

Phonological affixation

Heather Newell

Much recent work at the phonology-syntax interface has converged on the conclusion that there is no morpho-syntactic entity that correlates with the notion of 'word'. It has also long been noted that the phonological word is not a cohesive cross-linguistic unit. Phonological operations apply within domains that are smaller than, co-extensive with, and larger than what every native speaker agrees is a word, and phonological words are smaller than, equal to, and larger than syntactic heads. Given this variation, the only possible source for the information that determines whether and how a morpheme is incorporated into a word (or not) is lexically stored. Two possible sources of the pertinent lexical information are (1) morphological diacritics or (2) phonological form. It is argued here that only the latter is consistent with a fully modular system. I discuss evidence from multiple languages (such as English, Maybrat, Nivkh, and Ojibwe) that demonstrate that floating and/or empty melodic material can explain the membership of certain morphemes within particular phonological domains. The focus of this presentation will be on how this structure has a crucial impact on whether morphemes are interpreted inside or outside of particular phonological domains within a word.