

Syntactic position of contrast markers in different registers of French

JORINA BRYSPAERT & KAREN LAHOUSSE

Contrast markers in French



*Le cocktail de bienvenue a été organisé
à la Mairie de Lille.*

'The welcome reception was organized
at the Town Hall of Lille.'

*Le dîner de gala aura lieu
à la Brasserie de la Paix.*

'The gala dinner will take place
in Brasserie de la Paix.'

Contrast markers in French

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'The gala dinner **on the other hand** will take place in Brasserie de la Paix.'



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'The gala dinner **him** will take place in Brasserie de la Paix.' (lit.)



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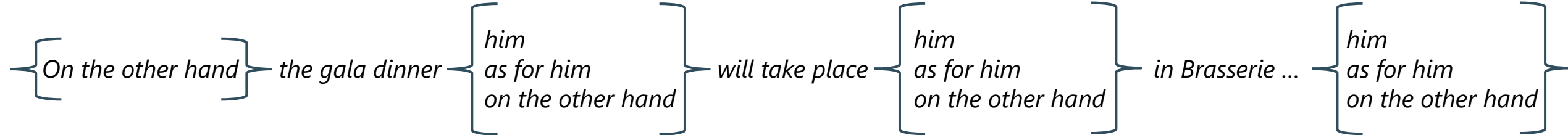
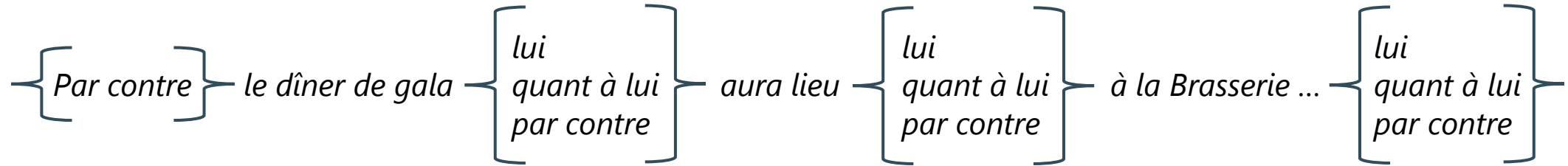
3. Quant à + emphatic pronoun (quant à E-Pro)

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'The gala dinner **as for him** will take place in Brasserie de la Paix.' (lit.)

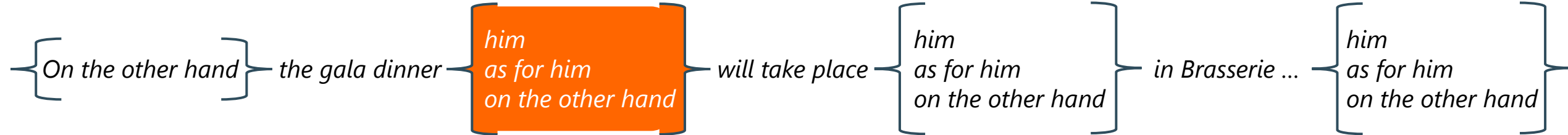
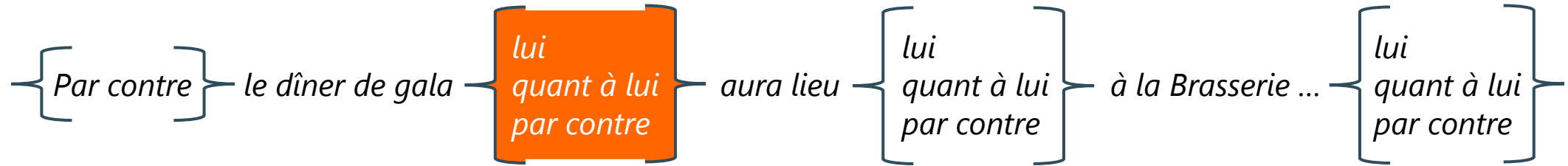


