

## **A prosodic analysis of the Spanish discourse marker *venga***

Autumn Averitt, Megan DeCleene and Jingyi Guo

Indiana University, Bloomington

It has been proposed that prosodic features contribute in a systematical way to the interpretation of discourse meaning (Hirschberg & Pierrehumbert, 1986; Pierrehumbert & Hirschberg, 1990). More specifically, certain correlation between intonation patterns and the various discourse meanings of single-word utterances (e.g. discourse markers and interjections) has been confirmed (Dascalu Jinga & Vanelli, 1996; Regan, 2016). The different pragmatic uses of the Spanish discourse marker *venga* ‘come on’ have been categorized (Stenstrom, 2010; see a review in Garnes, 2016), but a formal analysis of its intonation patterns has yet to be conducted. This study conducted a prosodic analysis of *venga* and found weak correlation between certain intonation patterns and discourse functions.

The current study employed the COLAm (*Corpus Oral de Lenguaje Adolescente de Madrid* ‘Oral Corpus of Adolescent Speech of Madrid’), which contains natural conversation among teenagers aged 13-19 from Madrid, Spain. It is the same corpus utilized in Stenstrom (2010), who classified the discourse functions of *venga* into three main categories: directive (initiate a conversational exchange), reactive (respond to the other speaker's action) and evaluative (shift the topic of conversation or as a follow-up of a reactive move). The current study classified 99 tokens of *venga* into the three main categories. The intonation pattern of each token was then described by measuring the location and F0 value of each notable shift (change of frequency higher than 10Hz) from a narrowband spectrogram. The initial F0 value of each token was recorded as Point 1, followed by all subsequent pattern shifts. No more than four points were recorded for each token. Due to the interference of other speakers or malfunctions with the recording equipment, in total the intonation pattern of 56 tokens was measured: 25 directives, 21 reactives, and 10 evaluatives.

The results revealed weak correlation between the discourse functions and intonation patterns of *venga*, due to the significant overlap of four intonation patterns (Low, Low-High, Low-High-Low and High-Low) among all three discourse categories. We found that Directives displayed most frequently the LHL (44%) and HL (32%) patterns, Reactives were mostly produced with HL (43%) pattern, with Evaluatives showing two most obvious patterns: LH (40%) and HL (40%). We proposed that the classification by Stenstrom (2010) may not accurately reflect the different

discourse functions of *venga*, which means there may be overlap between the three main discourse functions. It is suggested to apply a more accurate classification of the discourse functions and consider the subcategories as well. More detailed description of the intonation patterns, such as the timing of pitch shifts relative to the time of each token and the speed of pitch change, may help differentiate the same intonation pattern appears with two different functions.

### References

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