There is no “the current model” of intonation

Researchers do not seem to agree on basics:
- What are the primitives of intonational structure?
- Is intonation a phonetic or a phonological phenomenon?
- Do we need a phonology of intonation, and if so, of what form?
- What is the function of intonation?

Explore these issues as they play out in the analysis of Romani

Introduce the language and briefly sketch its prosodic system

Concentrate on aspects of
- phonetic realization and phonological representation
- the function of intonation in marking focus and expressing information structure

Discuss how Romani challenges received ideas but can also answer some of the outstanding questions

Discuss how we may achieve a better understanding of the nature of intonation cross-linguistically

Romani is Indo-Aryan language with extensive dialectal variation

The Komotini variety is a Vlach Romani variety

The speakers from Xanthi have more diverse backgrounds

The prosodic patterns described here appear valid for both areas

Ten speakers of both genders and various ages

Approximately 45 minutes of speech

Genres
- Spontaneous conversations between two or more speakers
- Conversations with Adamou
- Story telling
  http://lacito.vjf.cnrs.fr/archivage/languages/Romani_fr.htm
- Elicitation with Adamou (QUs)

Broad transcription, AM analysis and glossing in PRAAT
Romani has word-final stress in its native vocabulary.

Stress may appear on the penult or antepenult in loan words.

aste'nava “hospital”
kor'kodílo “crocodile”
'lapo “pill”
'lapora “pills”

\[ \sigma \]

\[ \sigma \]

Few studies are available on this issue:

- Ohala & Ewan (1973)
- Sundberg (1979)
- Caspers & van Heuven (1993)
- Xu & Sun (2002)

Xu & Sun (2002) claim that their results have established the physiological limits of pitch speed and excursion size and argue that given these physiological limitations, AM assumptions about the coordination of segments and tones are untenable.

**The physiological limit of pitch excursions**

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** Phonetic realization and phonological representation**

**Thrace Romani prosody: stress**

- Stress may appear on the penult or antepenult in loan words.

- aste'nava “hospital”
- kor'kodílo “crocodile”
- 'apo “pill”
- 'apora “pills”

**Thrace Romani prosody: intonation**

- Default (nuclear and prenuclear) accent
- Accent before “continuation rise”
- Nuclear accent in polar questions

- Declaratives, wh-questions
- Continuation rises, wh-questions
- Polar questions

**Swift pitch excursions in Romani - 1**

**Swift pitch excursions in Romani - 2**

13 ST or 45 ST/s

17 ST or 50 ST/s
Plateaux vs. Turning Points
- Studies have shown that the use of plateaux is extensive:
  - British English (Knight & Nolan 2006)
  - Neapolitan Italian (D’Imperio 2000, D’Imperio et al. 2000)
  - Italian and German (D’Imperio et al. 2010)
- Turning points (TPs) have been seen as a cornerstone of AM
- The importance of TPs is questioned by plateaux: intonational events may not be as localized as TPs suggest
- Questioning TPs can be interpreted as evidence against AM principles of phonetic organization of intonation

Extensive use of plateaux

Low, high and mid plateaux are used

Alternation between TPs and plateaux
The alternation in the Romani data suggests that plateaux may be simply a matter of phonetic realization:
- Plateaux are frequent but they alternate with TPs in structurally and pragmatically similar contours.
- Tones are realized either as points or as levels.
- Languages may prefer one or the other realization.
- Why such differences exist and how are they produced?
- Conventions for how to measure “flat” tones are required and how to understand their coordination with the segmental string.
- But this does not denigrate the relevance of TPs as possible reflexes of underlying tones or more general principles of phonetic organization of intonation.

Although transparency is certainly desirable, it may not always be possible, for various reasons:
- Economy in the representation of a system (cf. Arvaniti et al. 2006).
- The system does not allow for cross-linguistic similarity in representation (cf. Arvaniti & Baltazani 2005).

The phenomena of Romani examined here suggest that there is more variation in intonational realization than is often expected.
- This is often seen as a problem with intonation.
- However, intonational data:
  - are not more variable than “segmental” aspects of the speech signal.
  - variation is equally lawful and probably due to the same overall organization.
- Our expectations, however, appear to be different.
For narrow focus, Thrace Romani uses combinations of prosodic, syntactic and morphological marking (contra Büring, 2009):

- Prosodic and syntactic marking
- Prosodic, syntactic and morphological marking
- Prosodic marking

Prosodic focus marking (on its own) is not necessarily preferred to more “costly” strategies such as syntactic marking (contra Skopeteas & Fanselow, in press).
The data from Thrace Romani show that the relationship between information structure (IS) and intonation is indirect and language specific. This relationship may in part depend on the interaction of intonation with other components of the grammar. Listeners, therefore, do not expect direct highlighting of new information by means of an accent. Rather, listeners derive IS by comparing the prosody of an utterance with the system they know.

Romani provides us with evidence that our understanding of intonational form and function is still limited. Many aspects that we take for granted are questioned by these data. Some obvious answers:
- Study more languages
- Expand research beyond laboratory speech
- Study different varieties of discourse, as pattern frequency may vary with style.

The phonological nature of intonation is often not fully acknowledged:
- the use of ToBI as a transcription system
- Ladd’s call for phonetically transparent representations (Ladd 2008, chap. 3)
- Gussenhoven’s “half-tamed savage”

If intonation is seen as a straightforward component of phonology:
- context-related variation will be expected and tolerated
- a degree of representational opacity will be tolerated both within and across linguistic systems
- function will not be seen as the sole determinant of contrast
- sociolinguistic variation will be expected and studied.

Intonational structure is not dictated by IS. Intonation has its own rules and requirements which on many occasions will go against “common sense.” This point has been made before, but:
- it is not always fully acknowledged
- this Romani corpus is among the first extensive natural spoken corpora demonstrating such phenomena.
These Romani data show that we have a long way to go before we can say we truly understand intonation. It is imperative that we open up the range of languages and speaking styles examined, question even the most common sense ideas, and seriously entertain the possibility that intonation may appear as a "half-tamed savage" only because we do not yet know its culture.

Starting with the assumption that intonation is a phonological phenomenon that is not radically different from all other phonological phenomena should help resolve many of the current puzzles and disagreements and allow us to concentrate on figuring out the rituals of intonational culture.

Thank you!

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my speakers,