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UNIVERSIDAD DEL SALVADOR
Facultad de Filosofía y Letras
Doctorado en Lenguas Modernas

THE GOVERNANCE OF BRITISH ENGLISH PROSODY BY PHORICITY-BASED CRITERIA

LA REGENCIA DE CRITERIOS DE FORICIDAD EN LA PROSODIA DEL INGLÉS BRITÁNICO

DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

(IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF 'DOCTOR EN LENGUAS MODERNAS')

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October 2011

This study is kindly dedicated to all my students, who, for more than four decades, have sown the field of my profession, which has in turn granted me the necessary experience and encouragement to harvest this work.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Universidad del Salvador in general, and to the unbounded Christian generosity of Dr. Héctor Valencia in particular, for having made it possible for me, and indeed given encouragement, to systematise what has been part and parcel of my approach to the teaching of intonation at the universities and schools of education where I have worked for over four decades.

Also, I would like to mention my heart-felt indebtedness to the academic freedom –nowadays a perhaps endangered characteristic in the field of education– that has been granted me by the various educational institutions that have borne witness to my career as a phonetics and English language teacher. Among department heads and university deans past and present, I would like to mention the names of such eminent figures as the late Prof. Rebeca Schiffrin, Prof. Zulima Molina, Dr. Héctor Valencia, Prof. Susan Walsh, Prof. Sheila Walsh, Prof Cristina de Ortúzar, Prof. Mónica Voglino and so many other distinguished professors who made a point of allowing their faculty to develop professionally and personally along managerial lines of action that no doubt prioritised and secured full academic freedom.

The above list of names would be unjustly incomplete if I were to forget the academic weight of Prof Alfredo Zinkgräf and the late Prof. Jorge Lewis, who inducted me into the world of English intonation and its teaching, as well as into its research.

I would like to thank all my relatives, friends and colleagues without whose help and support this dissertation would have been scarcely more than an ambitious handwritten draft: Prof. Nora Ruiz Diaz, Prof. Emma Ramos, Prof. Francisco Zabala, Prof. Juan Carlos David, María Victoria Brió, Andrés Pérez, and Alfredo Álvarez.

Lastly, I wish to voice my indebtedness to my dear friend and colleague, Prof. Juan Ferretti, a specialist in academic writing and discourse analysis, whose invaluable advice was of paramount importance in the writing of this dissertation.

ABSTRACT

It can be safely contended that the descriptions of the intonation of languages or dialects have always constituted formidable tasks, as intonation is one of the most universal and, at the same time, one of the most specific features of human language. In spite of this universality, the characteristics that make up the intonation system of a speaker are dependent on his/her language, dialect, style, mood and even attitude. Numberless attempts have been made to explain what different intonation patterns convey in terms of meaning, yet these have lacked precision and have frequently been inadequate, as the major theoretical weaknesses are due to the unquantifiable nature of the implicatory meaning of intonation. This is not the case when purely acoustic and auditory features are concerned, since these can be accurately gauged, nowadays mostly through state-of-the-art technical devices. The present investigation purports to address the implicatory function of English intonation as intimately entwined with, and even dependent on, the macro-textual environment in which it occurs. The proposed relationship between prosody and text is one what will be strictly anchored in the concept of 'phoricity'. It is this central function that can be held accountable for most, if not all, instances of the use of a given intonation pattern in contemporary British English, in its RP ('Received Pronunciation') accent. This study therefore aims to explore the extent to which the prosodic features of the English language in its RP variety are governed by the referential phenomenon of phoricity. The views postulated and the texts analysed strongly seem to corroborate the centrality of the above function, that is, the relationship between what is "carried over" from, into, and beyond the utterance and its actual occurrence in a temporal and discoursal dimensions. Even though the model presented bears no pretence to postulating a minimalist analysis of British English intonation, or to any universal validity, it may be affirmed that it can provide a simple yet thorough explanation for most intonation patterns. It may also be asserted that its pedagogical use in the realm of higher education may yield positive results. It is felt, however, that much further research is needed, especially in the domain of dialectal varieties of English, as well as in the possible exploration of the intonation of other languages based on their phorico-linguistic properties. Among the other areas in which the principles underlying the present study may be examined in greater depth, its practical classroom use within the field of teacher education is felt to require permanent assessment, as therein lies the ultimate goal of the vision offered in this dissertation.

