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Prosodic style-shifting in preadolescent peer-group interactions in a working-class suburb of Paris*

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In this chapter, we study the variable use of phrase-final intonation contours in French by male adolescents recorded in guided interviews in a multi-ethnic working-class suburb of Paris. We show that speakers use pragmatically neutral rising or falling intonation when listing target words depicted on images shown by a fieldworker, but resort to a characteristic rising-falling intonation attributed to a working-class youth vernacular in contact with immigrant languages when negotiating the interpretation of pictures or competing for the floor with their friends listening to the interview. These instances of intra-speaker prosodic variation are analyzed as style-shifting (Bell 1984, 2001) where speakers draw on different prosodic resources to signal change in footing, i.e. their orientation to their own and others' role in the interaction (Goffman 1981) or the propositional content of utterances put forward by other participants in the conversational exchange. It is argued that phrase-final rising-falling intonation, typical in certain types of imperative in French, has a much broader pragmatic meaning in working-class youth vernacular where it seems to function as a micro-level style feature indexing common ground and in-group affiliation with members of the adolescent peer group.

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1.   Introduction

1.1   Ethnic diversity and language contact in the *banlieues*

Since the second half of the 20th century, labor migrations and immigrations have transformed urban centers of Western Europe into fascinating observational sites for the study of language contact. Generations of migrants and immigrants, first from rural areas, then from former colonies and beyond, brought little-known languages and dialects in long-term contact with languages of the majority. While one might have expected rapid assimilation and disappearance of incoming varieties in most countries, the emerging picture of post-World War II immigration at the beginning of the 21st century shows a variable linguistic outcome. It appears that "immigration has led to both short-lived and relatively stable bilingualism" (Hinskens et al. 2005: 35): some ethnic groups succeeded in establishing stable communities with strong ethnic ties and continued heritage language use, others have massively shifted to the majority language, transmitting very little knowledge of their native languages to the next generation.

In France, the shift from immigrant languages towards the language of the majority is part of a historical trend of cultural assimilation. Institutionalized housing aid, citizenship based on cultural allegiance rather than birth rights, and the ideology of a monolingual nation state (cf. Gadet and Varro 2006) contributed significantly to the successful absorption of major waves of immigration in the recent history of France (cf. Noiriel 1988). While the emergence of new technologies has not profoundly altered this pattern, it has brought considerable changes in the urban sociolinguistic landscape in France. Thanks to globalization and technological innovations that have resulted in greater mobility and greater access to instant communication, it is now possible for larger segments of transnational migrant and immigrant populations to exert a simultaneous presence in both their new and former homelands (Deprez 2006: 125). This might also play a role in the maintenance of some minority immigrant languages beyond the second generation (see below). Overall, however, long-term linguistic assimilation of immigrant minorities remains the expected outcome of language contact in every setting but ghettoized urban areas in France: "the linguistic assimilation of long-term resident immigrants is still observable after two or three generations in every setting other than ghettos, enclaves, and gated communities" (Deprez 2002: 30, our translation).

In some working-class urban areas, decades of economic struggle has created less than ideal conditions for long-term assimilation. "Socially disadvantaged peripheral areas of many cities containing relatively dense concentrations of minority ethnic groups" (Hargreaves and McKinney 1997: 12) housed for many

decades the poorest of the poor, often of recent immigrant origin. As the increased residential segregation of these populations became obvious and urban violence generated more and more headlines, entire neighborhoods, called *cités* 'housing projects' or *banlieues* 'suburbs', have been singled out as powerhouses of a new, multi-ethnic youth variety of French. Although, as Hornsby (2009: 166–167) rightly points out, "the long-term linguistic effects of immigration in France are yet to be fully understood", sociological indicators show that multi-ethnic language contact, and thus the potential influence of minority immigrant language use on French, is an everyday reality in urban areas in France. The INSEE poll on immigrant and regional language maintenance from 2002 (Clanché 2002; Héran et al. 2002) indicates, for instance, that Portuguese, German, Turkish, Arabic, Berber, Basque, and dialects of Chinese continue to be transmitted in French families of recent immigrant descent with at least one bilingual parent in the household. While these data have to be interpreted against the backdrop of the overwhelming dominance of French in and outside the family, they attest to the fact that at least some minority languages are maintained beyond the second generation.

Unlike in other European contexts (cf. Wiese 2009 for Germany), however, no studies in France would likely argue for the existence of a multi-ethnic "variety" of French as a result of post World War II immigration and language contact. Lexical borrowings and phonetic innovations more or less clearly traceable to heritage language use have been reported as part of a distinct "accent of the suburbs" (*l'accent des banlieues*) in major cities in France (cf. Pooley 2008 for an extensive review), but it is unclear whether these contact features have been integrated or are bound to disappear rapidly as working-class speakers' stylistic repertoire expands with age and social mobility. It is also an open question to what extent certain features observed in the speech of working-class immigrant youth today can be labeled as a variety without reifying to the extreme some of the phenomena under investigation. While, as Bucholtz (2003: 403) suggests, some "strategic essentialism" is useful, for instance, in identifying communities of practice or urban areas where certain linguistic features are thought to be dominant (see also Stewart 2009), "researchers must remain mindful of the assumptions it brings along with it concerning 'real' language and 'authentic speakers'".

