intonation affects subsequent choices for coreference. Using a story continuation experiment with aurally presented stimuli, we show that the location of contrastive focus in Mainstream American English significantly affects the preferred referent for the subject of the next sentence in a short discourse.

ORAL SESSION 4

4.1: Prosody of Questions

Tuesday, August 11, 2015, 11:30-12:30, Dochart 1
Chair: Haruo Kabozono

Session 4.1, Paper 1 (11:30-11:45)
Intonation and the pragmatics of yes-no questions in Central Catalan
Borràs-Comes, Joan and Prieto, Pilar
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The main aim of this paper is to test the claim that intonation plays an important role in the specification of dynamic epistemic commitments, i.e., speaker commitments to the speaker’s own proposition and to the addressee’s propositions. In an acceptability judgment task, 119 Central Catalan listeners were asked to rate the perceived degree of acceptability between a set of interrogative utterances [variously produced with one of four intonational contours] and their immediate discourse context (which was controlled for epistemic bias). We found that participants preferred some question intonation contours over others in specific epistemic contexts. That is, results show that question intonation encodes fine-grained information about the epistemic stance of the speaker; not only in relation to the speaker’s own propositions but also in relation to the addressee’s propositions.

Session 4.1, Paper 2 (11:45-12:00)
Question intonation in Hong Kong English: Interaction between Cantonese and English
Chen, Shuwen and Mok, Peggy Pik Ki
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Different sentence types are cued by various intonation patterns in English. Statements are uttered with a falling pitch while questions are cued by a raising pitch over the whole utterance. The intonation of questions in Cantonese, however, is signalled by a rising pitch at the second half of the last syllable. The current study investigates the intonation of statements and questions in Hong Kong English (HKE) to examine potential interaction of the two donor languages in HKE. Nineteen HKE speakers were recorded reading English and Cantonese sentences of different sentence types. Results showed that the intonation patterns of questions in HKE have mixed characteristics. They were cued by a final rising like Cantonese, but the rising was earlier than that in Cantonese, which may be affected by English.

Session 4.1, Paper 3 (12:00-12:15)
Acoustic correlates of Persian in-situ-wh-questions
Shiamizadeh, Zohreh; Caspers, Johanneke and Schiller, Niels O.
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This experiment was designed to investigate whether the acoustic correlates of prosody of the pre-wh-part of the sentence differentiate in-situ-wh-questions from declaratives in Persian. To accomplish the purpose of this research 115 declaratives and 115 in-situ-wh-questions were constructed. These sentences were elicited from eight Persian native speakers in a sentence elicitation task. The contrast between the prosody of the pre-wh-part of the sentence in declaratives and in-situ-wh-questions appears to have clear acoustic correlates, which can be captured in terms of a higher pitch level and shorter duration of the pre-wh-part of wh-questions and a larger pitch excursion size of the word immediately preceding the wh-word. This finding provides evidence for the claim [14] that questions universally differ from statements in that the former have some element of high pitch that is absent in the latter. In addition, the result implies that the in-situ-wh-questions can potentially be distinguished from declaratives based on the prosody of the pre-wh-part of the sentence.

Session 4.1, Paper 4 (12:15-12:30)
On the acoustics of wh-exclamatives and wh-interrogatives: Effects of information structure and sex of speaker
Repp, Sophie
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In German, wh-questions and verb-second wh-exclamatives are string-identical and can only be distinguished by intonation. This study presents data from a production experiment where speakers produced contextualized questions and exclamatives, showing that the two sentence types differ in many acoustic measures throughout the clause. The results also indicate that the realization of both sentence types is context-dependent in terms of information structure: focus is marked both in wh-questions and wh-exclamatives. Finally, the study shows that female speakers mark the difference between exclamativity and interrogativity more strongly than male speakers do.

4.2: Vowel Production

Tuesday, August 11, 2015, 11:30-12:30, Alsh
Chair: Juraj Šimko

Session 4.2, Paper 1 (11:30-11:45)
Articulation of English vowels in running speech: A real-time MRI study
Proctor, Michael; Chi Yhun, Lo and Shrikanth, Narayanan
michael.proctor@mgh.edu.au

16,105 vowels produced by three speakers of American English were examined using real-time MRI, to provide further insights into tongue shaping and articulatory contrast in stressed and unstressed positions in fluent speech.