

Title: The Emergent Prosodic System(s) of Bilbao-area Standard Basque

This study contributes to the larger body of research concerned with the prosodic systems and strategies of the Basque dialects currently spoken in Southern Basque country, with a focus on speakers of the Standard Basque dialect. While the major prosodic systems of the traditional Basque dialects are pitch-accent based, when Standard Basque was codified by the Basque Academy, no consideration was given to prosody, and so the standard defaults to stress-accent (as described by Elordieta & Hualde, 2014). To that end, the prosodic systems currently employed by speakers of Standard Basque ultimately relies on the resources that individuals and speaker groups are relying on in their productions. The present study aims to address the current research gap in the lack of intonational and prosodic analysis at the phrase level by addressing the following questions: (a) what are the acoustic correlates of accentual prominence in Standard Basque, and (b) what factors, if any, affect these correlates.

Data was collected from 6 Basque-Spanish bilinguals whose primary Basque dialect is the standard, through two production experiments: words in isolation, and neutral declaratives & yes-no questions. In Task 1, participants were prompted with a list of 26 common polysyllabic words in three different forms (a bare form, with the genitive singular postposition, and with the genitive plural postposition) with a 2x2 design for syllable count and structure (heavy or light syllables). In Task 2, speakers were prompted to produce neutral declaratives & yes-no interrogatives using a smaller selection of the same words used in Task 1 embedded in two simple verb constructions.

Although results largely corroborate previously reported patterns of Standard Basque adhering to a stress-accent prosodic system, they cannot be said to support them unconditionally. We found evidence that f_0 , duration, and intensity can all be used to signal accentual prominence as found in Gaminde et al. (2015), Rodríguez-Ordóñez & Gillig (2018), and Rodríguez-Ordóñez (2019). However, there is a hierarchy of force such that some correlates are more indicative of prominence, and speakers will not necessarily employ all three properties in an utterance. Additionally, we found variation in whether or not speakers treated suffixed words as single accentual units or if the suffix morphemes were treated as extrametrical, dependent upon speaker contact with Northern Bizkaian Basque dialects. In the phrasal level utterances, most speakers showed the expected downstep, but some produced utterances with pitch patterns more reminiscent of Southern Bizkaian Basque.

Ultimately, while the data set is not large enough to make definitive statements about the overall prosodic system(s) used by Standard Basque speakers in the Bilbao-area, there is sufficient enough data to note that idiolectal variation within a group of speakers covers a broad range of strategies. It can also be said that these strategies are heavily dependent upon the other languages and dialects that are in speakers' repertoires and in their environment. To that end, a closer look at language dominances, dialect contact, and how speakers (and interlocutors) perceive the "nativeness" of a speaker, both cognitively and socially, is worth further investigation.