

The Accentual System Of Mallabia Basque

José Ignacio Hualde*, Pello Mugarza** & Koldo Zuazo**

*University of Illinois
Department of Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese
j-hualde@ux1.cso.uiuc.edu

**Euskal Herriko Unibertsitatea (UPV/EHU)
Euskal filologia
fvpzuzek@vh.ehu.es

Laburpena

Lan honetan Mallabiko hizkeraren azentuera aztertzen dugu. Azentuera hau bi euskal azentu sistema nagusi artean kokatzen da: alde batetik, iparraldeko bizkaierarena (hitz azentudunen eta azentugabeen arteko bereizkuntza bat duena eta patroi ezmarkatu bezala azentua taldearen azken edo azkenaurreko silaban), eta beste aldetik, erdialdeko azentuera (azentua bigarren silaban edo, kasu markatuan, lehen silaban). Hemen erakusten dugu Mallabiko hizkerak bi euskal sistema nagusi hauen arteko lotura historikoa ulertzeko laguntzen digula.

Abstract

In this paper we examine accentuation in Mallabia Basque. This is an accentual system that appears to be transitional between the northern Bizkaian pitch-accent system (with a lexical distinction between accented and unaccented words and phrase-final or phrase-penultimate unmarked accentuation) and the central Basque systems (with accent on the post-initial or, in the marked case, on the initial syllable). Its study thus offers us important cues to understand the historical connection about these two very different prosodic systems.

Berba gakoak: Mallabia, azentua, prosodia.

1. Introduction

In a broad western and central area of the Basque-speaking territory we find accentual systems with regular post-initial accent (where some lexical exceptions may receive initial accent instead). In the northern part of Bizkaia, on the other hand, we find a rather different accentual system, reminiscent of that of Tokyo Japanese, where there is a lexical distinction between accented and unaccented words, the latter subject to a rule of phrase-final accentuation in certain contexts. In Hualde (to appear) it is claimed that this Northern Bizkaian system represents a more conservative stage and several historical developments are proposed for the emergence of postinitial accent as a general pattern. In particular, it is claimed that the accentual system employed nowadays in the Mallabia dialect is a transitional type that sheds light on one of these possible diachronic routes. In this paper we describe the patterns of accentuation in Mallabia Basque in greater detail, since there are no other published descriptions of this accentual system¹

¹ Although Gaminde's (1998) survey of Basque accentual types contains a brief mention of the

Mallabia is a township of approximately 1110 inhabitants located about 15 km south of Markina and only 3 km to the west of the urban area of Ermua and Eibar. Its accentual system, although related to those of the Markina and Gernika areas, has a number of very interesting specific features. As mentioned, it represents a transitional type from the Northern Bizkaian pitch-accent system towards the system with generalized accent on the second syllable (with exceptional accent on the first) found in some other neighboring areas such as Durango and Elorrio.

2. Accentual patterns

In their citation form (which for nouns and adjectives is the absolutive singular, e.g. stem + article /a/ -- or /e/ after a high vowel), words in Mallabia Basque can be classified along two accentual dimensions: the position of the accent and the shape of the accentual pitch contour. Considering pitch-accent shape first, in some words, the pitch rises on the accented syllable and has an abrupt fall on the posttonic. We will refer to this pitch-contour as "acute accent". In a

Mallabia dialect (pp. 83-84), it overlooks the most interesting features of this system.

lexically contrastive fashion, other words bear a “grave accent”, instead, in which the pitch also rises on the accented syllable but falls gradually towards the end of the word or phrase. Regarding the position of the accent, on the other hand, the accent may be located either on the first or on the second syllable of the word. All words accented on the initial syllable have an acute accent, whereas among those accented on the second, some have acute accent and some others have grave accent. By far the largest group is that of words with grave accent (on the second syllable) in their citation form. All of this is summarized and illustrated with examples in (1):

(1) Words in citation form

I. Marked classes: Acute accent (rapid fall)

Ia. Acute initial accent: *égixe* ‘truth’

Ib. Acute post-initial accent: *erròtarixe* ‘whetstone’

II. Unmarked class: Grave accent (slow fall).

Always on the second syllable: *mendixe* ‘mountain’, *erròtarixe* ‘miller’.

