

## IDENTIFICATION OF CONTENT BASED ON INTONATION OF TEST SENTENCE

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*' The present study is an attempt to find the influence of intonation patterns of part sentences on the identification of the contexts in which those part sentences are spoken.'*

' Intonation is the linguistic form in which the speaker organizes certain kinds of information' (Denes, 1959).

Intonation is the fluctuation of the voice pitch as applied to the whole sentence. ' Intonation is a phonetic manifestation (pitch being its instrument) of the attitude the speaker assumes toward the things spoken about or towards the auditor' (Isamu Abe, 1955). He further states that intonation may have an 'emotive' function. Its purpose is to supply a delicate shade of meaning to the utterance upon which it is superimposed.

An utterance may convey different meanings due to the changes in intonation, even though the utterance contains the same segmental phonemes (Hiremath, 1961).

' The most important grammatical function of intonation in the language family to which English belongs is that of tying the major parts together within sentences and tying sentences together within discourse—showing, in the process, what things belong more closely together than others, where the divisions come, what is subordinate to what and whether one is telling, asking or commanding.' (Bolinger, 1972).

The review of literature show that the intonation has both linguistic and non-linguistic functions. Any attempt at understanding a language will not be complete without knowing the process of intonation in that particular language. Studies to understand the intonation in Indian languages are scanty.

In the present study an attempt has been made to note various kinds of intonation patterns that can be imposed on a series of phonemes and how this varies with the context.

In the present study the following three part sentences were chosen arbitrarily, each of which could be used at least with five different intonation patterns to suit five different context sentences in Kannada language.

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## Part Sentence! t

### 1. ನೀನು ಅಲ್ಲಿಗೆ ಹೋಗ್ತಿಯಾ . . . . .

ninu alige hogthiya.....

(You will go there/you are going there)

### 2. ಅವನು ಇವತ್ತು ಬರ್ರಾನಂತೆ . . . . .

avanu ivathu barthanante.....

(It seems he is coming today)

### 3. ನಾಳೆ ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ ಬರ್ತೀನಿ.

nale belige barthini,.....

(I will come tomorrow morning/

I will be coming tomorrow morning)

## Examples of context sentences: (used with part sentence-1)

### 1. ನೀನು ಅಲ್ಲಿಗೆ ಹೋಗ್ತೀಯೆ, ಹಾಗಾದರೆ ನಾನು ಹೋಗೊಲ್ಲ

ninu alige hogthiya, hagamadre nanu hogalla.

(If you are going there, I am not coming)

### 2. ನೀನು ಅಲ್ಲಿಗೆ ಹೋಗ್ತಿಯೆ, ಒದೀತೀನಿ ನೋಡು

ninu alige hogthiya, oditini nodu.

(If you go there, I will kick you)

### 3. ನೀನು ಅಲ್ಲಿಗೆ ಹೋಗ್ತಿಯೆ, ಅದೇನು ಇದ್ದಕ್ಕಿದ್ದ ಹಾಗೆ

nine alige hogthiya, adenu idakida hage.

(You are going there! it is surprising!/  
It is surprising that you are going there)

### 4. ನೀನು ಅಲ್ಲಿಗೆ ಹೋಗ್ತಿಯೆ, ಅವರು ಬಂದಿರಾರೆ, ಸರಿ, ಜಗಳ ಶುರುವಾಗುತ್ತೆ

ninu alige hogthiya, avaru bandirthare, sari, jagla suruvaguthe.

(When you go there, they would also be there and the quarrel will start)

### 5. ನೀನು ಅಲ್ಲಿಗೆ ಹೋಗ್ತಿಯಾ, ತಲೆ ಸರಿಯಾಗಿದೆ ತಾನೆ.

ninu alige hogthiya, tale sariyagide thane.

(You are going there! Have you gone mad!)

A native Kannada speaker who had a background of linguistics, dramatics and English was asked to speak each part sentences with five context sentences. Thus three sets of five sentences each were developed. The speaker was asked to speak these sentences so as to convey the meaning of that sentence. The sentences were recorded in a sound-treated room (ISO standards) using a tape recorder (Ocean, Japan-make). Recording was done three times. The investigators and the speaker, acting as judges, chose one of these recordings as the natural one.

## **Procedure used for the development of further material**

*Part 'A':* Using the above recorded material, only part sentences were recorded on a different tape, with a gap of 45 seconds between each part sentence.

*Part 'B':* Further part sentence and context sentence of set 1 were re-arranged. That is, sentence 1 was recorded with the part sentence and context sentence as they were in the original recording. And part sentence of sentence 1 was recorded with context sentences 2, 3, 4 and 5 also, in the place of their part sentences. These were recorded in random order. Similarly, part sentences of sentences 2, 3, 4 and 5 were recorded with their context sentences and also, with the remaining four context sentences. Thus five sentences of set 1 were developed into another bigger set consisting of 25 sentences. Thirteen native speakers of the Kannada language were taken as subjects. The test was administered in a quiet room. Each listener was given a copy of the list of context sentences of all the three sets with the part sentences left blank. The listeners were given taped instructions as follows :

Now please listen to these recordings carefully. We want you to identify the correct context sentence by listening to each of these part sentences. You may mark the serial number of the part sentence which you think, suits the context sentence. Examples and explanations were also given when they had doubts. The test material part 'A' was played at a comfortable loudness level.

*Part 'B':* List of sentences of set I (consisting of 25 sentences) in the same order that they were recorded was given to each subject in the same experimental situation. The subjects were instructed to tick the sentences which they considered as spoken correctly or as normal. Part 'B' of the tape was played to them.

*Result and Discussion:* The analysis of the results of part 'A' shows that subject had not identified the correct sentences. Out of 195 responses (total responses for all the three part sentences with their five context sentences  $3 \times 5 \times 13 = 195$ ), only 90 responses were correct. Similarly, in part 'B' out of 65 responses ( $13 \times 5$ ) only 19 responses were correct. Thus the results show that it was not possible for the subjects to identify the correct context sentences when either only part sentence was spoken or part sentence and context sentence was given together.

'Every community has its own intonation pattern i.e., its own rule of changing the voice pitch when uttering the sentence. The fluctuations of voice pitch of the individuals follows, consciously as well unconsciously, these patterns. Those whose intonation does not coincide with these patterns are considered as foreign speakers. (Foreign, in the broad sense, meaning "strange" or "peculiar" or "alien"). Those who are not familiar with these patterns

naturally miss the subtle " overtones<sup>M</sup> of the sentence spoken' (Nien-Chuang T. Chang, 1958). The findings of the present study does not substantiate the above statement.

This may be due to several factors :

- (a) The speaker might not have made enough variations in intonation with different contexts, even though he was a native speaker. However, no subject felt it as 'foreign ' ' or strange ' or ' alien '.
- (b) The language used, Kannada, may permit the use of same or similar intonation pattern in different contexts.

Thus the study indicates the complexity of intonation and the need for further studies in the area.

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