Different syntactic positions



Different syntactic positions

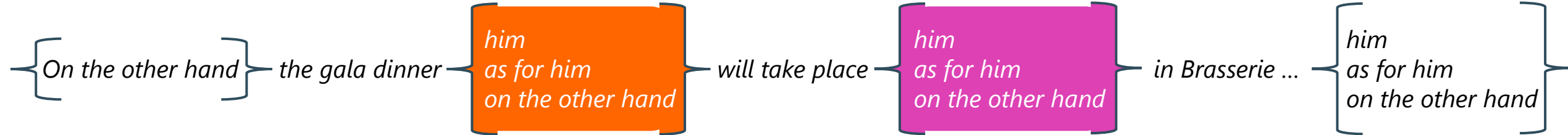
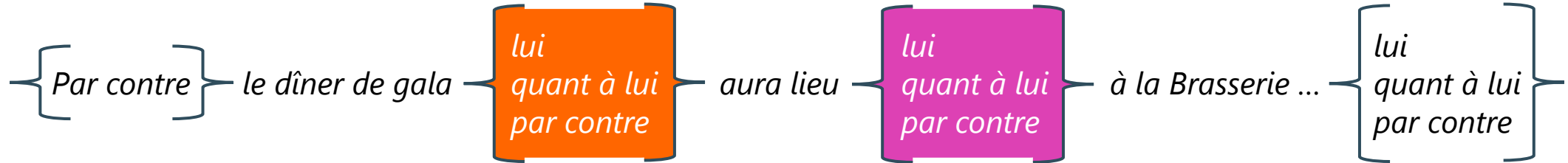
Between S and finite V



Different syntactic positions

Between S and finite V

Within VP

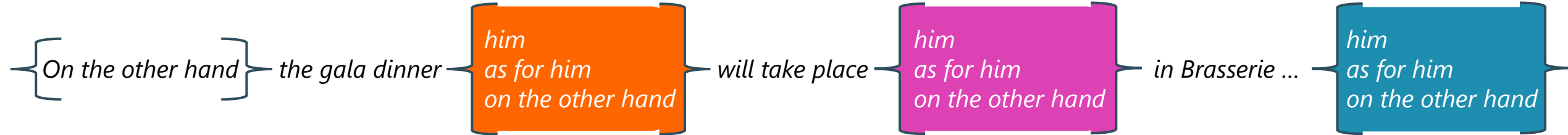
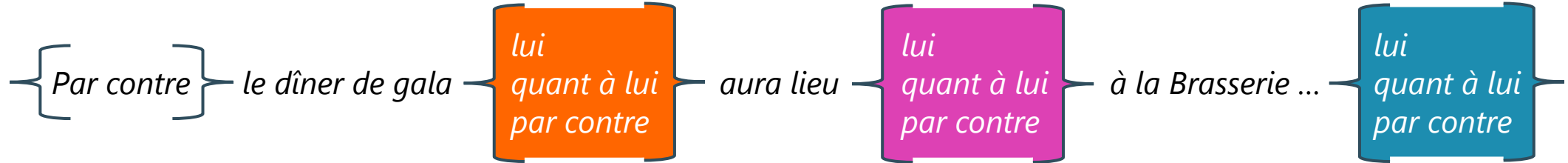


Different syntactic positions

Between S and finite V

Within VP

After VP



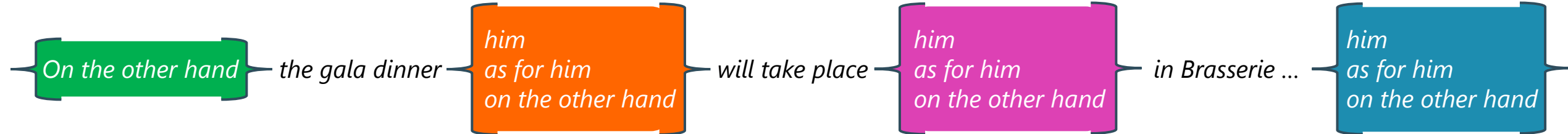
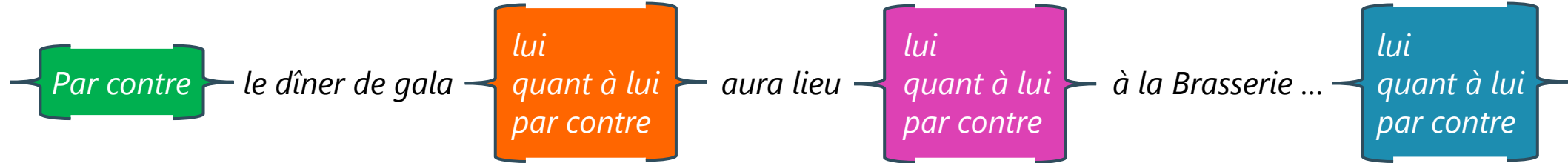
Different syntactic positions

