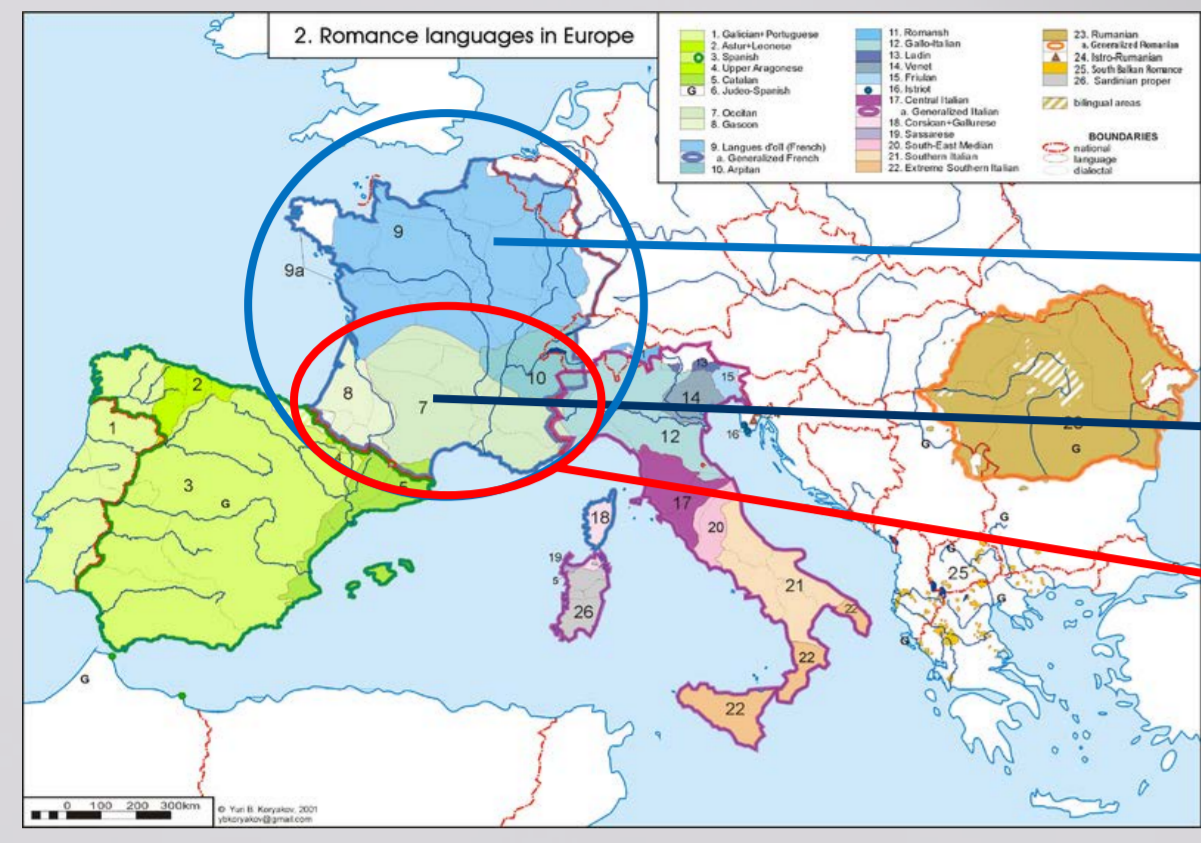


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INTRODUCTION

OCCITAN AND FRENCH WITHIN ROMANCE



Northern French
Southern French
Occitan

Intensive long-lasting diglossic contact (no more Occitan monolinguals, many interferences between both languages)

FOCUS IN GALLO-ROMANCE

Focus: concept related to the **salience** of a constituent that introduces **unpredictable information** in the discourse (Lambrecht 1994)

Focused constituent: **syntactically and/or prosodically highlighted**

Association of nuclear accent with focus

→ **focus in situ**; post-focal material: deaccented, but not dephrased (Chen & Destruel 2010) in assertions / copy of the nuclear contour in questions (Jun & Fougeron 2000)

However, nuclear accent normally **rightmost** in the clause → syntactic movements may help associate focus with it:

- (right or left) **dislocation of given elements** (Vallduví 1990)

→ focus in clause-final position receives nuclear accent

French: Les mandarines, je les ai MANGÉES, et les bananes, je les ai DONNÉES À MÉLANIE.
The tangerines, I them have EATEN, and the bananas, I them have GIVEN TO MELANIE.
I have EATEN the tangerines, and I have GIVEN MELANIE the bananas.