Minimal or near-minimal pairs can be found across both accentual dimensions of contrast, as shown in (2):

(2) (Near-)minimal pairs

a. Acute postinitial vs. grave

<i>frutéru</i> ‘fruit-bowl’	vs.	<i>frutèru</i> ‘fruit-seller’
<i>atàkie</i> ‘attack’	vs.	<i>atàkie</i> ‘gate’
<i>sagùtxue</i> ‘little mouse’	vs.	<i>sagùtxue</i> ‘shrew’
<i>erròtarixe</i> ‘whetstone’	vs.	<i>erròtarixe</i> ‘miller’

b. Acute initial vs. acute post-initial

<i>áskurie</i> ‘itch’	vs.	<i>askórie</i> ‘axe’
<i>bárrie</i> ‘bar’	vs.	<i>barrìe</i> ‘laughter’

c. Acute initial vs. grave post-initial

<i>ártie</i> ‘art’	vs.	<i>artìe</i> ‘live-oak’
<i>bárrie</i> ‘bar’	vs.	<i>barrìe</i> ‘laughter’
<i>básie</i> ‘base’	vs.	<i>basìe</i> ‘mud’
<i>párie</i> ‘pair’	vs.	<i>parìe</i> ‘shovel’
<i>sárie</i> ‘large basket’	vs.	<i>sarìe</i> ‘net’
<i>básue</i> ‘drinking glass’	vs.	<i>basùe</i> ‘forest’
<i>págue</i> ‘payment’	vs.	<i>pagùe</i> ‘beech tree’
<i>séru</i> ‘zero’	vs.	<i>serùe</i> ‘sky’
<i>sáltzie</i> ‘the selling’	vs.	<i>saltziè</i> ‘sauce’
<i>bégire</i> ‘looking’	vs.	<i>begìre</i> ‘more or less’

The acute/grave distinction is illustrated with a minimal pair in figure (1).

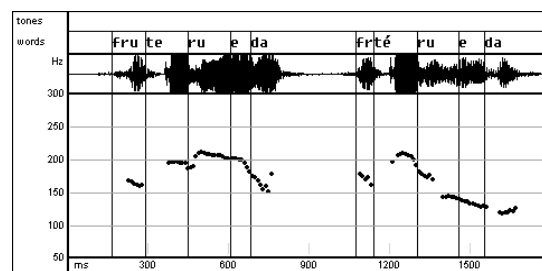


Figure 1: (a) *frutèru da* ‘it is the fruit seller’
(b) *frutéru da* ‘it is the fruit bowl’

As we can see in figure 1, in both examples the pitch rises on the second syllable (the curve is interrupted here because of the voicelessness of the /t/). The difference is that in (1a) the pitch continues rising in the posttonic before it starts to fall. In (1b), on the other hand, there is a rise and a fall within the accented syllable and a much steeper fall to the end of the utterance.

If we consider the behavior of these different accentual classes in non-phrase-final position, we discover that acute-accent words have a rise-fall pitch accent (as in their citation form), which causes the downstep of the accent on a following word. On the other hand, grave-accent words show a relatively high slowly falling plateau after the rise and, crucially, do not induce downstep of the accent on the next word in the phrase. Thus, if we compare, for instance, the examples in (3), a clear difference is that in the first example of each pair of sentences the second accent is downstepped (reduced) with respect to the first accent, whereas in the second example of each pair either the second peak is

higher or both accentual peaks reach approximately the same level:

(3)

1. lagùnān alàbiē da
'it is the friend's (sg) daughter'
- lagúnen alàbiē da
'it is the friends' (pl) daughter'
2. lagùnān alábak die
'they are the friend's (sg) daughters'
- lagúnen alábak die
'they are the friends' (pl) daughters'

In figures 2 and 3, we include Fo tracings for the two pairs in (3):

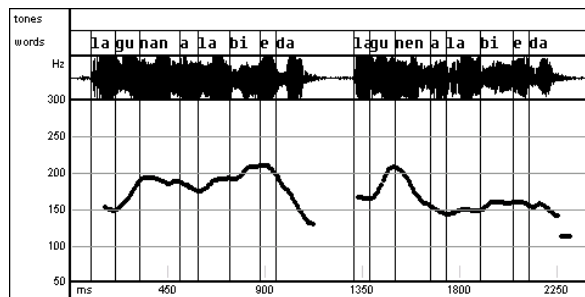


Figure 2: (a) *lagùnān alàbiē da* 'it is the friend's (sg) daughter'
(b) *lagúnen alàbiē da* 'it is the friends' (pl) daughter'

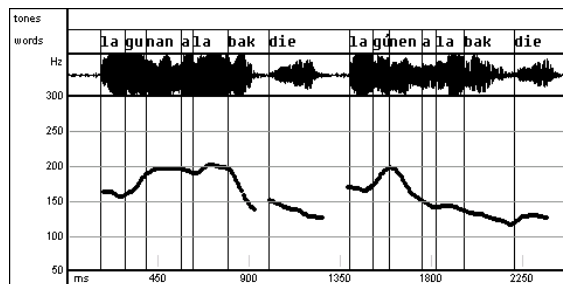


Figure 3: (a) *lagùnān alábak die* 'they are the friend's (sg) daughters'
(b) *lagúnen alábak die* 'they are the friends' (pl) daughters'

