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BRIDGING
AND THE PHONOLOGY-MORPHOLOGY INTERFACE

1. INTRODUCTION

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. It sometimes happens that 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 morpho-phonological phenomena. The bridging mechanism can, but does not have to, overlap with inter-onset 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

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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 inter-onset bridging domains as a reflection of its susceptibility to the requirements of the *Obligatory Contour Principle* (McCARTHY 1986). Let us begin with an outline of the major licensing mechanisms of *Government Phonology*.

2. LICENSING RELATIONS
IN THE PHONOLOGICAL STRUCTURE OF DOMAINS

The mechanism of *phonological licensing* determines the structure of phonological domains. A stronger form of licensing requiring more stringent contraction conditions to be fulfilled as well as triggering more dramatic changes is referred to as *government*. Skeletal positions are projected onto the syllabic constituents in terms of the licensing relations they are involved in.[1] In onset – rhyme sequences, each onset is universally licensed by the following nucleus (*Onset Licensing*). The nucleus, which is the head of the Rhyme, also licenses the potential rhymal complement (coda) position. Branching onset and nuclear structures, validated by the occurrence of phonotactic restrictions, exhibit the operation of intraconstituent left-to-right licensing. Moreover, in the case of the presence of the 'coda' position, the point has to be licensed by an onset to its right (*Coda Licensing*). Intercostituent licensing/government is universally head-final. The licensing relations available within a single phonological domain are depicted in (1) below:

(1)   O   ⟵   R   O ⟵ R

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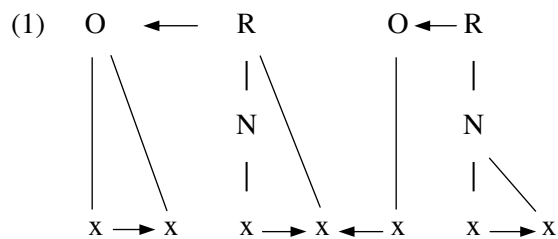
[1] The licensing principles to be addressed below come from KLV (1985), Kaye (1990), Harris (1994) and Charette (1991).

Nuclear and onset heads are also capable of contracting licensing relations at the relevant level of projection. Such interonset and internuclear domains are either head-initial or head-final, depending on language-specific requirements. Here, both the conditions for their contraction and effects vary from one language to another. Nevertheless, in any case of projection licensing/government, the *Complexity Condition* has to be observed. The principle imposes a prerequisite that a potential governee may not be more complex than its governor. The complexity dimension pertains to the segments attached to the positions of the governor and governee and is calculable in terms of a number of elements. All internuclear and interonset relations need to be government-licensed by a nuclear licenser, whose properties are determined in a language-specific manner. One example of such system-imposed requirements concerning government-licensers could be their phonetic content. In other words, a given language can demand that in order to license an inter-constituent relation, a potential government-licenser may not be empty (i.e. devoid of melodic material). Other systems tolerate empty nuclei as licensers.

Additionally, the licensing mechanism binding constituent heads at the relevant projection level can acquire the form of an inter-constituent bridge whose contraction depends on language-specific conditions and yields language-specific results. Nevertheless, it has to be noted that in each case of bridging, the binding relation must obtain between the relevant segments (element sharing).[2] Apart from its intimate relationship with the *Obligatory Contour Principle*, bridging can also manifest the interaction between phonology and morphology within a particular system. In what follows, we shall depict its workings and 'morpho-phonological function' as observed in Irish, German and Korean. Our discussion will first address the Irish data.

3. BRIDGING IN CONNEMARA IRISH

Connemara Irish provides evidence on the change triggered by the existence of the interonset relation contracted between plosives and following nasals. The alteration affects the nasal segment, bringing about its lenition. The process is depicted in the words such as those listed in (2) (Ó SIADHAIL 1989):

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[2] The idea of element sharing and interonset bridging was first formulated in Bloch-Rozmej (1995) and refined in Bloch-Rozmej (1998).

