

A phonological typology of North Germanic accent

Tomas Riad, Stockholm University

North Germanic tone accent has been typologized on the basis of *phonetic* notions like ‘number of peaks in accent 2’ (Gårding & Lindblad 1973, Bruce & Gårding 1978), and ‘value of first tone in accent 1’ (Fintoft et al. 1978). The description of tone accent has also often been based on *functional* notions. Accent 2 is sometimes described as the (morphologically) ‘connective’ (Elert 1981), ‘polysyllabic’ or ‘disyllabic’ accent (Molde & Wessén 1968). There is also the notion of a ‘compound rule’. Among potentially *phonological* notions, there is the idea of focus being expressed by ‘enhancement’ or by a ‘separate tonal gesture’ (Bruce 2005).

I argue that the typology of NGmc accent should be strictly based on phonological, i.e. structural properties, namely the following:

- Tonal value of the lexical tone (i.e. accent 2): H or L
- Number of association points: two or one
- Shape of transitions: spreading or interpolation

This leads to wider generalizations, and a both tighter and more inclusive typology.

Regarding the expression of focus, I propose to derive the notion of a ‘separate tonal gesture’ from a deeper generalization, namely that all dialects require a H tone for the expression of focus, and that the lexical tone in accent 2 can not serve that function. This follows in part from the privative nature of the tone accent distinction.

Finally, I argue, based on Riad (forthc.) and Myrberg & Riad (in prep.) that there is no dedicated ‘focus accent’ in the functional sense, but rather a phonological distinction between ‘big’ and ‘small’ accents (in some dialects), which may be employed for the expression of information structural focus, but also for other functions.

Bruce, Gösta 2005. Intonational prominence in Swedish revisited. In Sun-Ah Jun (ed.) *Prosodic typology – The phonology of intonation and phrasing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 410–429.

Bruce, Gösta & Eva Gårding. 1978. A prosodic typology for Swedish dialects. In Gårding E., Bruce G. and Bannert R. (eds.) *Nordic prosody*. Lund University, 219–228.

Elert, Claes-Christian. 1981. *Ljud och ord i svenskan 2*. (Umeå studies in the humanities 40) Almqvist & Wiksell International, Stockholm.

Fintoft K., Mjaavatt P.E., Møllergård E. & Ulseth B. 1978. Toneme patterns in Norwegian dialects. In Gårding E., Bruce G. and Bannert R. (eds.) *Nordic prosody*. Lund University, 197–206.

Gårding, E. & P. Lindblad. 1973. Constancy and variation in Swedish word accent patterns. *Working Papers 7*, 36–110. Dept. of Linguistics, Lund University.

Molde, Bertil & Elias Wessén. 1968. *Svensk språklära för danskar* (3rd edition). København: Rosenkilde og Bager.

Myrberg, Sara & Tomas Riad, in prep. The prosodic hierarchy of Swedish.

Riad, Tomas. forthc. The phonological typology of North Germanic accent. In Larry Hyman & Frans Plank (eds.). *Typology and phonology*.