As can be seen in figures 2 and 3 a major difference between the (a) and (b) contours is in the scaling of the second peak. Both *alàbiē* 'the daughter' in figure 2 and *alábak* 'the daughters' in figure 3 present a much lower peak in the (a) example than in the (b) example. The acute accent of the genitive plural form *lagúnen* 'of the friends' is manifested as a steep fall after the

accented syllable which triggers the reduction of the second accent in the phrase, whether this second accent is grave as in figure 2b or acute as in figure 3b. On the other hand, in the (a) examples, where the genitive singular *lagùnān* 'of the friend' has a grave accent, there is no downstep. The second accent of the phrase is realized as a higher peak than the first accent in both figures 2a and 3a.

Clearly the acute/grave distinction in Mallabia is related to the accented/unaccented distinction found in other Bizkaian varieties (see Hualde 1991, 1996, 1997, 1999, 2000, Hualde & Bilbao 1992, 1993, Hualde, Elordieta & Elordieta 1994, Elordieta 1997, Hualde, Elordieta, Gaminde & Smiljanic 2002). The main difference is that instead of the high plateau or slightly rising contour up to the end of the phrase that, with lexically unaccented words, we find in other Northern Bizkaian varieties, in Mallabia we find a slowly falling contour beginning in the posttonic. This has resulted a reinterpretation in the perception of prominence, as argued in Hualde (to appear).²

Accentual distinctions play a major role in inflected nominal forms in Basque. For words in the unmarked class, singular and plural forms often have different accentuation. In the next section we examine the accentuation of inflected nominals.

3. Accentuation of inflected nominal forms

As in other western varieties, singular and plural forms often contrast in accentuation. An interesting fact of the Mallabia dialect, not found in any other variety that has been described until now, is that words with vowel-final bisyllabic stems differ from other words in their accentuation in the plural. Furthermore, /i/-final stems, which undergo epenthesis of a consonant *x* /S/ between the stem and vowel-initial inflectional suffixes, are treated as consonant-final for accentual purposes.

The unmarked pattern is grave accent in most singular forms and post-initial acute accent in the plural and ablative singular, as shown in the following partial paradigm for /mendi/ 'mountain':

- (4) *mendi* 'mountain'

² An intermediate step in this evolution undoubtedly was the retraction of the accent from the final syllable of the phrase to the penultimate, as in neighboring Markina and Ondarroa (Hualde 2000, to appear).

By and large, the accentuation of these forms corresponds closely to what has been described for some northern Bizkaian varieties (the Gernika-Getxo type, Hualde 1999, among others). For the most part, the grave-accent forms correspond to the unaccented forms of these other varieties. In particular, the anomalous accentuation of the ablative singular (which has acute accent) with respect to other singular forms is general in Bizkaian. One difference with respect to other dialects is found in the comitative, which is accented in both singular and plural in other Bizkaian varieties, although the accent oftentimes falls on different syllables in the two numbers; e.g.: Gernika sg *lagunégas* ‘with the friend’, pl *lagúnekin* ‘with the friends’; Markina sg. *lagúnas* pl *lagúnekin*.

We find the same pattern with all consonant-final and (epenthesis-triggering) /i/-final stems and also with vowel-final stems of three or more syllables, as illustrated in (4) with the absolutive singular and plural:

(5)

- a. Consonant-final stems (including /i/-final)

uninflected stem	sg	pl
ogi ‘bread’	ogixe	ogíxek
gison ‘man’	gisóna	gisónak
lagun ‘friend’	lagùne	lagúnek
katedral ‘cathedral’	katèdrala	katédralak
katamixer ‘squirrel’	katàmixerra	katámixerrak
bersolari ‘verse-singer’	bersòlarixe	bersólarixek
arrijasotzaille ‘stone-lifter’	arrijasotzaillie	arrijasotzaillak

- b. Vowel-final stems of three or more syllables

alaba ‘daughter’	alàbie	alábak
abade ‘priest’	abàdie	abádiek
kategorixa ‘category’	katègorixie	katégorixak
astakume ‘baby donkey’	astákumie	astákumak
basamortu ‘desert’	basàmortue	basámortuek

On the other hand, bisyllabic stems ending in a vowel other than /i/ show a shift of the accent to the initial syllable in all plural forms (but not in the ablative singular, even though this form

also has an acute accent), this is illustrated in (5) with a partial paradigm of *etxe* ‘house’. Further examples, in the absolutive, are given in (6):

