in the spectrogram are difficult to separate from the babbling. This is also important for the results of the perceptual judgments and could explain disagreement between perceptual judges.

The fact that the judges in this study are disagreeing is not unique. In a study by Shriberg (1972), conclusion are drawn that training with a key is of importance for the concordance between judges. In this study the judges had experience of transcribing together but without direct feedback or a key.

In conclusion, the results from this study show that neither the perceptual nor the acoustic judgment, gave reliable answers. However, one could assume that these both methods complement each other. In order to increase the reliability, both perceptually and acoustically, it is important that the recordings are of sufficient quality. This can be achieved by using high quality equipment, carefully consider the placing of the microphone and by using a designed recording room where the risk for disturbing sounds is minimal (for example by using soft toys when recording children). To get a more valid judgment it is also suggested to exclude utterances where competing sounds cannot be avoided.

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Lund University, Centre for Languages & Literature, Dept. of Linguistics & Phonetics
*Working Papers* 52 (2006), 5–8



# Perception of South Swedish Word Accents

Gilbert Ambrazaitis and Gösta Bruce
Dept. of Linguistics and Phonetics, Centre for Languages and Literature, Lund University
{Gilbert.Ambrazaitis|Gosta.Bruce}@ling.lu.se

## Abstract

*A perceptual experiment concerning South Swedish word accents (accent I, accent II) is described. By means of editing and resynthesis techniques the F0 pattern of a test word in a phrase context has been systematically manipulated: initial rise (glide vs. jump) and final concatenation (6 timing degrees of the accentual fall). The results indicate that both a gliding rise and a late fall seem necessary for the perception of accent II, while there appear to be no such specific, necessary cues for the perception of accent I.*

## 1 Introduction

In the original Swedish intonation model (Bruce & Gårding, 1978) the two tonal word accents (accent I and accent II) are assigned bitonal representations in terms of High plus Low (HL), representing the accentual F0 fall. These Highs and Lows are timed differently, however, in relation to the stressed syllable depending on dialect type. For all dialect types, the HL of accent I precedes the HL of accent II. In South Swedish, the HL of accent I is aligned with the stressed syllable, while the HL of accent II is instead aligned with the post-stress syllable.

A problem with the latter representation is that the stressed syllable in accent II words has no direct tonal representation. Thus this modelling does not reflect what should be the most perceptually salient part of the pitch pattern of accent II. Figure 1 shows prototypical F0 contours of the two word accents (minimal pair) in a prominent position of an utterance as produced by a male speaker of South Swedish (the second author).

This particular problem of intonational modelling has been the starting-point of a phonetic experiment aimed at examining what is perceptually relevant in the F0 contours of accent I and accent II in the South Swedish dialect type. More specifically, our plan has been to run a perceptual experiment, where the intention was to find out what are the necessary and sufficient cues for the identification of both word accents.

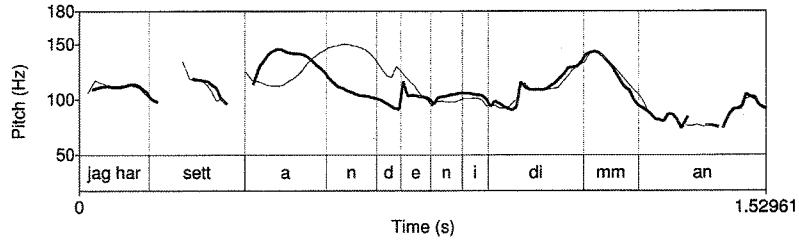


**Figure 1.** Prototypical F0 contours of the two word accents in a prominent position of an utterance as produced by a male speaker of South Swedish: *Jag har sett anden i dimman. ('I have seen the duck/spirit in the fog.')* Thick line: acc. I *('duck')*; thin line: acc. II *('spirit')*.

