

## Title: Phonologically conditioned gender mismatches in French

French features several overt gender mismatches between modifiers and nouns. This is illustrated below for the irregular adjective [bɛl/bo] ‘beautiful’, which suppletes under gender concord. In the context of masculine, consonant-initial nouns like *château* ‘castle’, the adjective is realized as [bo] (a), whereas under feminine consonant-initial forms like *maison* ‘house’, it is realized as [bɛl] (b). The affiliation of [bɛl] to feminine gender, however, does not apply in the context of vowel-initial nouns. In the context of vowel-initial nouns [bɛl] is used with both masculine and feminine nouns, as shown in (c,d) (the orthographic difference does not reflect any contrast the spoken language). The phonological context thus overrules the agreement morphology that applies in the context of consonant-initial nouns.

a.	<i>Le</i> MASC.DEF ‘the beautiful castle’	<b><i>beau</i></b> [bo] beautiful.MASC	<i>château</i> castele.MASC
b.	<i>La</i> FEM.DEF ‘the beautiful house’	<b><i>belle</i></b> [bɛl] beautiful.FEM	<i>maison</i> house.FEM
c.	<i>Le</i> MASC.DEF ‘the beautiful male friend’	<b><i>bel</i></b> [bɛl] beautiful.FEM	<i>ami</i> friend.MSC
d.	<i>La</i> FEM.DEF ‘the beautiful female friend’	<b><i>belle</i></b> [bɛl] beautiful.FEM	<i>amie</i> friend.FEM

Mismatches like the one above can be observed for all irregular adjectives that supplete for gender, as well as possessives, and the locative portmanteau *en/au*. It is the goal of this talk to provide an analysis for these mismatches. My analysis is couched in a realizational framework of morphology (Halle 1990), and, as elaborated in previous colloquium talks, I assume that phonological constraints apply at Vocabulary Insertion (Wolf 2008). To avoid a phonologically ill-formed output, a Vocabulary Item is inserted that does not match the agreement features of the morphosyntactic input. The phonological constraint ONSET rules out vowel-final forms like [bo] in the context of vowel-initial nouns like *ami* because they fail to provide a syllable onset to the noun-initial syllable (\*[bo.̩.mi]). To satisfy provide an onset, the feminine VI [bɛl] is inserted instead, yielding [bɛ.la.mi].

### References

- Halle, Morris. 1990. An approach to morphology. In ja Carter, Philipp B. Dechaine & Toby Sherer (eds.), *Proceedings of the North eastern Linguistics Society annual Meeting*, 150–184. Amherst, MA: GLSA.
- Wolf, Matthew Adam. 2008. *Optimal interleaving: Serial phonology-morphology interaction in a constraint-based model*. Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts PhD dissertation. <https://scholarworks.umass.edu/dissertations/AAI3336987>.