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Leonardo Contreras Roa

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# Contrastive analysis of interlanguage prosody of English as an L2:

## the case of L1-Spanish and L1-French learners

Leonardo Contreras Roa

### Introduction

The present is an **exploratory** study dealing with the **phonetic** realization (*f0*, *dur*) of focused lexical elements produced by native speakers of English and learners of English whose L1 is Chilean Spanish or French.

#### Objectives

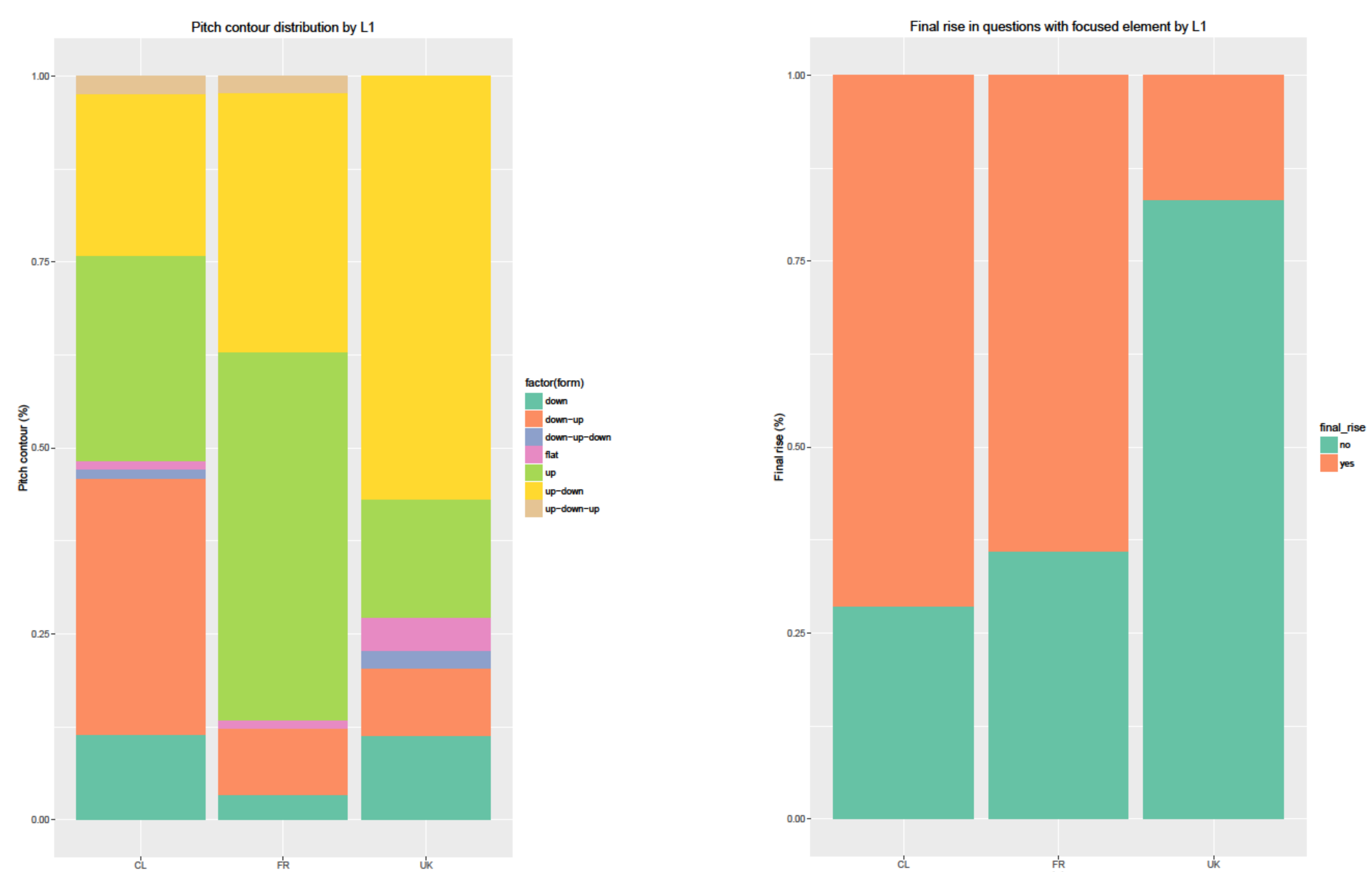
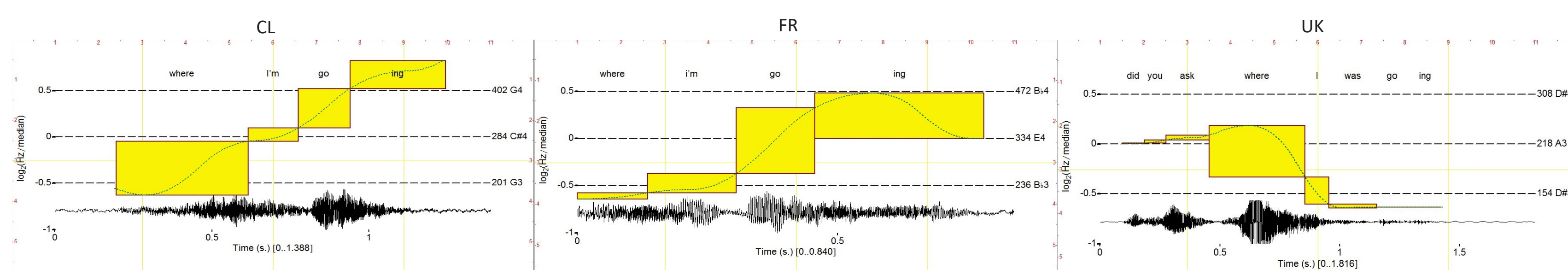
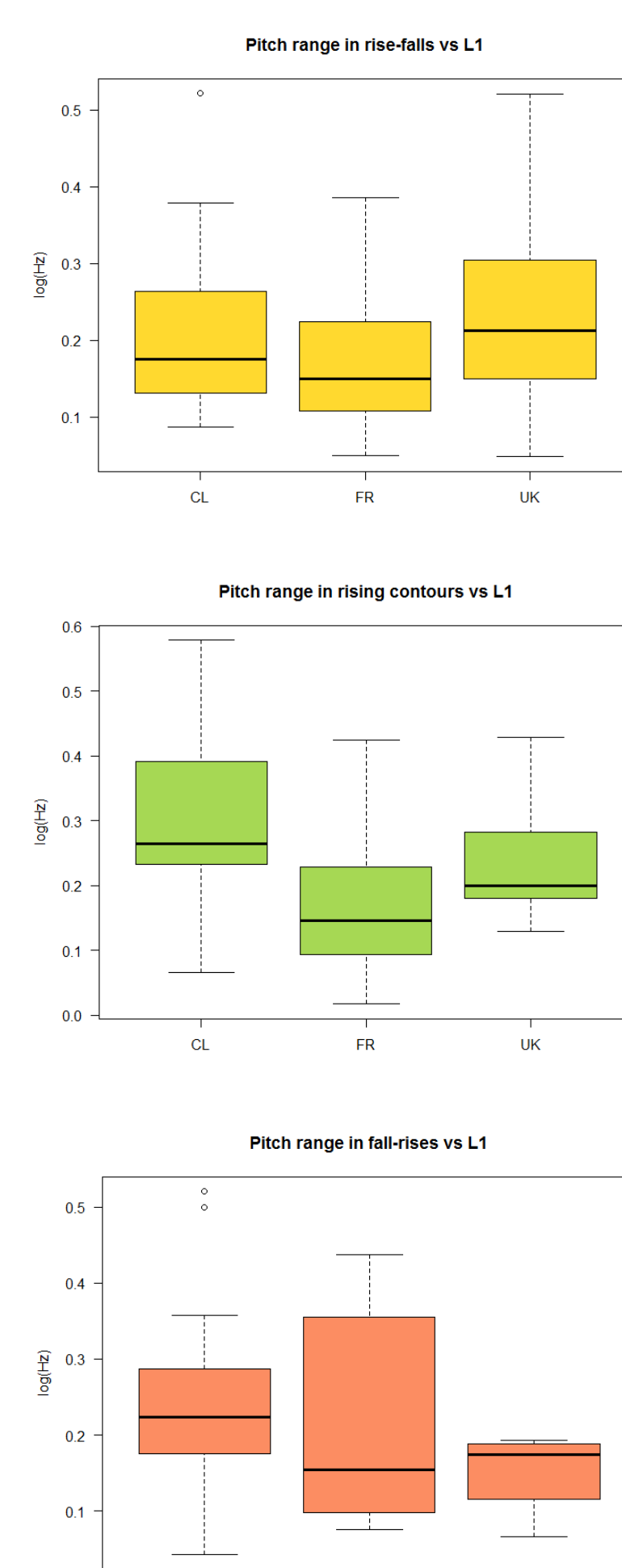
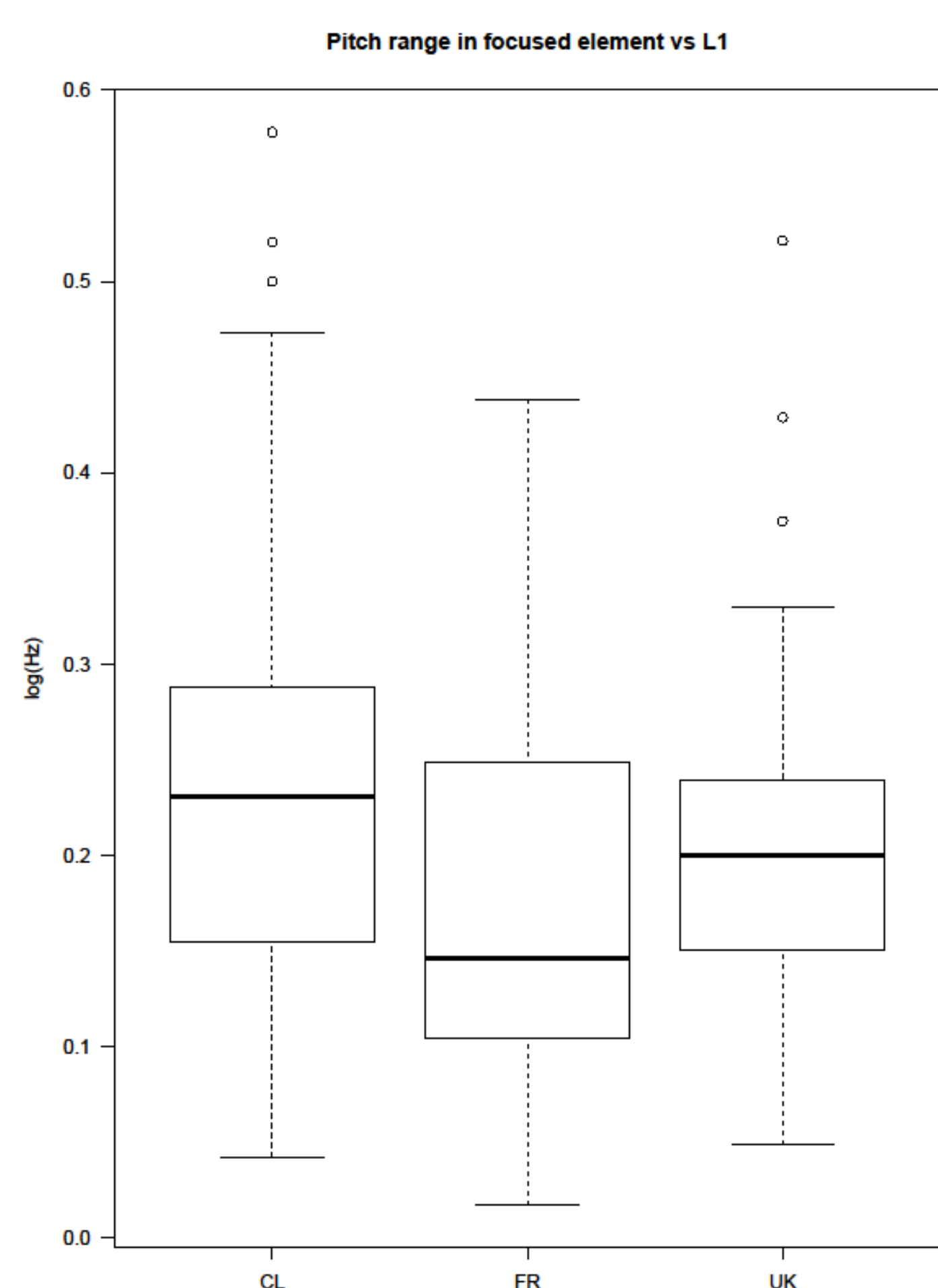
- **Describing** the *f0* movements in focused elements produced by the three groups of speakers
- **Comparing** the duration and *f0* movement differences between speakers of different groups
- Determining if differences and similarities in *f0* and duration depend on the speakers' L1

