AG 12: Phonological Domains: Universals and Deviations

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Systematic phonological alternations often seem to be bound to a particular phonological domain. The theory of Prosodic Phonology (e.g. Selkirk 1980, 1986; Nespor & Vogel 1986; Hayes 1989) holds that speech is hierarchically organized into constituents that are not necessarily isomorphic to syntactic constituents. Previous literature has largely dealt with how morphological elements can be organized into the prosodic structure. It has been reported that within individual languages as well as cross linguistically, there can be systematic differences in the prosodization of function words. For instance, Selkirk (1984) states that the principles of syntax-phonology mapping are blind to the presence of functional categories. Closer examination reveals that not only function words, but also various other morphological elements – e.g. suffixes and clitics – may vary with respect to the way they are prosodized. Moreover, within one syntactic category, elements may belong to different prosodic categories (e.g. the German preposition *statt* 'instead of' seems to function as a prosodic word, whereas *in* 'in' does not form a prosodic word of its own). Furthermore, morphological elements may behave as part of a prosodic domain *x* with respect to a (set of) phonological process(es) while they may seem to belong to another domain in the context of other processes (e.g., Turkish instrumental suffix *–lA*, which undergoes vowel harmony but fails to receive word-level right-most default stress). Also, the rules posited for morphology-phonology mapping seem to be based on circular logic: a syntactic category may determine the onset of a particular prosodic domain in which e.g. stress assignment takes place and at the same time presence or absence of primary stress suggests the inclusion or exclusion of a particular element from that very same domain.

In this workshop, we are specifically interested in the nature of the morphosyntax-phonology mapping and the principles that govern the prosodization of morphological elements, with special attention to cross-linguistic variation. In this respect, the following issues will be addressed:

(i) what is the cross-linguistic status of the categorical invisibility of function words?

(ii) do morphological elements bear any (lexical) information with respect to their morphophonological categorization (cf. Inkelas 1989). How should it be represented?

(iii) how much of mapping rules is given by universal grammar versus language-specific principles?

The Arbeitsgruppe will provide a forum for phonologists, morphologists with interest in formal aspects of phonological systems, diachrony as well as variation to discuss where the current theory of Prosodic Phonology stands, and how it may be revised to accommodate cross-linguistic diversity and observed universal patterns.