RUMANIAN INTONATION STEREOTYPES
Lauretia Dascalu-Jinga
Institute of Phonetics and Dialectology,
Bucharest, Romania

ABSTRACT
Relying on the criterion of intonation-text relation, the author proposes a classification of intonation stereotypes (ISs) into three categories: (1) ISs depending on a grammatical structure, e.g. Verb+Indefinite Article+Noun etc; (2) ISs representing a higher degree of connection between intonation and text, e.g. intonations specific to some idiomatic phrases; (3) ISs occurring in the absence of any text, i.e. the intonations of "hummed messages" used to express "Yes", "No" etc.

0. PRESENTATION
We propose a "intonation stereotype" (IS) as used here is meant to be more comprehensive than "stylized tones" or "clichés mélodiques"; it refers to a more or less fixed pattern which is necessarily associated with the same semantic and/or pragmatic content.

1. INTONATION STEREOTYPES DEPENDING ON A GRAMMATICAL STRUCTURE
1.1. The exclamative structure ce "what" + noun may have two intonational variants: - a one-peaked pattern: an upskip to the accented syllable of the noun is followed by a downskip; e.g.:

ce bogăț! "What abundance!"
- a two-peaked pattern: with the first peak on the exclamatory word and the second one on the accented syllable of the noun; e.g.:

ci te tabări! "How many pictures!"

1.2. The structure ce + noun can be also used with a somewhat opposite attitude, i.e. that of rejecting the partner's statement. In some cases, this rejecting exclamation is pronounced in the low part of the voice, with a slightly falling intonation and therefore a narrow pitch range. Since in Rumanian the main function of ce is the interrogative one, the rejecting IS may be contrasted to the "homonymous" interrogative pattern; compare:

Speaker A: Speaker B:
vrea să eleve am găsit o i-
in Himalaia. deo pentru "He wants to film. "I've

leave for Hi- got an idea
malaia." for the movie. Speaker B: Speaker B:

Ce idee! Ce idee?

What an idea! What's the i-
dea?

1.3. A high degree in terms of expressiveness (superlative) may be expressed in Rumanian, beside other devices, by using the structure verb + indefinite article + noun e.g.: Era un frig! "It was terribly cold!" (literally: "It was a cold!)". This "superlative" IS consists of a two-peaked pattern generally ending with a suspended high pitch: the two peaks correspond to the verb and the noun, respectively, the indefinite article being constantly pronounced on a low pitch. The last peak is usually followed by the lengthening of the last vowel on a high sustained pitch:

E o strese! "What a mess!" (Lit.: It's a mess!).

2. INTONATION STEREOTYPES REPRESENTING A HIGHER DEGREE OF CONNECTION BETWEEN INTONATION AND TEXT
This is the case of many phrases specific to any language, where a set sequence of concrete words implies a certain IS, or, as Bolinger says: "What we find is either a set intonation very restricted range of intonations as part of the set meaning" [1, 180].

Certainly, there is no string of words that has one necessary intonation [7, 180] and no intonation represents exclusively a certain text [6, 180]. In fact, to the enormous number of idioms of a given language there corresponds a rather limited number of intonations.

2.1. Most of the idioms have resulted from an ellipse, accompanied by their semantic reduction. This often creates homonymous utterances with the original ones with "full" meaning. Perhaps many languages have a number of such "expressions à deux lectures" of which one is idiomatic. In these cases, the intonation represents the only element, (beside the context), which determines the meaning, so that it has a distinctive function.

Actually, a great many of the Rumanian idioms may be regarded as "minimal pairs" of some utterances with the same wording and syntax, which are pronounced generally with a different intonation: compare:

Speaker A: Speaker A: Am nevoie de care diante a-
ut solarul este două tâ-
tă. cărți fi tre-

"I need all your wages." se two books is of use to you?"
2.2. It seems necessary to make a distinction between the expressions with a meaning by themselves and the ones which resort to the intonation [1, 276-277]. Some idioms have become "frozen" in an odd, ungrammatical form, so that they have no homonymous free pain (Lit.: "see a nose"). Generally they have a distinctive one; e.g.:

Speaker A: O să-mi dai și cărti tale. You'll give me your books too.

Speaker B: "By no means!"

3. INTONATION STEREOTYPES OCCURRING IN THE ABSENCE OF ANY TEXT

Some of these "intonation carriers" [2, 9] are uttered without opening the mouth; most of them function as different types of replies and probably it is this "sequential" position in the dialogue which makes possible their capacity of being wordless.

Some idioms are used in the Rumanian as an affirmative answer consists of two syllables formed by two syllables [m] separated by a "pure nasal aspiration which is generally voiced" [9, 8] its specific IS represents a rise on a pretty fixed interval of a major second (a slightly greater rising interval implies a rise on a pretty fixed interval of a major second, whereas in Hungarian it is characterized by a slower and smaller rise, a "bisyllabic sixth", with two peaks of intensity, one at the beginning, the other at the end of bun [5, 104].

In other languages the rising interval is different; for instance, Fonagy describes the French equivalent as a labial nasal [m] accompanied by an abrupt rise of a seventh, whereas in Hungarian it is characterized by a slower and smaller rise, a "bisyllabic sixth", with two peaks of intensity, one at the beginning, the other at the end of bun [5, 104]. In other languages still, it seems that the same IS may be used with a different pragmatic value, e.g. in United States it is heard as a gentle and shorter answer to "Thank you."

5. REFERENCES

[3] DASCĂLU, L. (1988), "Cîteve răspunsuri interogative și intonăția lor în limba română" (Some interrogative replies and their intonation in Romanian), Studii și cercetări lingvistice, 33, 39-