(6) Vowel-final bisyllabic stems: *etxe* ‘house’

	sg	pl
Absolutive	etxie	étxiek
Ergative	etxiek	étxiek
Dative	etxiai	étxiei
Genitive	etxian N	étxien N
Benefactive	etxiantzat	étxientzat
Inessive	etxien	étxietan
Allative	etxèra	étxieta(ra)
Ablative	etxétik	étxietatik

(7) Other examples of vowel-final bisyllabic stems

lora ‘flower’	lorie	lórak
kale ‘street’	kalie	káliek
asto ‘donkey’	astùe	ástuek
esku ‘hand’	eskùe	éskuek

Phrase-final accent is generally avoided. This results in retraction of the accent to the first syllable of two-syllable words in final position:

(8) Phrase-final retraction

<i>baltz</i> ‘black’	<i>bàltza</i> ‘the black one’
	<i>baltzà da</i> ‘it is the black one’

cf. pl: *báltzak* ‘the black ones’, *báltzak die* ‘they are black’

The phrase-final retraction rule has an exception in allative forms, which can be optionally contracted: *etxèra* ~ *etxà* ‘to the house, allative sg.’

What we have said so far applies only to words in the unmarked class (= grave accent in citation form, abs sg). All words that have an acute accent in the absolutive singular (and in their uninflected form, whether on the initial or on the post-initial syllable), keep the accent on that syllable throughout their inflectional paradigm. With these exceptional words there is no accentual distinction between singular and plural:

(9) Marked class: acute stems

músker 'lizard'	múskerra	múskerrak
txístu 'flute'	txístue	txístuek
líburu 'book'	líburue	líburuek
léngusu 'cousin'	léngusue	léngusuek
báserrri 'farm'	báserrixe	báserrixek
arráno 'eagle'	arránue	arránuek
basérrittar 'farmer'	basérrittarra	basérrittarrak

Consequently with what we have said, many of the minimal pairs given above in (2) are not distinguished in the plural:

(10) Minimal pairs

fruteru 'fruit-seller'	frutèrue	frutéruék
frutéru 'fruit-bowl'	frutérué	frutéruék

4. Marked words (acute accent in citation form)

As mentioned, words with an acute accent in their citation form are exceptional (i.e. they form a relatively small class). As in other western and central Basque dialects with an accentually exceptional or marked class, these words fall into two main groups: (a) compounds and words with certain derivational suffixes and (b) borrowings, some of them very old. In addition, there is a small residue of words of unclear origin. In general, it seems that the Mallabia dialect has fewer marked words than some other Bizkaian varieties whose lexicon has been explored from this point of view, such as Lekeitio and Getxo.

4.1. Compounds

Many compounds have acute accent, including productively created compounds. The accent may be on the first or the second syllable. Most compounds with initial accent have a monosyllabic first member. (i.e. the accent tends to occur on the first member of the compound). Nevertheless, it is not the case that all compounds have marked accent. Instead, we find some rather idiosyncratic sub-regularities. For instance, compounds with *-ar* 'male' and *-eme* 'female' have acute accent, but those with *-kume* 'child, offspring' do not:

(11) Compounds

Ia. Acute initial accent

óill-arra 'rooster', ást-arra 'male donkey', ást-emie 'female donkey', kát-arra 'tom cat', kát-emie 'she-cat', áititte

'grandfather', ánk-utzik 'with bare legs', áraiñ-eun 'day before yesterday' (standard Basque heren-egun, lit. 'third day'), báltz-unie 'black spot', bás-errixe 'farm' (lit. 'forest-village'), és-ola 'pole' (hesi-ola 'fence board'), étx-aurre 'façade (house-front)', íl-gora 'waxing of the moon (moon-up)', léngosue 'first cousin', ít-turren 'guiding oxen'.

