The interaction between morphological and phonological domains in Polish

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This paper discusses a complex interaction between morphological and phonological domains in Polish. Looking from a general perspective, morphological boundaries are clearly marked by the existence of external sandhi effects, providing evidence of prosodic categories aligned with them. For example, final obstruent devoicing is observed at the end of the word; a syllable boundary is found at the prefix-stem juncture; a trochaic foot appears at the word-final position and, in longer words, also word-initially. However, upon a closer examination of the data, various kinds of mismatches and irregularities seem to destroy this general picture. The first problem relates to the fact that affixes and clitics do not exhibit a uniform behaviour within their categories. Certain proclitics devoice and others do not, pointing out to their different status; some enclitics readily accept (secondary) stress and others do not; a mixed clitic~affix behaviour with respect to external sandhi characterizes still other grammatical morphemes attached in postposition, etc. The second problem is of theoretical nature. Polish data shed light on the principles of phonological domains' organization; for example, they point out that Selkirk's (1984) Strict Layer Hypothesis is violated to the extent that exhaustive parsing holds only for some domains and not for others.

In the present analysis, I will assume an Optimality Theoretic approach in which domain structuring follows from violable alignment constraints, predicting the internal domain organization, as well as the exact behaviour of particular affixes and clitics. I will argue that Polish phonology recognizes three word-like domains: Phonological Word (Pword), Morphological Word (Mword) and Phonological Unit (Punit), which are predicted by appropriate alignment constraints. Their hierarchical structure, as well as their exhaustive or non-exhaustive parsing follows from the interaction with other constraints. For example, the Pword domain is due to two unviolable constraints: *Align {Rt, L, Pw, L}* (The left edge of every root has to be aligned with the left edge of a Pword) and *Align {Infl, R, Pw, R}* (The right edge of every inflectional suffix has to be aligned with the right edge of the Pword). These constraints will guarantee the status of Pword to all lexical words, but not to prefixes, which do not contain lexical roots. Consequently, prefixed words will exhibit non-exhaustive parsing of larger domains into Pwords and a quasi-word boundary will be observed at the prefix-stem juncture.

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