Words may be stored in the lexicon with both underlying and surface forms.

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To ground this claim, data from the evolution of tonic vowels in the Italo-Romance dialect of San Valentino are discussed. A differentiation of tonic vowels according to syllable structure characterised the evolution of many Romance idioms. In some Italo-Romance dialects of the Upper South-eastern area, where San Valentino is located, vowel differentiation resulted in a series of surface allophones whereby the quality of the vowel varied according to syllable structure. More specifically, lax vowels or light diphthongs appeared in closed syllable and tense vowels alternating with heavy diphthongs surfaced in open syllables. The tense vowel/heavy diphthong alternation was regulated by sentence stress. Under sentence stress, that in these dialects is placed in final, rightmost position, vowels break yielding heavy diphthongs, whereas under simple word stress the tense allophones surface. Words with tonic open syllable uttered in isolation thus, bearing sentence stress, surface with a broken vowel. Further changes could eventually modify this state of affairs through merging, phonologisation or monophthongation of diphthongs. Nowadays, in the dialect of San Valentino, only the outcomes of Ĕ, Ŏ, Ū show alternating diphthongs. (Lu 'petə sa/ sə fɑtʃə mələ a lu "peitə, 'korə ma! / allu "kourə, 'nøtʃə i nutʃjıllə/ è ccu bbonə li "nəutʃə. Glosses: his foot/he hurt his foot, my heart (darling)/to the heart, nuts and hazelnuts/nuts are tastier). The diphthongised forms are arguably phonetic realisations of underlying simple vowels, with which they alternate according to the position of words in the sentence. However, some diachronic changes that occurred in the dialect hint at the possibility that, notwithstanding simple tense vowels are underlying, words with broken vowels are also stored in the lexicon.

In particular we discuss the outcomes of Ū: in open syllable, the simple vowel [u] alternates with [əu̯] in sentence final position. Breaking of /u/ to [əu̯] in sentence final position was blocked in a group of words by the presence of final Ŭ (MŪRUM > mu:rə, MŪTUM > mu:tə, FŪSUM > fusə etc. cf. FŪNIS > fəu̯nə etc.), which characterised an inflectional class containing masculine nouns. In open syllable of words bearing sentence stress then, [u] as opposed to [əu̯] came to indicate masculine singular and was extented to all masculine singulars with tonic Ū evolving from other inflectional classes not characterised by final Ŭ (i.e. LŪMEN > lumə). [u] vs. [əu̯] then conveyed a gender opposition in the singular and a number opposition in the plural, as illustrated by the following paradigm : 'skurə < OBSCURUM dark M.SG / 'skəu̯rə < OBSCURAM 'dark F.SG', 'skəu̯rə <OBSCUROS 'dark M.PL 'skəu̯rə < OBSCURAS 'dark F.PL'. This opposition arose from a phonological process that only concerned open syllables under sentence stress and thus in isolation, and did not in principle exist in open syllables of utterance medial position nor in closed syllables, where the outcome of Ū were respectively u/wʊ. However, the outcome of Ū in closed syllable was in some cases lowered to [ɔ] and in open syllable in sentence medial position it was fronted to [ø]. This exceptional outcomes extended the paradigmatic oppositions arisen in sentence final position to all contexts. The outcome [ø], backformed from the broken word forms containing [əu̯], erroneously analysed as basic forms, of which the simple vowel forms are seen as a contraction, extends to open syllables in internal position the gender and number opposition originating from the blocking of breaking in final position. The outcome [ɔ] extends it to closed syllables. If our analysis is correct, this could only have happened if forms with broken vowels are stored in the lexicon, as well as the forms with underlying vowels, and taken as basic forms, perhaps because those are the forms of words occurring in isolation. This does not mean that diphthongs are lexicalised, since in the dialects of this group where lexicalisation of the diphthong has taken place, they do not alternate with simple vowels anymore. They appear as such in both internal and final position. What is proposed here is that, as happens with morphologically complex word-forms, that can be stored in the lexicon notwithstanding the fact that they can also be derived by synchronically active word-formation rules, also word-forms with allophones deriving from underlying forms by phonological rules, can be stored in the lexicon as well as those underlying forms from which they derive. Both forms may be stored, despite one can be derived from the other by a synchronically active process. Evidence from other Italo-Romance dialects and other phonological processes is also brought to bear.