RESUMEN

Se puede afirmar con seguridad que las descripciones de las entonaciones de las lenguas y los dialectos han sido siempre tareas formidables, ya que la entonación es una de las características del lenguaje humano más universales, y a su vez específicas. A pesar de esta universalidad, los elementos que forman el sistema de entonación de un hablante dependen de su lengua, su dialecto, su estilo, sus estados de ánimo y hasta de su actitud. Se han hecho múltiples intentos para explicar lo manifestado por los patrones de entonación en términos de significado. Sin embargo, estos han adolecido de precisión y han sido, en general, insuficientes, dado que las mayores flaquezas teóricas se deben a la naturaleza incuantificable del significado implicativo de la entonación. Esto no se da cuando está en juego lo puramente acústico o auditivo, pues ello se puede medir con exactitud, en especial con los dispositivos técnicos de última generación. La presente investigación intentará abordar la función implicativa de la entonación inglesa como elemento íntimamente ligado al ámbito macro-textual en el que se manifiesta, e incluso dependiente de él. La relación que se propone entre prosodia y texto tendrá un estricto anclaje en el concepto de 'foricidad'. A esta función central se la considerará responsable de la mayoría de las instancias del uso de una estructura de entonación dada, si no de todas, en el inglés británico contemporáneo, en su versión RP ("Received Pronunciation"[1]). Este estudio, por consiguiente, se propone explorar en qué grado los elementos prosódicos del idioma inglés en su versión RP son gobernados por el fenómeno referencial de la foricidad. Las posturas presentadas y los textos analizados parecen corroborar la centralidad de la función mencionada, o sea, la relación entre lo que se "transporta" desde, hacia, y más allá de la articulación y de su manifestación real en sus dimensiones temporal y discursiva. Si bien el modelo presentado no pretende postular un análisis minimalista de la entonación del inglés británico, se puede afirmar que brinda una explicación simple, aunque completa, de la mayor parte de los patrones de entonación. Se puede también aseverar que su uso pedagógico puede arrojar resultados positivos. Se percibe, sin embargo, que se requiere una investigación más exhaustiva, especialmente en el área de las variedades dialectales del inglés, así como en el estudio de la entonación de otras lenguas basado en sus propiedades fórico-lingüísticas. Entre las otras áreas en las que se pueden examinar los principios subyacentes al presente estudio, se percibe que es su uso práctico en el aula, en al marco de la formación docente, el que debería requerir una permanente evaluación, ya que allí se halla el objetivo último de la visión que se ofrece en esta tesis.
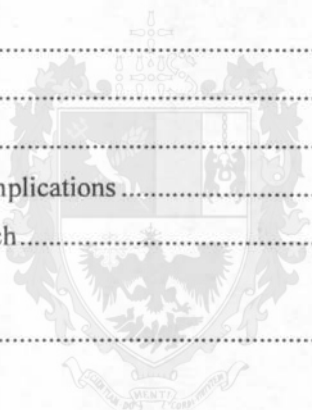
PALABRAS CLAVE: *entonación, anáfora, catáfora, neófora, exófora, inglés británico.*

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[1] Nota de traducción: "Received Pronunciation" significa literalmente "pronunciación recibida". El término refiere, en general, a la norma culta británica en lo que concierne al aspecto fonético.

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FOREWORD

My claims and terminology

I am infinitely indebted to several twentieth-century intonationists, mainly to Wiktor Jassem, Roger Kingdon, David Brazil, J. D. O'Connor, G. E. Arnold, David Cruttenden, J. C. Wells and Carlos Gussenhoven. I have made and still make constant use of the ideas and concepts put forward by these academics. However, in this work, I lay claim to having been the first ever to have initiated and developed the concepts of *neophoricity*, *anaphoricity* and *cataphoricity* with strict reference to prosodic features.