Before S

Between S and finite V

Within VP

After VP



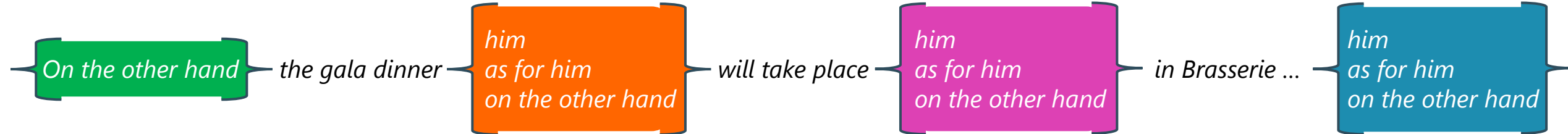
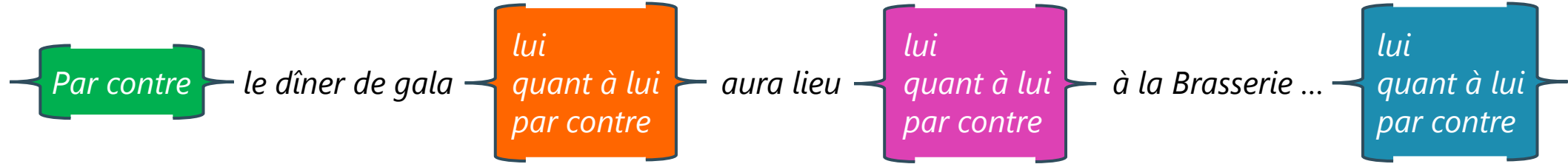
Different syntactic positions

Before S

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Within VP

After VP



Previous studies: Caddéo 2004; Dupont 2019, 2020 → no comparison between contrast markers

Research question & goal of this talk

Which factors influence the syntactic position of C-Adv_s, E-Pros & *quant* à E-Pros?

Research question & goal of this talk

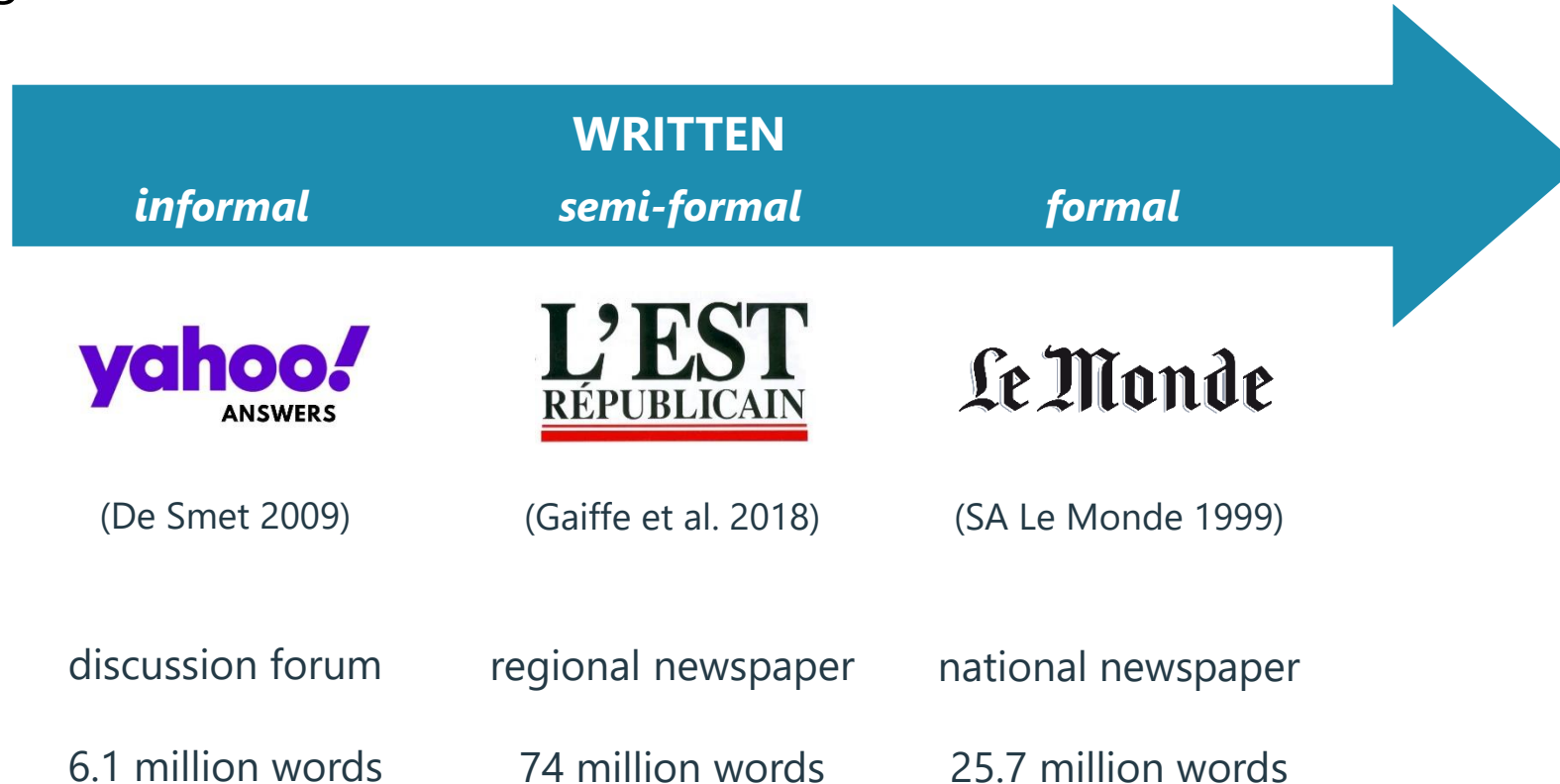
Which factors influence the syntactic position of C-Adv_s, E-Pros & *quant à* E-Pros?