(2)   gnás   [grã:s]   'custom'   mná   [mrã:]   'women'
       tnuth   [trũ:]   'desiring' an tsneachta   [ə 'trãχtə]   'of the snow'
       cnoc   [krũk]   'hill'   sneachta   [ʃn'aχtə]   'snow'
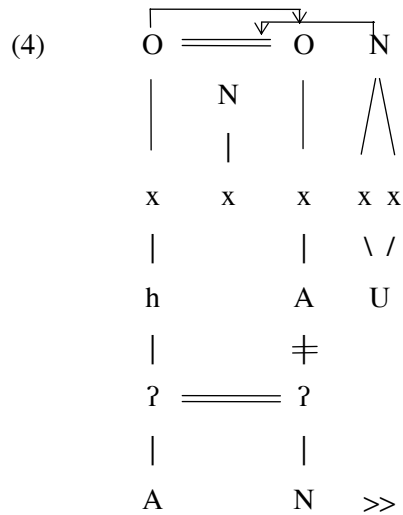
As shown above, the nasal consonant decomposes to the coronal [r].[3] The ana-
lysis of this phenomenon offered in Bloch-Rozmej (1995) proposes that the
segments participating in this process form an interonset relation whose estab-
lishment hinges on the presence of a full headed vowel to their right.[4] No inte-
ronset relation will ever be possible before a licensed, empty nucleus. In other
words, such an interonset relation requires a special license which in Conne-
mara Irish can be granted only by a melodically-filled nucleus. An empty nu-
cleus exhibits very weak government-licensing capabilities cross-linguistically
and in Irish in particular. This deficiency stems from its lack of melodic con-
tent. The analysis of the Irish lenition facts assumes the existence of a special
kind of licensing – that of interonset bridging. Constituent bridging, in turn,
depends on the availability of element sharing between the relevant onset
segments, in Irish this prime being ʔ (occlusion defining stoppness).

(3)   O ═══════ O
           │   N   │
           │   │   │
           x   x   x
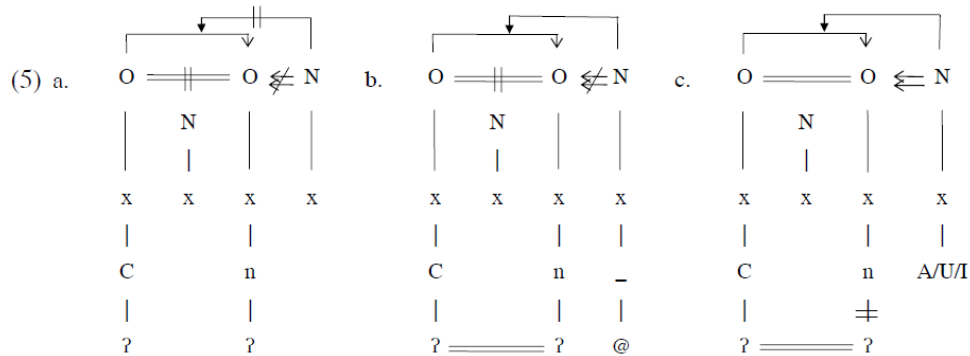   │   │
           ʔ ═══════ ʔ
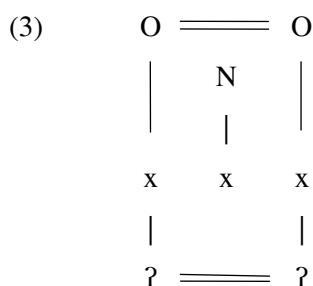
The mechanism of element-bridging itself does not effect the lenition process. In
Irish the reduction of nasals will occur only in the position of the interonset bridge
governee. Thus, nasal lenition requires that the two weakening contexts, i.e., be-
ing an interonset governee and a bridge complement, overlap. The consonantal
weakening of this type can be exemplified with the word *tnúth* [trũ:] 'longing'.

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[3] The claim that the lexical representations of these words contain nasal segments is
confirmed by the presence of vowel nasalisation and the availability of such alternations as
sneachta / an tsneachta. Moreover, in other dialects of Irish, e.g. Munster, the [r] is realised as [n].

[4] The primes constituting a segment are awarded different status. One of them enjoys the
status of the segment head, the other elements are dependents. Yet, it is also possible for a
melodic expression to remain empty-headed, without any active element in the head position.

