

Romance Conjugation Class Features could be Syntactic (and on certain assumptions must be)

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Bermúdez-Otero (2013:21) formulates **The Coupling Question**: How are stems correctly coupled with their corresponding Theme Vowels? This talk focuses on the Coupling Question as it arises in Latin and Romance verb morphology. I will argue for the following conclusions: (i) if you're committed to the idea that the lexicon contains simple pieces only, then conjugation class features remain the best answer to the Coupling Question in Latin and Romance verbs; and (ii) although standard versions of Distributed Morphology are associated with the claim that conjugation class features cannot be syntactic, the traditional arguments for this position don't go through in versions of DM with "Late Insertion at Both Interfaces". This much establishes that Romance conjugation class features *could be* syntactic after all. If time permits, I will go on to describe a version of DM I have been working on which adheres to Strict (Fodor+) Modularity of the kind advocated by Newell and Sailor (2023). I will give an argument that, if this particular version of a strictly modular DM is correct, then Romance conjugation class features *must* be syntactic.