

**Chamonikolasová, R. (2007) *Intonation in English and Czech Dialogues*. Spisy Masarykovy univerzity. Faculty of arts. Vol. 365. Masarykova univerzita, 119 pp.**

*Intonation in English and Czech Dialogues* (2007) by Jana Chamonikolasová is a corpus-based comparison of English and Czech intonation. The book is a modified version of the author's doctoral dissertation which resulted from her study of different approaches to prosodic systems and different traditions in prosodic transcription of the two languages compared.

The study is divided into three chapters. In the first chapter – *Intonation and prosodic system* - the author first concentrates on the intonation system of English. While viewing intonation as a complex of features from different prosodic systems (Crystal 1969), she concentrates on the two most relevant systems, i.e. pitch direction and pitch range. Secondly, she demonstrates the approach of Czech linguists to intonation and introduces the traditional terminology used in Czech intonation studies, above all a three-level hierarchy of linear units: syllable, rhythm group/stress group and utterance unit. Although the intonation systems in English and Czech are not identical, Chamonikolasová manages to concentrate on the comparison of the phenomena shared by the two systems, i.e. the segmentation of speech into tone or utterance units and the pitch movement of the nucleus or the cadence. Accordingly, the focus of her prosodic analysis is on the identification and description of the basic prosodic unit through which different melodies are realized in both intonation systems ('tone unit' in English and 'utterance unit' in Czech) and the most prominent prosodic feature within this unit.

The second chapter titled *The role of intonation in functional sentence perspective* is based mainly on Firbas's monograph *Functional Sentence Perspective in Written and Spoken Communication* (1992) and gives a brief survey of the concepts and principles of FSP as developed by Firbas (e.g. 1972, 1985, 1992) and further supplemented by Svoboda (e.g. 1981, 1983). In spoken language, the interplay of the three non-prosodic factors of FSP – the linear modification factor, the contextual factor and the semantic factor – is joined by one prosodic factor – intonation, since "it is in spoken communication that intonation can assert itself as a factor of FSP" (p. 24). Thanks to the author's skills and profound knowledge of the topic under her examination, this well-structured and easily surveyable chapter can become a useful introduction to the study of FSP for anyone interested in this branch of linguistics studies.

The third chapter *Analysis of English and Czech intonation* describes the corpus of four texts used for the analysis – one pair of scripted parallel texts, namely Havel’s play *Protest* (1992) and its English translation by Blackwell (1990) as broadcast on the radio, and one pair of non-scripted (i.e. natural, unprepared) texts, namely one non-surreptitiously recorded dialogue from the Czech National Corpus and one surreptitiously recorded dialogue from the London-Lund Corpus. After the description of the texts analysed and the prosodic transcription system applied, i.e. a simplified version of one of the English systems (Cruttenden 1986), the author focuses on five areas: the length of the tone unit, the position of the nucleus in a tone unit, the word class functions of the nucleus bearers, the FSP functions of the nucleus bearers and the pitch patterns of the nuclei.

The last chapter *Comparison of English and Czech intonation* focuses on the viewpoints mentioned above and brings many interesting results concerning not only differences between English and Czech conversation, but also some differences between scripted and non-scripted conversation across languages. Although the majority of tone units in all the texts analysed consist of one to six/seven words, the most frequent tone unit length is one word. This results from the frequent occurrence of hesitation and contact interjections and particles in face-to-face conversation. The analysis testifies to the tendency of the most prominent accent, the nucleus, to occur in the final position. However, the percentage of nuclei on the final word is higher in the Czech texts, which is in accordance with the Czech leading word order principle, i.e. the FSP linearity principle. The analysis of different word classes as nucleus bearing words indicates almost negligible differences between English and Czech. As regards their FSP functions, nuclei most often occur on rhematic elements. As for pitch direction, the analysis indicates that the most frequent nucleus type in all texts is the fall, in particular in the English texts, while the Czech texts display higher percentages of rises.

An important component of the study is the Appendix, which contains the complete analysis of 250 tone units from each of the four texts. These samples can be easily used for further research by other linguists.

While drawing on the traditions of both the English and Czech languages with a certain preference for English prosodic transcription systems, Chamonikolasová’s monograph represents a valuable and interesting contribution to the study of intonation of two different languages. Moreover, her inspiring work can provide the basis for more comprehensive comparative studies of English and Czech and possibly some other languages.

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