(4)

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                  ┌─────────┬──────┐
                  │       v  ↓      ↓
        O ═══════  O    N
        │       N       │      /\
        │       │       │     /  \
        x       x       x    x  x
        │               │    \  /
        h               A    U
        │               ╪
        ʔ  ═══════  ʔ
        │               │
        A               N    >>
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Interestingly, not all melodically-filled nuclei sanction the emergence of in-teronset-bridging. Sequences consisting of plosives plus nasals feature differ-ently, both in terms of distribution and with respect to lenition word-finally and elsewhere. We can observe a general absence of [tn, dn, kn, mn] clusters at the end of Irish words, though they are attested word-internally before schwa. This indicates that an empty nucleus possesses different government-licensing capabilities than an empty-headed one (i.e. schwa). Beyond doubt, there seems to exist a correlation between the contraction of an interonset do-main and the presence of a realised nucleus following the relevant onset seg-ments. An empty nuclear position, then, is incapable of licensing an inter-onset bridge or performing the role of an indirect government-licenser. Hence, the absence of word-final stop-nasal clusters. It is also noteworthy that Irish exhibits the lack of word-final stop-liquid clusters. Furthermore, being at-tached to the position of the interonset governee turns out not to be a suffi-cient condition for a nasal to decompose. Apparently, no lenition effects are found before schwa, as in *leicneach* [lʹe<u>kn</u>ʹəχ] 'mumps' for instance. Conse-quently, we shall argue that for an interonset governing domain to become a bridging domain, its potential licenser – the adjacent vocalic segment may not be empty-headed. Only a nucleus headed by an active element can sanction the contraction of an interonset bridging relation. A segment that finds itself in the position of a bridge licensee will undergo weakening, as in the word *tnúth*. Such effects of interonset bridging, however, will not occur in expressions such as *aigne* or *leicneach*, where the nasal is followed by schwa.

(5) a.   O ══╪══ O ⪇ N   b.   O ══╪══ O ⪇ N   c.   O ═════ O ⇐ N

	N				N				N	
x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
C		n		C		n	_	C		n	A/U/I
ʔ		ʔ		ʔ ══ ʔ			@	ʔ ══ ʔ			

4. BRIDGING IN GERMAN

In what follows a slightly different application of bridging will be suggested that serves as a link between phonology and morphology. More specifically, it will 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. Let us first consider the evidence on vowel fronting. Wiese (1996:181) argues that „*an understanding of Umlaut involves practically all aspects of the phonology of Modern Standard German including its interaction with morphology*." In the first place, it should be stressed that umlauted, i.e. fronted, stem vowels always appear in morphologically derived forms. A handful of illustrative examples are provided in (6) below (WIESE 1996:182):

(6)   Huhn   [u:]   Hühner   [y:]   'chicken/pl.'
      Vogel   [o:]   Vögel   [ø:]   'bird/pl.'
      Stand   [a]   ständig [ɛ]   'stand/always'
      laufen   [aʊ]   läuft   [ɔY]   'run/he runs'

Seen from the historical perspective, Umlaut is related to the vowel-harmony rule of Old High German, whereby a stressed stem vowel would undergo fronting before a final high, front vowel or glide, as in *gast* vs. *gesti* 'guest / guests', for instance. The transitional period from Old High German to Middle High German brought about the reduction and subsequent loss of final vowels and in conse-

quence, the fronting alternation came to be reanalysed as the property of particular stems (WIESE 1987, LODGE 1989 and SCHEUTZ 1989). Synchronic evidence seems to support the intuition that certain stems have to be lexically specified for the palatal feature, which in the present framework will take on the form of a floating **I** prime at the right edge of given domains. Compare the forms in (7a) with umlaut effects before the [i]-containing suffix with those in (7b) unaffected by the palatal property of the affix (DUDEN 1990).

