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\noboundary

You can defeat a ligature or kern that TEX applies to the first or last character of a word by putting \noboundary just before or just after the word. Certain fonts intended for languages other than English contain a special boundary character that TEX puts at the beginning and end of each word. The boundary character occupies no space and is invisible when printed. It enables TEX to provide different typographical treatment to characters at the beginning or end of a word, since the boundary character can be part of a sequence of characters to be kerned or replaced by a ligature. (None of the standard TEX fonts contain this boundary character.) The effect of \noboundary is to delete the boundary character if it's there, thus preventing TEX from recognizing the ligature or kern.