Combination of language-internal & language-external factors

Methodology

Quantitative analysis of 10.028 C-Advs, 4.965 E-Pros and 1.804 *quant à* E-Pros in different corpora
→ different registers



Methodology

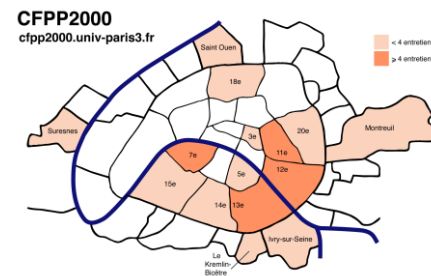
SPOKEN
semi-formal



(Avanzi et al. 2012-2020)

interviews

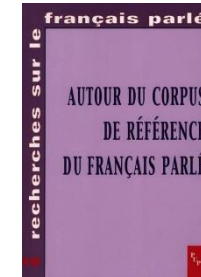
1.01 million words



(Branca-Rosoff et al. 2012)

interviews

0.7 million words



(Équipe DELIC 2004)

interviews + public speech

0.44 million words

1. Language-internal point of view

What is the preferred syntactic position of C-Adv_s,
E-Pros & *quant* à E-Pros?

Contrastive adverbs

Most frequent position
= before S (except for LM)

	LM	ER	YCC	SPOKEN
Before S	22% (580)	67% (3.304)	89% (1.626)	84% (495)
Between S & fin-V	14% (365)	6% (276)	3% (47)	1% (8)
Within VP	63% (1.683)	27% (1.356)	6% (113)	5% (29)
After VP	1% (23)	1% (26)	2% (38)	10% (59)
Total	100% (2.651)	100% (4.962)	100% (1.824)	100% (591)

Contrastive adverbs

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~ discourse function:
linking devices
(e.g. Altenberg 2006; Lenker 2010)

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(1) *Non le regelement de fédération de tennis internationale interdit de commencer le tennis à l'age de 13 ans, je suis désolé. **Par contre** la pratique du jokari est autorisée à partir de 13 ans!*

'No the rules of the international tennis federation prohibit starting tennis at the age of 13, I'm sorry.
On the other hand the practice of jokari is authorized from the age of 13!' (YCC)

Emphatic pronouns

Most frequent position
= between S & fin-V

	LM	ER	YCC	SPOKEN
Before S				
Between S & fin-V	61% (1.093)	54% (1.519)	83% (235)	82% (67)
Within VP	39% (690)	45% (1.275)	12% (34)	15% (12)
After VP	0,3% (6)	1% (18)	5% (13)	4% (3)
Total	100% (1.789)	100% (2.812)	100% (282)	100% (82)

Emphatic pronouns

Most frequent position
= between S & fin-V

~ discourse form & function:
anaphorically refer to
antecedent (= S) & mark
its contrastive nature
(Caddéo 2004; Cappeau 1999;
Nølke 1997; Rocquet 2014)

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(2) *Martine est repartie dès le lendemain matin. Jean-Luc, **lui**, a assisté à la deuxième journée d'enregistrement aux Buttes-Chaumont.*

'Martine has left the next morning. Jean-Luc, **him**, has attended the second day of recording at Buttes-Chaumont.' (ER)

Quant à + emphatic pronoun

Most frequent position
= within VP (except for YCC)

	LM	ER	YCC	SPOKEN
Before S				
Between S & fin-V	25% (82)	28% (401)	56% (18)	0% (0)
Within VP	74% (241)	71% (1.026)	44% (14)	0% (0)
After VP	1% (3)	1% (19)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Total	100% (326)	100% (1.446)	100% (32)	100% (0)

