

Register differences in the marking of contrastivity in French:

Syntactic position of contrastive adverbs
versus emphatic pronouns

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Two strategies to mark contrastivity



Minou dort dans le fauteuil.

‘Minou is sleeping in the armchair.’

(I) CONTRASTIVE ADVERB

Simba, par contre, chasse dans le jardin.

‘Simba, on the other hand, is hunting in the garden.’

(II) EMPHATIC PRONOUN

Simba, lui, chasse dans le jardin.

‘Simba, him, is hunting in the garden.’ (lit.)

- CASE STUDY**
- Contrastive ADVs *par contre* & *en revanche* ‘on the other hand’
 - Emphatic PROs *lui* ‘him’ & *eux* ‘them’

Previous research

- Most studies on **contrastive ADVs** in French: analysis of semantic (discourse) properties, based on limited amount of formal (written) data (Anscombre 1983; Danjou-Flaux 1980, 1983, 1984, 2003; Jayez 1982; Lenepveu 2007, 2009; Mellet & Monte 2005; Masseron & Wiederspiel 2003; Mellet & Ruggia 2010; Moeschler & de Spengler 1981; Rivara 2008; Veland 1998; etc.)
- Some studies on **position of contrastive ADVs** in (formal!) French
 - **DUPONT 2015**: positions based on information structure (theme & rheme) (↔ this talk: syntactic positions)
 - **CSÚRY 2001 + HAMMA & HAILLET 2002**: initial, medial & final position (↔ this talk: separate category for position medial_1 = between S & V)
- (1) ***(initial)** Simba **(medial_1)** ne veut **(medial_2)** pas dormir dans le fauteuil **(final)**.*
'**(initial)** Simba **(medial_1)** does not want **(medial_2)** to sleep in the armchair **(final)**.'

Previous research

- Almost no previous research on **emphatic PROs** in French
(Detges 2018; Detges & Waltereit 2014; Rocquet 2014; Ronat 1979)
 - Most attention to 1st & 2nd person singular forms (*moi* ‘me’ & *toi* ‘you’)
 - Most attention to initial & final position
- In sum ...
 - No extensive corpus analysis of **syntactic position** contrastive ADVs & emphatic PROs **in different discursive genres**
 - Contrastive ADVs & emphatic PROs **have never been compared**

Goals of this talk

ANALYSIS OF SYNTACTIC POSITION ...

- **contrastive ADVs ↔ emphatic PROs**

In which syntactic positions do they (most often) occur?

Differences between ADVs & PROs?

- **in different discursive genres**

Does the syntactic position vary depending on the discursive genre?

Differences between ADVs & PROs?

- ***par contre* ↔ *en revanche* (case study)**

Differences between the syntactic position of the 2 contrastive ADVs?

Methodology

Syntactic position of ADVs *par contre* & *en revanche* and PROs *lui* & *eux* in **3 different corpora = 3 different discursive genres**

Corpus	Year	Size	Discursive genre	Text type
<i>Est Républicain (ER)</i> https://www.ortolang.fr/market/corpora/est_republicain/2	2010-2011	74.000.000 words (estimation)	formal written	journalistic texts
<i>Yahoo Contrastive Corpus of Questions and Answers (YCC)</i> https://fr.answers.yahoo.com/	2006-2009	6.100.000 words	informal written	online discussion forum
<i>Corpus du Français Parlé Parisien des années 2000 (CFPP)</i> http://cfpp2000.univ-paris3.fr/	2005-2019	700.000 words	informal spoken	interviews

Syntactic position: our classification

3 SYNTACTIC POSITIONS, BASED ON SVO WORD ORDER

I. Adverb before the **subject**

(2) *alors elle va chercher les voisins puis ils rentrent + ils la voient pas + mais par contre **l'armoire** avait été vidée (CFPP)*

‘so she goes to look for the neighbors then they go back + they do not see her + but on the other hand **the cupboard** had been emptied’

→ **impossible with emphatic PRO!**

(3) *Minou dort dans le fauteuil. *Lui, **Simba**, chasse dans le jardin.*

‘Minou is sleeping in the armchair. *Him, **Simba**, is hunting in the garden.’

