R E V I E W

of a thesis pursuing a Ph D degree in the domain of 2.1. Philology, Ph D Programme "Germanic Languages" (Phonetics and Phonology of the English Language)

Submitted by Vladimir Filipov Valov

Topic of the Ph D Thesis: SOME ASPECTS OF INTONATIONAL PHONOLOGY

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Vladimir Filipov Valov's Ph D thesis, written in English, is located in an interdisciplinary topical domain embracing issues related to aspects of intonational typology. Bearing in mind the increasing interest in contemporary linguistics in the processes and mechanisms of applying the principles of intonational typology to different languages and in view of establishing the evolutionary achievements in contemporary research, recently the above-mentioned interdisciplinary area in linguistics has been becoming ever more problematic in its priorities and is gaining theoretical relevance.

The doctorand tackles the topic pursuing the ultimate goal to reveal scientifically the role of intonation from a purely linguistic point of view and for the first time includes not only evidence from the synchronic plane but also from that of diachrony. In that respect the dissertation thesis illustrates how the mechanisms of content typology can be implemented in contrasting the functioning of intonation as a case marker in the different languages subjected to analysis.

The main thesis of the dissertation is that intonation, relying on the "hidden memory of language" (from Nikolaeva's point of view), manifests purely grammatical categories of the most basic type, the latter realizing deep semantic casual relations. In that way (and in agreement with Bolinger) the casual aspect shows that intonation functions under the conditions of a two-case system language.

Basing himself on his own assumption that intonational research is "a financial luxury for any impoverished Eastern European country", the doctorand posits right at the beginning that the present work will focus on issues which do not require experimental work with equipment that is not available in this country: thus, the analysis can be based solely on deep panoramic research of a wide gamut of language phenomena, the latter, in the doctorand's opinion,

"having escaped the attention of the ever more closely specializing phoneticians and phonologists in their respective sphere of research". Such a pessimistic viewpoint held by the author is made up for by the fact that, irrespective of its marginal position on the borderline between phonetics, syntax, with discourse analysis recently added, and also carrying the burden of semantics, intonation is still "one of the most important aspects of voice dynamics" (as rightly pointed out by Sapir). Recently synchronic intonational research has been gaining in precision with the advent of electronics, computerization, statistics and the techniques of psychology. Thus, a complex interdisciplinary domain is gradually established which, unfortunately, does not pay adequate attention to the achievements of philology, remains indifferent to anthropology, and is minimally interested in cultural studies. This is why one of the objectives of the present work is to illustrate the advantages of including the latter disciplines in intonational research.

The doctorand adheres to the Eva Gårding's concept that "intonation is the global melody of a phrase or sentence to which the local pitch movements are subordinated", and, that in the speech act, "the speaker creates an utterance aimed at the hearer in a given context and the utterance consists of a sentence, the latter having a given prosody".

In view of the aims and objectives of the research Vladimir Valov starts with grammatical parsing, thus the phenomenon of *intonation* can be viewed in its multifaceted perspective, the latter substantiating the adequacy of analysis. In that respect he points out that the Noun Phrase in the postmodifying position ("intonational typology") is in a process of taking up the status of a compound noun, thus asserting its own autonomous status. Being of central relevance to the dissertation, the linguistic concept of intonation is subjected to more detailed analysis since the former has always been part and parcel of the study of prosody and/ or the study of the suprasegmental system of language. On the other hand, the very word *prosody*, as is widely known, is of Greek origin and is associated with the study of the melody characteristics of language – the pitch of the voice, loudness, tempo, rhythm, etc., i.e. these are tonal and quantitative features of prominence whose exponents on sentence level are tempo, intonation and sentence stress.

The doctorand adheres to the axiomatic statement that on the sentence level intonation manifests its grammatical, *ergo* its sign character, in an optimal way. That is why, in his opinion, sentence intonation can be employed as the foundation of typological analysis.

In Chapter I the dissertation proves that intonation can function grammatically as a case marker, i.e. it is no longer a 'floating' feature but

'anchors' at the category of case. In that case intonation does not act as a merely competing mechanism but rather as what A. M. Peshkovskij termed "the compensatory law of intonation" which in this case is used in identifying the language mechanisms in the analysis of specific languages, i.e. typologically. Examples of reconstructed intonation based on Latin data and also examples from English, German and Russian are put forward in the dissertation.

In Chapter II the focus of attention is the issue of the place and status of intonation in the overall grammar of language and even within the framework of a broader model. The basis of the model of levels is formed by semantics: all levels are linked with meaning and the top of the model is invariably occupied by intonation. The thesis that is upheld is that the lowest and the highest constructs of the model violate the discrete character of language while the systems located in between are based wholly on the discrete character of the linguistic units. The interaction of intonation and distinctive features in segmental phonology is subjected to analysis: it becomes obvious that in the bottom-top process of fluctuation intonation leaves traces on each of the levels it traverses. Thus, intonation does not convey simply postlexical meaning in a linguistically structured way; rather its substantial characteristics are laid in the phonology it interacts with. In this way its "competing mechanism" is determined but its formal exponents function explicitly on all the remaining language levels. The examples adduced with phonologically motivated emphatic structure unanimously illustrate the principle by illuminating how the structure is rendered from English into Bulgarian and Russian, and the different phonological and lexico-grammatical mechanisms the different languages resort to. It is established that the meaning of the intonationally prominent word is carried by the nucleus of the syllable, manifested by the F0 perturbations. Usually, in such cases, the F0 peak is not the major characteristic: according to the author and the translators the increased duration of the syllable's consonantal onset creates the effect of 'positive' exaggeration in the utterance. In a number of examples the manner of the combination of intonational with lexico-grammatical meanings is illustrated.

