

Aligning the syntax and intonation of contrast in Galician

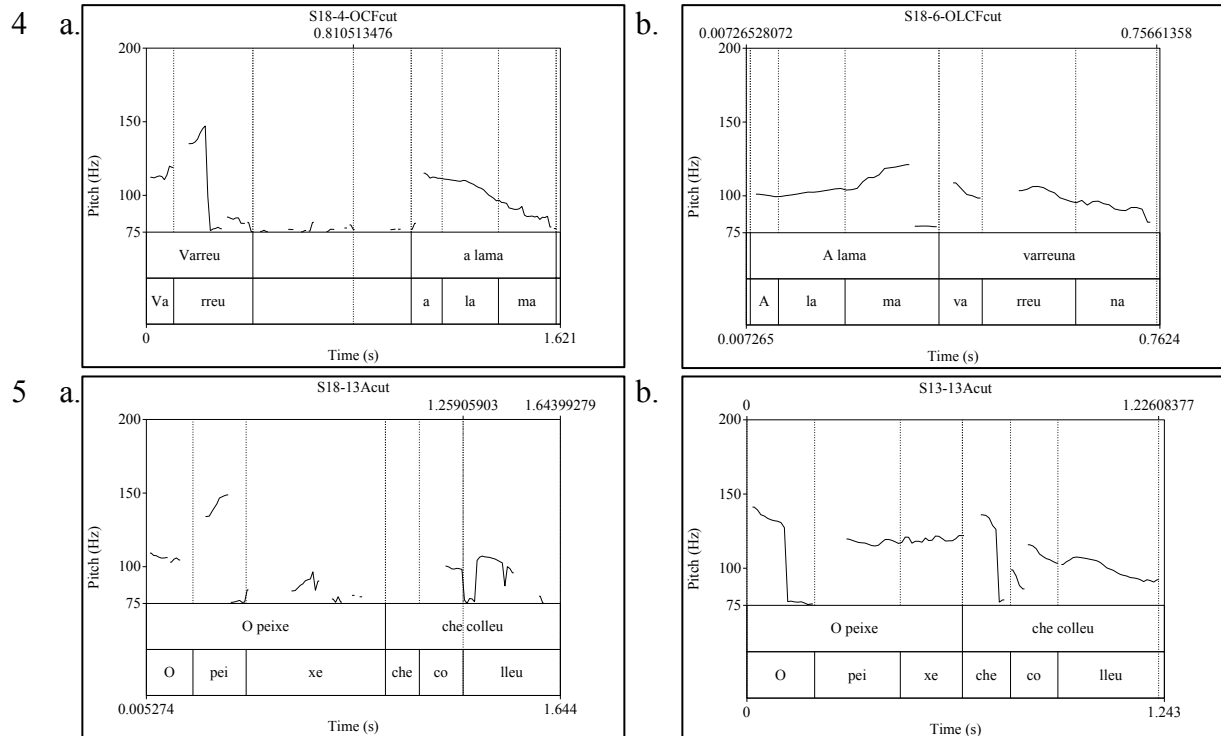
The current paper seeks to unify discussion of a syntactic and prosodic phenomena related to the expression of object contrast in Romance in general and Galician in particular. It has been claimed that contrastive focus in languages like Spanish and Italian may be expressed in situ (1a) or in a fronted position (1b). The syntactic position of the in situ contrastive constituent has been proposed to coincide with that of information focus and nuclear scope, in the lowest, rightmost syntactic position within the VP (e.g. Rizzi 1997, although see Beletti 2004 and López 2009 for differing accounts). Fronted contrast is posited to appear in the specifier of a higher, left-peripheral functional projection, as the product of syntactic movement motivated by the checking of [+Focus] features (e.g. Rizzi 1997; Zubizarreta 1998, although see Szendrői 2004 for important objections to a feature-based approach). Fronted contrast in European Portuguese (2a) and Galician (2b) triggers enclisis, which led Gupton (2010) to propose that such constituents should be analyzed as contrastive topics. If contrastive topics and contrastive foci appear in a left-peripheral position as result of syntactic movement (although see e.g. Cinque 1990 for a base-generation account), the question arises as to whether the expression of contrast involves optionality. Russian data in Titov (2012) is very similar in that in situ constituents may be information focus or contrastive focus, and contrastive focus may be expressed in situ (3a) or in the left periphery (3b). Although her data suggest apparent optionality with the expression of contrastive focus in Russian, she rejects the notion, proposing that left-peripheral movement is a disambiguating operation that does not target a fixed syntactic position.