In this paper, we analyze the use of phrase-final intonation contours in face-to-face interactions between adolescents recorded in a working-class suburb of Paris. Some of these contours have been claimed to have emerged and spread in contact with immigrant languages (see Fagyal 2005), and to vary from one working-class urban area to another in France (Lehka-Lemarchand 2008). Based on the analysis of peer-group interactions in guided interviews recorded in a multi-ethnic working-class suburb of Paris, we show that certain phrase-final contours are part of peer group-based interactional styles that draw on a variety of local

linguistic resources in an innovative way. In the following sections, we first review previous findings on intonation in minority and immigrant language settings, and then formulate our research questions and hypotheses.

1.2   Prosody in contact with minority languages

In his seminal work on contextualization cues in cross-cultural communication, Gumperz (1978, 1982) was the first to point out that contact-induced borrowing of prosodic features might lead to negative stereotyping in face-to-face interactions. He documented that Hindi-English bilinguals, who perceived their own utterances as neutral statements, sounded inappropriately emphatic and face-threatening to native speakers of British English due to prosodic transfer from Hindi. Although Gumperz did not propose a phonological analysis, he did single out uncharacteristically short phrases and infelicitously placed utterance-final pitch accents highlighting words typically unaccented in the speech of native speakers of British English. His observations regarding listeners' sensitivity to the pragmatic meaning of utterance-final pitch prominence proved to be especially influential. For instance, in role-play exercises devised for industrial language training of speakers of English as an Additional Language, Roberts et al. (1992: 151) showed that accenting the word 'sheets' rather than 'back' in the utterance "Could I have those sheets back, please?" sounded like an accusation rather than a request to native speakers of British English (see also Cameron 2001: 109–110).

Pragmatically infelicitous, possibly contact-induced, intonation contours have also been attested in the speech of urban working-class immigrant youth across Europe. In France, intonation contours tied to French spoken by working-class adolescents of immigrant descent were shown to be perceived as over-emphatic (Stewart and Fagyal 2005) and associated with the poorest neighborhoods of the greater Parisian region (Stewart 2009). In Germany, intonation contours borrowed from Turkish have also been attested in the speech of Turkish-German bilingual youth in Germany (Queen 1996), although these contours were apparently not stigmatized. In Sweden, intonation has also proven to be a stereotypical cue distinguishing long-term residents from descendents of recent immigrants in Rinkeby, a working-class suburb of Stockholm known from its sizeable multiethnic population (cf. Stroud 2004; Quist 2008). Together with other phonetic features, "Rinkeby Swedish" intonation patterns containing an unexpected rise of tone and an uneven rhythm (Kotsinas 1998: 136; 2001) were negatively perceived and qualified as "un-Swedish" by monolingual Swedes. While there is some evidence that these features might have since become less emblematic of a single urban area (Boyd and Fraurud 2009), their emergence in the late 1990s in Stockholm is well-documented.

Despite the relative paucity of studies on intonation in variationist sociolinguistics, (see Chambers 2009: 210), phonetic studies of minority languages and dialects in contact with majority languages in Europe have shown that prosodic features can be indexical of speaker characteristics other than ethnicity. Lowry (2002), for instance, focused on prosodic variation as a factor of attention paid to speech in Belfast English where the most salient final (nuclear) accent in an intonation phrase (IP)[1] is predominantly rising in both interrogatives and declaratives. Her findings showed that the majority of speakers used falling pitch accents in formal settings, very likely emulating the prestige variety of British English. Rising pitch accents typical to the local vernacular, on the other hand, were predominant in informal contexts and showed a strong correlation with speakers' gender. In addition to prosodic variation in response to context-driven factors, a few studies have also examined prosodic variation in response to various characteristics of the audience. Douglas-Cowie and Cowie (1999) reported that speakers interviewed in a rural village in Northern Ireland systematically alter pitch range and pitch span depending on the social class and in-group vs. out-group characteristics of their addressees. While dynamic measures of pitch movements led to promising results, findings were not conclusive. According to the authors, inter-speaker differences in gender might have represented a confounding factor, which suggests that a tighter control of speaker-specific variables is essential for a reliable detection of style shifts. Thus, regarding the systematic use of prosodic variation in response to the audience, these authors concluded that "if style shifts linked to audience design extend to prosodic features, they are not easy to find" (idem: 1587). Miller's (2007, 2009) fieldwork in the French-speaking Vaud county in Switzerland also showed online monitoring of pitch range as a factor of the degree of formality of the conversational exchange. In addition, it illustrated systematic prosodic variation in response to various members of the audience, as certain intonation contours emerged in interaction with locals but not with outsiders (Miller 2007: 206–232). Although phonetic evidence gathered from previous studies remains inconclusive, it seems that perceived group membership with the addressee could be a conditioning factor of systematic prosodic variation in response to the audience. The present study explores some aspects of this relational dimension of prosodic style-shifting in greater detail.

