**Two Types of Rising Declaratives: Speaker Dependent Perception of Intonational Cues**

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**Introduction**

(1) Assertive Rising Declaratives \[5\], \[9\]  
My name is Anna?  
I'm calling from Edinburgh?  

(2) Inquisitive Rising Declaratives \[2\], \[4\]  
You met president Obama?  
The manager has been notified?

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**Main Argument**

(1) The distinction between assertive vs. inquisitive rising declaratives \[1\], \[6\]  
Psychologically real; brings about distinct conventional effects

**Summary:** Effects relating to speaker/adresssee certainty about proposition, politeness, authority, etc. crucially depend on whether the listener classifies a rising declarative as a question or an assertion.

(2) Factors that influence assertive vs. inquisitive interpretations: not restricted to differences in form (intonation); social factors

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**Experiment**

Declarative/polar interrogative sentences with diverse likelihoods (e.g. Ellen is married, Maria was in a spaceship)

Produced by 4 speakers (2 female, 2 male) Manipulated in intonation (from level base)

- **Rising1**
- **Rising2**
- **Rising3**
- **Falling**

**Materials**

Declarative/polar interrogative sentences with diverse likelihoods (e.g. Ellen is married, Maria was in a spaceship)

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**Procedure**

400 participants from Amazon MTurk

(Q1) Most likely interpretation? (forced choice)  
(a) info-giving (b) info-seeking (c)...

(Q2) How certain is the speaker that \(p\)? \(0-100\)

(Q3) How certain is the speaker that the addressee knows whether \(p\)? \(0-100\)

(Q4) How polite did s/he sound? \(0-100\)

(Q5) How authoritative did s/he sound? \(0-100\)

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**Intonational effect**

Participants’ choices for illocution from Q1  
(y-axis, in %) plotted by intonation (x-axis)

- **Assertion**
- **Question**

**Gender effect**

Female speakers (with same degree of rise): more Question interpretations

**Conventions**

Rating for sp. certainty (Q2 & sp. - addr. certainty (Q2-Q3) plotted by illocution (Q1)

- **Assertion**
- **Question**

**Conte(n/x) effect**

Choices for illocution (%) plotted by intonation & content (minimal triplet; 3 panels)

- ** Assertion**
- **Question**

**Social meanings**

Rating for politeness (Q4) and authority (Q5) plotted by choices on illocution (Q1)

- **Assertion**
- **Question**

**Conclusion**

Choice between assertive vs. inquisitive rising declaratives sociolinguistically meaningful: e.g. more Qs attributed to women

Different conventional & social effects for assertive vs. inquisitive rising declaratives

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**References**


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