- **raising of the focused constituent to FocP** in the left periphery (Rizzi 1997)

→ nuclear accent on focus, pitch range compressed on the main clause

Occitan: Las MANDARINAS, m'agrada mai.
The TANGERINES, me please more.
I prefer TANGERINES.

- **cleft sentence:** given information embedded in a subordinate clause

→ nuclear accent on focus, pitch range compressed on the subordinate clause

French: Ce sont DES ORANGES que je veux, pas des citrons.
This are OF-THE ORANGES that I want, not-of-the lemons.
Occitan: Son D'IRANGES que vòli, pas de citrons.
Are OF ORANGES that I-want, not of lemons.
I want ORANGES, not lemons.

Accentual Phrase initial accents may mark contrast → focus in situ

French: J'ai MANGÉ les mandarines, et j'ai DONNÉ les bananes À MÉLANIE.
I have EATEN the tangerines, and I have GIVEN the bananas TO MELANIE.
I have EATEN the tangerines, and I have GIVEN MELANIE the bananas.

METHODOLOGY

SPEAKERS

11 Occitan speakers from La Cauna/Lacaune (Tarn, France), all bilinguals in French
10 southern French speakers from La Cauna/Lacaune (Tarn, France), different degrees of proficiency in Occitan
5 northern French monolingual speakers from Lille (Nord, France)

DATA: SITUATIONS QUESTIONNAIRE

Speakers were asked to imagine a set of everyday-life situations and were asked to react adequately, thus producing utterances with different semantico-pragmatic meanings (Prieto 2001)

Situations for statements:

- **Broad focus statement (S0):**

Look at the picture and tell what Marie/Maria is doing.

Oc: "Maria manja una banana." ("Maria is eating a banana.")
Fr: "Marie mange une banane." ("Marie is eating a banana.")



- **Corrective focus 1 (SF1):**

You are in a store where the shopkeeper is a little bit deaf. You have asked her for a kilo of oranges, but she starts to give you lemons/tangerines instead. Tell her that what you want is oranges.

Oc: "Vòli d'IRANGES, pas de MANDARINAS." ("No, I want ORANGES, not TANGERINES.")
Fr: "Ce sont des ORANGES que je veux, pas des CITRONS." ("No, I want ORANGES, not LEMONS.")

- **Corrective focus 2 (SF2):**

You are talking with a friend about two mutual friends of yours who want to buy a new house. You are disagreeing about the location of the house they plan to buy: you are sure that they are going to live in Nîmes, but your friend is convinced that they are moving to Bordeaux/Marseille instead. Tell your friend with conviction that they are not, that they are going to live in Limoges/Nîmes.

Oc: "Non, viuràn a NIMES." ("No, they're going to live in NIMES.")
Fr: "Non, ils vont vivre à LIMOGES." ("No, they're going to live in LIMOGES.")

Situations for yes-no questions:

- **Neutral yes-no question (Q0):**

You enter a store that you have never been in before and ask whether they have tangerines.

Oc: "Avètz de mandarinas?" ("Do you have tangerines?")
Fr: "Est-ce que vous avez des mandarines?" ("Do you have tangerines?")

- **Focus 1 (QF1):**

You were explaining bad things about Marie/Magdalena with someone and you hear somebody approaching. Ask your interlocutor if the person who is coming is Marie/Magdalena.

Oc: "Es pas la MAGDALENA qu'arriba?" ("Isn't it MAGDALENA who is coming?")
Fr: "C'est pas MARIE qui arrive?" ("Isn't it MARIE who is coming?")

- **Focus 2 (QF2):**

Someone tells you that a friend of yours, called Jean/Jordi, wants to run in the municipal elections. You cannot believe Jean/Jordi would run in an election. Incredulously, ask for confirmation.

Oc: "Lo JORDI se presenta a las municipalas?" ("JORDI is running for mayor?")
Fr: "JEAN se présente à la mairie?" ("JEAN is running for mayor?")

