
Syntax and Prosody in expressing surprise

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In this work we consider sentences expressing surprise in Italian and German. In particular, we analyze counter-expectational questions, and exclamations and show that these utterances require the presence of a syntactic projection *EvalP* that operates on the evidence that the interlocutors have at their disposal in a given discourse situation. This *EvalP* interacts with different discourse particles and high negation and gives rise to a particular intonational morpheme that expresses the speakers attitude towards the proposition.

As for Italian, we consider examples of the following type. In a scenario where I have been told that Mario is on a diet and eats only fruit, when I see him eating a hamburger, I am surprised. The following question or exclamation is appropriate in such a case:

- (1) Ma non mangiavi solo frutta?
But not eat.IMPf only fruit?
'But weren't you eating only fruit?'
- (2) Ma è un hamburger!
But is a hamburger!
'But it is a hamburger!'

In German, the use of a modal verb is quasi-obligatory in the surprise - question and in the parallel exclamative, as is illustrated in (3) and (4):

- (3) Wolltest du nicht nur Obst essen?
Wanted you not only fruit eat?
'Weren't you going to eat only fruit?'
- (4) Aber du wolltest doch nur Obst essen!
But you wanted PAR only fruit eat!
'But should you not eat only fruit!'

References: • Giorgi, Alessandra. 2017. *Ma non era rosso?* (But wasn't it red?): On counter-expectational questions in Italian, in L. Repetti et al. (eds), *Proceedings of the 46th Linguistic Symposium on Romance Languages*. • Hinterhölzl, Roland; Munaro, Nicola, 2015. *On the interpretation of modal particles in non-assertive speech acts in German and Bellunese* in Josef Bayer, Roland Hinterhoelzl, Andreas Trotzke, *Discourse-oriented Syntax*, Amsterdam/Philadelphia, John Benjamins Publishing Company, pp. 41-70.