I use the term *anaphora* not only as an equivalent of Jassem's *evocative tone* and of Brazil's *referring tone*. *Anaphora*, as I understand it, can be reflected not only by non-falling tones, but also by key[2], post-nuclearity, de-accenting and de-stressing. Indeed, words or sequences of words in discourse will be considered 'anaphoric' in this work even when they are not spoken on a 'rising' tone. By saying this, I make it absolutely clear that *anaphora* is no mere substitute for Brazil's *referring tone*. Likewise, I grant that the 'level' nuclear tone is always cataphoric, but it is by no means the only way of expressing *cataphora*. In reality, *cataphora* can be conveyed also by the rise and the 'fall-rise' although these two tones are not exclusively cataphoric.

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[2] Brazil (1985) allows for high, mid and low key and, for him, 'key' is the pitch height of the onset. Again, for the above author, 'termination' is the pitch height of the nucleus. In this study, 'key' is used to name the pitch height of both the onset and the nucleus. In other words, there will be two instances of 'key' in the present study, namely, one at onset level and another at nucleus level.

I also claim to be the first to assert that *high heads*, which are made up either of one or several high-level non-nuclear tones, are also cataphoric, in the sense that they point forwards to the nucleus, which will resolve this obliqueness (*Oblique* is a term first used by Brazil, 1985).

The concept of *neophoricity* is very much my own, as it was coined by my colleague Prof. Juan Ferretti at my instance and for the purpose of this study. Although *neophoricity* is closely linked with tonicity, tonicity is by no means the only element contributing to the former concept.

The phrase 'foregone conclusion' in so many words, applied to low key, is also my own harvest. The confirmation / refutation dichotomy, thus worded, as applied to likely responses to yes / no questions, was also first heard from me in my lectures as most of the other ideas that I claim as my own. Besides, the point should be made that, in this exploration, such words as 'premise' and 'foregone' [3]. Carry an inherently anaphoric meaning, as does 'connotation'.

My tonetic notation

For the purpose of the present dissertation, I have taken leave to use the following tonetic marks. They are basically Kingdon's (1958) tonetic stress-marks, kindly and masterfully digitised for this survey by Prof. Emma Ramos.

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[3] It should be important to bear in mind that the Anglo-Saxon prefix *fore-* is the equivalent of the Latin *pre-* (*The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, 1993).

I myself and many of my colleagues cater for three keys and 'terminations' (Brazil, 1985), and represent them as *above* the line of print for 'high', *on* the line of print for 'mid', and *below* the line of print for 'low'. I do likewise when dealing with heads, so that I cater for a 'high' head, a 'mid' head, and a 'low' head.

Mark	Tone	Position
ˈ	HIGH ONSET / HIGH HEAD	Above the line of print
ˈ	MID ONSET / MID HEAD	On the line of print
ˈ	LOW ONSET / LOW HEAD	Below the line of print
>	HIGH LEVEL NUCLEAR TONE	Above the line of print
>	M ID LEVEL NUCLEAR TONE[4]	On the line of print
>	LOW LEVEL NUCLEAR TONE	Below the line of print
\	HIGH FALL	Above the line of print
\	MID FALL	On the line of print
\	LOW FALL	Below the line of print
/	HIGH RISE	Above the line of print

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[4] Indeed, in this dissertation, the symbol for the level nuclear tone has been taken from O'Connor and Arnold's (1973) notation.

