

Swedish is typically described as a language with two rather special prosodic characteristics, as compared to most other Germanic languages: First, it has a tonal contrast at the word level (accent I vs. accent II). Second, Swedish is often assumed to exhibit a rather restricted set of intonational contrasts at the phrase or utterance level. As Gussenhoven (2004) puts it: "Where English, Dutch, and German have a large number of pitch accents to signal various shades of information status (H*L, H*, L*H, etc. [...]), Stockholm Swedish has essentially only one intonation contour [...]". The problem with this statement is that hardly any "shades of information status" or other utterance-related functions beyond the marking of focus have so far been taken into account systematically in studies on Swedish intonation. In this study, we are investigating how different shades of "expectedness" of information are encoded by intonational means in Swedish, using German as a reference language. Two Swedish dialects "Central Swedish and South Swedish" are taken into account, since they differ prosodically in an interesting manner. A short test phrase was embedded in six pragmatic contexts and read by 27 speakers (nine of each language/ variety: German, Central Swedish, and South Swedish). Intonation contours were examined by calculating and comparing normalised mean F0 curves per language and test condition. The results suggest that both Swedish dialects included in this study seem to have a more varied utterance intonation than assumed earlier, which, however, may still be more restricted than German intonation. In addition, the results reveal quite large differences between the two Swedish dialects.