Ib. Acute postinitial accent

labáde-gaixe 'seminarian' (cf. abàdie 'priest'), adár-soñue 'joke (lit. horn-play)', afál-ostie 'after dinner' (cf. afàrie 'supper'), aitté-besuetako 'godfather', aitté-iñarreba 'father-in-law', aitté-ordie 'step-father', aitté-santue 'the Holy Father', alb-ágiñe 'side tooth', amá-iru 'thirteen', amá-saspi 'seventeen', amá-sulo 'mommy's child' (lit. mother-hole), anáixa-ordie 'step-brother', anká-lusie 'long legged' ank-ártie 'between the legs', ank-ókerra 's.o. with crooked legs', aó-sabala 'talkative (wide-mouth)', arró-putze 'proud', artáberdie 'green corn', artá-lorie 'corn flower', asá-burue 'head of cabbage', bet-ókerra 'with crooked eyes', astélana 'Monday' (BUT astègune 'week day'), barré-gurie 'laughter', jakín-gurie 'desire to know', esán-gurie 'meaning', bas-éri-ttara 'farmer', baskál-ostie 'after dinner', burú-aundixe 'big-head, type of bird, lanius collurio' (BUT burú-bidie 'reasoning'), burú-surixe 'white headed' dirú-aldixe 'time when there is money', egú-astena 'Wednesday', egú-barrixe 'Christmas (day-new)', egú-ena 'Thursday', egún-sentixe 'dawn', egúr-iketza 'wood coal', egón-esiñe 'restlessness', biótz-errie 'heart burn', erbí-txakurre 'hare dog, hound', errú-bakue 'blameless', esné-beixe 'milk cow', estú-aldixe 'hard times (narrow-time)', gabón-sar 'New Year's eve', geldí-unie 'resting time' gibél-urdiñe 'type of mushroom, russula viriscens (back-blue)',³ ipúrt-

³ This example shows that the meaning of *urdin*, nowadays 'blue' or 'gray', must have included the meaning 'green' at an earlier time (in which sense it has been replaced by the borrowing *berde*), since this mushroom's color is a deep green.

argixe ‘lighting bug (buttocks-light)’, j-án-arixe ‘food’, negár-gurie ‘desire to cry’ jun-étorrixie ‘round trip (go-come)’ kardú-latza ‘hard thistle’ (BUT kardù-berie ‘soft thistle’), karrámarrue ‘crab’, lurr-íkerie ‘earthquake’, otz-íkerie ‘tremor’, mutíl-sarra ‘bachelor (boy-old)’, udé-barrixe ‘spring (summer-new)’.

II. Grave accent

astà-kumie ‘baby donkey’, katù-kumie ‘kitten’, axè-lekue ‘windy spot’, basà-katue ‘wild cat’, basò-mutille ‘lumberjack (forest-boy)’, bisì-modue ‘lifestyle’, eskòn-barrixe ‘newly-wed’, jaix-ègune ‘holiday’, jan-èdana ‘food and drink’.

4.2. Derived words

Most derived words have unmarked grave accent, but some derivational suffixes induce acute accent:

(12) Derived words

I. Acute accent

-ti: áis-tixe ‘oak grove’, sagás-tixe ‘appletree grove’, maás-tixe ‘vineyard’, ló-tixe ‘sleepy’

-ka: adár-ka ‘hitting with horns’ (cf. adarra ‘horn’), arrí-ke ‘throwing stones’

-kera: adár-kerie ‘horn shape’ (BUT adárkadie ‘length of horns’), ibíl-kerie ‘manner of walking’, orrás-kerie ‘way of combing, hairdo’, lús-erie ‘length’

-tza: dirú-tzie ‘amount of money’, lastó-tzie ‘pile of straw’, lagún-tzie ‘help’ morrón-tzie ‘serfhood’

-ero: áste-ro ‘weekly’, egún-ero, íll-ero, úrte-ro

-dun: ardí-dune ‘sheep owner’, motór-dune ‘motorized’ (BUT ulesuridüne ‘s.o. with white hair’)

-en: báltz-ena ‘blackest’

-ago: báltz-ague ‘blacker’

-egi: báltz-egixe ‘too black’

II. Grave accent

-garri: berò-garrixe ‘heater’

-tasun: berò-tasune ‘heat’

-lari: bersò-larixe ‘verse-singer’

As in other Bizkaian dialects, specific accentual patterns are applied to Spanish borrowings with certain endings. For instance, borrowings from Spanish *-ero* words have acute accent when the meaning is ‘place, receptacle’ but grave accent when the meaning is ‘profession, occupation’, as we see in the example in figure 1.

4.3. Loanwords

Many words in the acute accent class are borrowings, both very old and recent:

(13) Acute-accent borrowings

Ia. Initial

ábixie ‘nest’ < Lat. cavea, ántzarra ‘goose’ < Lat. anser, árbolie ‘tree’, árrixkue ‘risk’, átuén ‘immediately’ < Sp. en el acto, béspérie < Sp. víspera, dántzie ‘dance’, déndie ‘store’, dénporie < Lat. tempora ‘time’, dómekie ‘Sunday’, dúrdurie ‘type of bird, turdus viscivorus’, gánbarie ‘attic’ < Lat. camera, gónie ‘skirt’, íngurue < Lat. in gyrum ‘surrounding area’, káixolie ‘cage’, kíkerie ‘pitcher’ < Sp. jícara, kínddie < Sp. guinda, kórtie ‘yard’, kúlpie ‘blame’, kúbixe ‘Guinea pig’ < Sp. cuy, lándarie ‘plant’, lángie ‘planck’, lápitze ‘pencil’, lékue < Rom. lueco, líburue ‘book’, máixue ‘teacher’, mállue ‘hammer’, périxie ‘market day’ < Sp. feria, póspolue ‘match’, sápatue ‘Saturday’, téllatue ‘roof’.

