



SPAU133

Lecture 9

Supra-segmental Features

Segments + Suprasegmentals

- Segments = Sounds
- We describe segments according to the place and manner of articulation (if they are consonants) or according to the height and advancements of the tongue, lip rounding, and tenseness (if the sounds are vowels).
- Suprasegmentals are features that “ride on top” of segments.
- Supra = above / over

Differences between segmental features and suprasegmental features:

1. It is often difficult or even impossible to identify the quality of a suprasegmental feature just by hearing a single segment. In segmental features you have to compare different segments or different utterances to see what the features are.
2. Some suprasegmental features can extend to numerous segments in an utterance rather than belonging to one phonetic segment.

Length

(1) Examples of using length to contrast word meaning in Finnish

- a. i. [muta] 'mud'
- ii. [mu:ta] 'some other'
- iii. [mut:a] 'but'

- b. i. [tapan] 'I kill'
- ii. [tapa:n] 'I meet'

- c. i. [tule] 'come!'
- ii. [tule:] 'comes'
- iii. [tu:le:] 'is windy'

- /si/ vs /ni/
- /sar/ - /sur/

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- High vowels are shorter than low vowels
 - Voiceless consonants are longer than voiced consonants.
 - Voiceless fricatives are the longest consonants of all.

Class Recording

- https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/g6uY_Zy6Ztg4VZzdrGsFuaaw2-ZOwW9lYUh3wH-qXWJiNXI9aaXWA9909fkgQcZZ.lgNrzc8okNcp6fAf
Passcode: .a.y9ZUR

Intonation

- Fundamental Frequency depends on the rate of vibration of the vocal folds.
- Pitch is the correlate of fundamental frequency
- The pattern of pitch across a stretch of speech (such as a sentences) is called intonation.
- EX: You got an A on the test.

Intonation : Pitch Accents and Phrasal Tones

- I love you.

Tone

- The pitch in which the syllable is pronounced.

Tone Languages

(5) Examples from Mandarin Chinese: different tones, different meanings

Segments	Tone Numbers²	Tone Pattern	Gloss
[ma]	55	high level	'mother'
[ma]	35	high rising	'hemp'
[ma]	214	low falling rising	'horse'
[ma]	51	high falling	'scold'

Tone language have level tones. Some of them have contour tones.

Stress

- Stress is a property of an entire syllable, not segments.
- A stressed syllable is more prominent than an unstressed one.
- Stressed syllables are usually longer, louder, and contain full vowels.

For example, compare the first vowels in the words *photograph* and *photography*; how are they different? In *photograph*, the first syllable is the most stressed and would be transcribed with the full vowel [oʊ]. But in *photography*, the second syllable is the most stressed, and the vowel in the first syllable has been “reduced” to [ə].

Types of Stress

- Primary stress
- Secondary stress
- Unstressed (tertiary stress)

[fə'tɑ:ɡɪə,fi].