How calling contours convey propositional attitudes

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Most Indo-European languages have various intonation contours to attract the hearer's attention, such as in Germanic (cf. Ladd 1978:30–32), but also outside.The pattern is illustrated below for German (1):

(1)   a.   MOTHER*: [friː. də. ˈriː. kə]*
               L+   H* !H-%

    b.   FRIEDERIKE*: [jaː. aː]*
                  L+H* !H-%

Calling contours of this type show puzzling pragmatic properties. As pointed out by Ginzburg (2012:69) and Krifka (2013), response particles such as *yes* or *no* serve as means to detect a question under discussion (QUD) which was introduced into discourse with the latest move. The big question arising in (1) is what is the QUD which is confirmed by *ja*? Inspired by Bartels (1999) and Truckenbrodt (2012: 2045–2048), it is assumed here that the intonation contour introduces a salient proposition with the content 'are you ready to cooperate with respect to the content of the message?', which being at-issue content becomes an available antecedent for response particles. Apart from that, the calling contours illustrated in (1) imposes further requirements on the context in form of non-at-issue content: (i) the speaker is not sure whether they have the hearer's attention (cf. Pierrehumbert/Hirschberg 1990:293–294). (ii) Inspired by Ladd (1978:525–532), the level boundary tone !H- is taken here to introduce a further salient proposition p_{exp} which is an speaker expectation and the fact that the expects p_{exp} to become true is known to the addressee. (iii) There is some information beneficial either to the speaker or to the hearer.

The analysis presented here is implemented in *Type Theory with Records* as suggested by Ginzburg (2012) and Cooper (2023). It builds on three ingredients: (i) a type hierarchy of prosodic constituents inspired by Klein (2000), (ii) a grammatical morpheme in form of a contour, which is the head of the speech act type call and which is licensed by a special phrasal scheme and (iii) a conversational rule licensing the use of calls.

References: • Bartels, C. (1999). *The Intonation of English Statements and Questions*. New York: Garland. • Ginzburg, J. (2012). *The interactive stance: meaning for conversation*. Oxford University Press. • Krifka, M. (2013). Response particles as propositional anaphors. In T. Snider (ed.), *Proceedings of SALT 23*. Santa Cruz, CA. 1–18. • Ladd, R. D. (1978). Stylized intonation. *Language* 54(3), 517–540.