(7) a. Stand / ständing   'stand / always'   b. Mut / mutig 'courage /adj.'
        Not/nötig   'need / needed'   Gewalt/gewaltig 'force/powerful'
        Hand / händisch   'hand / manual'   Gnom[e] / gnomisch 'gnome / adj.'
        (er) rät /rat + (e)t/ 'he advises'   ihr ratet   'you advise'

On the other hand, whenever a suffix lacks a high, front vowel, no umlaut will be triggered. Consider the examples in (8):
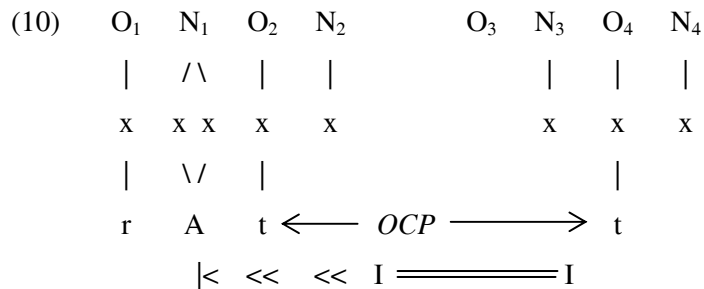
(8)   Ber_a_tung   'consultation'
        Einl_a_dung   'invitation'
        Umg_e_bung   'environment'
        Unterh_a_ltung   'entertainment'
        Unterschl_a_gung   'defalcation'

It seems that for Umlaut to apply, both the stem and the suffix need to carry lexical **I**-specifications. In other words, Umlaut requires that the stem of the word be morphologically marked for the element **I** which floats at the end of the domain and the suffix added also needs to contain the palatal element, either floating or present in the phonological specification of its vowel. On the basis of the above observations we propose that the two **I** primes enter into a specific kind of bridging relation which triggers the leftward spreading of the palatal element. **I** 'reaches' the first vowel on its left and modifies its melody in the way that a front vocalic expression appears. The mechanism of **I**-spreading is demonstrated in (9) below:

At this stage it is important to observe that the contribution of morphology to the process of Umlaut consists in the lexical marking of particular morphological domains with the element **I**. Phonology, on the other hand, offers a mechanism that brings about the fronting change, enabling the two **I**s of adjacent morphological domains to interact, i.e. see each other. In other words, the relation of bridging makes it possible for **I** primes supplied by the neighbouring morphological domains to extend their interpretation area within the representation of a word. Phonology has nothing to do with the fact that certain affixes or stems are additionally specified for the floating **I** element, whereas morphology is unable to effect the cooperation of the two **I**s that meet. In this sense then is it possible to speak of the phonology – morphology interaction in the process of yielding umlauted forms.

As was mentioned in the introduction to this presentation, Umlaut in German interacts with consonant degemination. Without going into any detailed discussion of this process, it suffices to be observed that there occurs a clear correlation between degemination and umlaut in verbal form inflection for present tense 2nd and 3rd person singular. Specifically, only verbs which belong to the phonematic and morpho-phonematic conjugation exhibit these effects. The analysis of Umlaut outlined above identifies the trigger of the fronting process attested in the derived forms of these verbs with the bridging-effected spreading operation of a floating palatal element **I** residing at the right-hand edge of the root domain that has contracted a bridging relation with the **I** of the suffix. Whenever umlaut is possible, however, also the degemination results will be found. Consider the illustration of the umlaut / degemination combined impact on the form (er) *rät* (/rat + (e)t/) [rɛ:t] 'he advises' provided in (10) below (BLOCH-ROZMEJ 2002):

(10) O_1 N_1 O_2 N_2 O_3 N_3 O_4 N_4

        | /\ | | | | |

        x   x x   x   x   x   x   x

        | \/ | |

        r   A   t ⟵— *OCP* ⟶ t

         |< << << I ═══════ I

The empty positions N_2O_3 that are not involved in any licensing relation undergo reduction, which brings the two onset segments O_2 and O_4 to be strictly adjacent on the melodic tier. Being identical and immediately adja-