The current paper seeks to inform this syntactic issue by examining the intonation of contrast in Galician. We examine prosodic data collected from 19 Galician-speaking graduate and undergraduate students age 19-35 enrolled at the University of Santiago de Compostela at the time of data collection. Participants were recorded with a Zoom H4n portable recorder while reading contextualized sentences that sought to elicit a variety of information structure scenarios. We present in situ and left-peripheral contrast data that were analyzed using Praat (Boersma & Weenink 2015). Escourido's (2005) study of Galician intonation found F_0 to be the most relevant parameter for focalizing in the case of in situ contrastive focus, similar to Face's (2000, 2002) findings for in situ contrastive focus in Spanish. We examine the adequacy of two accounts of the syntax-pitch interface for Galician. Frascarelli & Hinterhölzl (2007) propose a one-to-one correspondence between pitch and discourse function based on an examination of the Italian and German left periphery. Face & d'Imperio (2005), however, propose the existence of a continuum for the marking of contrast via word order and/or intonation owing to variation within and among varieties. Following Titov (2012), and in line with Chomsky (2008), we also expect left-peripheral constituents to exhibit different prosodic behavior from their in situ counterparts, assuming movement serves to disambiguate contrastive from information (narrow) focus.

The results are the following: 1) many (though not all) speakers used a pretonic rise followed by a fall through the tonic syllable to encode in situ contrastive focus on the direct object *a lama* 'the mud' (4a), 2) many speakers used a rise through the tonic syllable followed by an abrupt post-tonic fall (suggestive of post-focal compression, see e.g. Vanrell et al. 2013) to encode left-peripheral contrast (4b), and 3) this left-peripheral strategy was not universal (cf. the direct object *o peixe* 'the fish' in 5a and 5b). These findings suggest that left-peripheral intonation is not as rigid as Frascarelli & Hinterhölzl's (2007) cartographic interface account would suggest, and that languages may employ a variety of prosodic strategies to disambiguate contrastive focus from information focus.

Examples

1. a. Compró LA CHAQUETA (no el gorro). (Spanish)
 b. LA CHAQUETA compró (no el gorro).
2. a. ESSE LIVRO dou-lhe, mas este não. (EP, from Barbosa 2000: 60, ex. 111b)
 ‘THAT BOOK I give him, but this one no.’
 b. A CENORIA o coello comeuna. (Galician, from Gupton 2010: 219, ex. 12a)
 ‘The rabbit ate THE CARROT.’
3. a. Ivan čitaet KNIGU. (Russian, from Titov 2012: 120, exs. 1a, 1c)
 b. KNIGU Ivan čitaet.
 ‘Ivan reads THE BOOK.’



Selected references

- Boersma, P. & D. Weenink. 2015. Praat: doing phonetics by computer [Computer program]. Version 5.4.08, retrieved 24 March 2015 from <http://www.praat.org>
- Escourido, A. 2005. Aproximación ao estudo da focalización no galego. In González, M., Fernández, E. & B. González (eds.), *III Congreso Internacional de Fonética Experimental*, 261-277. Santiago de Compostela: Xunta de Galicia.
- Face, T. & M. d’Imperio. 2005. Reconsidering a focal typology: evidence from Spanish and Italian. *Italian Journal of Linguistics* 17: 271-289.
- Frascarelli, M. & R. Hinterhölzl. 2007. Types of topics in German and Italian. In Winkler, S. & K. Schwabe (eds.), *On information structure, meaning and form*, 87-116. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Titov, E. 2012. Encoding focus and contrast in Russian. In Neeleman, A. & R. Vermeulen (eds.), *The syntax of topic, focus, and contrast*, 119-155. Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter.
- Vanrell, M., Stella, A., Gili Favela, B. and P. Prieto. 2013. Prosodic manifestations of the effort code in Catalan, Italian and Spanish contrastive focus. *Journal of the International Phonetic Association* 43.2: 195-220.