
Prosody and tag question forms in Glasgow Scots

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Wiltschko and Heim (to appear) discuss the role of prosody with regard to English confirmational particles like *right* and *eh*. The authors argue rising intonation is syntacticized in a “Call on Addressee” (CoA) position (Beyssade and Marandin, 2006) in the Grounding domain. The particles sit in lower Ground projections, and combine with the intonation to give the “confirmational” meaning.

(1) [CoA / [_{GroundA} eh [_{GroundS} [CP]]]]

Confirmational particles and tag questions seemingly carry out similar functions; however, English tag questions do not always have rising intonation (e.g. Ladd 1981).

Here, I will explore data from Glasgow Scots, first noted in Thoms et al. (2013). Glasgow Scots has a particle, *-int*, used only in tag questions and exclamatives.

(2) They wur leavin, **wint** they? (Thoms et al. 2013)
they were leaving, weren't they
‘They were leaving, weren't they?’

I will present the results of a grammaticality judgment experiment testing two hypotheses: firstly, that *-int* is only available in “confirmation” tag questions (Ladd 1981). Secondly, that although it looks like negation, *-int* is a CoA marker, in complementary distribution with rising intonation. If this does turn out to be the case, it will lend support to Wiltschko and Heim’s claim that prosody can be syntacticized; it will also prove interesting for the relationship between tag questions and confirmation particles.

References: • Beyssade, C. and Marandin, J.-M. (2006) “The speech act assignment problem revisited: Disentangling speaker’s commitment from speaker’s call on addressee” In *Selected Papers of CSSP 2005* 37–68 • Ladd, R. (1981) “A first look at the semantics and pragmatics of negative questions and tag questions” *CLS 17* 164–173. • Thoms, G., Adger, D., Heycock, C. and Smith, J. (2013) “Remarks on negation in varieties of Scots” Handout, Cambridge workshop on English dialects. • Wiltschko, M. and Heim, J. (to appear) The syntax of confirmational: A neo-performative analysis.