## 2 Method

We asked subjects to judge whether they perceive the test word *anden* as either meaning *'the duck'* (accent I) or *'the spirit'* (accent II), in naturally produced and synthetically manipulated test utterances. We chose to put the test word in a non-final accented position of an utterance containing two accented words (test word and context word; see Table 1), for several reasons. First, we wanted to have the possibility of removing the accentual F0 fall of the test word while maintaining an utterance-final falling pattern. Second, we chose two different context words – one with accent I (*drömmen, 'the dream'*), one with accent II (*dimman, 'the fog'*) – in order to provide a "dialectal anchor" for the listeners. Third, by having the test word non-finally, we avoided phrase-final creaky voice on the test word, thus facilitating the editing of F0. Regarding semantic factors, we tried to choose context words which would be as "neutral" as possible, i.e. which would not bias the ratings of the test word. The test material was recorded by a male speaker of South Swedish (the second author) in the anechoic chamber at the Centre for Languages and Literature, Lund University.

**Table 1.** The structure of the test material, or the four recorded test utterances respectively. (*'I have seen the duck/spirit in the dream/fog.'*)

| | Test word | Context word | Used for |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Jag har sett* | *anden* (***accI***) | *i drömmen* (***accI***) / *i dimman* (***accII***). | A: control stimuli |
| | *anden* (***accII***) | *i drömmen* (***accI***) / *i dimman* (***accII***). | B: primary stimuli |

### *2.1 Stimuli*

We created 12 F0 contours and implemented them in two recorded utterances (B in Table 1), by means of F0 editing and resynthesis using the PSOLA manipulation option in Praat (<http://www.praat.org>). Figure 2 displays the 12 contours for one of the utterances (*dimman*) as an example. The starting point was a stylization of the originally recorded F0 contours, i.e. with accent II on the test word (glide/dip4 in Figure 2). Based on this stylized accent II contour, three contours with a successively later F0 fall were created (dip3, dip2, dip1), each one aligned at successive segmental boundaries: in dip3, the fall starts at the vowel onset of the post-stress syllable (schwa), in dip2 at the following /n/ onset, and in dip1 at the onset of /i/. Thus, a continuum of concatenations between the two accented words was created. Two further steps were added to this continuum: one by completely removing the fall, yielding a contour that exhibits a high plateau between the two accented words (dip0), and one by shifting back the whole rise-fall pattern of the original accent II, yielding a typical accent I pattern (dip5). For each dip position, we also created a contour that lacks the initial

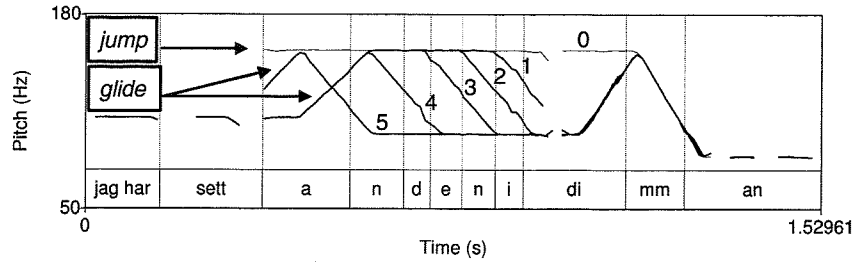


**Figure 2.** Stimulus structure, exemplified in the *dimman* context: 6 dip levels (0...5) x 2 rise types (jump, glide). These 12 F0 contours were implemented in both recordings (*dimman* and *drömmen*), yielding 24 stimuli.



gliding rise on /a(n)/, by simply transforming it into a "jump" from low F0 in *sett* to high F0 right at the onset of *anden*. It should be pointed out that the difference between glide and jump is marginal for dip5 (i.e. accent I), and was implemented for the sake of symmetry only.

Additionally, we generated 4 control stimuli which were based on the A-recordings (cf. Table 1). These are, however, not further considered in this paper.