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1. The IP (Intonation Phrase) is the topmost prosodic constituent in the prosodic hierarchy in Autosegmental-Metrical approaches to intonation. In French, IPs are demarcated by phrase final lengthening and a phrase final boundary tone on the last full (non schwa) syllable the IP (Jun and Fougeron 2000, 2002). Each IP contains one or more smaller tonal units: the AP (Accentual Phrase).

1.3   Research questions and hypotheses

In this paper, we take a case study approach to the interactional aspects of pro-sodic variation. We examine intonation contours realized on various target words uttered by adolescents of immigrant descent in response to an interviewer (out-group) and members of a peer audience (in-group) of different ethnic back-grounds during interviews recorded in a middle school located in a working-class neighborhood north of Paris. The interviews were originally set up as guided conversations with one interviewee (see 2.0). For the most part, adolescents who volunteered to participate came to the interview with one or more of their friends who mostly stayed in the background as passive listeners. In a few cases, however, members of the audience spontaneously intervened in the conversation, giving side comments or commenting specifically on the speaker, the target words, or the task at hand. In some cases, these interruptions significantly altered the origi-nal frame of the interaction (see 3.1), which had to be redefined and managed "on the fly" as the interview progressed. However, these interruptions also allowed for first-hand observations of intra-speaker prosodic variation with respect to change in footing, i.e. change in speakers' orientation to their own and others' roles in the interaction "as expressed in the way they manage the production or reception of an utterance" (Goffman 1981: 128).

   In this paper, we concentrate on one aspect of prosodic variation: pitch move-ments at the end of major prosodic units. Although these pitch movements can be decomposed into smaller tonal units, such as pitch accents and boundary tones (Jun and Fougeron 2000, 2001), given the functional nature of this study, we focus only on their continuity and directionality at the end of major prosodic units, and thus refer to rising, falling, or rising-falling contours. We follow House's (2006: 1544) relevance theoretical account of tonal meaning by assuming that in-tonation conveys grammatical (modality), discourse-structural (finality, continu-ation), and indexical (speaker-specific) information simultaneously. We analyze target words in lists (see 2.0) to keep the pragmatic context comparable across productions. Our focus will be on discourse-structural information conveyed by phrase-final pitch movements that signal speaker orientation towards their own and others' roles in "successfully negotiating common ground in interaction with the hearer" (House 2006: 1554). Following Bell's (1984, 2001) audience-design framework, we analyze speaker orientation towards various participant roles and the joint negotiation of common ground with others during several conversa-tional exchanges. We seek to find evidence of speaker-internal and audience-di-rected indexical information in the use of intonation contours. Specifically, we expect tonal patterns associated with a multi-ethnic youth vernacular to emerge,

signaling convergence to, or divergence from, other participants' roles and conversational moves in the exchange, as we assume that speakers draw "on a range of linguistic resources available in their speech community to respond to different kinds of audiences" (Bell 2001: 145).

If we find that intra-speaker prosodic variation correlates with convergence to, and divergence from, other participants' orientation towards the exchange, we will propose to analyze the strategic use of intonation contours as a stylistic resource cueing stance towards the propositional content of utterances as well as active and silent participants in the conversational exchange.

To summarize, we seek answers to the following questions: (1) Do speakers utter the same target words with different phrase-final intonation in the same setting depending on the type of audience present? (2) If they do, what contours emerge with what type of audience and how are they reciprocated? (3) Do intonation contours tied to multi-ethnic working-class communities in greater Paris emerge in the interactions, and if so, with what participants in the audience?

2.   Method

Excerpts analyzed in this study were recorded between 2002 and 2003 in a working-class suburb of Paris called La Courneuve, one of the poorest neighborhoods North East of the capital (ORGECO 2001). All participants were between eleven and fifteen years of age, born in or in the vicinity of the same town of about thirty-five thousand people, and enrolled in the same middle school where the interviews were recorded. Those who spoke one or more additional languages in the family reported to have either active or passive knowledge of these languages. Monolingual French speakers' families have been reported to be monolingual for at least three generations.

We will focus on three 14 year-old male speakers' interactions with their friends and the fieldworker. The first two speakers, Yasin Z. and Ismael N., were born respectively to parents of Algerian and equatorial African descent. In addition to French, Yasin Z. reported to speak "Algerian Arabic" at home. Ismael N., whose family came from Mali, did not elaborate on questions of language use at home, and referred to his African heritage language as "Malien".[2] Basil B., one of Ismael N.'s friends, was a 13 year-old monolingual speaker of French with no

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2. Similar to other large families who emigrated from Mali, Ismael N.'s parents very likely spoke Bambara or Soninke, one of the two main vehicular languages in Mali.

reported recent immigrant origins. All speakers are referred to by pseudonyms bearing no resemblance to their real names.[3]

The interviews took place before friends and classmates in a quiet hallway or classroom accessible to students during recesses. The first part of the speakers' task, presented as a naming game, consisted of listing the names of people, objects, landmarks, and symbols (e.g. letters of the alphabet)[4] depicted on, or evoked by, images shown by the fieldworker. Words were either open-set or closed-set single choice items (see Appendix for the complete list). The first type implied the selection of one word from a limited set of possible words, while the second type allowed the choice of only one word. The speakers' place of birth and the nearest housing project to their place of residence were part of open-set items elicited mostly at the beginning of the interview. These words were not all comparable across speakers, but the fact that they were from a closed set of possible local landmarks allowed for limited comparisons. Open-set items were also good conversation starters, providing context for the more constrained, single-choice items, part of the task (see Excerpt 2). Most target words were closed-set single-choice items identical for each speaker. When a synonym was uttered by the speaker instead of the expected word, and members of the audience were not involved in the interaction, the fieldworker gave clues to elicit the expected word. This elicitation method that remained sensitive to peer-group dynamics left room for possible guessing and discussions which, as we shall see, sometimes took place with the spontaneous participation of several members of the audience.