Ib. Postinitial

arkóndarie ‘shirt’, askórie ‘axe’ < Lat. asceola, asúkrie ‘sugar’, bentánie ‘window’, domínistikue ‘sneeze’ < Lat. dominus tecum, erlójue ‘watch’, errégiñie ‘queen’ < Lat. regina, errékie ‘creek’, eskólie, itxúrie ‘aspect’ < Sp. hechura, kittérie ‘guitar’, koméntue ‘convent’, martítzena < Lat. Martis eguna ‘Tuesday’, puxíkue < Lat. uessica ‘bladder’, afróntue ‘squall’, bandérie ‘flag’.

Many borrowings have an acute accent on a different syllable from the source:

(14) Borrowings with accent shift

abíonetie < Sp. avionéta, abánikue ‘fan’ < Sp. abanico, aiúntamentue < Sp. ayuntamiento, dinámittie < Sp. dinamita, dispáratie ‘nonsense’ < Sp. disparate, elétronikie < electrónica, errébistie < Sp. revista, errégalue < Sp. regalo,

errémedixue < Sp. remedío, errépublikie < Sp. república, errétoliekie < Sp. retórica, eskármientue < Sp. escarmiento, eskúpetie < Sp. escopéta, espáratrapue < Sp. esparadrápo, estémangue < Sp. estómago, gasóliñie < Sp. gasolína, kalábasie < Sp. calabáza (BUT kalidadie), kontrábandue < Sp. contrabándo ‘smuggling’ (BUT kontrábandistie), mansánillie < Sp. manzanílla ‘camomille’.

Although clearly there are certain tendencies, in general it appears that the accentuation of borrowings is not completely predictable. Thus, to give just one example, whereas Sp. *grámo*, *gráno* give *grámue*, *gránue*, respectively, from Sp. *grádo* we have *gradüe*.

4.4. Other exceptional items

Finally, besides from compounds and derived words and various types of loanwords, there is also a relatively small group of acute-accent words of uncertain etymology. By and large, the same items belong to this group in all western and central varieties that recognize an accentually exceptional class:

(15) Words of uncertain etymology with acute accent

Ia. initial

bélarrixie ‘ear’, ábaue ‘honey comb’, ádorie ‘vigor’, árrautzie ‘egg’, átzie ‘back part’ áurrie ‘front’, báskarixe ‘dinner’, énderie ‘Spanish lg.’, éuskerie ‘Basque lg.’, éuskixe ‘sun’ (< eguzki < egu(n) ‘day’ + ?), béstie ‘other’, gánorie ‘skill’, gárrasixe ‘cry’, íntxaurre ‘walnut’ (< ? + ur ‘hazelnut’), ístarrixe ‘throat’, ítaixe ‘scythe’, máixe ‘table’, mállie ‘level’, múskerria ‘lizard’, órratza ‘needle’, símaurre ‘fertilizer’, tálue ‘pancake’, txálué ‘applause’, txíngorra ‘hail’, úsaba (< ugazaba) ‘boss’

Ib. post-initial

adábagixe ‘mending’, arránue ‘eagle’, asérixie ‘fox’, berákatza ‘garlic’ burdúntzixe ‘roasting spit’, erfñotza ‘laurel’, errúkixe ‘pity’, goróstixe ‘holly’, ílex aquifolium’, lapíkue ‘cooking pot’, orkátillie ‘ankle’, otzárie ‘basket’, úrdaixe ‘lard, bacon’ (< urde ‘pig’ + gai ‘matter’?).

5. A comparative/diachronic perspective

The acute/grave contrast lends the Mallabia accentual a certain amount of complexity. As mentioned at the beginning of the paper, undoubtedly this contrast is diachronically related to the accented/unaccented distinction found in Northern Bizkaian. In an area from Getxo to Gernika, phrases composed entirely of lexically unaccented items receive final accent when focalized. In these phrases, the pitch rises at the beginning of the phrase and stays high up to the last syllable, where it falls, as shown in the example on the left in (16) with a schematic contour. Accented words, on the other hand, present a sharp fall immediately after the accented syllable, as in the corresponding plural example on the right:

(16) Gernika-Getxo

lagunena dá	lagúnena da
‘it is the one of the friend’	‘it is the one of the friends’