∕	MID RISE	On the line of print
∕	LOW RISE	Below the line of print
˅	HIGH FALL-RISE	Above the line of print
˅	MID FALL-RISE	On the line of print
˅	LOW FALL-RISE	Below the line of print
˄	HIGH RISE-FALL	Above the line of print
˄	MID RISE-FALL	On the line of print
˄	LOW RISE-FALL	Below the line of print
⁻	HIGH PREHEAD[5] (non-stressed)	Above the line of print
⁰	HIGH RHYTHMICAL STRESS (unaccented)	Above the line of print
₀	MID RHYTHMICAL STRESS (unaccented)	On the line of print
₀	LOW RHYTHMICAL STRESS (unaccented)	Below the line of print
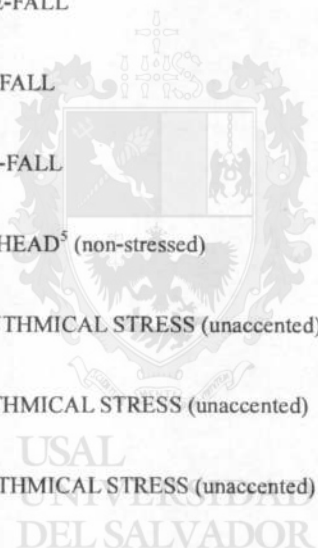
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[5] For the purpose of this study, allowance will only be made for a low prehead, which is "unmarked", and a high prehead, which is marked by means of a horizontal raised dash before the utterance (see Kingdon, 1958).

1.- INTRODUCTION

1.1.- The research area

It is an undeniable fact that English is the official language of several
countries and is normally spoken as a first language by almost 500 million
people, according to reliable updated sources. Of the numberless varieties
of English that are spoken all over the world, there are two which have a
special status, given that they are regarded as the most prominent dialects
chosen for ELT (English language teaching), especially in the sub-realm
of TEFL (the teaching of English as a foreign language). These standards
are known as Standard American English and Standard British English. As
regards the latter, one particular accent, usually referred to as *Received
Pronunciation* (RP) (Gimson, 1980), has been associated with those
people educated in British public schools, and has been for years
established as a standard variety for foreign learners. However, it has been
suggested that the part of the English-speaking population who speak RP
is extremely small, and several authors have proposed that the RP of today
be extended to encompass all educated users of Southern British English

(Brown, Currie and Kenworthy, 1980). It is the intonation system of this variety that will be examined in the present dissertation, as it may be safely assumed that this intonation model is common to a very large section of the educated population (particularly of the South) of Britain, extending far beyond the domains of "pure" RP. Thus, and for the purpose of the present study, this system is to be referred to as 'British English Intonation'.

1.2.- Defining intonation

Defining intonation has always been a controversial task. Ladd (1996) has viewed it as "[t]he use of suprasegmental phonetic features (pitch) to convey postlexical or sentence-level pragmatic meanings in a linguistically structured way" (p. 6). On a similar note, Cruttenden (1997) has directly associated it with pitch movement. Gussenhower (2004) has also related it to pitch variation. In the author's own words:

> Languages use pitch variation contrastively for the expression of
> discoursal meaning and for marking phrases. One of the important
> points developed in Ladd (1996) is that intonation is structural, just
> as lexical tone is structural, or morphological paradigms are. In

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principle, an intonation contour has two structures: a morphological
one, which identifies the morphemes and thus gives the meaning of
the contour; and a phonological one, which gives its tones. (p. 22)

Coulthard (1977), on the other hand, has related it to prosody, thus
including pitch movements, as well as loudness, length, speed, voice
quality. Interestingly, *pitch* seems to be the common denominator in most
descriptions of intonation. Cruttenden (1997) has stated that pitch is the
"perceptual correlate of fundamental frequency" (p. 1): this basically
means the continuous variation in the height of the sounds that the hearer
perceives as the vocal cords vibrate. Intonation can therefore be explained
in terms of pitch movement, which can be classified through the
attachment of such labels as 'high' or 'low', and of tones (e.g. 'falling' /
'rising'), and so on (Ranalli, 2002).

Gussenhoven (2004: 1) states that:

Pitch is the auditory sensation of tonal height. We have this
sensation when listening to the difference between [s] and [ʃ], for
instance, but in speech, it is most precise when it reflects the
periodicity in the acoustic signal. Periodicity amounts to repetitions
of the same pattern of vibration, each such repetition being a *period*
and corresponds to a closing-and-opening action of the vibrating