The second part of the speakers' task consisted in commenting on the pictures. This was carried out as a game of free association, sometimes prompted by questions from the interviewer as to what the images evoked in the speakers' mind. Drawings of objects alternated with photographs of celebrities aimed at maintaining the speakers' interest in the task. The interview typically lasted from 15 to 25 minutes.

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3. Following variationist sociolinguistic practice, speakers are identified by pseudonyms. The first names featured in this study were chosen randomly from the top 100 female or male first names typical to the speakers' heritage language and/or country of family origin. At the time of the publication of this article, the following web sites contained information relevant for frequently assigned first names of African origin: http://www.studentsoftheworld.info/penpals/stats.php3?Pays=MLI, http://www.studentsoftheworld.info/penpals/stats.php3?Pays=ALG

4. Besides gathering data on listing intonation contours, this task aimed at eliciting at least five occurrences of every French oral and nasal vowel in identical discourse contexts (see Appendix for the list of target words).

3. Quantitative analyses

Seventy-eight target items occurred in comparable IP-final positions in Yasin Z. and Ismael N.'s interviews (see Table 1 in Appendix). Productions of these words were submitted to acoustic and perceptual analyses using spectrograms and pitch tracks obtained in Praat (Boersma 2001). Schematic representations and illustrations of three types of contour observed in the speakers' speech are shown in the top and bottom rows, respectively, of Figure 1. Cells on the left correspond to the penultimate syllable of the IP; cells on the right depict the final syllable of the IP.[5]

Final rises (LH) shown in the leftmost boxes in Figure 1 are referred to as "continuation rises" in French. They are typical in lists (Guaïtella 1991) and assertions in non-final positions in the utterance (Delattre 1966; Di Cristo 1998) in both read and spontaneous speech. Final falls (HL) shown in the middle of Figure 1 also represent a basic contour type in French. They are associated with finality in lists and statements at the end of major prosodic units. For our purposes, occasional slightly falling or level intonation contours are also grouped in this category, as their phonetic forms did not warrant their classification as a rise, and the contours did not represent a known *cliché* intonation, such as a stylized fall or calling contour (Fónagy et al. 1983; Ladd 1996: 139–143; Fagyal 1997).
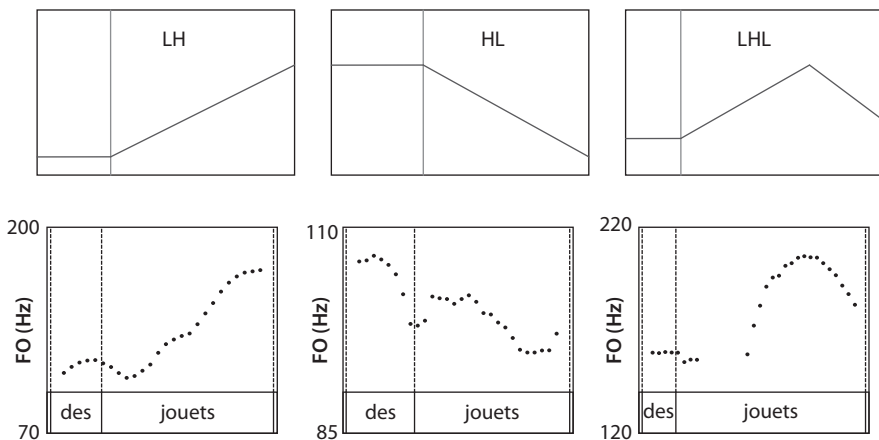

Figure 1. Rising (LH), falling (HL) and rising-falling (LHL) intonation contours in intonation phrase-final position in three renditions of the target word *des jouets* 'toys'

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5. In IP-final position, this accent is pre-empted by the IP-final accent and boundary tone (cf. Jun and Fougeron 2002: 150–153).

The third, rising-falling (LHL), contour is represented in the leftmost box of the top row in Figure 1. This tonal pattern is atypical in lists. Its occasional, variable realization with a lengthened penultimate syllable has been tied to working-class French in contact with immigrant languages (Gadet 1998). Conein and Gadet (1998), for instance, refer to this pattern in terms of an accentual shift to the penultimate syllable in their illustrations of the most distinctive phonetic features of working-class youth vernacular in the 1990s. The contour is typically characterized by a rising penultimate pitch movement and optional lengthening of the penultimate syllable followed by a short and sharp fall on the final syllable of the phrase. Several studies have analyzed the phonetic form (Fagyal 2003a, b, 2005; Le Gac et al. 2006) and the perceptual distinctiveness (Lehka-Lemarchard 2008; Stewart 2009) of this family of rising-falling contours, using different methodologies. A similar contour with a steeper slope than that observed in declarative utterances conveys imperative modality in standard French (Léon 1974; Stewart 2009: 134–142), and seems to have been singled out since the late 1980s as particularly frequent in the speech of working-class adolescents of immigrant descent.[6] It has been suggested that the LHL contour's use in a variety of pragmatic contexts in working-class Parisian French could be the result of pragmatic transfer and subsequent semantic expansion in working-class French in contact with heritage languages from North Africa (Fagyal 2005; Fagyal 2010b).

