Lexical lack of accent and dephrasing in Northern Bizkaian Basque
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In Northern Bizkaian Basque (NBB), syntactic phrases composed of unaccented words cannot constitute independent phonological phrases, unlike accented words (Elordieta 1997, 1998, 2007\textsuperscript{a,b}; Jun and Elordieta 1997; Gussenhoven 2004; Selkirk and Elordieta 2010; Elordieta and Hualde 2014). This pattern violates the constraint MATCH\textsc{Phrase}, which maps syntactic maximal projections onto phonological phrases (Selkirk 2011; Elfner 2012, 2015; Elordieta 2015; Bennett et al. 2016). Elordieta and Selkirk (2018) propose an explanation for the prosodic deficiency of unaccented words based on the idea that unaccented words lack a prosodic head, and that words lacking a head cannot be the heads of phonological phrases, either (Selkirk 2007). Absences of heads induce violations of a family of prosodic well-formedness constraints demanding prosodic constituents to be headed: $\pi$:\textsc{Head} ($\omega$:\textsc{Head} and $\varphi$:\textsc{Head} for prosodic words and phonological phrases, respectively). Another constraint family calls for a prosodic constituent head to bear a tone: $\text{HEAD}:T\text{ONE}$ ($\text{HEAD}:T\text{ONE}$ and $\text{HEAD}-\mu(\varphi):T\text{ONE}$ for $\omega$s and $\varphi$s, respectively). Egyptian Arabic, where each $\omega$ bears a tone (Hellmuth 2007), exemplifies the role played by $\text{HEAD}:T\text{ONE}$ when this constraint is highly ranked. The insertion of a pitch accent on the head of a $\varphi$ in English would constitute an example of $\text{HEAD}-\mu(\omega):T\text{ONE}$ at work (Ladd 1998/2006, Truckenbrodt 2006, Féry and Samek-Lodovici 2006, among others).Epenthésizing a tone to satisfy the constraints $\omega$:\textsc{Head}, $\varphi$:\textsc{Head} and $\text{HEAD}-\mu(\varphi):T\text{ONE}$ is not possible in NBB, due to highly ranked DEP-T\textsc{ONE}. The impossibility for syntactic XPs composed of one or more unaccented words to constitute independent $\varphi$s can be explained if the prosodic well-formedness constraints $\varphi$:\textsc{Head} and $\text{HEAD}-\mu(\varphi):T\text{ONE}$ dominate MATCH\textsc{Phrase}. The unaccented words must therefore group in a $\varphi$ that contains an accented word, that is, a $\varphi$ with a headed $\omega$, in order to be parsed in a legitimate $\varphi$.

We have carried out an experiment aiming to document the prosodic behavior of unaccented words in different syntactic configurations but with the same linear sequencing [NB: A=accented word; U=unaccented word; - = boundary between syntactic arguments]: (a) AA-UA; (b) AA-U-A; (c) AAU-A; (d) AAUA. The results show that U-words group with the following A-word systematically, separate from the preceding A-words (i.e., $\varphi$(UA)), even crossing boundaries between syntactic arguments as in (b) and (c). The phrasing $\varphi$(UA) implies many violations of MATCH\textsc{Phrase} in (b) and (c), even more than for (a) and (d), but such phrasing prevails due to the low ranking of MATCH\textsc{Phrase} and the higher ranking of the prosodic well-formedness constraints discussed above.