Chapter III is dedicated to typology and intonational analysis, and is mainly of informative character: it does its best to present the formal aspect of the study of intonation, i.e. the methods of intonational phonological analysis and the setting up of a uniform transcription, the two becoming a reliable foundation for embarking on successful typological research. The work presents the received intonational taxonomy: accent types, boundary and phrasal tones, initiated in the original notation of J. Pierrehumbert, known as ToBI (TOnes and Break Indices): it is implemented with modifications to a number of languages, including Bulgarian (cf. Dimitrova 2016).

Chapter IV is dedicated to the content typology of languages, specifically to the semantic cases manifested by intonation. The thesis adopted axiomatically in the dissertation is that theoretical primacy is given to the sentence rather than the word and that it is in that way, as the doctorand convincingly shows that Bolinger's well-known metaphorical allusion about "the primitive dance of intonation" in the intonation-syntax interface should be understood. The ensuing conclusion is that intonation in its grammatical function enjoys primacy in the disambiguation of the linguistic unit. That intonation does convey a grammatical category can be seen from the respective English examples, whereby the argumentation is parallelly enhanced also by examples from German. This forms the basis for the thesis that the difference in the semantic case structure brings about an intonation difference of a strictly determined character, i.e. the latter invariably seems to function as a case morpheme, hence has a sign character. The examples from Bulgarian convincingly substantiate the doctorand's thesis that intonation can also function as a grammatical morpheme in the verb system, as tentatively suggested in the domain of aspect, as the author remarks, though the latter issue is left for future research. In conclusion, the doctorand finds support in Yanakiev's categorical statement that "[a] special characteristic of these morphemes is that they are signaled suprasegmentally…" and, thus, Nikolaeva's hypothesis of the "hidden memory of language" mentioned at the beginning of the dissertation is validated: it is widely accepted that the efficiency of the sign consists in the all inclusiveness it possesses irrespective of its provenance. Thus, intonation marks exponents of a semantic case, reaching down to the "hidden memory of language".

Chapter V is dedicated to the relation between intonational phonology and content typology, applied to the interpretation of material from translations of literary texts. A number of examples related to the fidelity in the rendition of prosodic means are subjected to analysis in the area of poetic translation from and into different languages and the contrastive data are from translation variants in Russian, English (2 variants) .and even Swedish. Certain typological similarities are discussed, the latter enhancing the level of translation equivalence, e.g. the presence of postpositional definite article in Swedish which contributes to the effect of dynamism in the poetic text. As a whole, the comparison confirms Jakobson's thesis that "the poetic function projects the principle of equivalence from the axis of selection to the axis of combination". The principle is also applied to literary fiction texts and to their translation equivalents in Russian and English. The analysis of the translated texts, the English ones in particular, exemplify a high degree of syntactic equivalence, the phenomenon being culturally and prescriptively conditioned, as the dissertation proves. Exemplifying his interest in the so-called "dead languages", the doctorand proves that he is aware of the fact that the main issue comes to the point whether the linguist will be capable of reconstructing the intonation of a

piece of literature from antiquity. The latter was performed orally and such texts, as is well-known, were sung. The observations based on four texts prove the syncretism of language and music, and the use of the vocative form is interpreted as an eloquent testimony of the "stylized intonation" in language. This, in its turn, comes as further support to Lotman's thesis that sometimes intonation can be employed as a "mnemonic symbol". At the end of the chapter the doctorand deals with the Stoic concept of "lekton" whereby, as is well-known, philosophy resorts to two disciplines having speech as its ultimate goal: rhetoric and dialectic. It is claimed that the "lekton" is first and foremost a product of a contextually meaningful utterance, neither reducible to a physical entity, the latter being expressed verbally, nor solely to the speech sounds, which materialize it. However, the treatment of this assertion is specified in the dissertation by inserting the relevant comment that the "lekton" is also related to meaning, the latter viewed as a non-material unit of a whole sentence. In this respect, the following can be concluded: by bringing in adequate exemplification the dissertation proves that the "lekton" is a concept which from the Stoics' point of view subsumed both intonation and also other non-material language phenomena such as presupposition.