Figure 2 shows that the majority of the seventy-eight target words were uttered with a rise (LH) by both speakers, although Yasin Z. used more rises (93%) than Ismael N. (68%). Final falling (HL) contours were attested in only two percent of all cases in Yasin Z.'s speech, and were also sporadic in Ismael N.'s renditions of the target items (7%). From a quantitative point of view, the most noticeable difference between the two speakers lies, however, in the use of rising-falling contours. Only three LHL intonation contours (4%) were counted in Yasin Z.'s renditions of the twenty-eight IP-final target words, while Ismael N. uttered more of these items (25%) with the pragmatically marked intonation contour. However, the LHL contour did not occur with the same types of target word: Yasin Z. only used it in open-set single choice items; Ismael N. with both open- and closed-set target words. This suggests that the contextualization of this prosodic cue was different in the two speakers' speech.

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6. Christian Bachman, the first sociologist to conduct participant observations in one of the multi-ethnic working-class suburbs of Paris, is quoted on the strong affective component of intonation in working-class youth vernacular, stating that certain intonation contours sound "like verbal fights" (*comme des engueulades*) for the average French speaker (*Le Monde*, 1995.09.02, see Stewart 2009: 17).
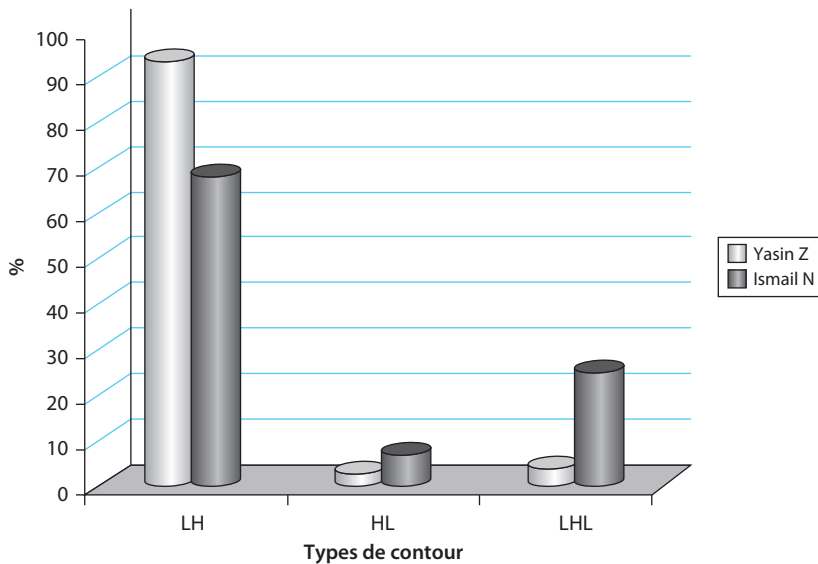
Figure 2. Percentage of rising (LH), falling (HL) and rising-falling (LHL) contours in phrase-final position for two speakers (N = 78)

In the remainder of the paper, we analyze the dynamics of peer-group interactions with the fieldworker to find out what might have motivated the emergence of the LHL contour in different interactional settings. We propose to interpret the exchanges in terms of Bell's audience design model (1984, 2001), focusing on the possible speaker-internal motivations of relational orientation towards the content and the participants of each exchange. While we adopt the analytical toolkit of the audience design model when analyzing instances of style-shifting in our corpus, we also shy away from singling out one source of motivation for style-shifting. Instead of maintaining the traditional dichotomy of initiative vs. reactive style-shifting, i.e., initiating a change in the situation rather than responding to such as change, we align with Coupland's view that "the balancing of response and initiation remains one of the key problems" of analytical approaches to style (Coupland 2007: 21). We will show that speakers style-shift in **inter**action, i.e., both as reactive and proactive agents, with respect to the various changes that occur in the relational setting (frame and footing) and the emerging common ground (meaning) of the interaction.

4.   Listing contours in context

4.1   Open-ended, co-operative orientation

We first examine excerpts from Yasin Z.'s interview involving an audience of six close friends seated around a small table in a quiet hallway. Excerpt 1 is extracted from the naming game recorded with Yasin Z., one of the most popular and charismatic personalities in school, and a leader figure for many of his peers (see Fagyal 2010a, b). IP-final intonation contours on the last syllables of target words are bolded, and tonal movements are transcribed in parentheses. Silent pauses are signaled by the # sign. The first five lines in Excerpt 1 represent a typical sequence, in which this speaker consistently uses pragmatically unmarked rising intonation contours to list target words when orienting himself solely towards the interviewer. First, he names the object shown in the picture (*revolver* 'gun', line 1), volunteering with at least one more piece of information (*Magnum 357 piton*, line 1). The interviewer acknowledges the word (line 2) and asks for more input (line 3). In response, Yasin Z. readily proposes an interpretation and ends up uttering the expected target word (*arme* 'gun', line 4). In turn, the interviewer acknowledges the word and invites the speaker to proceed to the next image (line 5).

