

Clashes and Lapses: Responses to Edge Prominence  
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Standard metrical theory (Lieberman & Prince 1977) assumes that primary and secondary stresses are assigned after initially drawing a grid, that is, the formal expression of rhythmic structure. Rhythm is characterized by the tendency to even spacing. Consequently, languages that display clashes form a challenge for this approach; consider Gibwa (1), Biangai (2), Gosiute Shoshone (3), and Tauya (4):

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|--|---|
| (1) <i>Gibwa</i><br>(a) σσσðσð<br>(b) σσσðσðð            | (2) <i>Biangai</i><br>(a) ðððσσσ<br>(b) ððððσσσ |
| (3) <i>Gosiute Shoshone</i><br>(a) σðσðσð<br>(b) σðσðσðð | (4) <i>Tauya</i><br>(a) ððσðσσ<br>(b) ððσðσσσ   |

The patterns in (1-2) can be explained by including the notion of a degenerate foot. However, (3-4) cannot be captured in traditional metrical theory, since an *even* number of syllables is grouped into binary feet. In contrast, in a top-down model of stress assignment (e.g. Van der Hulst 1996), there is no initial rhythmic carpet and primary stress is assigned onto lexical items directly. After lexical prominence has been computed, rhythm, as a fully automated process, applies post-lexically.

To account for the data in (1-4), I propose the mechanism of Edge Prominence (EP). Rooted in phonetic reinforcement of edge constituents, this property can permeate the grammar and become a more abstract marking. For instance, Gosiute Shoshone (3) displays initial main stress and a right edge strengthened EP syllable; post-lexically, rhythm docks onto the main stress and a rhythmic carpet unfolds. Crucially, since EP is assigned in the grammar, the EP marked syllable is ‘invisible’ to rhythm and a clash is observed in words with an even number of syllables (5a):

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|--|--|
| (5) (a) even-numbered<br>Acc      EP <i>lexical</i><br>σ σ ð σ ð ð<br>x <sup>→</sup> . x . x x <i>post-lexical</i> | (b) odd-numbered<br>Acc      EP<br>σ σ ð σ ð σ ð<br>x <sup>→</sup> . x . x . x |
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Furthermore, EP accounts for dual systems (e.g. Garawa, Piro). In these systems, characterized by a lapse next to the main accent, EP is determined post-lexically, rather than lexically. The (post-lexical) rhythmic carpet is not only sensitive to the phonetically strengthened syllable, it even proceeds from it, since the EP strengthened syllable is the most readily available structure that can carry rhythm:

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|--|---|
| (6) Acc<br>σ   σ   σ   ð   σ   ð<br>x   .   .   x   .   ←x | <i>lexical</i><br>EP<br><i>post-lexical</i> |
|--|---|

There is ample evidence to posit EP as an independent linguistic mechanism. However, the computation of main accent and EP at the same level of representation predicts an unstable system, which is subject to change; diachronic research will have to show whether this prediction is borne out.