#### Hypotheses

- H<sub>1</sub> Speakers belonging to different L1 groups will perform focus in different ways at a *f0* and duration level
- H<sub>2</sub> Differences originate from influence of the speakers' L1

### Results

- Analyses show that speakers of different L1 groups favor **different types of pitch contours** to express focus: **rise-falls** are most common among native English speakers, whereas **rises** are frequently observed in L1-French speakers and **fall-rises** are fairly common among Spanish speakers.
- **Pitch range** (max *f0* - min *f0*) values vary by group of speakers: overall, L1-Spanish speakers perform larger pitch movements than L1-French and native speakers.
- Learners perform **final rises** in questions with focused elements more often than native speakers.



### Conclusion, discussion and further research

These results provide a first glance at the prosody of English learners. Marked differences are observed regarding pitch contour choice and range in focused lexical elements among speakers of different L1s.

However, these data remain exploratory due to the size of the sample and the variation of the syntax and lexical elements elicited by a semi-spontaneous speech task. Confirmation is needed through the analysis of a larger corpus of learner oral production, and through the use of tasks that allow the control of variables such as lexical content.

Contextualized reading out loud tasks of short sentences presenting focus can be used in order to obtain more detailed and reliable data which could be used to establish a link between the pitch contours chosen by learners, the way they perform them and the prosody of their L1.

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