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Basbøll, Hans

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Hans Basbøll

I certainly agree that we should all specify what we are talking about, and that the term sandhi is sometimes used too loosely. When it comes to Ternes’ positive proposal, however, of delimiting the term sandhi to what happens between words, certain reservations come to mind.

If you take a typical sandhi process in Modern Danish, like the assimilation of an /n/ in place of articulation to a following stop, it occurs between words in a phrase, e.g. in han går where han may end in a velar nasal (as opposed to a dental nasal, in isolation): [han'go?, haŋ'go?] ‘he walks’. Exactly the same process occurs, I would argue, between elements in a compound, e.g. in sandgulv ([san'gəl, 'san'gəl] ‘floor of sand’. And there may even be a hierarchy, from the minimal domain (the morpheme or the syllable), where the rule is obligatory, to the maximal domain (the utterance, say) where it only applies in fast speech or under low formality-conditions (with several intermediate domains intervening).

Another example from Modern Danish which is partly similar, partly different (and much more subject to lexical conditions), is what may be called “linking r” (although such a term is not traditionally used for this phenomenon within Danish linguistics): final /r/ is in certain contexts “linked”, i.e. pronounced as a phonetic consonant ([ɾ]) and not as a glide ([ɤ]), before “full vowels”. The pronunciation with [ɾ] is found obligatorily before stressed vowels within the same morpheme (e.g. karat [ka'raʔ] ‘value’), but this is not linking, strictly speaking. The pronunciation with [ɤ] (but still not a real “linking r”) also occurs optionally – favoured by a high degree of formality/distinctness – before an unstressed full vowel within single morphemes (e.g. Tora [toːna] (high style) or [toːa] (low style)). Before some derivative endings starting with a “full vowel”, genuine linking (as a sandhi-phenomenon) occurs in certain conservative norms, e.g. in læserinde [laːse'rɛnda] ‘female teacher’ (conservative), cf. [laːse'rɛnə] (less conservative) – derived from lærer [laːrɛ] ‘teacher’ or [laːrɛn] (very old-fashioned) and the suffix (fem.) -inde [ɛnə], cf. violinistinde [violinis'tɛnda] ‘female violin player’, from violinist [violiniːst] ‘violin player’. Between words, linking only occurs in now obsolete forms of speech (to be heard e.g. in grammophone records with the
author Karen Blixen (= Isak Dinesen, Pierre Andrée), who was born in 1885 and who spoke a very conservative (but pure Standard) language for her time: *Da min Søster og jeg . . .* [damin 'søsdoθor'jou] 'when my sister and I . . .', cf. her pronunciation of *Søster* alone [søsdø(h)]. Some of the word internal linking r's have become lexically frozen, e.g. in *Æro* ['ɛəro:] (name of an island ending etymologically in -ø [ø:] 'island').

If you want to restrict the term sandhi, e.g. to the exclusion of phonotactic restrictions, I think it is somewhat arbitrary (and question-begging) to define its occurrence by means of the word, especially if the notion word is defined in non-phonological terms.

I would rather say that each language makes use of a small number of different boundaries (from the syllable boundary up to the utterance boundary) that serve to rank rules, i.e. delimit their domain on both sides (Basbøll 1978a). Within such a framework, it will thus be an empirical issue whether some kind of 'word-boundary' is the relevant environment, in a given language, for some process which we consider as a typical case of sandhi on independent grounds. According to my (admittedly very restricted) experience, the boundaries which are relevant for sandhi do not generally equal boundaries between words when these are defined on independent grounds (e.g. morpho-syntactically). In Danish, for example, it seems to be the case that boundaries before suffixes with a full vowel, and between the elements of a compound, are at least as strong as those surrounding words in a stress-group.

And in both Danish and French (cf. Basbøll 1978a with references), there seem to be domains for phonological rules (including sandhi-processes) both smaller and larger than the traditional word, whereas the morpho-syntactically (or lexically/semantically) defined word does not function as such a domain. In other words: the boundaries surrounding a non-phonologically defined word have no special status with respect to sandhi or to phonological rules in general, also cf. Marina Nespor's contribution to this volume. It should be added that the fact that a phonological word can in some cases be characterized as composed of certain classes of morphemes which each may be grammatically defined, is another matter (cf. Basbøll 1978b for examples from French).
References

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1986  'The phonological word in Greek and Italian', (In this volume, 65–74).