PROCEDURE

Separation of the utterances:

- by **syntactic types**:

Statements: (S)(V)O order / cleft / elliptic / presentative (elliptic cleft)

Yes-no questions: Fr: VSO order / headed by "est-ce que" / SVO order

Oc: headed by "es que" or not

- by the **position of focus within the Intonation Phrase**: medial / final

Prosodic labeling in Praat (Boersma & Weenink 2010) in the Oc_ToBI and Fr_ToBI transcription systems

Comparison of the prosodic realization of focus for each syntactic type and position with broad focus conditions

RESULTS

FOCUS IN STATEMENTS

Syntactic structures

AF1	(S)V	O	cleft	presentative	elliptic	TOTAL
Northern Fr.	3	2	0	1	6	
Southern Fr.	2	7	0	5	14	
Occitan	7	6	1	0	14	
TOTAL	12	15	1	6	34	

AF2	(S)V	O	cleft	presentative	elliptic	TOTAL
Northern Fr.	7	0	0	0	7	
Southern Fr.	8	2	0	0	10	
Occitan	12	2	1	0	15	
TOTAL	27	4	1	0	32	

Main structures: canonical word order (S)V(O), but also cleft (more cleft and elliptic sentences in situation AF1 than AF2)

No major differences between linguistic varieties

Prosodic features of focus

Broad focus: nuclear configuration = mainly fall (L* L%) in all varieties

Narrow focus: focused element more salient than the rest of the utterance, always bears a **pitch accent** (very often the nuclear one), generally followed by a **prosodic break** (lengthening and H, IH or L ip- or IP-final boundary tone) but **huge variety of contours**

SF1	AP-initial rise	IP-medial rise	IP-/ip-final fall	Fall from high pretonic	IP-/ip-final high fall	IP-/ip-final rise-fall	TOTAL
Northern Fr.	3	0	1	1	1	0	6
Southern Fr.	1	1	0	4	6	2	14
Occitan	1	1	1	2	8	1	14
TOTAL	5	2	2	7	15	3	34

SF2	AP-initial rise	IP-medial rise	IP-/ip-final fall	Fall from high pretonic	IP-/ip-final high fall	IP-/ip-final rise-fall	TOTAL
Northern Fr.	1	1	0	1	1	2	6
Southern Fr.	3	0	0	2	3	2	10
Occitan	0	1	5	2	3	5	16
TOTAL	4	2	5	5	7	9	32

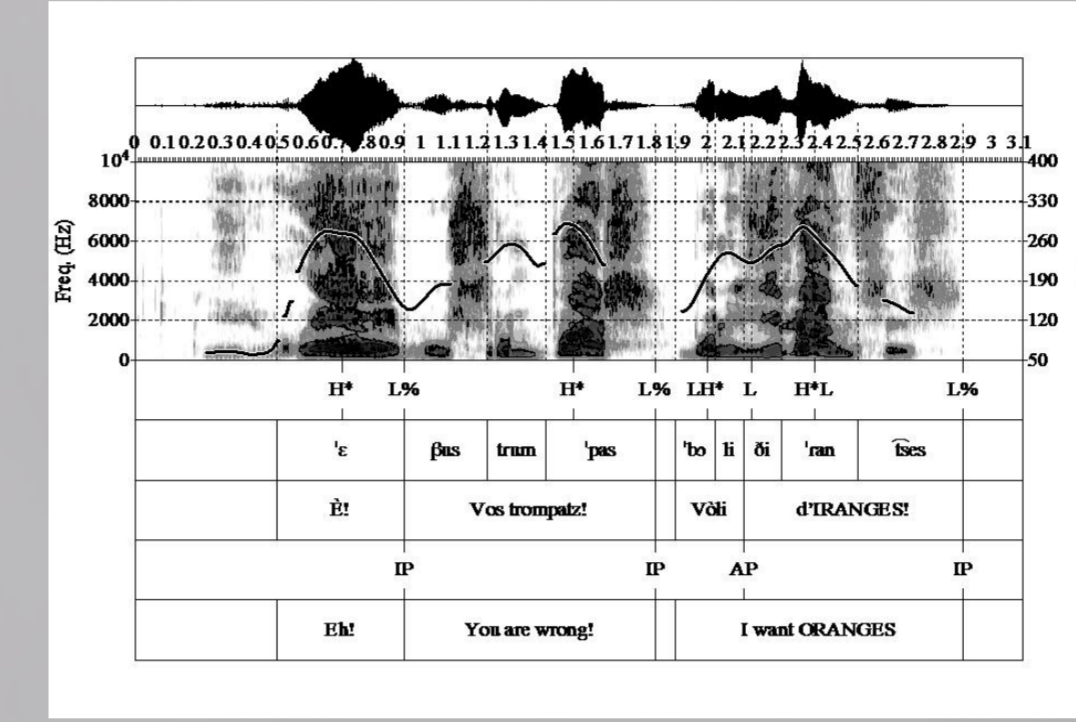
Main contours:

High fall: progressive rise towards a peak in the first half of the accented syllable, followed by a fall

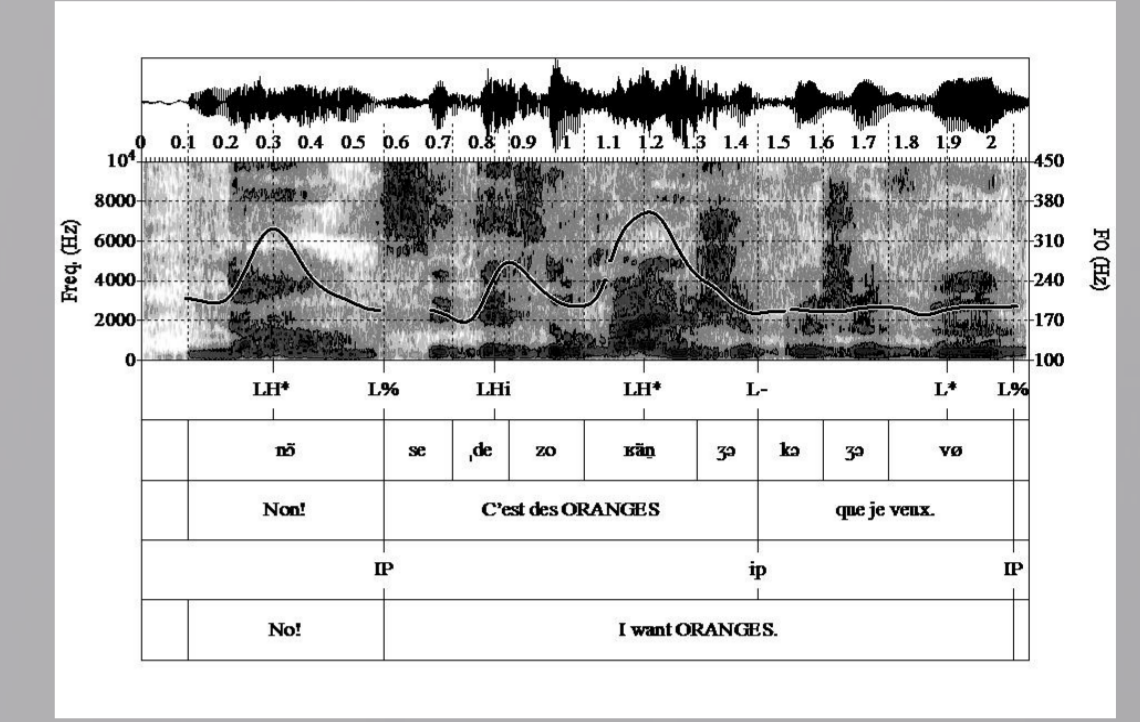
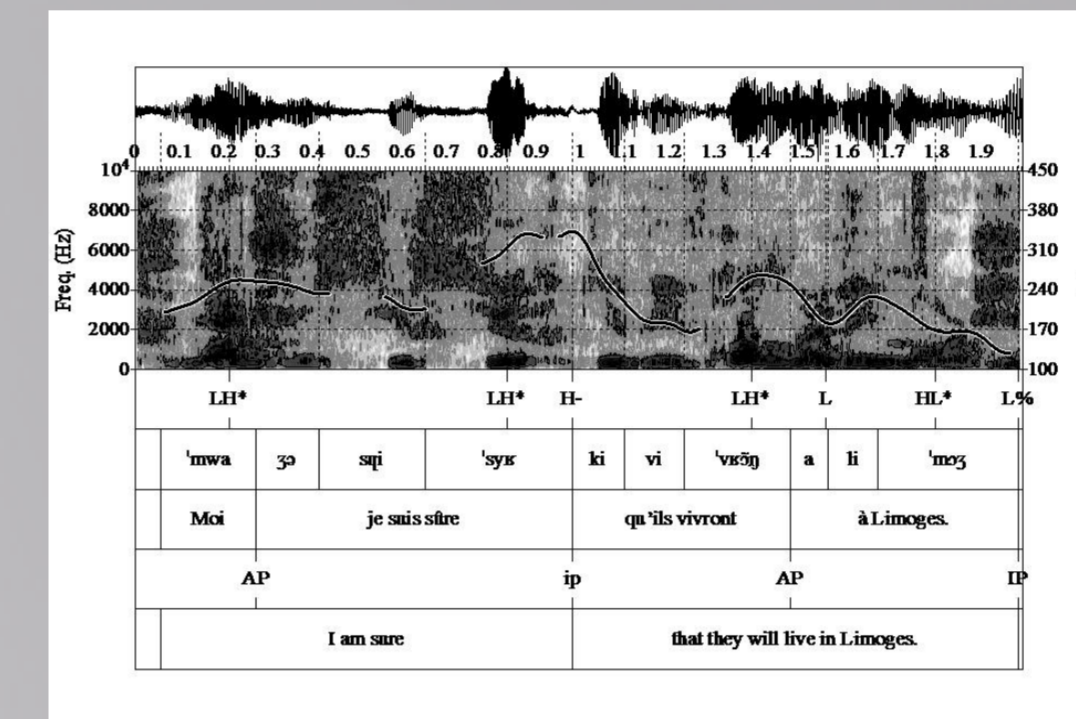
(mostly in southern varieties, more frequent in SF1 than in SF2)

