Wednesday 2pm - 4pm: Special Session - Slavic Prosody

2pm - 3pm: Invited papers

Štefan Beňuš
_Slovak prosody in the phonetics-phonology debate: Yers and emergent prosodic breaks._

Prosody is central for understanding the cognitive system underlying human speech and relates to both more granular aspects of our phonological competence as well as more continuous aspects of observable articulatory movements and resulting acoustic characteristics. The understanding, and formal treatment, of the relationship between these two inter-related components of human speech is at the core of the cognitive approach to speech. In this presentation I contribute to this discussion by drawing links between two seemingly unrelated lines of my research on Slovak, and argue that understanding the continuous prosodic nature of speech is critical for improving our understanding of cognitive competence underlying it. The first aspect concerns yer vowels as the proto-typical problem of Slavic phonology, the second involves the nature of prosodic boundaries.

Tamara Rathcke
_Time and timing in intonational phonology: analysing pitch categories in Russian (and other Slavonic languages)._  

Many Slavonic languages are still lacking a comprehensive description of their intonational phonologies. Given that decisions regarding the number of relevant categories and their types are the key issues of any phonological analysis, this presentation will concentrate on how time and timing can inform intonational phonology. Evidence from Russian (and also Bulgarian, Czech and Polish) will demonstrate that time pressures arising from intermittent voicing and an upcoming phrase boundary have different effects on
Slavonic vs. Germanic languages. Potential implications of these findings for prosodic typology will be discussed.

Jaye Padgett

*On the origins of the prosodic word in Russian.*

The Prosodic Word is a foundational notion in phonological theories, being relevant for the statement of many phonological generalizations. In spite of their importance, there are basic open questions about prosodic words. Where do they come from? Can their structure in one language vs. another be predicted? In this paper I suggest a research program that attempts to address such questions by viewing prosodic words as emergent over time from the interaction of phonetics, phonologization, and syntactic structure.

3pm - 3:40pm: Submitted papers

Bistra Andreeva, Jacques Koreman, William Barry

*Local and global acoustic correlates of information structure in Bulgarian.*

In this study the prosodic exponents of information structure are examined in the production of six Bulgarian sentences under different focus conditions (broad focus and non-contrastive and contrastive narrow focus). Results show that speakers consistently discriminate broad and narrow focus by both local and global acoustic cues. Local cues are the phonetic properties of the accented syllables, while global cues reflect broader phonetic patterns in the intervals before and after the accented syllable, which vary independently of the tonal accent. Contrastive and non-contrastive accents are differentiated exclusively by local cues, but only when the focus is early in the sentence.

Agnieszka Wagner

*Description of Polish speech rhythm using rhythm metrics and time-delay approach: A comparative study.*

The goal of this study is to provide a multidimensional description of rhythmic structure of Polish utterances. For this purpose a time-delay approach proposed in [1] is applied and results of qualitative and quantitative analyses based on time-delay plots are compared with results obtained with selected rhythm metrics. The study shows that description that relies on a combination of rhythmic scores is inconclusive and difficult to interpret, because it does not account for rhythmic structuring nor grouping. The time-delay approach, on the contrary, appears to be very efficient in exploring short-time and long-term timing variability that determines Polish speech rhythm.

3:40pm - 4:00: Panel discussion