### *2.2 Procedure*

All 24+4=28 stimuli were rated 4 times. The whole list of 112 stimuli was randomized and presented to the listeners in 8 blocks of 14 stimuli each, via headphones. The listeners heard each stimulus only once and had to rate it as either referring to a duck (*and*) or a spirit (*ande*), within 3 seconds, by marking it on a paper sheet. The whole test was included in a wav-file and took 11:31 minutes. Instructions were given orally and in written form. A training test with two blocks of 4 stimuli each was run before the actual experiment. 20 South Swedish native speakers, 5 male, 15 female, aged 19-32, with no reported hearing impairments, volunteered as subjects.

### *2.3 Data analysis*

Based on the four repetitions of each stimulus, an accent II score in % (henceforth %accII) was calculated per stimulus and subject. These %accII scores were used as raw data in the analyses. Means and standard deviations, pooled over all 20 listeners, were calculated for every stimulus. A three-way repeated-measures ANOVA was run for the 24 primary stimuli to test for effects of the following factors: FINAL WORD (2 levels: drömmen, dimman), RISE TYPE (2 levels: jump, glide), and CONCATENATION (6 levels: dip0...dip5).

## 3 Results

The mean %accII ratings are displayed in Figure 3. The stimuli that were intended to represent clear cases of accent I (dip5), and accent II (glide/dip4) were convincingly rated as expected. The graphs for the two different contexts look very similar, and accordingly, FINAL WORD had no significant effect (p>.8). Also, as would be expected from Figure 3, both RISE TYPE and CONCATENATION have a significant effect (p<.001 each). However, the difference in rise type is not reflected in a constant %accII difference, which is especially salient in dip5. Accordingly, we also found a significant interaction between RISE TYPE and CONCATENATION (p<.001).

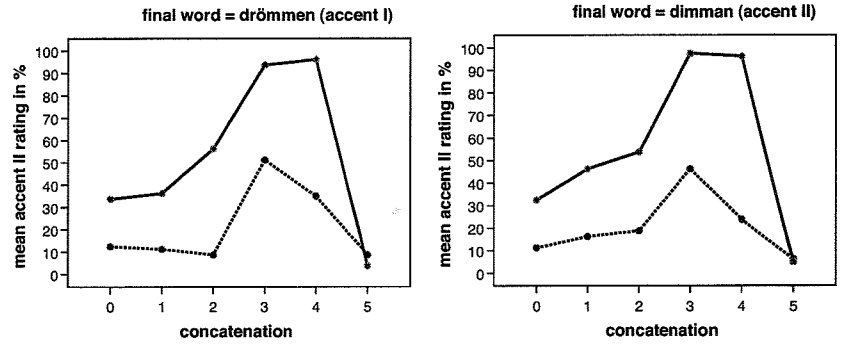


**Figure 3.** Mean accII-ratings in % for 2 final word conditions, 6 dip levels (concatenation), and 2 rise types: glide (straight line) and jump (dotted line).

## 4 Discussion

Referring back to the issue about necessary and sufficient cues for word accent identification (cf. Introduction), we will comment on a number of points in the light of our experiment.

*Is the gliding rise through the stressed syllable necessary for the perception of accent II?* – Replacing this glide by an F0 jump up to the stressed syllable results in a sizeable decrease in the votes for accent II (cf. glide/dip4 vs. jump/dip4). This suggests that the gliding rise is necessary for the unambiguous perception of accent II.

*Is a late-timed fall necessary for the perception of accent II?* – Replacing the F0 fall through the post-stress syllable by a high plateau in the target word yields a tendency towards accent I (cf. glide/dip4 vs. glide/dip0). This suggests that the fall is necessary. However, the fall must not be substancially earlier than in the original accent II word, since this would correspond to accent I.

Thus, both the gliding rise and the late fall seem necessary for the unambiguous perception of accent II. When one of them is removed, the ratings tend towards accent I. When both these cues are absent, the tendency becomes rather strong (cf. jump/dip0).