The erudition of the doctorand in the selection of his bibliography is impressive – 384 titles mainly of English writing authors. This is not accidental since the author of the dissertation has gone through a long and eventful road of scholarly formation – starting as an undergraduate student (1980 – 1981) at the Department of English Language and Literature at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" and going through a five-year course in English at the University of Malta, specializations at the Department of Anthropology at SUNY – Albany, New York and visiting lector in Bulgarian language and culture at the University of Leeds and the University of Sheffield in Yorkshire, UK (three years). This is only part of his professional and teaching experience when he had the opportunity to acquire much experience and grew as a scholar and translator/ interpreter.

From a compositional point of view, the structuration of the dissertation work in five chapters adopted by the doctorand Vladimir Valov is fully motivated from the point of view of the fact that the topic itself is not only a novelty but also virgin soil in research, and in this sense it is labour-consuming for description, thus, it fully justifies the inclusion of more chapters and paragraphs than usual: this comes to meet adequately the criteria of adequacy of argumentation and reliability of evidence in the content. What also comes to the fore is the fact of a harmonious and proportional ordering of the individual chapters, structured internally as autonomous entities, well-defined paragraphs, whereby the essence of the researcher's design can easily come to the fore and

outline distinctly enough the results of the theoretical analyses and their illustrating explications.

From the content point of view I was deeply impressed by the ability of the doctorand to discern the relevant problems in the wealth of ideas and structure the variety of results yielded in the course of research, combining them in a summary form in tables and diagrams, the latter giving evidence of the exactness and precision of the qualitative and quantitative indicators illustrated.
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Apart from the indisputable merits of the present piece of research that I have commented on, I think it is worth pointing out some aspects which were left incomplete and also some shortcomings which do not depreciate the significance of the research and may be the result of the novelty of the problems discussed or come from the standards of citation that are current in the Anglo-Saxon academic tradition in academic writing. However, commenting on them will doubtlessly contribute to the correct interpretation of the problems in the analysis and enhance precision in a future publication of the work:

1. There are some lacking items in the bibliography which are major and significant contributions to the topic: they can certainly enrich its content basis, e.g.: *Prosodic Aspects of Russian Speech* [in Russian] *– Moscow. : RAN publication, 1996* ; Kodzasov, S. V. *Researches in the Domain of Russian Prosody* [in Russian] *Moscow.: Yazyki slavyanskih kul'tur, 2009. — 496 p. — (Studia philologica);* Potapova, P. & V. Potapov *Speech Communication. From Sound to Utterance.*[in Russian] *Moscow.: Yazyki slavyanskih kul'tur, 2012. . — 464 p. — (Studia philologica);* Caroline Féry. *Intonation and Prosodic Structure. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016. — 374 p.;* Savicka, I. & T. Boyadzhiev. *Bulgarian-Polish Contrastive Grammar. Volume 1: Phonetics and Phonology.* [in Bulgarian] *Sofia: BAN, 1988, – 167 p.; Cecilia Ode Russian Intonation A Perceptual Description. (STUDIES IN SLAVIC AND GENERAL LINGUISTICS). Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1989, - 304 p.;* Popov, D. *Phonostylistics of Discourse* [in Bulgarian]. *Shumen: Shumen University Publishing House, 2004, — 205 p.;* Popov, D. *Linguistic Personology of Speech. The Metamorphoses of Voice* [in Bulgarian]. *Shumen: Shumen University Publishing House, 2016, — 298 p.;*
2. The citation of authors using only their surnames in a science text (cf. the summary) in Bulgarian is unacceptable and is viewed as stylistically vicious use. It also creates inconvenience in reading since it can cause ambiguities in correctly identifying the author – especially with people having

identical surnames. This is why it is strongly recommended that the first name (in an abbreviated form) precede the surname.

In conclusion, it can be stated that the dissertation of Vladimir Filipov Valov presents a large-scale theoretical and empirical piece of research about the place and role of the semantics of intonation in the typology of languages of different grammar. The central contribution of the work is based on the endeavor to convincingly prove that intonation is associated with the deep semantic category of case. More specifically, the present work proves that intonation is a realization of a complex linguistic sign since the intonation units are viewed as two-side units (of double articulation), i.e. as linguistic signs, and the results of the study on the aspects of intonational typology can be of use to further compilation of a system of exercises that are to be used in practical (English) intonation classes aiming at the elucidation of certain prosodic phenomena; similar exercises can be used in translation classes. The doctorand is fully familiar with the subtleties in the phonetic/ phonological research of English (i.e. it fully satisfies the requirements of the educational aspects of the degree "doctor") and in the dissertation the doctorand has obtained results which will enrich the theory of intonational phonology (i.e. they meet the requirements related to the scientific aspects of the degree "doctor"). As a whole, the dissertation meets the highest criteria for obtaining the degree "doctor".

In view of the above, the impressions from the overall analysis of the work, and the subsequent positive appraisal of the theoretical and applied contributions in the dissertation I am fully convinced to vote for conferring the academic degree "DOCTOR" to assistant-professor Vladimir Filipov Valov in the professional domain 2.1. Philology, Ph D programme "Germanic Languages" (Phonetics and Phonology of the English Language) and appeal to all the other esteemed members of the academic jury to vote for that proposal.

Sofia, 17th August, 2019   Signature:

Professor Dr Dimitar Popov