Keynote-Vortrag: Carlos Gussenhoven

Thema: “Empirical approaches to word prosodic structure”

Establishing the nature of a language’s word prosodic structure can be non-trivial, as shown by the continued controversies over the word prosodic structure of languages like French and Indonesian. I assume that words may have stress, tone, stress and tone, or neither of these. Some indeterminism may arise from the fact that stress can be defined phonetically as well as phonologically in ways that do not always give the same verdict. I will report on results of production and perception data for Ambonese Malay and Nigerian English, and conclude that Ambonese Malay has neither stress nor tone and that Nigerian English has both. The Sequence Recall Task as developed by Emmanuel Dupoux and colleagues will be argued to be an important empirical probe into the lexical - as opposed to postlexical - nature of word prosodic structure. Success in this task is determined by whether prosodic markings are present in the lexicon. This is the reason why listeners with a Persian language background are ‘stress deaf’, despite the high functional load of prosodic contrasts in Persian.