In Lekeitio we find essentially the same contrast, with the difference that (almost) all lexical accents have shifted to the penultimate syllable of the word:

(17) Lekeitio

lagunena rá	lagunéna ra
‘it is the one of the friend’	‘it is the one of the friends’

In Ondarroa and Markina, unaccented phrases receive phrase-penultimate accent, instead of phrase-final accent. In Markina, where, in this particular case, the lexical accent of the plural form is on the same syllable as in Gernika, the resulting constrative patterns are as in (18), whereas in Ondarroa, where the accent of the plural form has been shifted as in Lekeitio, the pitch patterns are as schematized in (19):

(18) Markina

lagunaná da	lagúnena da
‘it is the one of the friend’	‘it is the one of the friends’

(19) Ondarroa

lagunaná ra	lagunána ra
'it is the one of the friend'	'it is the one of the friends'

In all these systems, in the lexically unaccented case the pitch remains high up to the final (in Gernika-Getxo and Lekeitio) or the penultimate syllable (in Markina and Ondarroa) and this is the syllable that is perceived as carrying accentual prominence. In Mallabia, instead, we find a slow fall from the third syllable of the phrase to the end (generally more pronounced in the last two syllables), a fact that has caused the perception of prominence to be transferred to the second syllable:

(20) Mallabia

lagùnana da	lagúnena da
'it is the one of the friend'	'it is the one of the friends'

Fo tracings for these Mallabia examples can be observed in figure 4:

Notice that in the (a) example in figure 4, after the abrupt rise on the second syllable, the peak continues rising and the fall does not begin until the penultimate syllable. There thus seems to be a certain amount of variation on the precise point where the fall starts in grave-accent words/phrases. Although the patterns do not differ greatly from those found in Markina, the location of the fall in unmarked words and phrases is not well-demarcated with respect to the end of the phrase, and this seems to have led to a perceptual reanalysis where now the rise on the second syllable is seen as the locus of the accent.

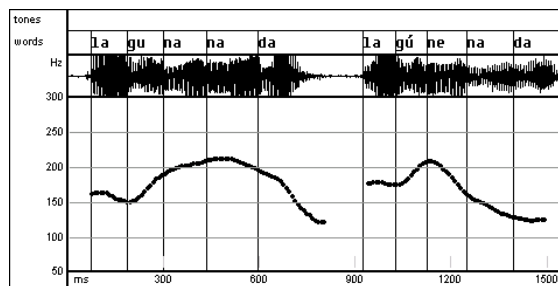


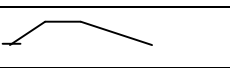
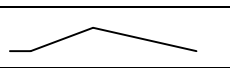
Figure 4:

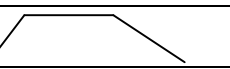
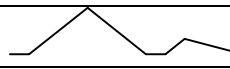
- (a) *lagùnana da* 'it is the one of the friend'
 (b) *lagúnena da* 'it is the one of the friends'

It is easy to envision how a system of the Mallabia type can be transformed into a much simpler system. It would be enough for some children to fail to acquire the rather subtle acute/grave distinction. The result would be a system where most of the time the accent would be on the second syllable (< former grave and postinitial acute), and exceptionally we would have initial accent. In this reanalyzed system, thus, words accented on the second syllable, whether they used to bear a grave or an acute accent, would fall together in one class, and would contrast only with those words that are accented on the initial. This is indeed what we find in some neighboring areas such as Durango, Elorrio and Elgoibar.

The accentual system employed by conservative Mallabia speakers (i.e. those with the acute/grave distinction), however, remains very similar to the Northern Bizkaian pitch-accent type, which has a contrast between lexically accented and unaccented words. In particular it is very close to the Markina subtype. In fact, whereas 'grave accent' is an appropriate characterization of the pattern that these words show in phrase-final position, we saw above that grave-accent words do not cause downstep of a following accent, unlike acute-accent words (figure 2). This suggests that grave-accent words are actually lexically unaccented, and that the rise on the second syllable is a phrase-boundary phenomenon. This is confirmed when these words are placed phrase-medially, as in, *gure lagùnana da* 'it is the one of our friend', *gure lagunan alàbie da* 'it is our friend's (sg) daughter'. In this medial context we can see that a grave-accent word such as *lagùnana(a)* loses its prominence altogether (since the rise takes place on the second syllable of the phrase), whereas this prominence is preserved in the corresponding acute-accent plural forms, conveyed by a rapid fall immediately following the accented syllable:

(21) Mallabia: Grave vs. acute in non-phrase-final position

	
gure lagunana da	gure lagúnena da
'it is the one of our friend'	'it is the one of our friends'

	
gure lagunán alàbie da	gure lagúnen alàbie da
'it is the daughter of our friend'	'it is the daughter of our friends'

Consider the Fo tracings in figure 5:

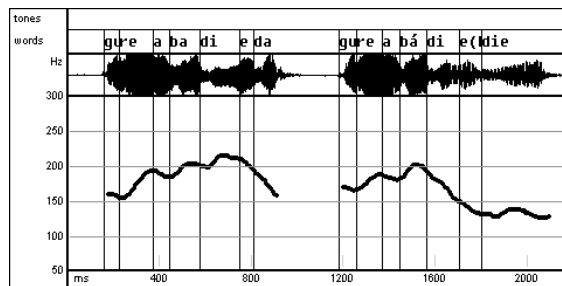


Figure 5: (a) *gure abàdie da* 'he is our priest'
(b) *gure abádiek die* 'they are our priests'

In both examples in figure 5, the main rise takes place on the second syllable of the phrase, *-re*. In the figure 5a example, the rise continues until the antepenultimate syllable *-di-*, with small intervening dips that can be considered microprosodic effects produced by the voiced consonants /b/ and /d/. In the figure 5b example, containing the acute plural form *abádiek* 'the priests', the pitch rises up to the lexically accented syllable, where a steep fall starts.⁴

Given these facts, we can analyze Mallabia Basque as possessing the same lexically accented vs. lexically unaccented distinction that we find in the Northern Bizkaian area. The main difference is in the tonal contour of phrases composed of unaccented items. In Lekeitio, for instance, these phrases clearly have final accent. In Ondarroa and Markina, they have penultimate accent in an equally clear fashion. Here is where we consistently find a fall in pitch. In Mallabia,

⁴ Further research is, however, necessary to determine to what extent the initial rise has become a word-level, as opposed to phrasal, phenomenon in Mallabia.

on the other hand, we have seen that the location of the fall is earlier than in these other dialects and appears to be more variable. This, we have suggested, has produced a shift of the locus of prominence to the second syllable of the phrase, characterized by a clear rise.

The other remarkable fact about Mallabia accentuation that we have noted is the leftwards shift of the accent in the plural of words with vowel-final bisyllabic stems.

6. References

- Elordieta, G. (1997). Accent, tone and intonation in Lekeitio Basque. In Fernando Martínez-Gil and Alfonso Morales, Front (eds.), *Issues in the Phonology and morphology of the major Iberian languages*, 3-78. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown Univ. Press. [Revised version in *Anuario del Seminario de Filología Vasca 'Julio de Urquijo'* 32 (1998): 511-569.]
- Gaminde, I. (1998). *Euskaldunen azentuak*. Bilbao: Labayru Ikastegia.
- Hualde, J.I. (1991). *Basque phonology*. London: Routledge.
- Hualde, J.I. (1996). Accentuation and empty vowels in Ondarroa Basque: Against the concept of phonological derivation. *Lingua* 99: 197-206
- Hualde, J.I. (1997). *Euskararen azentuerak*. Donostia/San Sebastián & Bilbao: Gipuzkoako Foru Aldundia & Euskal Herriko Unibertsitatea (Supplements of *Anuario del Seminario de Filología Vasca 'Julio de Urquijo'* 42)
- Hualde, J.I. (1999). Basque accentuation. In van der Hulst, Harry, ed., *Word prosodic systems in the languages of Europe*, 947-993. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Hualde, J.I. (2000). On system-driven sound change: Accent shift in Markina Basque. *Lingua* 110: 99-129.
- Hualde, J.I. (to appear). From phrase-final to post-initial accent in western Basque. In: Fikkert, Paula & Haike Jacobs, eds., *Development in prosodic systems*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Hualde, J.I. & X. Bilbao. (1992). A phonological study of the Basque dialect of Getxo. *Anuario del Seminario de Filología Vasca Julio de Urquijo* 26: 1-117.
- Hualde, J.I. & X. Bilbao. (1993). The prosodic system of the Basque dialect of Getxo: A metrical analysis. *Linguistics* 31: 59-85.
- Hualde, J. I., G. Elordieta & A. Elordieta. (1994). *The Basque dialect of Lekeitio*. Bilbao and Donostia-San Sebastián: Univ. del País Vasco

and Supplements of *Anuario del Seminario de Filología Vasca Julio de Urquijo*.
Hualde, J. I., G. Elordieta, I. Gaminde & R. Smiljanic. (2002). From pitch-accent to stress-accent in Basque. In Carlos Gussenhoven & Natasha Warner (eds.), *Laboratory Phonology* 7, 547-584. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.