

The path of the innovative [ts̺] sound in Andalusian Spanish: A sociophonetic story

Abraham Carrasco Portillo
abraham.carrasco92@gmail.com

This study analyses the synchronic variation of the heterosyllabic consonantal cluster /st/ produced as an affricate [ts̺] in two locations from Western Andalusia in Spain: Seville, an urban environment, and Paradas, a rural town. In this study the aim is to determine the possible origin and the path the change is following using the apparent-time hypothesis; so age and origin of the speakers are the social variables and three acoustic parameters are used to describe the recorded sounds: VOT, Centre of Gravity (CoG) and closure duration.

The lenition of the implosive /-s/ produced by debuccalisation and the various phenomena it triggers was already studied in this Spanish region by early dialectologist like Alvar (1955). Depending on the process used by the speaker a different solution comes as a result, e.g.: pre- and post-aspiration, gemination... However, various authors (Moya, 2007; Ruch, 2008; Vida, 2015) have recently recorded and studied the affricate variant mainly in cities: Seville, Málaga and Antequera and Moya identifies Seville as a possible irradiator of this sound.

For the current paper, thanks to a conducted interview, semi-spontaneous speech of 49 speakers divided in two age groups for each location was analysed. As mentioned, only urban environments have been studied for this reason with this research we are aiming to shed some light on this subject studying the speech in a smaller town and contrasting the results with the already obtained for the cities. This comparison can help determine the path this sound is taking and whether we might be facing a change from below.

The acoustic parameters chosen helped classifying the tokens in the different variants registered and how the realisations of this cluster were distributed among the different age groups and localities. The analysis showed that VOT was longer for younger than for older speakers, although there was no significant difference between speakers from Paradas and Seville. CoG was higher for younger speakers and significantly higher in speakers from Paradas. The relation between the VOT and the closure duration mimicked the results in previous studies (Moya, 2007) showing that speakers who present a longer closure produce geminates while a shorter closure is usually associated to post-aspirate or affricate variants.

These results indicate that the affricate is found more often in Paradas than in Seville. In addition, it is shown that elder generations tend to produce a post-aspirated stop rather than an affricate. These findings suggest that the origin of the innovative sound might be in rural areas, rather than in urban, which supports the hypothesis of this being a change from below, that is gaining more popularity among the speakers living in cities.

References

- Alvar, M. 1955. Las hablas meridionales de España y su interés para la lingüística comparada. *Revista de filología de España*, 39, 284-313.
- Moya Corral, J. A., Baliña, L., & Cobos, A. M. 2007. La nueva africada andaluza. *Las hablas andaluzas y la enseñanza de la lengua. Actas de las XII Jornadas sobre la enseñanza de la lengua española*, 275-285.
- Ruch, H. 2008. La variante [ts̺] en el español de la Ciudad de Sevilla: aspectos fonéticos-fonológicos y sociolingüísticos de un sonido innovador. *Romanisches Seminar der Universität Zürich*.
- Vida Castro, M. 2015. "Resilabificación de la aspiración de /-s/ ante oclusiva dental sorda. Parámetros acústicos y variación social". Cabedo Nebot, Adrián (ed.): *Perspectivas actuales en el análisis fónico del habla. Tradición y avances en la fonética experimental*. Universidad de Valencia, 7, 441-451.