Quant à + emphatic pronoun

Most frequent position
= within VP (except for YCC)

~ form:
'heavier' syntactic weight
(Cappeau 1999)

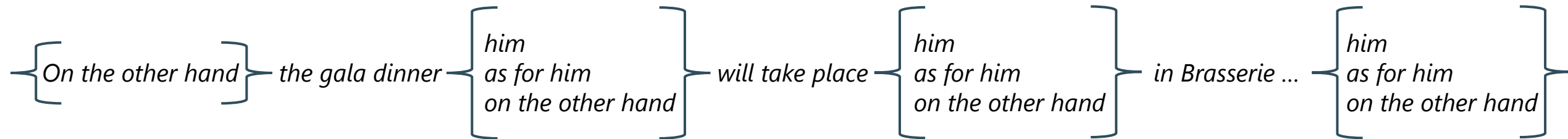
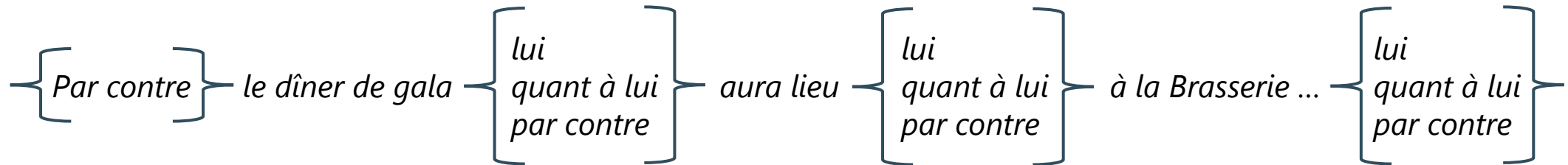
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(3) *Sur le parcours identique à la saison dernière, Arnaud Chivot a décroché la seconde place. Antoine Serrière a, **quant à lui**, attrapé le 16e rang.*

'On the same course as last season, Arnaud Chivot has taken the second place. Antoine Serrière has, **as for him**, grabbed the 16th place.' (ER)

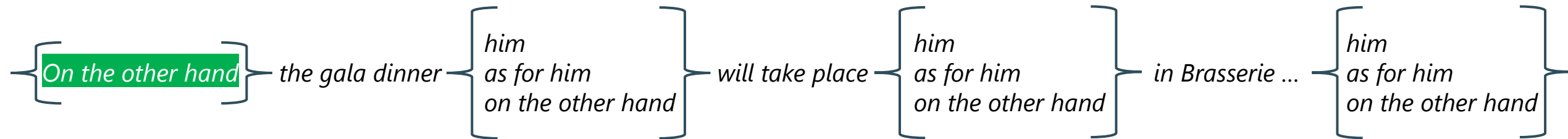
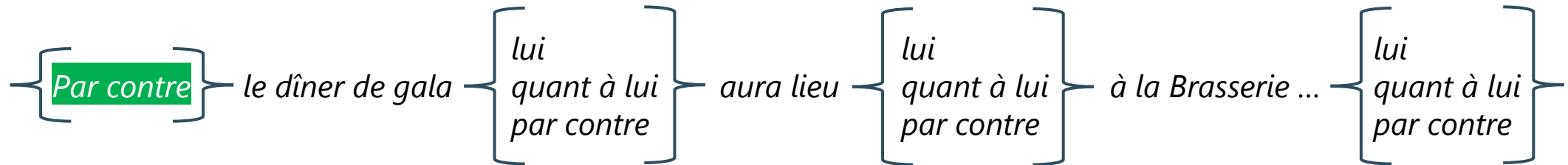
Interim summary

Different preferred syntactic position ~ discourse function & form



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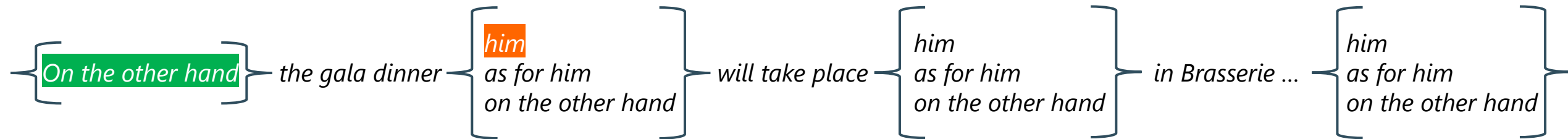
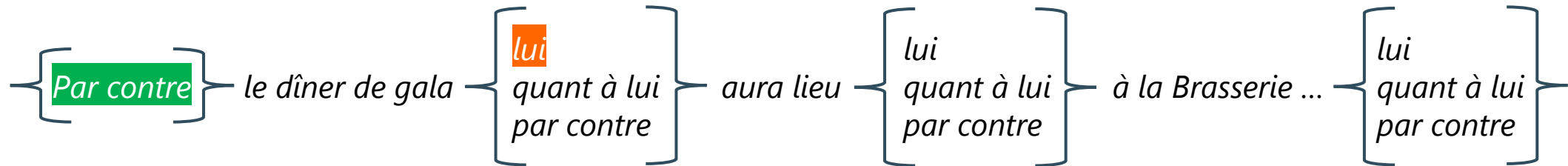


