

## Dissertation Abstract

### *The Prosodic Word in European Portuguese*

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The subject matter of the dissertation is the prosodic word. It bears on the organization of grammar and phonology, its interface with morphology and syntax, and the nature of phonological representations. Despite the reference to various other languages, it primarily focuses on European Portuguese (EP).

A major result of this research is the identification of the phonological properties that constitute clear diagnostics for the prosodic word domain in EP and those that identify phonologically deficient units (clitics). As to the former, it is concluded that the prosodic word is richly cued in EP. Among the identified diagnostics for the prosodic word are: (i) many phonological processes (e.g. lowering in final stressless syllables closed by sonorant, final non-back vowel deletion, initial *r*-strengthening, initial vowel feature specification); (ii) prominence phenomena (e.g. word primary stress, secondary initial stress, focal stress); (iii) tonal phenomena (e.g. pitch accent assignment and distribution); (iv) phonotactic restrictions; and (v) constituent deletion processes (e.g. deletion under identity and clipping). Unlike in many other languages, such as German and English (Hall 1999b, Raffelsiefen 1999), EP prosodic words are not subject to a minimal size and do not bound resyllabification. As

to clitics, besides lacking the properties listed above, and not undergoing processes that apply within the prosodic word domain, they also exhibit the behaviour of stressless syllables (e.g. their only vowels may undergo semivocalization and/or deletion, and they do not block vowel deletion processes that are generally inhibited under stress clash conditions).

The second main outcome of the thesis regards the identification of morphosyntactic objects that are prosodized within a prosodic word domain. On the basis of the diagnostics for the EP prosodic word, it is established that a prosodic word that immediately dominates the next lower constituent in the prosodic tree includes either a stem plus any suffixes that do not constitute independent domains for word stress assignment, or affixes (prefixes or suffixes) that constitute independent domains for word level stress. Suffixes that do not form an independent stress domain and enclitics are incorporated into the same prosodic word as their morphological base/host. As to unstressed prefixes, as well as proclitics, they behave phonologically like prosodic word initial elements. Since the initial segments of their base/host also exhibit the phonology of prosodic word initial units, and adopting the view on the prosodization of clitics expressed in Selkirk (1996), Booij (1996a), and Peperkamp (1997a), among others, it is proposed that prefixes and proclitics are adjoined to (rather than incorporated into) the prosodic word that dominates their base/host, yielding a recursive structure.

Phonological evidence is further presented suggesting that a number of morphosyntactic units are grouped together under a prosodic node that includes two or more prosodic words, which, however, does not display the properties of a phonological phrase. The phonological behaviour of such domain is analysed as resulting from the prosodization of these units together within a compound prosodic word, that is, a domain that is immediately dominated by the phonological phrase and that dominates two or more prosodic words. Compound prosodic words in EP comprise (i) derived words with affixes that constitute stress domains independent of their base, (ii) several types of compounds, (iii) abbreviations, and (iv) mesoclititic structures.

The third core question for which a tentative answer is given is why such prosodic groupings obtain. In order to explain the specific prosodic structures found, and only those, two mapping conditions relating prosodic structure to morphological and syntactic structures are proposed: (i) Morphology-Phonology mapping – the prosodic word domain includes a stem plus suffixes; (ii) Syntax-Phonology mapping – the lowest *Lex<sup>o</sup>* is mapped onto a prosodic word. The first condition accounts for the non-incorporation of prefixes into the base prosodic word (unlike suffixes), whereas the second explains the grouping of units formed by more than one prosodic word within a compound prosodic word, and the incorporation of postverbal pronominal clitics into the verb's prosodic word. A parsing condition stating that any morpheme not dominated by the prosodic word node is adjoined to the following prosodic word is further postulated on the basis of the behaviour of prefixes and almost all clitics – it is

shown, for instance, that phonologically motivated encliticization is totally excluded in EP, even if no host exists to the right of the clitic, contrary to German or Dutch (Kleinhenz 1996, Hall 1999a, Booij 1996a). The fact that prefixes and suffixes forming independent stress domains as well as stressed function words (that do not include a stem) constitute independent prosodic words is accounted for via a general well-formedness condition on this domain stating that a unit bearing word stress must be included within a (minimal) prosodic word. Finally, the observation that the right edge of the lexical prosodic word does not prevail postlexically – since the right boundary of the prosodic word that includes the verb disappears when pronominal clitics are postlexically incorporated into the host's prosodic word – leads to the postulation of a mapping condition relating lexical and postlexical words in such a way that only the left boundaries of lexical prosodic words are preserved postlexically.

In order to reach these conclusions, other specific issues are also investigated: (i) a detailed description and classification of each of the phonological phenomena referred to in the thesis is given, including the identification of the relevance of the prosodic word domain for its occurrence; (ii) the affix/clitic status of pronominal clitics – which are the only elements that are grouped together with the preceding prosodic word in EP, thus displaying a prosodic structure similar to suffixes – is systematically inspected and the conclusion is drawn that these units must attach to their hosts postlexically, rather than being lexically attached like affixes; (iii) the nature of reduction phenomena that are specific of (very frequent) clitic words is also examined.

The thesis contributes to the understanding of yet not fully comprehended issues, such as (i) which morphosyntactic structures are mapped onto which prosodic domains, (ii) what is the exact information required for the construction of the prosodic word domain, (iii) what are the structural restrictions imposed on the architecture of prosodic trees, (iv) what are the sources and limits of crosslinguistic variation in the prosodization of morphosyntactic material, and (v) how are lexical and postlexical levels related. Some cross-linguistic consequences of the EP findings are also explored, bearing on the analysis of prosodic words and clitics in languages like English, Dutch, German, French, Italian, Brazilian Portuguese, and Baule.

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