

The effect of pitch accent type on stress processing: Towards unravelling the underlying mechanisms

Katharina Zahner (University of Konstanz, Department of Linguistics)

In intonation languages, such as English, German or Dutch, pitch accents are associated with stressed syllables (Ladd, 2008). Across pitch accent types, the concrete alignment of f0 peaks (and valleys) with the stressed syllable differs, rendering f0 an ambiguous cue to word stress. In this talk, I will present results from both offline stress judgement tasks and online word recognition, which show that the position of the f0 peak in different pitch accent types guides the perception of lexical stress and lexical activation (Zahner, Kutscheid, & Braun, in press). The second part of the talk will discuss two (potential) mechanisms that can explain why utterance-level intonation affects stress identification and lexical processing: a) the salience of high f0 (Hsu, Evans, & Lee, 2015) and b) the frequent co-occurrence of high f0 and the stressed syllable (in H*-accents, Peters, Kohler, & Wesener, 2005). Based on recent data from exposure-test paradigms, I will argue that the occurrence frequency of different pitch accent types modulates the reliance on f0 as a stress cue.

Hsu, C.-H., Evans, J. P., & Lee, C.-Y. (2015). Brain responses to spoken f0 changes: Is H special? *JPhon*, 51, 82-92.

Ladd, D. R. (2008). *Intonational phonology* (2nd ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press.

Peters, B., Kohler, K., & Wesener, T. (2005). Melodische Satzakkentmuster in prosodischen Phrasen deutscher Spontansprache - Statistische Verteilung und sprachliche Funktion. In K. Kohler, F. Kleber & B. Peters (Eds.), *Prosodic structures in German spontaneous speech (AIPUK 35a)* (pp. 185-201). Kiel: IPDS.

Zahner, K., Kutscheid, S., & Braun, B. (in press). Alignment of f0 peak in different pitch accent types affects perception of metrical prominence. *JPhon*.