Excerpt 1

1   Yasin Z. (facing the interviewer, names objects shown on a picture)
    là on voit un revolver (LH)   #   *ça doit être un Magnum 357 piton (LH)*
    here one sees a revolver   it must be a Magnum 357 python
2   Interviewer & Audience
    Ouais
    yeah
3   Interviewer
    ça t' fait penser à quoi (LH)
    what does that make you think of
4   Yasin Z.
    *ça m' fait penser à euh à une **arme** (LH)*
    it makes me think of, uh, of a gun
5   Interviewer
    bon ben, c'est une arme (HL)   #   *vas-y, continue (HL)*
    OK, it's a gun   go on
6   Friend 1 (seated next to the speaker, commenting on the picture)
    comme Lucky Luc (HL)
    like Lucky Luc [cartoon character]

7   Ismael N. (seated far away, trying to look at the picture)
     attends, je veux l' voir (HL)
     wait, I want to see it
8   Friend 2 (seated far away, trying to look at the picture)
     moi aussi (HL)
     me too
9   Yasin Z. (undisturbed, goes on to the next picture)
     *là on voit une **voiture** (LH)*   #   *on voit à l'arrière il y a un **pneu crevé** (LH)*
     here one can see a car   one sees at the back of the car a flat tire

In Excerpt 1, Yasin Z. is the sole expert on the interpretation of the pictures shown by the interviewer. He is cooperative and fully oriented towards the interviewer. In Bell's (1984: 159) words: "he is first person, primary participant at the moment of speech, and qualitatively apart from other interlocutors". In turn, the only "known, ratified, and addressed" member of the audience, the interviewer, is the only addressee supervising, so to speak, the joint interpretation of target words. In this type of face-to-face exchange, other than some occasional back-channel cues, the audience is relegated to the role of silent onlookers. Thus, following Bell's (1984) audience design framework, members of the audience can be considered auditors who are known and ratified but not "addressed" participants of the conversational exchange.

  This interactional frame was sometimes challenged by the most active members of the audience who came to the interview with the speaker and who often refused to remain silent during the exchange. One such attempt at leaving the role of a passive member of the audience behind is shown in the second part of Excerpt 1 (above). While the interviewer is preparing to show the next picture, Friend 1 initiates a side comment (line 6), comparing the object eliciting the previous target word (*revolver* 'gun') to one owned by a well-known cartoon character (*Lucky Luc*). Upon hearing this, two other members of the audience raise from their seats to look at the pictures, voicing their willingness to join the conversation. Undisturbed and unaffected by his peers' opinion, however, Yasin Z, the only ratified speaker in the exchange carries on. Rising intonation patterns realized on *voiture* 'car' and *pneu crevé* 'flat tire' in line 9 (Figure 3) signal Yasin Z.'s cooperative orientation towards the interviewer and the interactional frame. Thus the task and the interactional frame at hand, pre-defined by the interviewee from the start, remain unchanged. Rising contours on the above target words are noteworthy in this respect, because they characterize most closed-set target words in utterance-final positions in Yasin Z.'s speech. In such prosodic positions, target words could also be realized with falling intonation, indicating discourse-finality, and closure. Thus, in Yasin Z.'s case, the systematic choice of rising intonation is likely socially
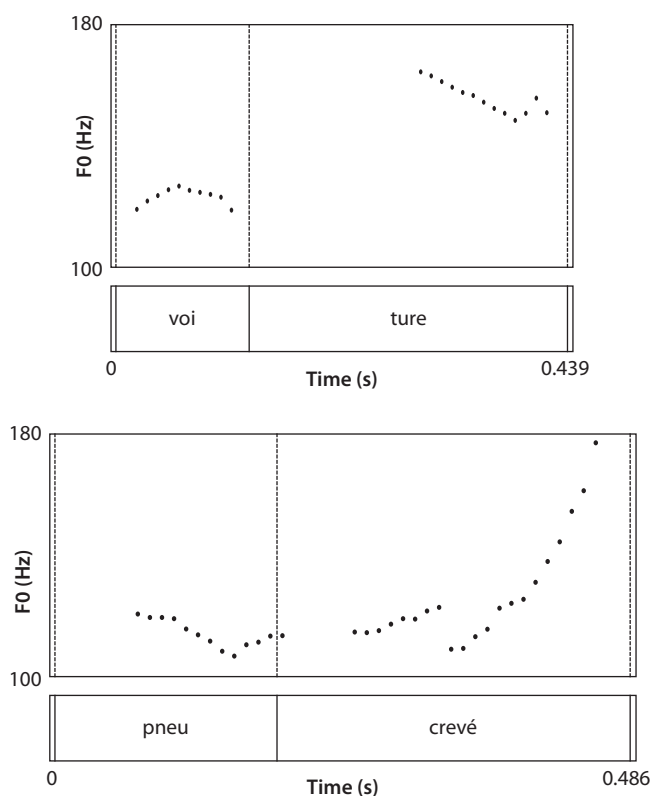
Figure 3. Target words *voiture* 'car' and *pneu crevé* 'flat tire' realized with a final rise (LH) in utterance-final position

meaningful, as rises (i.e., LH phrase-final boundary tones) are taken to signal "open-endedness and continuity in [speaker] orientation towards building the on-going discourse", as in House's (2006:1554) model of tonal meaning.

