

Mixing L1 and L2 intonation: L1 Korean in L2 English and L2 Spanish

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It is well known that L2 speech is influenced by the phonology and phonetics of L1 in both segmental and suprasegmental/prosodic aspects of speech (Flege 1995, Best and Tyler 2007, Li & Post 2014, Mennen 2015). Since ToBI is a transcription system of phonological properties of prosody and intonation, thus language-specific and dialect-specific (Beckman et al. 2005), transcribing the intonation and prosodic system of L1-accented L2 speech challenges the ToBI transcription system. Pan_Mandarin ToBI (Peng et al. 2005) uses a “code” tier to tag the identity of a specific variety of Mandarin as well as to mark the points of code-switching between varieties of Mandarin (e.g., “<GY” at the beginning of Guoyu Mandarin and “<RGH” at the beginning of Rugaohua Mandarin). However, this type of tag is not suitable to capture the prosodic event where L1 prosodic feature is mixed with L2 prosodic feature in the same word or syllable when the prosodic system of L1 is very different from that of L2.

In this talk, we will show how intonational categories and prosodic structure of L2 English and L2 Spanish produced by L1 Korean speakers show a mixture of English and Korean or Spanish and Korean prosodic systems, respectively. In addition to the difference in word prosody (English and Spanish have lexical stress while Korean doesn't), English and Spanish differ from Korean in the number of prosodic units and how each unit is intonationally marked (Jun 2005a, Beckman & Pierrehumbert 1986, Prieto and Roseano 2010). Unlike English and Spanish, Korean has an Accentual Phrase (AP), a tonally defined prosodic unit which is slightly larger than a word, and the AP-initial tone is sensitive to the laryngeal feature of the AP-initial segment (Jun 1998, 2005b). As expected, less proficient Korean learners more often produced AP-like tonal pattern in their L2 English and L2 Spanish when attempting to produce pitch accents, and the AP tonal pattern (i.e., rising f₀ contour over the phrase) was sometimes realized over a whole word of English/Spanish and other times only the AP-initial or - final tone was realized on the initial or final syllable of an English/Spanish word. We will discuss how to transcribe L2 speech which includes a mixed prosodic system of two languages whose prosodic systems are not similar.

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