The mismatch between syntactic phases and prosodic phrases
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In this talk we compare two current theories about the syntax-phonology interface. One theory proposes that spell-out domains directly define phonological phrases. (For a variety of proposals, see, e.g., Dobashi 2004, 2009, 2010; Ishihara 2007; Kahanmuyipour 2009; Newell 2008; Kratzer & Selkirk 2007; Pak 2008; Selkirk 2009.) Spell-out strips away a phonological string from the syntactic structure and maps it to the phonological component. In the alternative, Edge based mapping theory, prosodic domains are defined based on an algorithm asymmetrically mapping syntactic constituent edges (for example, phase edges) to prosodic constituent edges. (For a variety of proposals, see, e.g., An 2009; Cheng & Downing 2007, 2009; Downing & Mtenje, to appear; Downing, in press; Kandybowicz 2009; Selkirk 1986, 1995; Truckenbrodt 1995, 1999, 2005, 2007.) To compare these two theories, we focus principally on the prosodic phrasing in two phases and two spell-out domains:

a. vP phase → the complement of v, i.e., VP = spell-out domain
b. CP phase → the complement of C, i.e., IP = spell-out domain

Using data from selected Bantu languages – Chichewa, Chimwiini, Kinyambo, Luganda & Zulu – illustrating common prosodic phrasing patterns in simple sentences and in complex sentences – in particular, restricted relative clauses, sentential complements and adjunct clauses – we show that an Edge-based analysis of the phrasing straightforwardly accounts for all the data. Prosodic phrases systematically align with the right edges of XPs (e.g. phases/spell out domains) while ignoring the left edge. This is illustrated in the Chichewa data below. Notice in (a) and (b) that an entire CP, including subject, verb and verbal complements, can be parsed into a single prosodic phrase. In (c), notice that the head of the relative clause phrases with what precedes and follows; the first prosodic phrase break falls at the right edge of the relative clause. That is, prosodic phrases align with right CP edges:

(1) Chichewa (Downing & Mtenje, to appear; Downing, in press; Kanerva 1990: 98)
   a. ( a-na-ményá nyumbá ndí mw-áála)
      s/he-TAM-hit CL9.house with CL3-rock
      ‘S/he hit a house with a rock.’
   b. (ma-kóló a-na-pátsíra mwaná ndalámá zá mú-longo wáake.)
      6-parent 6SUBJ-TAM-give 1.child 10.money 10.of 1-sister 1-her
      ‘The parents gave the child money for her sister.’
   b. (ma-kóló a-na-pátsíra [DP [CP mwaná a-méné á-ná-wa-chezéera]])
      CL6-parent 6SUBJ-PST1-give CL1.child CL1-REL 1SUBJ-PST2-6OBJ-visit
      ( [DP ndalámá zá mú-longo wáake]).
      CL10.money CL10.of CL1-sister CL1.her
      ‘The parents gave [the child who visited them] money for her sister.’

This data is problematic for a spell out domain analysis. First, it incorrectly predicts that verbs and heads of restrictive relative clauses should phrase separately from what follows, as they are in a separate spell out domain. While syntactic analyses, like Dobashi (2004, 2009, 2010) and Pak (2008), have been proposed to get around these problems, we show that these proposals are not convincing, as they do not account for a wide range of available data. A final problem we raise is that, in languages like Chimwiini (Kisseberth 2010), prosodic phrases are generally smaller than the spell out domain, as they right-align with XP edges.

We conclude that the Edge-based approach to mapping phases with prosodic phrases provides the best account of the phrasing: a “syntactically informed” prosodic phrasing.