C-Adv



Interim summary

Different preferred syntactic position ~ discourse function & form



C-Adv

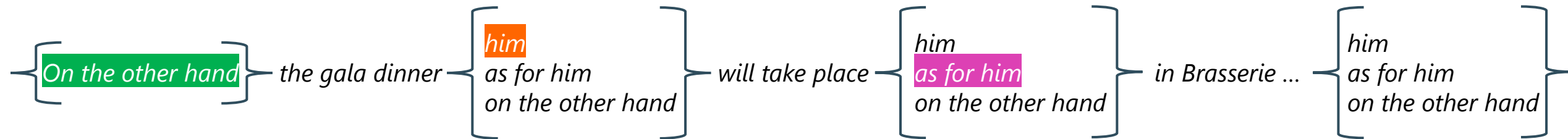
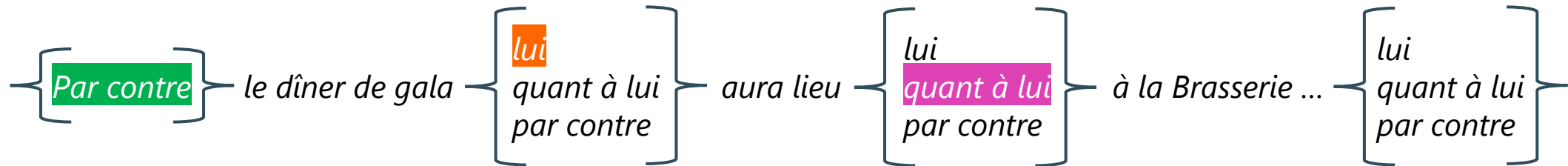