Syntactic position: our classification

II. Adverb / Pronoun between the **subject** and the **inflected verb**

- (4) *une femme fatale colle aux semelles quand on marche dessus, **une femme téfale**, par contre ne **colle** pas* (YCC)
'a femme fatale sticks to the soles when one walks on it, **a “femme téfale”** on the other hand **does** not **stick**'
- (5) *Les poissons ne peuvent pas respirer dans l'air... **Les mammifères marins (dauphins, baleines)**, eux, **montent** respirer à la surface.* (YCC)
'Fish cannot breathe in the air... **Marine mammals (dolphins, whales)**, them, **rise** to the surface to breathe.' (lit.)

Syntactic position: our classification

III. Adverb / Pronoun after the **inflected verb**

(6) *Seront interdits l'amorçage et la cuillère. Le moulinet sera **en revanche** autorisé.* (ER)

'Baiting and spooning will be prohibited. The reel **will** on the other hand be authorized.' (lit.)

(7) *Les Suisses détenaient l'AOC depuis 2001, les Français l'**avaient** décroché, eux, en 2007.* (ER)

'The Swiss held the AOC since 2001, the French **won** it, them, in 2007.' (lit.)

General overview – contrastive ADVs

In all corpora: **before S** > after V > between S & V

	ER (formal written)	YCC (informal written)	CFPP (informal spoken)
before S	2681 (68%)	1424 (92%)	166 (86%)
between S and V	208 (5%)	32 (2%)	2 (1%)
after V	1069 (27%)	98 (6%)	26 (13%)
TOTAL	3958 (100%)	1554 (100%)	194 (100%)

General overview – emphatic PROs

In all corpora: **between S & V** > after V > before S

	ER (formal written)	YCC (informal written)	CFPP (informal spoken)
before S	(0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
between S and V	1517 (54%)	226 (83%)	17 (81%)
after V	1306 (46%)	45 (17%)	4 (19%)
TOTAL	2823 (100%)	271 (100%)	21 (100%)

General overview – emphatic PROs

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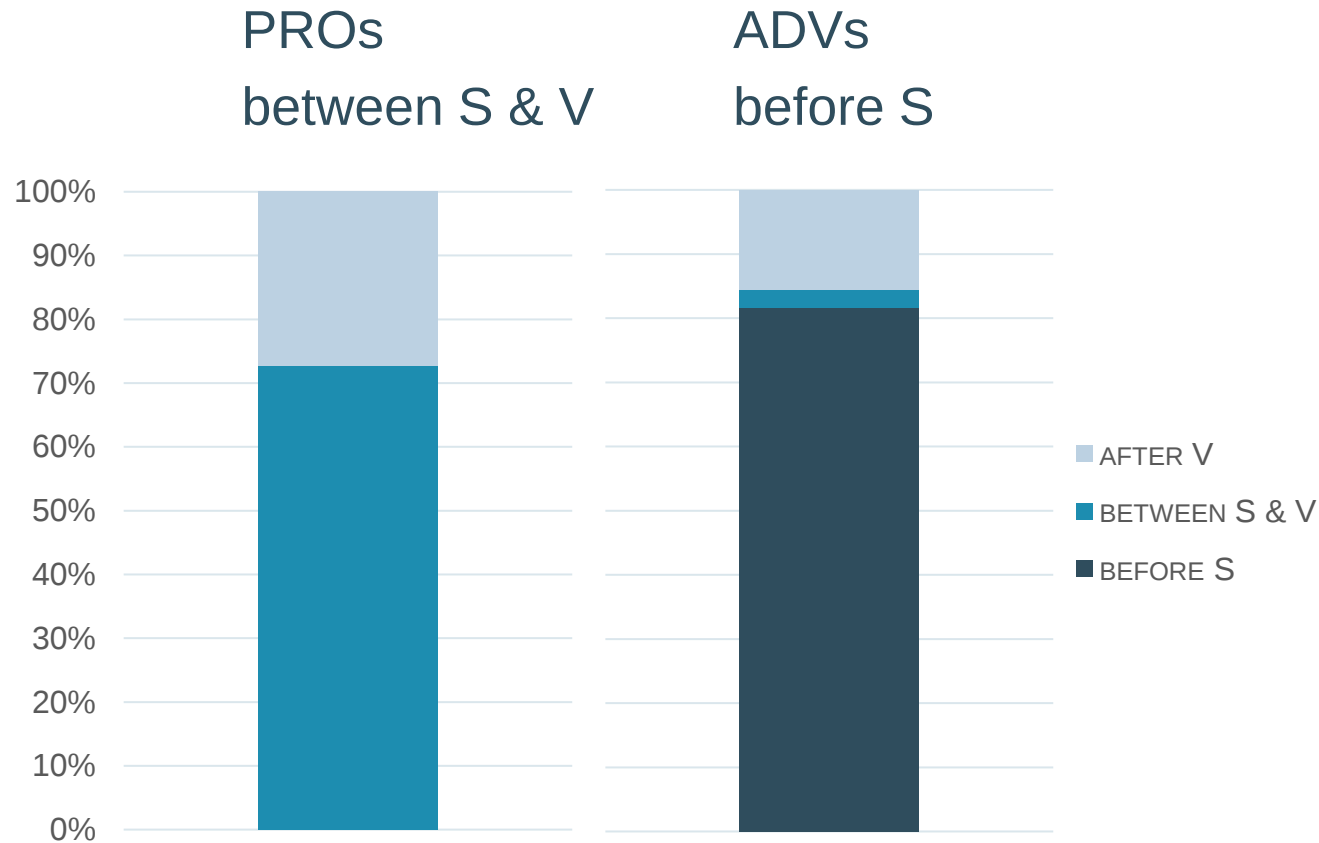
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Note: PROs rather infrequent in spoken French