Rise-fall: rise within the accented syllable, followed by a fall – expressive contrastive focus (Di Cristo 1998)

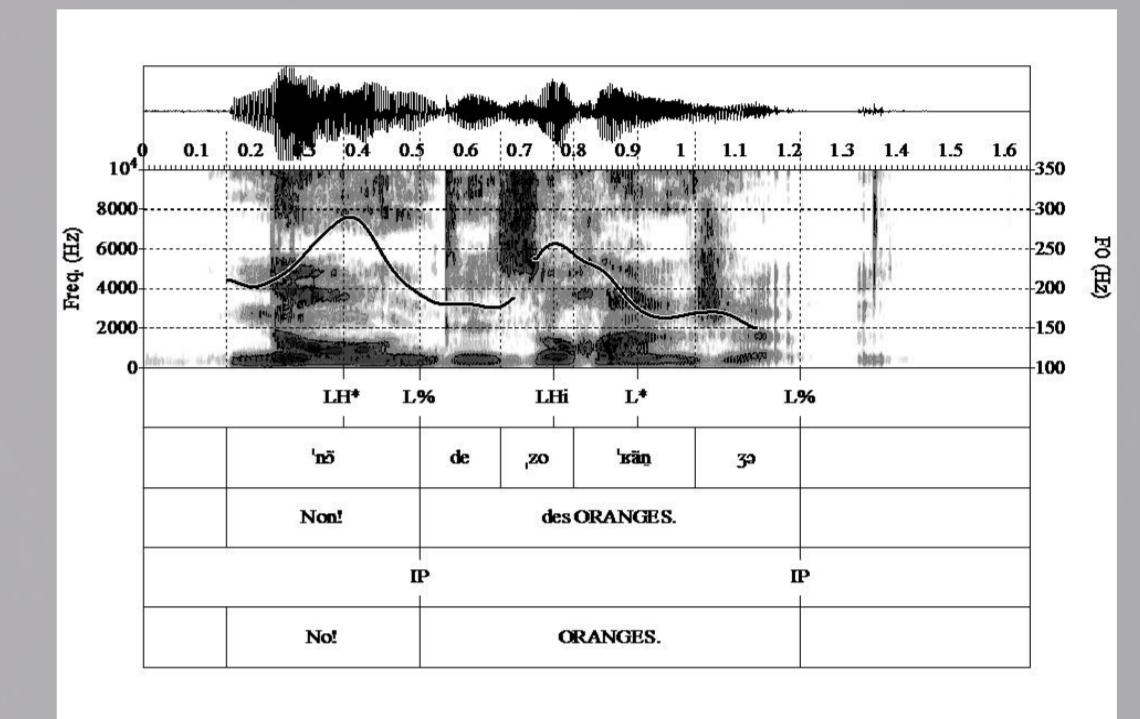
(more frequent in SF2 than in SF1)