E-Pro



Interim summary

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C-Adv



E-Pro



quant à + E-Pro



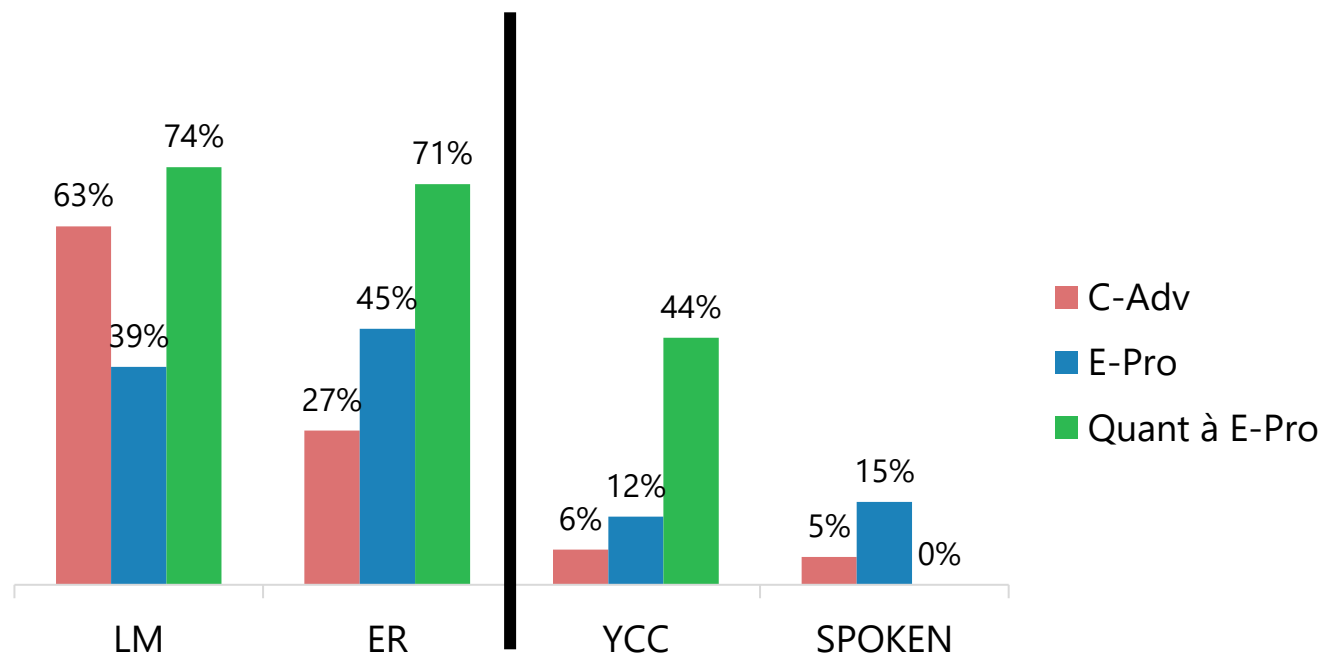
2. Language-external point of view

What is the influence of register on the syntactic position of C-Adv_s, E-Pros & *quant* à E-Pros?

Influence of register

Position within VP:

written formal (LM & ER) > written informal (YCC) & spoken



(C-Adv: $\chi^2 = 980.77$, $N = 10028$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.001$, Cramer's $V = 0.31$; E-Pros: $\chi^2 = 126.57$, $N = 4965$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.001$, Cramer's $V = 0.16$; *quant à* E-Pros: $\chi^2 = 11.76$, $N = 1804$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.001$, Cramer's $V = 0.08$)

Influence of register

The **influence of discourse function & form** on the syntactic position is **register-dependent**:

- (semi-)formal written French: influence of discourse function & form is neutralized in favor of the standard French word order S + fin-V + other elements
- informal written & spoken French: influence of discourse function & form is more important
~ discourse-configurationality of informal/spoken French
(e.g. De Cat 2007; É. Kiss 1995, 2015; Karssenbergh 2017; Leonetti 2017; Surányi 2016; Wolfe 2021)

C-Advs: register difference between LM & ER

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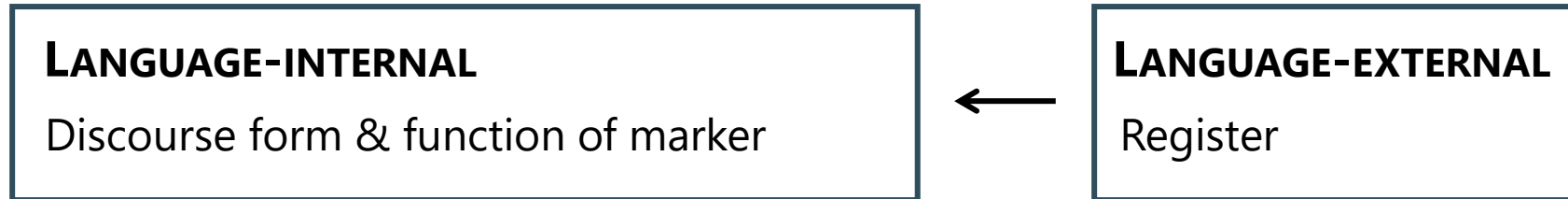
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Hypothesis: avoid left periphery because of subjective interpretation (e.g. Traugott 2012; Degand 2014)

Conclusion

Syntactic position of contrast markers

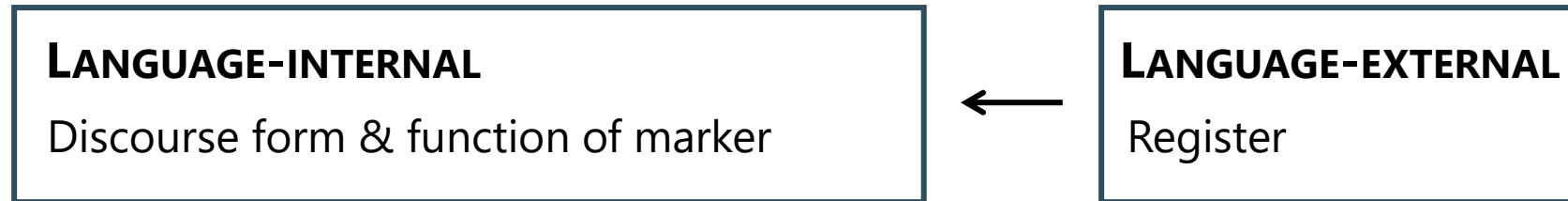
→ combination of language-internal & -external factors



Conclusion

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Register variation is pervasive in French

(e.g. Armstrong 2001, 2002; Ashby 1981; Barra-Jover 2004; Cappeau 1999a, 2008; Coveney 1996, 2000; Gadet 1996; Massot 2008, 2010; Rowlett 2007, 2013; Wolfe 2021; Zribi-Hertz 2011)