PROs versus ADVs

Most frequent position:



PROs versus ADVs

emphatic PROs: mostly between S & V

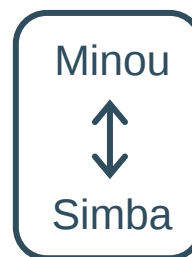
= in line with form & function: refer to antecedent (= S) & mark its contrastive nature

(8) *Minou dort dans le fauteuil.*

‘Minou is sleeping in the armchair.’

Simba, lui, chasse dans le jardin.

‘Simba, him, is hunting in the garden.’ (lit.)



↔ contrastive ADVs: mostly before S

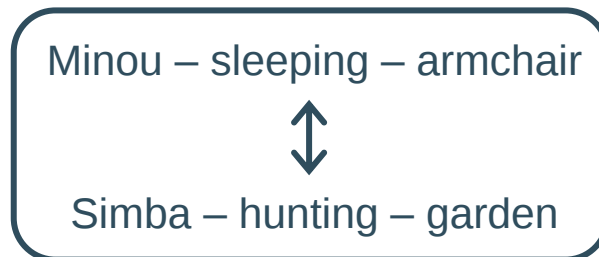
= in line with function: can indicate contrast of the whole sentence

(9) *Minou dort dans le fauteuil.*

‘Minou is sleeping in the armchair.’

