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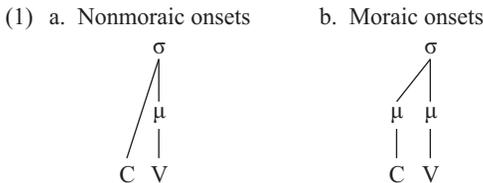
**Onsets:** Suprasegmental and prosodic behaviour. By NINA TOPINTZI. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010. Pp. xiii, 268. ISBN 9780521493352. \$106 (Hb).

Reviewed by T. A. HALL, *Indiana University*

In this book, Topintzi argues—contrary to what is usually assumed in moraic theory—that syllable onsets, like nuclei and codas, can bear weight. Evidence for this claim is drawn from a wide variety of phenomena, in particular, stress, compensatory lengthening, word minimality, and geminates. While the claim that onsets can be weightful itself is not new (e.g. Hajek & Goedemans 2003), *Onsets* is the first comprehensive study on this topic because it unifies a number of very diverse arguments that are not usually treated together.

Ch. 1 provides the reader with the necessary theoretical background, while Chs. 2–5 consider the topics relating to onset weightfulness listed above. Ch. 6 explores several brief case studies, and Ch. 7 discusses various alternative approaches.

T begins Ch. 1 by discussing the literature on syllable weight and the various models that have been proposed to capture it. The first part of the chapter considers stress, compensatory lengthening, word minimality, and geminates, arguing that this type of material can and should be captured with the moraic model (e.g. Hyman 1985, Hayes 1989) as opposed to an approach with skeletal slots (e.g. Clements & Keyser 1983). Although the moraic model is singled out as the most successful theory, that approach is argued to be empirically insufficient because it does not countenance moraic onsets. T holds that the traditional view that onsets are weightless is based on the claim that languages with weightful onsets are rare and that moraic theory should therefore stipulate that onsets are universally weightless (7). In essence, T argues that there are—from the universal perspective—the two types of onsets in 1.



T contends that most languages treat onsets as in 1a, although there are a number of languages with moraic onsets, as in 1b. It is argued at length in later chapters that moraic onsets as in 1b hold not only for word-initial onsets, but also for word-medial onsets. There are two types of moraic onsets discussed in Ch. 1 (and throughout the remaining chapters): distinctive and coerced (cf. Morén 2001). The former refers to phonemic weight distinctions; for example, in a language that contrasts a singleton [C] and a geminate [C:], the latter must be underlying, that is, /C:/. By contrast, coerced weight is weight acquired in the output due to a requirement such as word minimality or weight by position, where an input moraicless /C/ turns into a moraic [C<sub>μ</sub>]. An optimality-theoretic (OT) treatment of the way in which coerced moraic onsets are derived is presented in Ch. 1.

Ch. 2 explores the connection between onsets and stress. T argues that onset-sensitive stress depends on two dimensions: (i) the quality of the onsets (QO), and (ii) the presence of the onset (PO). For QO languages, only certain types of onsets count as heavy, whereas others are light. For example, in Karo (a Tupi language spoken in Brazil) stress treats only onsets with a voiceless sound as moraic but not onsets with voiced sounds. Only the QO dimension is argued to be attributed to weight, while the PO dimension relates to alignment considerations that require stressed syllables to be onsetful, but not moraic. A four-way typology is posited: (i) languages with QO only, (ii) languages with PO only, (iii) languages with both QO and PO, and (iv) languages with neither QO nor PO. A clear example of a language falling into category (i) is Karo, which T analyzes in Ch. 2 in detail. Languages discussed in support of (ii) are Aranda (an Australian language), Banawá (an Arawan language spoken in Brazil), and Dutch, and for (iii) Pirahã (a language isolate spoken in Brazil). Each of these languages displays a pattern of coerced onset weight that is captured with a ranking of OT constraints. T notes that this constraint hierarchy

predicts a pattern in which all onsets are moraic (38). While there are apparently no languages of this sort with respect to stress, word minimality in Bella Coola (a Salishan language spoken in British Columbia, discussed in Ch. 4) is mentioned as a possible candidate.

Ch. 3 investigates the role of onsets in compensatory lengthening (CL). The most common type of CL involves the deletion of a coda consonant and the lengthening of an adjacent vowel—a process that is easy to capture in standard moraic theory (e.g. Hayes 1989): if coda consonants are moraic, then CL involves the preservation of a mora after the deletion of that coda consonant. Since onset consonants in that approach to moraic structure are not moraic, the prediction is that there should not be a CL process in which an onset consonant deletes and an adjacent vowel lengthens. In the present chapter, T presents copious data from Samothraki Greek illustrating precisely that type of process. Thus, in that language, onset /r/ deletes and the following vowel lengthens in words like [rafts] > [á:fts] ‘tailor (masc.)’ and [fréna] > [fé:na] ‘brakes’, but coda /r/ is retained in words like [figár] ‘moon’. That the deletion of /r/ in word-internal onsets does not trigger lengthening (e.g. [luri] > [lui] ‘strap, strip’) is accounted for by appealing to a markedness constraint banning a super-long hiatus sequence (\*V:V). Ch. 3 concludes with a brief case study of Trique (an Oto-Manguean language spoken in Mexico), illustrating that onsets are the target for CL—that is, the lengthening of a vowel triggers the gemination of an onset consonant.