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Complexity of subject

M. Périssol, ministre du logement de 1995 à 1997



MINISTÈRE
CHARGÉ DU
LOGEMENT

*Liberté
Égalité
Fraternité*

1995-1997

complex, post-modified subject

*M. Dériot fait équipe avec le sortant centriste Bernard Barraux. M. Périssol, ministre du logement de 1995 à 1997, joue, **quant à lui**, sur ce passé récent et sur sa réputation d'élus de dossiers. (LM)*

'Mr. Dériot teams up with outgoing centrist Bernard Barraux. Mr. Périssol, housing minister from 1995 to 1997, is playing, **as for him**, on this recent past and on his reputation as an elected official.'

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(semi-)formal written French

complex, post-modified subject

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'Mr. Dériot teams up with outgoing centrist Bernard Barraux. Mr. Périssol, housing minister from 1995 to 1997, is playing, **as for him**, on this recent past and on his reputation as an elected official.'

Register variation in the expression of contrastive subjects in French

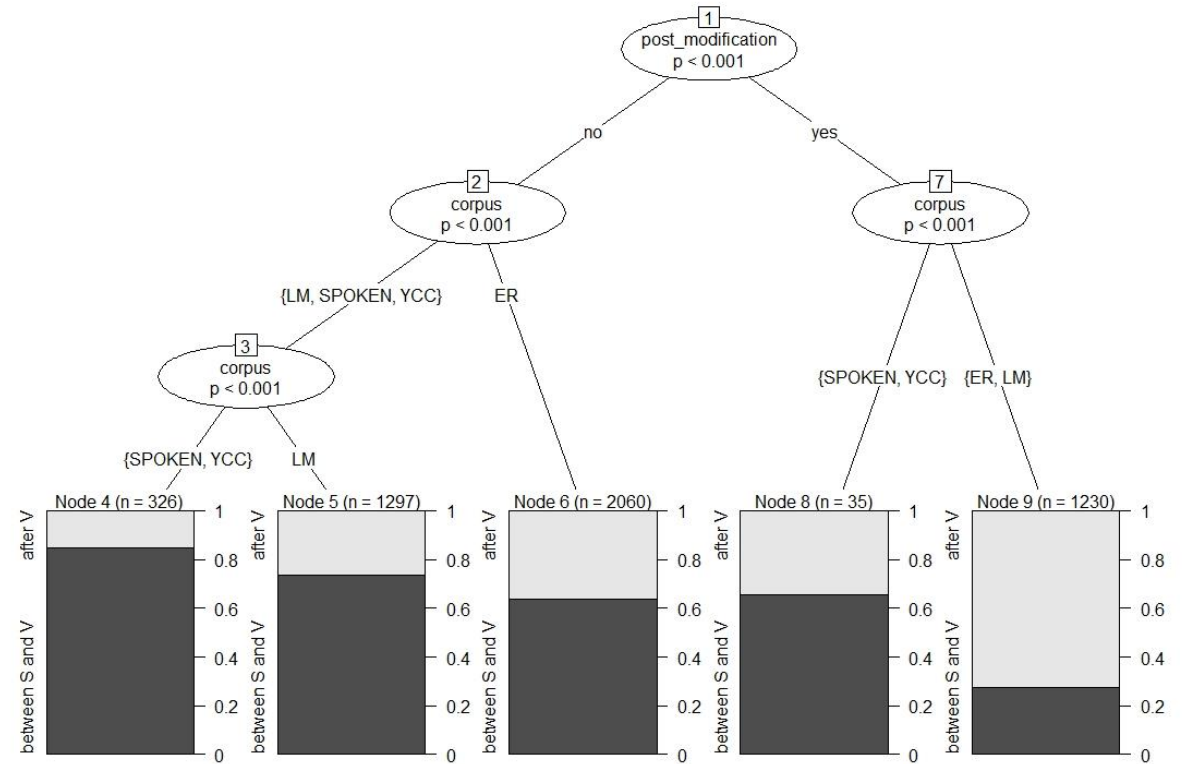
A corpus-based study



Jorina Brysbaert

Supervisor: Karen Lahousse

Co-supervisors: Anne-Catherine Simon & Benedikt Szmrecsanyi



**Register variation in the expression of
contrastive subjects in French**

A corpus-based study



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Brysbaert, Jorina & Karen Lahousse. forthcoming.
Syntactic position of contrast markers in different
registers of French. *International Journal of
Corpus Linguistics*.

THANK YOU!