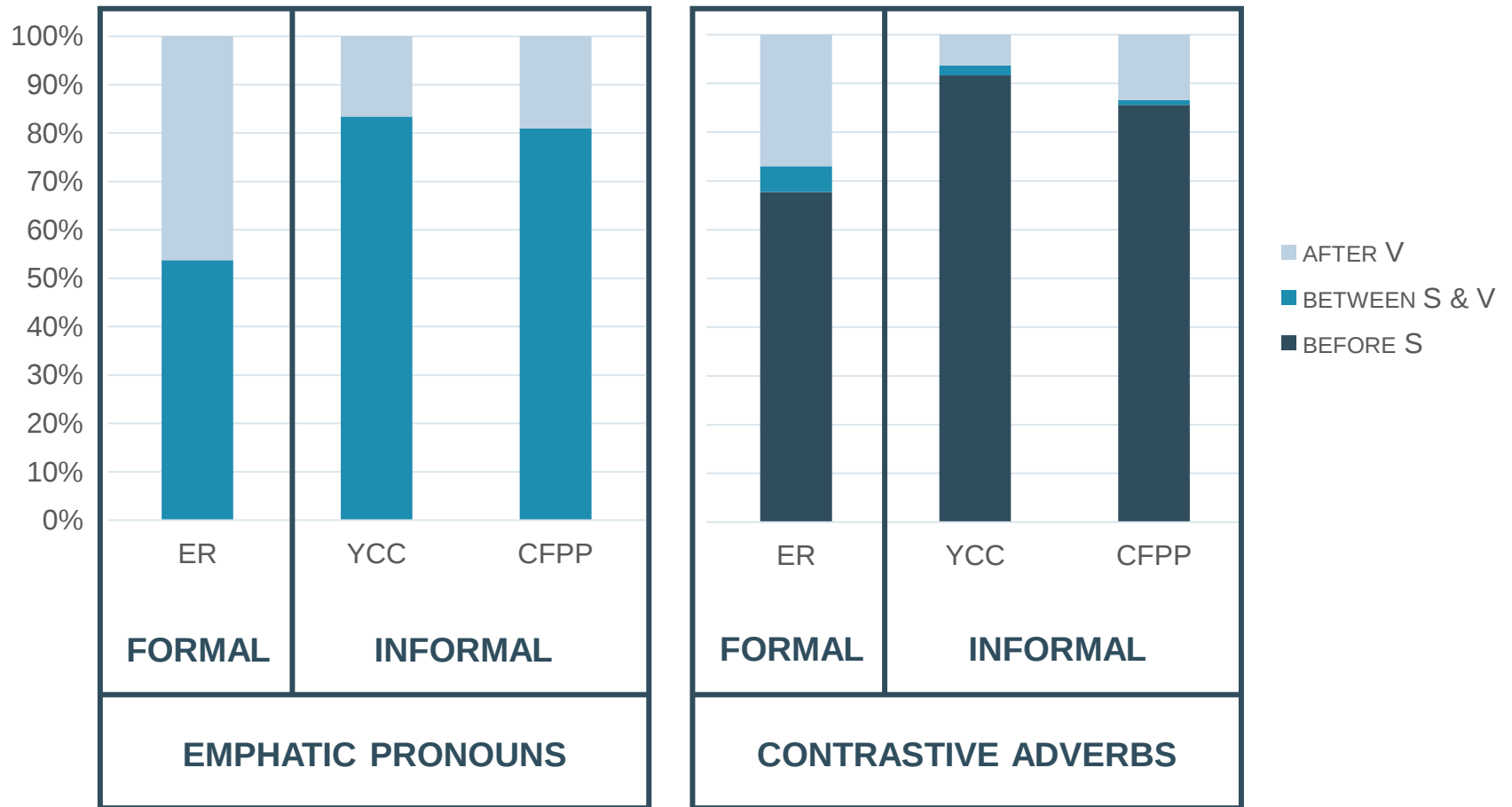
Par contre *Simba chasse dans le jardin.*

On the other hand Simba is hunting in the garden.’



Discursive genres

More often after V in formal (ER) than in informal (YCC, CFPP) French



Discursive genres

More often after V in formal (ER) than in informal (YCC, CFPP) French
± in line with hypothesis that connectors are more often used sentence-internally in written than in spoken language (e.g. Dupont 2015)

HOWEVER ...

- Difference not due to modality (written ↔ spoken), but formality (formal ↔ informal)
- Can pronouns considered to be “connectors”?

Par contre versus en revanche

En revanche → influence of formality on position

- ER (formal written): **before S > after V**
- YCC (informal written) & CFPP (informal spoken): **before S >> after V**

	<i>par contre</i>			<i>en revanche</i>		
	ER	YCC	CFPP	ER	YCC	CFPP
before S	775 (83%)	1194 (92%)	159 (86%)	1906 (63%)	230 (88%)	7 (78%)
between S and V	37 (4%)	22 (2%)	1 (0,5%)	171 (6%)	10 (4%)	1 (11%)
after V	120 (13%)	76 (6%)	25 (14%)	949 (31%)	22 (8%)	1 (11%)
TOTAL	932 (100%)	1292 (100%)	185 (100%)	3026 (100%)	262 (100%)	9 (100%)

Par contre versus en revanche

Par contre → no influence of formality on position

- ER (formal written): **before S >> after V**
- YCC (informal written) & CFPP (informal spoken): **before S >> after V**

	<i>par contre</i>			<i>en revanche</i>		
	ER	YCC	CFPP	ER	YCC	CFPP
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Par contre versus *en revanche*

Why no influence of formality on position of *par contre* ($\leftrightarrow$ *en revanche*)?