*What is necessary, and what is sufficient for the perception of accent I?* – Accent I is most convincingly represented by stimuli with an early fall (dip5). However, the discussion above has already shown that this early fall cannot be a necessary cue, since a number of stimuli lacking this early fall have received high accent I ratings (cf. also jump/dip1-2). Furthermore, a high-starting stressed syllable (jump) favors accent I ratings, but cannot be regarded as sufficient, since the absence of an accent II-like fall appears necessary (cf. dip3).

Thus, our results are most easily explainable along the hypothesis that there are no specific necessary cues for accent I at all, but that simply the absence of accent II cues is sufficient for the perception of accent I. It is still remarkable, though, that the absence of only one accent II cue alone (e.g. the late fall) results in more votes for accent I than for accent II.

*Why does a glide followed by a plateau trigger a considerable number of votes for accent I?* – We do not have a definite answer to this question. One possibility is that the conditions of phrase intonation play a role. In the early part of a phrase, the expectation is a rising pattern. Thus a phrase-initial accent I may be realized as a rising glide even in South Swedish, as long as there is no immediately following F0 fall. Another possibility is that the glide-plateau gesture represents a typical accent I pattern of another dialect type (Svea or Stockholm Swedish), even if the context word at the end has a stable South Swedish pattern.

*What does our experiment tell us about the markedness issue?* – From the perspective of perceptual cues, accent II in South Swedish appears to be more "special" than accent I. This will lend some support to the traditional view of accent II being the marked member of the opposition (cf. Elert, 1964; Engstrand,1995; Riad 1998).

## Acknowledgements

Joost van de Weijer assisted us with advice concerning methodology and statistics.

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Lund University, Centre for Languages & Literature, Dept. of Linguistics & Phonetics
*Working Papers* 52 (2006), 9–12



# Focal Accent and Facial Movements in Expressive Speech

Jonas Beskow, Björn Granström, and David House
Dept. of Speech, Music and Hearing, Centre for Speech Technology (CTT), KTH, Stockholm
{beskow|bjorn|davidh}@speech.kth.se

## Abstract

*In this paper, we present measurements of visual, facial parameters obtained from a speech corpus consisting of short, read utterances in which focal accent was systematically varied. The utterances were recorded in a variety of expressive modes including Certain, Confirming, Questioning, Uncertain, Happy, Angry and Neutral. Results showed that in all expressive modes, words with focal accent are accompanied by a greater variation of the facial parameters than are words in non-focal positions. Moreover, interesting differences between the expressions in terms of different parameters were found.*

## 1 Introduction

Much prosodic information related to prominence and phrasing, as well as communicative information such as signals for feedback, turn-taking, emotions and attitudes can be conveyed by, for example, nodding of the head, raising and shaping of the eyebrows, eye movements and blinks. We have been attempting to model such gestures in a visual speech synthesis system, not only because they may transmit important non-verbal information, but also because they make the face look alive.

In earlier work, we have concentrated on introducing eyebrow movement (raising and lowering) and head movement (nodding) to an animated talking agent. Lip configuration and eye aperture are two additional parameters that we have experimented with. Much of this work has been done by hand-manipulation of parametric synthesis and evaluated using perception test paradigms. We have explored three functions of prosody, namely prominence, feedback and interrogative mode useful in e.g. multimodal spoken dialogue systems (Granström, House & Beskow, 2002).

This type of experimentation and evaluation has established the perceptual importance of eyebrow and head movement cues for prominence and feedback. These experiments do not, however, provide us with quantifiable data on the exact timing or amplitude of such movements used by human speakers. Nor do they give us information on the variability of the movements in communicative situations. This kind of information is important if we are to be able to implement realistic facial gestures and head movements in our animated agents. In this paper we will report on methods for the acquisition of visual and acoustic data, and present measurement results obtained from a speech corpus in which focal accent was systematically varied in a variety of expressive modes.

## 2 Data collection and corpus

We wanted to be able to obtain articulatory data as well as other facial movements at the same time, and it was crucial that the accuracy in the measurements was good enough for