

Reading notes and questions: Hyman 2011, p. 197–211 (due 02/05)

An unstarred note is just a note, not a question for you.

* indicates a question to help you understand the paper.

** indicates a question that is more open-ended to get you thinking.

- (1) Notation: á: high tone, à: low tone, ǎ: rising (low-high) tone, â: falling (high-low) tone; H = high, L = low (not heavy vs. light!). In examples, [j] is written as “y”.
- (2) **p. 197** What is NON-LINEAR PHONOLOGY? [McCarthy \(1982\)](#) states:

The claim in SPE ... is that an utterance and the representations underlying that utterance are made up of a matrix of distinctive features, with each column corresponding to a single segment. Segments, then, are bundles of unordered features, and utterances are strictly ordered lists of segments. All properties of an utterance, including such obviously prosodic ones as tone, stress, and syllabification, must inhere in its segments, mediated by the distinctive features and rules for interpreting them phonetically. With the addition of a simple theory of boundaries or junctures, this essentially exhausts the SPE conception of phonological representation. The only major comment on representational issues to be found in subsequent discussion of SPE is the abstractness question, an issue involving the whole grammar as much as this area alone.

The SPE model remains the most comprehensive theory of phonology devised to date. One can, however, identify the development of a significant alternative in what might be called nonlinear phonology. The common element of the diverse trends falling under this single term is a rejection of the SPE model of phonological representation I have just outlined. Properly speaking, the features still have a place, but the segments do not. Utterances are made up of several kinds of simultaneous levels, with each level related to but ordered independently of (whence the designation nonlinear) any other level. In no level can segments of the SPE sort be identified. Methodologically, the focus on phonological structure in nonlinear phonology has reduced the attention paid to and the formal role of phonological rules and their interaction.

- (3) **p. 197** We'll get to HARMONY, FEATURE GEOMETRY and INTONATION later in the course.
- (4) **p. 197** The OBLIGATORY CONTOUR PRINCIPLE (OCP) is mentioned later in the article (p. 209-210). It “prohibits sequences of identical tonal features within the same morpheme”. (It was later generalized to features in general).
- (5) ****p. 198** At the end of item (ii): “Some of this work has shown that focus is not necessarily prosodically marked in certain languages with tone (Downing 2007).” Why might you expect focus not to be marked using pitch in a tone language?
- (6) **p. 199** A TBU (tone bearing unit) is the unit to which tones associate, typically the syllable or the mora.
- (7) ****p. 199** With the definition of a tone language in (2) in mind, consider English. In English, a rise-fall-rise pitch contour has been proposed to indicate contrastive topic ([Jackendoff, 1972](#); [Büring, 2003](#); [Constant, 2014](#)), i.e. this contour can be described as the contrastive topic morpheme. Is English a tone language?
- (8) **p. 199** Somali noun roots in (3): although it's not apparent from the example words here, the tonal contrast between masculine and feminine in Somali marks not just a biological gender contrast but a grammatical gender contrast.
- (9) ****p. 202** Isolation is often a context (or “frame”) for neutralization of contrast, e.g. final devoicing in German. In reviewing and revising hypotheses about tone “piles”, it's important to run the words through various “frames”, e.g. isolation, utterance-initial, utterance-final, etc. The pitch contour of every word in a pile should have the same shape (and level) within a particular frame, but may change from frame to frame. More abstractly, a “frame” might be considered to be a combination of factor levels in an experimental design, e.g. in a 2×2 design of PROSODIC POSITION (utterance-final, utterance-medial) × PRAGMATIC CONTEXT (out-of-blue-focus, contrastive focus), one of the four frames would put the elicited word in utterance-final position, under out-of-blue-focus (see [Yu \(2014\)](#) for more on experimental design in fieldwork). This frame idea is a legacy of [Pike \(1948\)](#), a seminal work on tone. Can you think of some other kinds of factors that you might use in designing different frames, i.e. besides prosodic position or focus conditions?
- (10) **p. 203 (14)**: It's typical for Bantu languages (and other Niger-Congo tone languages) to have different classes of nouns and verbs. Each class has a characteristic tonal pattern.

- (11) ****p. 204** (15): Do you agree with Hyman that the associative tone should be considered a genitive case morpheme? Why or why not? What kind of range is there in the spellout of genitive case in natural language, e.g. can you think of examples where genitive case is spelled-out as [+rounding], etc.?
- (12) ****p. 207** Why might it be reasonable for an underlying /LH/ to be realized as mid level?
- (13) ***p. 208** Suppose that there were a Mende noun mbàkèlu[^] (i.e. there's a rise-fall tone (^) over the last syllable, sorry about the non-standard notation) and a bisyllabic suffix *-lelu* that behaved like *=hu* and *=ma* in that it takes its tone according to the tone of the preceding noun. What might happen to the tones on mbakelu-lelu?
- (14) **p. 209–211** (22, 23, 26) The diagrams here are typical for depicting phonological processes in autosegmental theory. If they seem cryptic to you at the moment, don't worry. We'll go over these as we get more into autosegmental theory.
- (15) ***p. 211** (25) Suppose there were a noun /kutu/ 'unicorn'. What tones would you expect on 'uncle's unicorn'?

Bibliography

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