- Link with fact that *par contre* is typical of informal French (Brysbaert & Lahousse 2019) & with fact that position before S is typical of informal French (see above)
- *Par contre* keeps part of its “informal character” in formal written ER, by occurring preferably in the “informal position” before S?

Conclusion

- **Difference contrastive ADVs ↔ emphatic PROs**

Most frequent position:	}	in line with their form & function
ADV = before S		ADV: can express contrast on whole sentence
PRO = between S & V		PRO: contrast on subject

- **Difference between discursive genres**

Influence of formality: ADVs & PROs more often after V in formal than in informal French

- **Difference *par contre* ↔ *en revanche***

en revanche: influence of formality on position

par contre: no influence of formality on position

Future work

- Analysis of syntactic position of other contrastive ADVs (*au contraire*, *à l'opposé*, etc.)
- Analysis of data from other (especially spoken) corpora
- Statistical analysis of data

THANK YOU !

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EXTRA SLIDES

Syntactic position: our classification

Adverb / Pronoun before the **subject with dislocation**

(10) *je ne suis ni arabe, ni musulmane, pourtant je soutiens la Paléستine. **toi** par contre **tu** doit être sioniste, islamophobe et peut être même raciste.*

(YCC)

‘I am neither Arab nor Muslim, yet I support Palestine. **You**, on the other hand, **you** must be Zionist, islamophobic and maybe even racist.’

(11) *La technique change la donne, les modes de consommation évoluent, et **le marchand**, lui, **il** doit nécessairement s'adapter.* (ER)

‘Technology changes the situation, consumption patterns evolve, and **the merchant**, him, **he** must necessarily adapt.’ (lit.)

Syntactic position: our classification

EXCLUDED CASES

→ impossible to use positions distinguished on the basis of SVO order

- Subject inversion (no SVO)

(12) Par contre, pourras-tu te trouver une autre personne dont s'occuper pas trop loin de chez toi facilement? (YCC)

‘On the other hand, will **you** be able to easily find another person to take care of not too far from home?’

- Clefts

(13) il y avait **des professeurs** au contraire qui trouvaient que c'était insupportable d'avoir des enfants (CFPP)

‘there were **teachers** on the contrary who found that it was unbearable to have children’

Syntactic position: our classification

- Sentences without subject and / or without conjugated verb

(14) *Il ne faut pas viser la perte mais au contraire l'enrichissement linguistique.* (LM)

‘We should not aim for linguistic loss but on the contrary for linguistic enrichment.’ (lit.)

(15) *La plus impressionnante est l'arrivée il y a une semaine d'un tigre du Bengale. Il vient compléter la nursery déjà bien pleine de trois tigres blancs nés eux, il y a un mois.* (ER)

‘The most impressive is the arrival a week ago of a Bengal tiger. It completes the nursery already quite full of three white tigers born them, a month ago.’ (lit.)

