

The onset of the prosodic word  
Abstract  
February 2007

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In one of the pioneering works of Optimality Theory (Prince and Smolensky 1993), McCarthy (1993) offers a comprehensive analysis of r-insertion in non-rhotic dialects of English, and suggests that the constraint driving the process is not an onset-related constraint, but rather a constraint requiring prosodic words to end in a consonant ("FINAL-C"). While morphological categories such as roots or stems are sometimes subject to templatic requirements involving an obligatory final consonant, independent evidence for a requirement of this kind on genuine prosodic constituents, such as surface prosodic words, is sparse. This paper shows that, while McCarthy's treatment remains, in its essentials, a model of optimality-theoretic analysis, it is unnecessary to take recourse to FINAL-C once the onset requirements for different levels of the prosodic hierarchy, together with their associated faithfulness properties, are better understood.