cent, the consonants undergo the reducing effect of the *Obligatory Contour Principle*. Hence, in *rät* degemination occurs. Notice that the empty position N_3 which is neither properly governed nor parametrically-licensed does not surface as schwa.[5] It has to be kept in mind that for **I**-spreading to be effected, the specific bridging relation has to be established. Such a relation involves both the relevant elements and their constituents (i.e. N_1 and N_3). Within the inter-nuclear bridging domain the position N_3 is licensed, and hence unavailable for phonetic interpretability. In this way, then, Umlaut, which necessitates **I**-spreading, conditions the occurrence of degemination. However, the presence of schwa in the suffixal nucleus, as in the form *wartet* 'he waits', derives from the lack of licensing of the nucleus separating the two [t] onsets by the internuclear bridge. The absence of bridging, in turn, can be accounted for by the fact that the verb stem is not lexically marked for the floating **I** prime which might potentially create an interelement bridge with the floating **I** of the suffix. In consequence, N_3, the empty nuclear position, will be realised as schwa due to its being ungoverned by N_4 or licensed by N_1. Hence, the relevant onset consonants will remain melodically separated, thus not being liable to the *OCP*.

As was briefly described above, degemination can be dependent on Umlaut in the sense of applying to segments that come to be adjacent whenever the relation of bridging binding the appropriate nuclei suppresses the empty position separating the onsets dominating identical segments. The contraction of interelement bridging is contingent on the lexical presence of the palatal elements at the edges of adjacent domains. The presence of these often floating primes is an inherent feature of specific morphological domains and hence constitutes input to phonological processing. It is in this way that phonology interacts with morphology in German.

4. BRIDGING IN KOREAN

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 [ɨ]-insertion between nasal-nasal sequences attested in this language. The realisation of [ɨ] is effected across domain boundaries, e.g. when a suffix has been added to

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[5] In accordance with the ECP (KAYE 1990).

the root, but is absent in the case of morpheme-internal nasal clusters. The table in (11) below contains examples illustrating this process.

(11)   /paŋmaɲi/   'club'
       /maŋnani/   'wretch'
       /t´tɨm/   [t´tɨmɨmj´]   [t´tɨmɨni] 'to grope for / connective / effective'
       /a:n/   [anɨmj´]   [anɨni]   'to hug / connective / effective'
       but
   /nar/   [nalmj´]   [nani]   'to fly / connective / effective'

The items just listed reveal the inertness of intramorphemic NN sequences to vowel-insertion, which contrasts with the behaviour of those emerging as a result of suffix-addition. Simultaneously, it has to be noticed that liquids feature differently than nasals in not allowing any [ɨ]-epenthesis. As pointed out in Rhee and Heo (1998) and Rhee (2001), in Korean the central vowel serves as an empty nucleus filler when its position is not suppressed by either proper government or inter-onset government. The latter mechanism responsible for licensing a subset of word-internal empty nuclei can be documented with the following examples:

(12)   /musønø/   [musɨn]   'what'
       /sinapøro/ [sinapɨro]   'gradually'
       /t´a:røki/ [t´a:lki]   'strawberry'
       /t´arøpo/   [t´alpo]   'dwarf'

As depicted in (12) above, in the first item, [musɨn], the realisation of the central vowel arises as a result of the lack of proper government discharged by the word-final empty nuclear position. In [sinapɨro], the epenthetic vowel splits the obstruent – liquid sequence even though the empty nucleus separating the consonants is properly governable. The remaining two items are provided by Rhee's analysis as illustrating the operation of the right-to-left inter-onset government involving liquid – obstruent strings. This inter-constituent relation is established when the requirements of the *Complexity Condition* are respected, i.e. when the potential governee is no more complex than its governor. Furthermore, refining the existing analysis, we propose that only bridging domains can be licensed as interonset governing ones. This, in turn, leads us to the recognition of two additional conditions referring to an interonset relation. One of them has to do with the existence of a specific inter-element bridge that binds the adjacent segments and the other pertains to the availability of an appropriate government-licenser for this relation.
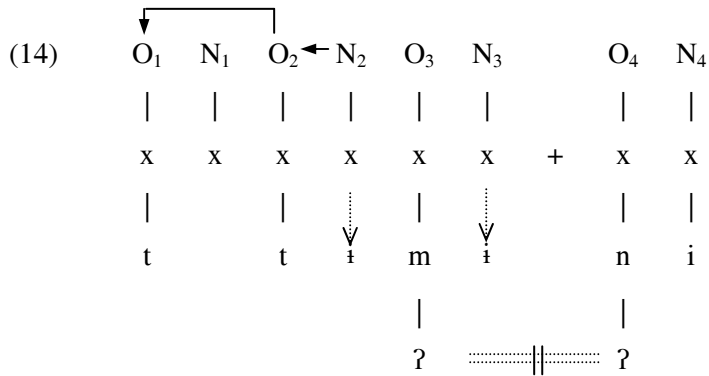
We shall maintain that Korean segments are capable of contracting stop-bridging domains which when licensed by melodically-filled nuclei, become inter-onset governing relations. Such interonset bridges are able to suppress intervening empty nuclei. As a result, it is possible to encounter bridging domains before licensed empty nuclei but those that are simultaneously governing relations will be absent from this context. We illustrate the operation of bridging alone and a combination of bridging and inter-onset government in (13a) and (13b) respectively.