4.2   Claiming the floor, affirming status

As mentioned above, while most members of the audience surrounding Yasin Z. were auditors, some insisted on assuming a more active, ratified speaker role in the interaction. One such speaker was Ismael N., one of the speakers also featured in Excerpt 1. Shortly after Yasin Z.'s interview started, Ismael N. seemed to have taken on the role of the "main host" of Yasin Z.'s public performance in front of, and for the sake of, the group that was party to Yasin Z.'s recording. First Ismael N. only occasionally volunteered with side comments and rarely interrupted the

speaker. As the interview progressed, however, his intolerance for passive auditing started to increase. He became more and more demanding of the participants' attention. In Excerpt 2, he and Yasin Z. are commenting upon the images, on which the latter was invited to comment alone.

Excerpt 2

1   Interviewer (asks the speaker for clarifications about an open-set target word)
     *c'est dans les **Quatre-Mille** ça (LH)*   #   *où c'est*
     is it in the Four Thousand [name of a housing project]   #   or is it
2   Yasin Z.
     non non   #   *c'est en face en face de la **Verlaine** (HL)*
     no no   it is in front of Verlaine [name of a housing project]
3   Interviewer
     *ah c'est la cité **Barbusse** (LH)*
     oh is it Barbusse [name of a housing project]
4   Ismael N.
     c'est en face de
     it is facing
5   Yasin Z. (interrupting Ismael N.)
     en face des Verlaine Nord de
     facing Verlaine north of
6   Ismael N. (interrupting Yasin Z.)
     c'est en face de
     it is in front of
Audience (several friends interrupting, overlapping voices)
7   Yasin Z.
     *et derrière c'est **Verlaine** (LHL)*
     and Verlaine is behind

Ismael N.'s attempts at providing the right answer to the interviewer's question about the nearest housing project to the gym discussed in Excerpt 2 are unsuccessful, as Yasin Z. systematically interrupts him. In the final exchange, Yasin Z. uses LHL intonation to communicate the right answer to Ismael N., thus reclaiming the floor that, as the sole ratified speaker of the exchange, he considers to be his own. Rather than resorting to open-ended rising contours as in Excerpt 1, he reserves HL falling, i.e., neutral statement, intonation with the interviewer. The two contours are depicted in Figure 4.

Several minutes after this exchange, Ismael N. begins to argue with the interviewer about access to the microphone, preventing Yasin Z. from continuing his participation. Yasin Z., frustrated at not being able to finish, shifts to a style
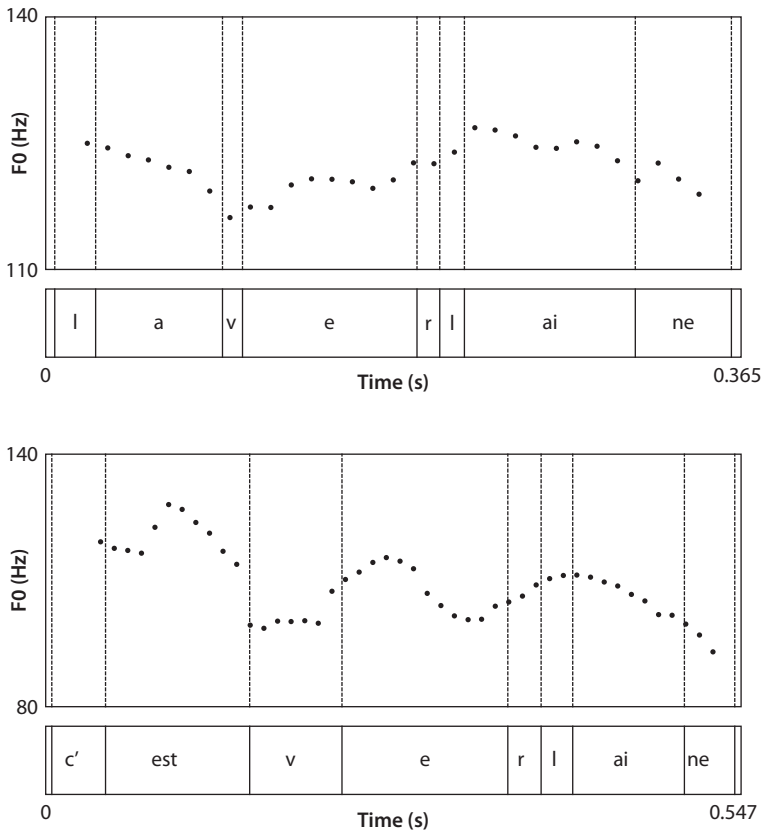
Figure 4. Target word *Verlaine* 'Verlaine' with HL falling contour addressed to the interviewer (line 2, Excerpt 2) in the top panel, and LHL rise-fall contour in response to a member of the peer-group audience (line 7, Excerpt 2) in the bottom panel

reserved exclusively for his peers. At the moment when, because of the incessant interruptions, Yasin Z. is no longer able to speak, he appears to leave his role of experimental subject and silences Ismael N. He puts his classmate in his place by establishing an immediate silence around him with a brisk and unexpected style shift: he uses the marked LHL intonation contour with non-standard lexis. A depiction of this contour can be seen in Figure 5.