Fall from high pretonic: progressive rise towards a peak in the preaccentual syllable, followed by a fall



AP-initial rise: in SF1, more frequent in northern French – objective contrastive focus (Di Cristo 1998)



FOCUS IN YES-NO QUESTIONS

Syntactic structures

Q0	headed	VSO	SVO	TOTAL
North. Fr.	4	0	1	5
South. Fr.	2	6	2	10
Occitan	2	8	10	20
TOTAL	8	14	3	25

QF1	headed	VSO	SVO	TOTAL
North. Fr.	0	0	5	5
South. Fr.	2	1	6	9
Occitan	0	11	11	22
TOTAL	2	12	11	25

QF2	headed	cleft	SVO	LD	TOTAL
North. Fr.	0	0	3	2	5
South. Fr.	1	6	2	1	10
Occitan	1	7	3	0	11
TOTAL	2	13	8	3	26

Questions headed by Oc. "es que" or Fr. "est-ce que": mostly for Q0, but also present in QF1 and QF2

Canonical word order V(S)O: mainly in southern varieties, identical to declarative word order in Occitan (pro-drop)

Cleft: absent in Q0, always in QF1, also very frequent in QF2

Focus left dislocation (LD): present in QF2

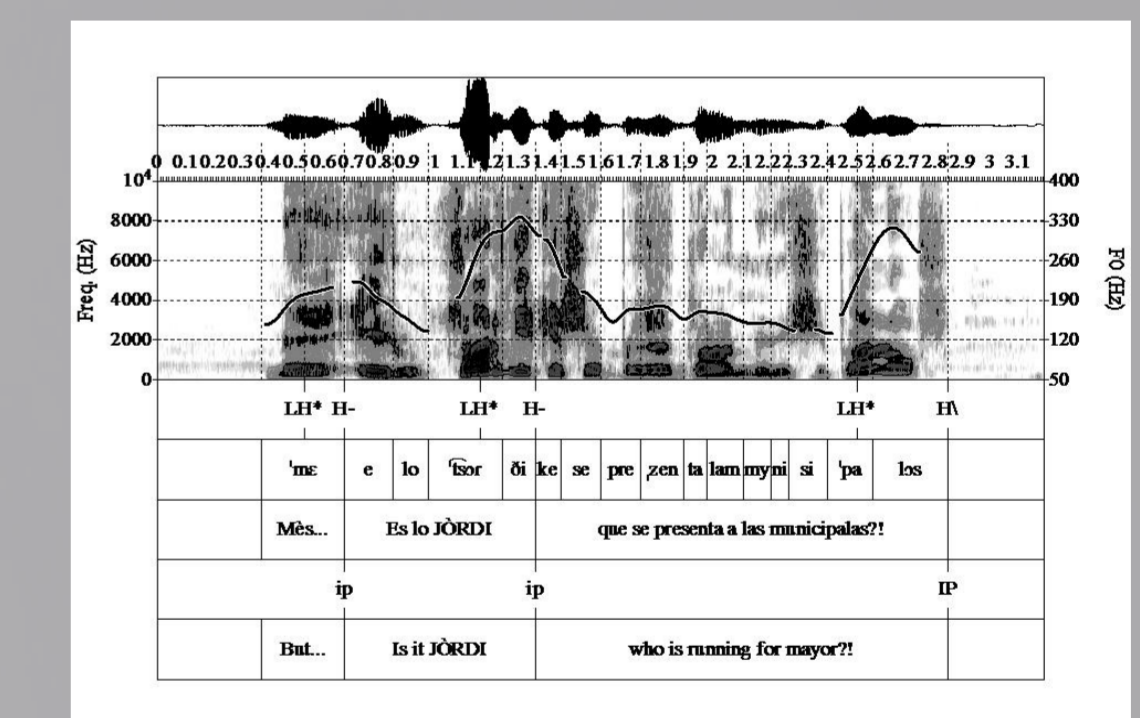
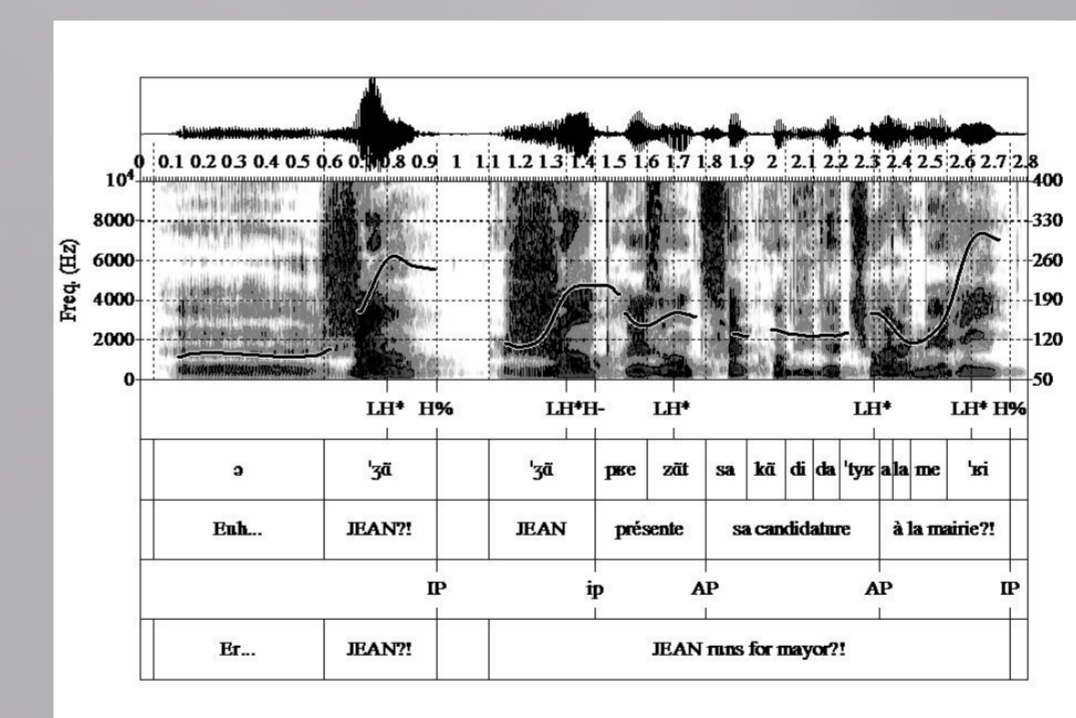
Declarative word order (S)V(O): more frequent under focus conditions than in Q0, undetectable in Occitan (pro-drop)

Prosodic features of focus

Broad focus (all linguistic varieties): 1 prenuclear rise ((L)H* or (L)Hi) + 1 nuclear rise (LH* H%)

Rising-falling (LH* L%) or falling (!H* L% or L* L%) nuclear configurations also possible in questions headed by Oc. "es que" or Fr. "est-ce que"

Narrow focus: focused element more salient than the rest of the utterance, always bears an **extra rising pitch accent** (LH*), usually followed by a **prosodic break** (lengthening and H- boundary tone), mostly in southern varieties



CONCLUSIONS

In Occitan as in French, a **focus constituent** is always more **prominent** than the others in an utterance. This relative salience is achieved by **accenting** the constituent and generally placing a **prosodic break** after it, instantiated by lengthening and a boundary tone, and often deaccenting or reducing pitch range on other constituents.

In statements, many different pitch contours may be used to highlight the focus: a high fall, a rise-fall, a fall from a high preaccentual syllable, an AP-initial accent, a simple IP-internal rise or even a nuclear fall as in broad focus statements. However, high falls occur more frequently in Occitan and in southern French than in northern French, which appears to be an interference phenomena of Occitan onto the French contact variety.

In change, **yes-no questions** show a great consistency in realizing both nuclear and focal accents as sharp rises in both languages. Neutral yes-no questions often display only two rises: one at the beginning and one at the end in nuclear position. Extra rises may serve to highlight focal constituents.

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