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Variation in prosodic systems - synchronic and diachronic aspects

In this course, we discuss how prosodic systems develop over time, and how cross-dialectal variation can be analyzed from a synchronic and diachronic perspective. Our empirical focus will be on tone accent systems. Throughout the classes, we discuss relevant cases from Franconian, Lithuanian, Scandinavian, and Serbo-Croatian.

The languages have in common that they have binary tone accent oppositions: for instance, in many Franconian dialects, the difference between [bɛin²] ‘leg-sg’ (Accent 2) and [bɛin¹] ‘leg-pl’ (Accent 1) is primarily based on the tonal contour. Yet the accent opposition can also be manifested in other ways, viz. via durational and / or segmental contrasts. Due to this richness of correlates, Franconian is a perfect example to show how word stress, (intonational) tone, and segmental structure can interact with each other; therefore, it can serve as an ideal starting point for the comparison of different accent systems.

As we shall see, interactions such as those in Franconian are highly relevant for current debates on the synchronic and diachronic analysis of tone accent contrasts. The phenomenon bears on some of the most fundamental issues in phonology: the relation between phonological representations and their phonetic realization, as well as the relation between synchrony and diachrony.

Suggested Readings

Day 1

Van der Hulst, H. (2011): Pitch accent systems. In: Van Oostendorp, M., Ewen, C.J., Hume, E., Rice, K. (Eds.), *The Blackwell Companion to Phonology*. Blackwell publishing, Oxford, 1003-1026.

<http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?rep=rep1&type=pdf&doi=10.1.1.204.6012>

Day 2

[Köhnlein, B.: Contrastive foot structure \(ms.\).](#)

Day 3 & 4

Blevins, J. (1993). A tonal analysis of Lithuanian nominal accent. *Language*, 237-273.

Gussenhoven, C. (2004). *The Phonology of Tone and Intonation*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 209-227.

Zec, D. & E. Zsiga (2009). Interaction of tone and stress in Standard Serbian: phonological and phonetic evidence. In: Browne, Cooper, Fisher, Kesici, Predolac and Zec (Eds.), *Formal Approaches to Slavic Languages 18*. Michigan Slavic Publications. 2009.

Day 5

Köhnlein, B.: Optimizing the relation between tone and prominence: Evidence from Franconian, Scandinavian, and Serbo-Croatian tone accent systems. *Lingua*, 131, 1-28.