(13)   a. /katøkø/ [kat̵ik] 'full'   b. /maṉnani/ 'wretch'
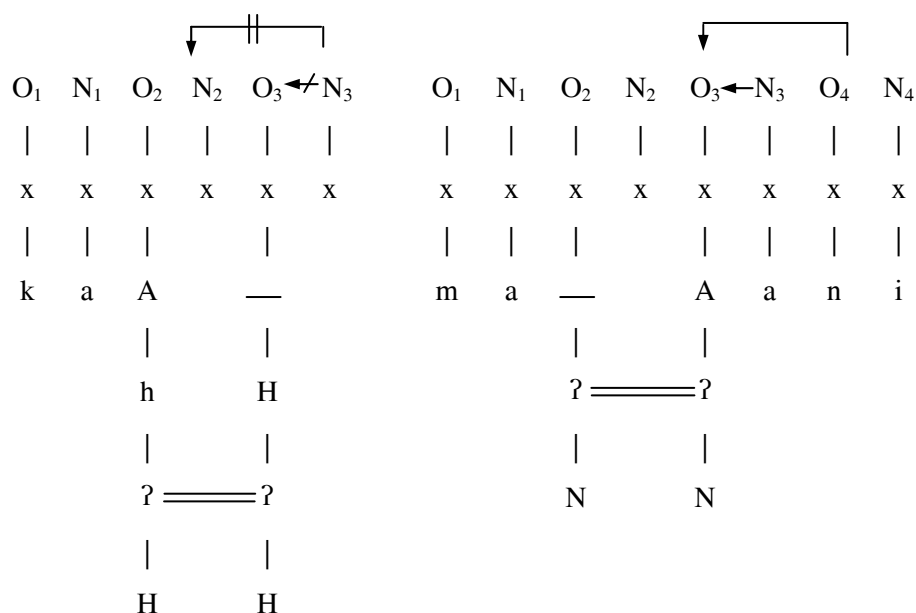
In the left-hand structure no interonset government is possible because of the violation of the *Complexity Condition* requirements, on the one hand, and the lack of a filled nuclear licenser of this relation on the other. In (13b), in turn, the imposed complexity gradient between the nasals is respected and the interelement bridge has an unlicensed nuclear licenser. Consequently, the bridge acquires the status of a governing domain which enforces the suppression of N_2.

Turning now to vowel-insertion in the cross-morphemic situation, let us see what happens in the case of the word [t´tim̵ni] 'grope for / effective' where the effective suffix is added:

(14)   O$_1$ N$_1$ O$_2$ ← N$_2$ O$_3$ N$_3$ O$_4$ N$_4$

          | | | | | | | |

          x   x   x   x   x   x   +   x   x

          | | ⋮ | ⋮ | |
                            ↓   ↓

          t   t   ɨ   m   ɨ   n   i

                            | |

                            ʔ ═══════‖═══════ ʔ

The problematic character of this representation derives from the fact that all the necessary conditions for the contraction of an interonset government bridge have been satisfied and yet vowel insertion has taken place. It seems that the fact that the two nasals are assigned to different morphological domains exerts a decisive effect on their ability to participate in interelement bridging. Consequently, we would like to hypothesise that the property to contract cross-morphemic bridging relations is language-specific. This proviso is formulated in (1515) below:

(15)   *Bridging Parameter*

                                                        ↗ ON
   Cross-morphemic bridging is forbidden
                                                        ↘ OFF
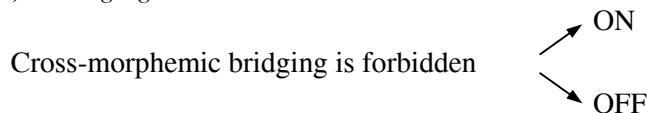
In accordance with this parameter, some languages will allow bridging relations to bind material from adjacent morphological domains and set the OFF position of this parameter. German seems to belong to this group, whereas Korean chooses the ON option, which secures that no bridge can ever be established between segments across domain boundaries. Some support in favour of recognising the existence of the *Bridging Parameter* comes from the operation of harmony phenomena in languages, where consonantal harmony processes are restricted to individual domains, whereas vocalic harmony is capable of surpassing domain boundaries (HANNSON 2001). Recall the German Umlaut involving nuclei belonging to separate morphological domains.

   Since we have excluded the possibility of suppressing the empty nucleus N$_3$ by means of the interonset bridging domain, a question that arises now is

why this nuclear position resists both the proper government of N_4 and domain-final parametric licensing? Since both of these suppressing devices should be at work here (i.e. in (14) above), the realisation of the central vowel has to serve some important function in Korean. With respect to that, it will be proposed that the manifestation of this position is connected with the workings of the *OCP* which aims at reducing sequences of alike segments. It seems that Korean resists the operation of the *OCP* by either strengthening the autosegmental bonds of the similar segments by means of a bridging relation or separating them on the melodic level with a vocalic segment. In the cross-morphemic context, where bridging is barred from applying, the latter device appears to be resorted to in order to prevent the operation of the *OCP*.

6. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, 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. Furthermore, the operation of the bridging mechanism can be either parametrically confined to single domains or allowed to apply across boundaries. When working domain-internally, bridging is utilised for purely phonological purposes. This is the case in Irish or Korean. Nevertheless, when bridging is freed from this parametric confinement, e.g. in German, it is able to involve material from neighbouring domains and effect processes modifying their shape.

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RELACJA POMOSTOWA (*BRIDGING*)
I INTERFEJS MORFOFONOLOGICZNY

Streszczenie

W badaniach materiału językowego niejednokrotnie napotykamy zjawiska, do których wyjaśnienia nie wystarczy zastosowanie rozwiązań czysto fonologicznych. Leżą one bowiem na pograniczu oddziaływań czynników zarówno morfologicznych, jak i fonologicznych. Podstawową tezą, jaką formułuje autorka artykułu, jest twierdzenie, że w obrębie systemu językowego istnieją mechanizmy umożliwiające współdziałanie powyższych komponentów języka. Modelem teoretycznym zastosowanym w pracy jest model Fonologii Rządu. Analizując wybrane procesy zachodzące w językach niemieckim, irlandzkim i koreańskim, należy stwierdzić, że możliwość interakcji międzysegmentowych wchodzących w skład sąsiadujących morfemów podlega parametryzacji. Jedne systemy językowe pozwalają na kooperację domen morfologicznych, inne zaś taką możliwość odrzucają. Mechanizmem, który umożliwia współpracę fonologii z morfologią, jest – zdaniem autorki – relacja pomostowa (*bridging*). Wymaga ona specjalnego rodzaju licencjonowania. W języku niemieckim pomaga ona wyjaśnić zjawisko przegłosu (*umlaut*), które jest wynikiem oddziaływań morfofonologicznych. Język irlandzki posługuje się relacją *bridging* jedynie wewnątrz pojedynczych domen fonologicznych. Dane pochodzące z języka koreańskiego pozwalają na sformułowanie hipotezy dotyczącej działania parametru regulującego wybór relacji pomostowej przez dany system językowy.

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Słowa kluczowe: morofonologia, relacja pomostowa bridging, licencjonowanie, parametr, elementy.
Key words: morphohonology, bridging, licensing, parameter, elements.