

Exceptional segments in Polish

Jerzy Rubach

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Abstract In a recent paper “Unexceptional Segments” (2012), published in this journal, Gouskova proposes a new analysis of Russian yers, the renowned Slavic vowels that show an alternation with zero. This paper investigates the question of whether Gouskova’s analysis can be extended to Polish yers. Section 1 introduces the basic data. Section 2 analyzes Polish yers in terms of the framework proposed by Gouskova (2012) and argues that the analysis falls short of accounting for the full range of the attested facts. The conclusion is that it is segments rather than morphemes that need to be treated as special or exceptional.

Keywords Phonology · Lexical exceptions · Indexed constraints · Yers · Slavic languages · Polish

1 Basic data

Polish exhibits a pattern of vowel–zero alternations, as in *ošet* ‘thistle’ (nom.sg.) – *ost+u* (gen.sg.), where *e* occurs in the nominative singular but not in the genitive

J. Rubach
University of Iowa, Iowa, USA

J. Rubach (✉)
University of Warsaw, Warsaw, Poland
e-mail: jerzy.rubach@uw.edu.pl