No tonal roots for stød in Scandinavia

1. Introduction: This talk presents a critical view of the thesis that stød is a tone (Itô and Mester 1997, 2011, Riad 1998, 2009, Morén 2005, Lorentz 2006; see also Kiparsky 2009[1995]). There are serious objections at all levels: phonetic and phonological, lexical and post-lexical. For reasons of space only a single aspect will be discussed: the tonal representation posited as the source of stød is highly unlikely typologically, either as a compressed falling contour (Itô and Mester 1997) or just as a low tone (Morén 2005) in the stressed syllable.

2. Stød as compressed H*L (or just L) in the stressed syllable. The tonal representations posited to generate the stød contrast are as follows, regardless of how these representations are arrived at phonologically.

\[(1)\]
\[
a. \text{Itô and Mester 1997, 2011} \quad (H^*)^2 (L) \text{ vs } (H^*) (L)
\]
\[
b. \text{Morén 2005} \quad (X L)^2 (L) \text{ vs } (X) (L)
\]

3. The unlikelihood of H*L (or just L) for stød I. The Scandinavian typology. The typology of Scandinavian accents does not provide support to (1). The contrast in monosyllables is quite unusual, even though tone-basis restrictions can be sporadically found, both in “high” and “low tone” areas (Lorentz 2008). Within posyllabiles, only a few patterns of the “high tone” (Christiansen 1954) or “one-peak” areas (Gårding 1977) resemble the tonal contrasts of (1) on the surface. The closest matches in W and S Nor and S Swe are usually analysed as in (2).

\[(2)\]
\[
a. \text{privative analysis, Lorentz 1995, } ^1(H^*) (L) \text{ vs } ^2(LH^*) (L)
\]
\[
b. \text{timing analysis (approximate formalization), } ^1L^+H^* L \text{ vs } ^2L^*+H L
\]

The implications of these analyses will be discussed, both synchronic and diachronically, paying special attention to West and South Norway, especially the dialect of Flekkefjord (Hognestad 2011).

In non-tonal areas, like Iceland, words can have H*L or L*H (Árnarson, Dehe 2010) in different phrasal contexts. Stød in Danish, however, is unrestricted with respect to phrasal context, appearing in initial, medial, or final position within the utterance, also regardless of utterance modality, or information structure (Grønnum 1991, 1992). Stød also appears in syllables with H, L, or with no tone at all in secondary stress (Basbøll 2005, Grønnum 1992).

4. The unlikelihood of H*L (or just L) for stød II. The typology of Denmark. The typology of Danish intonation, both at the level of regiolects of the standard variety (Grønnum 1991) and traditional dialects (Kroman 1947, Andersen 1958, Ejskjær 1990), does not support (1) either. Regional intonation tells us two things: (i) the stød and non-stød contrast is not accompanied by tonal contrasts, just by microprosodic effects, and (ii) stød can be realized with both falling and rising contours on the stressed syllable, or without tone on syllables with secondary stress (Basbøll 2005). If intonation is autosegmentalized, Copenhagen is clearly (L*)(H) for both stød and non-stød words.

Traditional dialects also differ from the expectations of (1). For instance, Andersen (1958:3ff.) reports that in South East Funen, monosyllables with stød have a rising contour, while monosyllables without stød have a falling contour, quite the opposite of what the tonal model predicts. For the rest of Denmark, Kroman (1947) reports that the usual melody of accent 1 stressed syllables is not (HL), but (LH) or simply late (H), while the reverse is the case for accent 2, that is, (HL) within the stressed syllable, but without stød; or early (H) when the syllable is too short.

5. Conclusions. The unlikelihood of (1) poses serious questions not only for the synchronic analysis of stød as tone but also for the diachronic claim that stød originated from pitch accents. On the other hand, this review should contribute to more comprehensive typologies of Scandinavian prosody across national borders, also across the functional differences of the tunes (lexical or post-lexical).
References