

Prosody

Prof Janet Fletcher, The University of Melbourne
Dr Debbie Loakes, The University of Melbourne
Dr Rosey Billington, The University of Melbourne

Overview

Prosody is a fundamental feature of spoken language, yet aspects of speech prosody are often under-investigated in linguistic description, and can present specific kinds of analytical challenges. Our models of prosodic typology, for example, are still based on well-resourced languages for the most part, although this situation is rapidly changing. In this short course we will cover basic elements of speech prosody and explore current theoretical models of prosodic representation, including autosegmental-metrical approaches to intonation, and offer practical suggestions for getting started with prosodic analyses. Topics will include:

- Definitions of prosody.
- Components of prosody (stress, tone, rhythm, phrasing) and their phonological representation.
- Phonetic expression of components of prosody and how they relate to and interact with one another.
- Linguistic and paralinguistic functions of prosodic elements.
- Ways of incorporating prosodic data collection in language documentation projects, and approaches to using existing corpora for analyses of prosodic patterns.
- Modelling prosody and intonation in under-described languages, and procedures for establishing and refining intonation analyses of less well-resourced languages.

Assumed knowledge

It is assumed that participants will have a basic knowledge of undergraduate linguistics including introductory phonetics and phonology, but no prior experience in advanced / experimental phonetics or intonational phonology. We will also not assume that participants have prior advanced experience with Praat or other acoustic phonetic techniques, although participants are advised to bring their laptops and to install Praat (www.praat.org) prior to the course.

Background knowledge and preparation

A number of recommended papers will be made available prior to the course.

Course

The course sequence will provide theoretical background and an overview of the following four broad topics. Where possible, practical analytical tasks will be incorporated in each session.

- Basic introduction to the study of prosody
- Lexical Prosody I – stress
- Lexical Prosody II – tone
- Intonation, including approaches to analysing the intonation of a “new” language or variety

If you have any questions, please contact coedl@anu.edu.au

OR feel free to contact Janet Fletcher with any questions j.fletcher@unimelb.edu.au