Bridging and the phonology-morphology interface

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Apart from purely phonological and purely morphological phenomena attested in the systems of languages, there are certain areas where close co-operation of the two disciplines can be observed. Consequently, the phonetic outcome can often result from an interplay of both phonological and morphological factors. As sometimes happens, the mere establishing of domain boundaries proves insufficient in accounting for certain forms occurring in particular languages. Evidence can be found supporting the intuition that individual languages employ specific mechanisms capable of manifesting the phonology/morphology interaction in producing concrete phonetic representations.

The presentation to be delivered will be couched within the non-linear framework of Government Phonology. We shall dwell on the hypothesis formulated in Bloch-Rozmej (1998) to the effect that segments and their corresponding constituents are capable of contracting a special type of a licensing relation that we call *Bridging*. An inter-element, or inter-constituent, bridge can, in response to language-specific requirements and parameter-settings, be resorted to in accounting for either purely phonological or morphophonological phenomena. The bridging mechanism can, but does not have to, overlap with interonset government, thus bringing about different results. The existence of such a bridging - interonset government combination is a language-specific property. In this presentation our attention will be drawn to a number of processes found in Irish, German and Korean that can readily be accounted for once the relation of bridging has been employed. Connemara Irish can be argued to exhibit the workings of bridging as a mechanism underlying the process of nasal lenition. The example of Irish illustrates the operation of bridging as a device used for purely phonological purposes. The system of Irish allows for the contraction of interonset bridging domains as a reflection of its susceptibility to the requirements of the *Obligatory Contour Principle*.

It will also be demonstrated that interonset bridging can prove useful in constructing the analysis of the phenomena of Umlaut and degemination in German. Of the two processes, Umlaut will be shown to involve the interaction between phonology and morphology. Bridging, in turn, can be perceived as a mechanism that makes this interplay possible. In other words, phonology

interacts with morphological conditioning by allowing the establishment of an inter-element bridging relation involving material belonging to adjacent morphological domains.

Further support for the existence of the phonology / morphology interface is provided by Korean. Relying on the evidence discussed in Rhee (2001), we shall attempt to put forward a bridging-based analysis of [U]-insertion between nasal-nasal sequences attested in this language. The realisation of [U] is effected across domain boundaries, e.g. when a suffix has been added to the root, but is absent in the case of morpheme-internal nasal clusters.

The solutions suggested in this presentation take sides with the assumption that although phonology and morphology are mutually independent, there exist certain mechanisms, e.g. bridging, enabling their interaction. Their employment is a matter of language-specific choice.

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