

The phonetics and phonology of intonation in the light of cross-linguistic evidence

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In recent years, research on intonation has seen a revival but also a new conflation of phonetics and phonology and the wide adoption of atheoretical terms, such as *prominence*, which rely entirely on a phonetic understanding of speech without recourse to phonological structure. In this talk, I will review cross-linguistic findings on the phonetics, phonology, and pragmatics of intonation, focusing on recent research of mine on the phonetics and pragmatics of tunes used with Greek *wh*-questions. These findings support the view that a principled separation of phonetics and phonology is essential for understanding intonation and disentangling gradient from categorical aspects of realization. Further, they demonstrate how the study of intonational pragmatics can shed light onto the phonological structure of intonation, thereby providing evidence for the need to consider the two in tandem.

These findings will be discussed in light of recent research which appears to cast doubt on some basic tenets of the Autosegmental-Metrical theory of intonational phonology, such as the principles of tune-text association. I argue that this research does not question these principles to the extent it has been argued; rather, it highlights the need for extensive cross-linguistic research, and the development of a credible typology leading to plausible predictions about what is possible in intonation. Moving away from models designed primarily for English (or any one language for that matter), and acknowledging the diverse ways in which intonation, and prosody more generally, is organized, much as we acknowledge that some segmental phenomena and associated formalisms do not apply to all languages, is essential for progress in the study of intonation.