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(1) a. **ur** → **uru**
 'town' (Schiffman 1983: 26)

b. **kar** → **karu**
 'car' (Aronoff & Sridhar 1983: 19)

(2) a. *ur-ina janaru* → *ur:in janaru* / *ur:na janaru*
town-GEN people
'the people of the town' (Schiffman 1983: 26)

b. *ka:rige* → *ka:rige*
car-DAT
'to the car' (Aronoff & Sridhar 1983)

(3) a. *kair-ga* → *kairuga***[u]**
car-PL
'cars'
b. *bass-ga* → *bassuga***[u]**
bus-PL
'busses' (Aronoff & Sridhar 1983)

(4) a. kair-gal_{WL}-ige_{SL} → kairugalige b. gaŋd-gal_{WL}-as_L → gaŋdugala
 car-PL-DAT man-PL-GEN (Schiffman 1983: 33)

Consequently, stem-level affixes are outside of word-level affixes in violation of strict stratal ordering. Furthermore, u-epenthesis is counterbled at the root boundary and bled at the plural-case boundary. Additionally, example (4b) reveals that the genitive surfaces with its allomorph -a that normally surfaces after vowel-final stems (cf. *guru-a* → *guruva* / *guru* : / *guru*, teacher-GEN) instead of -ina, cf. example (2a), that normally surfaces after consonants. **Analysis:** I

propose that the case suffixes when combined with the plural suffix change their stem-level status to word-level. Hence, they are chameleon affixes. Word-level status allows the case suffixes to enter word-level phonology where they no longer bleed u-epenthesis at the root boundary. Crucially, u-epenthesis is still bled at the plural-case boundary because both affixes enter the word-level phonological optimisation together, see (5).

- (5) $\text{gaṇḍ-ga|}_{\text{WL-asL}}$
 stem-level phonology: gaṇḍu (no bleeding of u-epenthesis)
 word-level phonology: gaṇḍuga|a (bleeding of u-epenthesis)

Furthermore, I assume that a word-level phonologically conditioned suppletive allomorph optimisation (PCSA) resorts to the default allomorph -a. In comparison, stem-level PCSA determines PCSA according to the phonological environment, which results in -ina after consonants and -a after vowels. I model PCSA in a stratal pre-phonological modulette where language-specific phonological constraints determine the correct allomorphs. The tableau below shows how at stem-level PCSA the phonologically suitable allomorph -ina is selected due to the high ranking of *C-a, a language-specific PCSA constraint that is violated when the vowel [a] follows a consonant at a morpheme boundary. The

SL:	$\text{u:r-}\{a>\text{ina}\}$	*C-a	PRIORITY
a.	u:r-a	*!	
 b.	u:r-ina		*

constraint PRIORITY (Bonet et al. 2007) which selects the “default” allomorph -a over -ina, is ranked below *C-a which leads to the phonolo-

WL:	$\text{gaṇḍu-ga }\{-\{a>\text{ina}\}\}$	PRIORITY	*C-a
 a.	gaṇḍu-ga -a		*
b.	gaṇḍu-ga -ina	*!	

gically more salient allomorph -ina being chosen. At word-level PCSA, the constraints PRIORITY and *C-a are re-ranked. The higher rank of

PRIORITY ensures that the default allomorph -a will always be chosen despite violations of *C-a. A stratal analysis that relaxes strict stratal ordering by introducing a looping mechanism that allows re-visitation of the stem-level stratum (Mohanani 1986) derives incorrect phonological interactions with u-epenthesis. A loop falsely predicts that u-epenthesis is counterbled at the plural-case boundary creating gaṇḍuga|u . This form feeds PCSA selection of -a correctly. However, general phonology now resolves the vowel hiatus by either glide insertion (written Kannada) or vowel fusion (spoken Kannada) (cf. $\text{guru-a} \rightarrow \text{guruva/guru/guru}$ Schiffman 1983). This yields the incorrect surface forms $*\text{gaṇḍuga|uva/gaṇḍuga|u:}$, see (6).

- (6) $\text{gaṇḍ-ga|}_{\text{WL-asL}}$
 stem-level phonology: gaṇḍu (u-epenthesis not bled)
 word-level phonology: gaṇḍuga|u (u-epenthesis **not** bled)
 loop to stem-level phonology $*\text{gaṇḍuga|uva/gaṇḍuga|u:}$ (-a & hiatus resolution)

Conclusion: Stem-level affixes are never outside of word-level affixes, instead stem-level affixes are chameleon affixes that change their stratum corroborated by the affixes’ morphological and phonological behaviour. The abandonment of level ordering makes incorrect predictions.

Selected References: Aronoff, M. & Shikaripur N. S. 1983. Morphological levels in English and Kannada. In *Papers from the Parasession on the interplay of phonology, morphology and syntax*, 3-16. Chicago Linguistic Society. • Bermúdez-Otero, R. 2018. Stratal Phonology. In *The Routledge Handbook of Phonological Theory*, 100-134. Abingdon: Routledge. • Bonet, Eulàlia, M. L. & J. Mascaró. 2007. Allomorph selection and lexical preferences: Two case studies. *Lingua* 117(6). 903-927. • Kiparsky, Paul. 2020. Morphological units: stems. In M. Aronoff (ed.), *Oxford research encyclopedia of linguistics*. Oxford Univ. Press. • Mohanani, K. P. 1986. *The theory of lexical phonology*. D. Reidel Publishing Company. • Schiffman, H. F. 1983. *A reference grammar of spoken Kannada*. Univ. of Washington Press.