STRESS IN TWO-SYLLABLE AND THREE-SYLLABLE WORDS IN SEOUL DIALECT

by

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to the author's parents

Mr. and Mrs. Myung Whan Ahn.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Review of the Literature

Studies carried out on the prosodic features of English have brought fruitful results. In recent years increasing attention has been devoted to the complex linguistic problems of stress in English, and yet the complexities and the elusiveness of stress make diffficult the interpretations of investigations that have been carried out. However, compared to work done in English, studies on the prosodic features of Korean are still in the beginning stages.

The concept "stress" has been defined by various descriptive labels such as loudness, prominence, sonority, intensity, energy, volume, force, effort, etc. Concerning these labels of stress, Wang (1962:20) states that 'the labels have been traditionally used with little regard for precision and measurability' of stress. However, stress is regarded by most authorities as the force of articulation with which a syllable is uttered.

Jones (1950, 2:137) states that 'the force with which a syllable is pronounced is called stress. This force consists chiefly of pressure from the lungs...' and 'the term "stress" refers only to the degree of force of utterance...' (1956:246). For Bloomfield (1933:110, 90), stress, '---that is, intensity or loudness---consists in greater amplitude of sound waves,' and 'consists in speaking one of these syllables louder than the other or others.' Jones (1956:245) looks upon stress as an articulatory gesture, but he too insists on 'the objective impression of loudness.' However, Jones' definitions of stress, intonation, and prominence are quite clear, and his subjective evaluations of their acoustic correlates have been substantiated by psycho-acoustic and acoustic experiments.

Bolinger (1965:21) is quite careful to select the terminology in which

stress is explained, stating 'I shall refer to intensity, the physical term for amplitude of sound waves, rather than loudness, the psychological impression that varies directly with amplitude, because the experiments are based on measurements of intensity.'

Huh (1965), too, defines stress as a strong force of utterance requiring the energetic action of all speech organs. He also sees that because of the energetic action, the speaker can recognize the difference between the strongly articulated sound and the weak one. But from the listener's stand point, it is quite ambiguous to distinguish stress solely by this action. He agrees with Bolinger (1958) on the point that stress accent always occurs simultaneously with the pitch accent. Contrary to this stand is the position of Jones (1956:247): 'a hearer can distinguish by ear and a speaker can distinguish by sensation quite a number of degrees of stress, say four or five.'

Trager and Bloch (1942:35) describe stress as 'degrees of loudness' and Pike (1947, 2:250) considers that it is 'a degree of intensity upon some syllable which makes it more prominent or louder than an unstressed syllable.' Bolinger (1958:111) states that 'the idea that stress may depend on pitch is not new', and assumes stress to be a part of pitch, as a result of John Muyskens' experiment in 1931. However, Pike (1947, 1) and Jones(1956) oppose this argument by pointing out instances in which strong stresses are found in low-pitched syllables in a language. Hill (1958:27) also distinguishes stress from pitch stating that since a partial correlation between pitch and stress is not absolute, 'it remains necessary to treat pitch and stress independently.'

Bronstein (1960:244) assumes, 'stress is part of each syllable we speak, and every syllable possesses some degree of it,....' His opinion on the