Ch. 4 considers the role of onsets and word minimality, that is, the requirement in certain languages that words must exhibit a minimum size. Many languages have been shown to have a bimoraic word minimum. Standard moraic theory predicts that no language with a bimoraic word minimum will allow for [CV] words along with uncontroversially bimoraic [VV] (and [VC]), while simultaneously ruling out monomoraic [V]. The chapter consists of a detailed treatment of Bella Coola (referred to above) in which it is argued that onsets are moraic, although only in [CV] words. Put differently, Bella Coola onsets are generally speaking not moraic, unless the word is a monosyllable with a short vowel ([CV]). In this respect, Bella Coola is argued to be a case of coerced onset weight because onset moraicity is enforced in order to satisfy a requirement that words be minimally bimoraic. The chapter concludes by considering and rejecting earlier treatments of Bella Coola that do not adopt onset moraicity.

Ch. 5 investigates the role of onset geminates. In contrast to the preceding chapters, the material discussed in Ch. 5 deals with consonants that are underlyingly moraic (and not with coerced moraic onsets), that is, underlying geminates /C:/ (analyzed as /C<sub>u</sub>/). The moraicity of onset /C:/ comes from the same phenomena that illustrate coerced weight, for example, stress, word minimality, and CL. In most versions of moraic theory, (intervocalic) onset geminates (i.e. the /C:/ in /VC:V/) straddle the syllable boundary, thereby displaying the ‘flopped’ structure in 2a. T rejects that type of representation, arguing instead that moraic geminates have the representation in 2b. That structure is argued to be advantageous for languages with word-initial geminates, but it is also claimed to be the correct structure for word-internal geminates, as in /VC:V/.

- (2) a. ‘Flopped’ geminate      b. Geminate as moraic onset



In the course of the chapter, T presents case studies from languages with word-initial geminates (Pattani Malay and Trukese, a Micronesian language spoken on the Truk atoll, south of Guam), arguing that 2b is the correct representation. Word-medial onset geminates are discussed in several additional case studies, for example, Marshallese (a Micronesian language). In that section, T makes it clear that 2b and not 2a is the correct structure.

Ch. 6 considers two types of languages. First, there are languages whose data suggest that onsets are moraic, but where the available evidence is too sparse or controversial to conclude that this is the correct analysis. Second, there are languages with moraic onset-based treatments posited by other linguists, but which T shows are misguided or simply incorrect. Some of the ma-

terial falling into the first group relates to the role of onsets in tone and reduplication—two topics not dealt with in the first five chapters.

Ch. 7 summarizes the book's main themes and considers (and rejects) various alternative approaches to onset-related phenomena, for example, the prominence-based account endorsed by Smith (2005).

In sum, *Onsets* provides an excellent and readable treatment of the role of onsets and syllable weight. I consider the book to be essential reading for phonologists interested in those topics.

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**Applying priming methods to L2 learning, teaching and research: Insights from psycholinguistics.** Ed. by PAVEL TROFIMOVICH and KIM McDONOUGH. (Language learning and language teaching 30.) Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2011. Pp. ix, 254. ISBN 9789027213020. \$54.

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Trofimovich and McDonough, and their collaborators, integrate a body of research furthering our understanding of the psycholinguistic bases of language learning and teaching. Uniquely, priming is the principle experimental methodology used to explore second language (L2) acquisition (e.g. the structure of the L2 lexicon), learners' understanding of L2 (e.g. listening comprehension), and L2 production (e.g. the use of particular L2 syntactic structures). PRIMING refers to the facilitation (and inhibition) of behavioral responses (e.g. response times) to a stimulus (target) as a result of prior experience with another stimulus in some way similar or related to it. In the L2 learning context, priming paradigms can be used to reveal the impact of the structure of L2 learning material on learners' subsequent mastery of (aspects of) L2. We can ascertain the nature of the L2 spoken (phonological) lexicon (using auditory priming), the structure and ease of accessibility of the L2 semantic lexicon (using semantic priming), and the L2 learners' acquisition of L2 syntactic structures (using syntactic (structural) priming).

The research presented articulates why priming methodology can provide valuable insights into L2 comprehension and production in learners at different stages of acquisition, and how the findings are relevant to the teaching of L2 in classroom settings. The book links theory and application in L2 learning and teaching, and is therefore relevant both to readers focused on theory and to those interested in the more applied and pedagogical aspects of L2 learning and teaching. Researchers (graduate students included) will draw inspiration from the application of priming methodology in this arena, while L2 teachers will find this volume an accessible, evidence-based resource for best L2 teaching practice and learning outcomes.