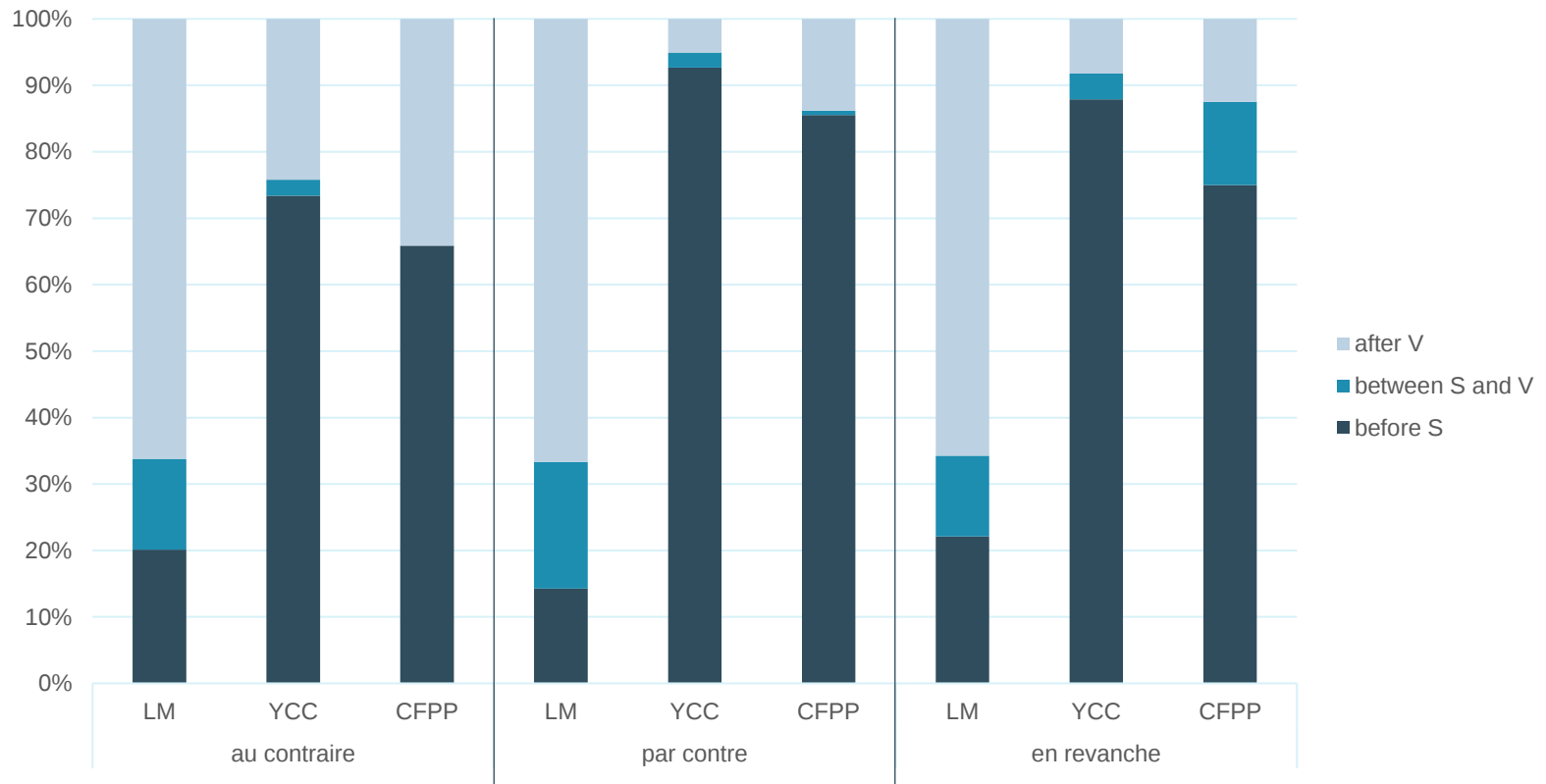
Position of contrastive ADVs – pilot study

- Absolute & relative frequencies of positional analysis per adverb

	<i>au contraire</i>			<i>par contre</i>			<i>en revanche</i>		
	LM	YCC	CFPP	LM	YCC	CFPP	LM	YCC	CFPP
before S	31 (20%)	91 (73%)	27 (66%)	6 (14%)	164 (93%)	124 (86%)	40 (22%)	160 (88%)	6 (75%)
between S and V	21 (14%)	3 (2%)	0 (0%)	8 (19%)	4 (2%)	1 (0%)	22 (12%)	7 (4%)	1 (13%)
after V	102 (66%)	30 (24%)	14 (34%)	28 (67%)	9 (5%)	20 (14%)	119 (66%)	15 (8%)	1 (13%)
TOTAL	154 (100%)	124 (100%)	41 (100%)	42 (100%)	177 (100%)	145 (100%)	181 (100%)	182 (100%)	8 (100%)

Position of contrastive ADVs – pilot study

- No individual differences between the 3 ADVs



Position of emphatic PROs

- Absolute & relative frequencies of positional analysis per form

	<i>lui</i>			<i>eux</i>		
	ER	YCC	CFPP	ER	YCC	CFPP
before S	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
between S and V	1025 (52%)	127 (85%)	12 (75%)	492 (59%)	99 (82%)	5 (100%)
after V	958 (48%)	23 (15%)	4 (25%)	348 (41%)	22 (18%)	0 (0%)
TOTAL	1983 (100%)	150 (100%)	16 (100%)	840 (100%)	121 (100%)	5 (100%)