

## **Basque prosodic features in Spanish: language contact and social factors**

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Within the growing field of research on phonetic and phonological issues of language contact and bilingualism, aspects of suprasegmental phonology have started receiving more attention, especially in prosody and intonation. A particularly interesting issue is that the presence of features of a language variety (LV-A) in another language variety (LV-B) is variable within the contact population. The main goal of this paper is to show that individual social factors of speakers of LV-A may help explain the differences among speakers in the degree of presence of LV-B features. Such factors can be the degree of contact of LV-A speakers with LV-B speakers and the attitudes of LV-A speakers towards LV-B and the LV-B ethnolinguistic group. [1], [2], [3] and [4] constitute work along these lines, on intonational features of Catalan and Basque in the variety of Spanish spoken in Majorca and the Basque Country and the presence of English intonational features on the variety of Polish spoken by Polish immigrants.

The present study analyzes the prosodic characteristics of the variety of Spanish in contact with Basque (in the Basque Country and in Navarre, Spain). We focus on information-seeking yes/no questions, which present different intonation contours in Spanish and Basque. In Castilian Spanish these sentences end in a rising contour ([5], [6], [7], [8], among others), whereas in Basque they end in a falling or rising-falling circumflex contour (cf. [9], [10], [11], [12]). For Madrid Spanish, [13] report a majority of falling final contours in yes/no questions in spontaneous speech, but according to the authors' descriptions, the questions displaying falling contours are topic-continuers or confirmation-seeking rather than neutral or information-seeking, like in our study. In fact, [13] report final rising contours for absolute interrogatives that initiate a topic, like the interrogatives in our study. Our interrogatives were obtained from semi-directed interviews, where the interviewer (the subjects of our study) asked questions on topics related to the interlocutor's life and his/her views on Basque, Spanish and the Basque and Spanish ethnolinguistic groups. We present data from semi-directed interviews in Spanish with 36 speakers (monolingual Spanish, L1 Spanish-L2 Basque and L1 Basque-L2 Spanish) from urban and rural areas in the Basque Country and Navarre. This study continues our previous work on this topic ([2],[4]) by including speakers from Navarre.

All the speakers presented a substantial presence of Basque-like intonational contours at the end of information-seeking interrogatives regardless of their linguistic profile, but speaker differences in the degree of presence of such features were also observed. Greater variability was found in urban settings, where Spanish is pervasive, and a positive correlation was observed between attitudes towards Basque and the degree of prosodic convergence with this language: the more positive the attitudes, the greater the degree of convergence. Our interpretation of this correlation is that the adoption of the characteristic Basque prosody allows speakers to be recognized as members of the Basque community. However, in rural settings the prosodic realization of the absolute interrogatives was falling almost 100%, and no correlation was found with attitudes towards Basque. Our interpretation is that in rural areas the presence of Basque in daily life is stronger, and that there is a consolidated variety of Spanish used by all speakers regardless of their attitudes. Thus, the adoption of intonating features of this language is not the only indicator belonging to the Basque ethnolinguistic group.

Our study reveals the great relevance of subjective social factors, such as language attitudes, in the degree of convergence between two languages.

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