

A guest lecture within the ISCA Distinguished Lecturer Tour 2017-2018  
Dept. of English and American Studies, Palacký University Olomouc  
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**The linguistic and social functions of prosody**

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Prosody plays an essential role in conveying meaning in spoken communication. Research in diverse languages shows that prosody can be used to express illocutionary force, signaling the speaker's intention to inquire, declare, express surprise, etc. Prosody is also described as signaling information structure meaning, identifying how a word or phrase should be interpreted in relation to the prior discourse, e.g., referring to an entity previously mentioned, or new. Beyond these functions related to linguistic meaning, prosody also conveys paralinguistic information, about the speaker's attitude towards their interlocutor, and about the speaker's immediate affective and emotional state. *How do the linguistic and paralinguistic functions of prosody interact?* In this talk I will present highlights from two studies on American English that investigate prosodic form (phonetic and phonological) in relation to linguistic and paralinguistic meaning. The first is a study of prosodic entrainment between two speakers in a game-playing interaction, where comparison of acoustic measures of phrasal prosodic features between interacting speakers reveal distinct patterns of convergence and divergence depending on the communicative function of the utterance. The second is a study of how prosodic prominence relates to information structure, viewed from the dual perspectives of the speaker (production) and listeners (perception). These studies reveal interactions between linguistic and paralinguistic factors governing prosodic expression, which call for new ways of thinking about the representation of prosody at the phonological and phonetic levels, and theoretical approaches that integrate linguistic and social functions of language.