4.3   Asserting common ground

The third excerpt (Excerpt 3) was taken from a similar exchange. On this occasion, however, the audience and one of Ismael N.'s best friend, Basil B., are commenting together on images being presented to Ismael N. This "collaboration"
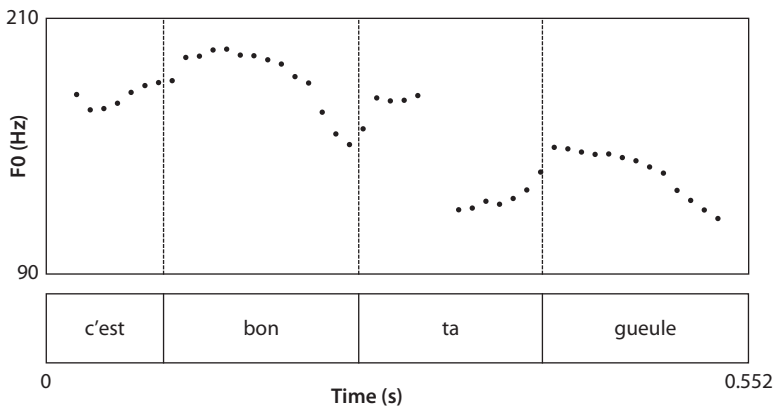
Figure 5. Interjection *C'est bon. Ta gueule*! 'That's enough. Shut the hell up!' uttered to a member of the audience preventing the speaker from continuing the recording

between friends takes on several aspects. One aspect is the co-construction of common ground for the interpretation of some of the pictures shown to Ismael N., the ratified speaker of this exchange. Ismael N. and his friends seem to be searching for a consensus on the word referring to the image presented to them.

Excerpt 3

1   Interviewer
     OK. Donc même chose: tu peux nous dire l'objet, le nom de l'objet et à quoi…
     OK. So, same thing: tell us the object, the name of the object and what…
2   Basil B. (in the background)
     C'est un pistolet 350 (HL) [laugh]
     It's a 350 pistol [laugh]
3   Ismael N.
     Euh # Revolver (LH)
4   Basil B. (in the background)
     Un revolver (HL) aïe, aïe!
     A revolver.   Oouch, ouch!
5   Interviewer (partial overlap with Ismael N.)
     Est-ce qu'une idée…
     Does an idea…
6   Ismael N.
     Revolver (LHL)
7   Basil B.
     Il dit revolver (HL)

8   Interviewer
     Est-ce qu'une idée qui te vient à l'esprit quand tu vois ça?
     Does an idea come to mind when you see this?
9   Basil B. (in the background)
     Ouais c'est Lucky Luc (HL)
     Yeah it's Lucky Luc.
10   Ismael N.
     Oui # la police (LH)
     Yes, the police.
11   Basil B. (in the background)
     [laughs]

The above exchange is different from previous excerpts in that common ground on the interpretation of the picture at hand is systematically co-constructed with a member of the audience without any sign of oppositional stance between the participants. As soon as the interviewer provides the prompt (line 1) and before the ratified speaker, Ismael N., has time to answer, one of the speakers' friends, Basil B., who is also looking at the picture bursts out the name *pistolet* for the object (line 2). The interpretation proposed by Basil B. is revised to *revolver* by Ismael N. who utters it with rising intonation (line 3), i.e., an open-ended proposal for inclusion in the on-going negotiation of common ground for this lexical item. The playful reception of the word *revolver* by Basil B. and other members of the audience surrounding him (line 4) very likely prompts Ismael N. to reiterate the same word with a characteristic LHL intonation for the sake of his audience (line 6). There is no sign of oppositional stance towards any member of the audience in this repeated occurrence of the word. On the contrary, Ismael N. cuts off the interviewer preparing the next question (line 5) with the word *revolver* reiterated with rising-falling intonation, as he appears to be indirectly communicating with his audience, yet again, positively echoing this terms (line 7). After the interviewer's second question (line 8), Basil B. is again the first to answer quietly from the background with a joke about the most likely bearer of an old-fashioned gun for French adolescents: the cartoon character Lucky Luc (line 9). While Ismael N. does not take up on this opportunity to interact with his friends, his reference to the police (line 10) nonetheless elicits laughs from these active members of his audience. Theses intonation contours on the word *revolver* are shown in Figure 6.

Following the audience design model proposed by Bell (1984, 2001), Ismael N.'s shift to the LHL contour could be interpreted as an instance of reactive style-shifting, as the speaker shifts from a particular intonation contour on *revolver* (LH, line 3) to another contour (LHL, line 6) in reaction to his audience's uptake of the same word (HL, line 4). Thus, Ismael N. reacts to changes in participant roles and
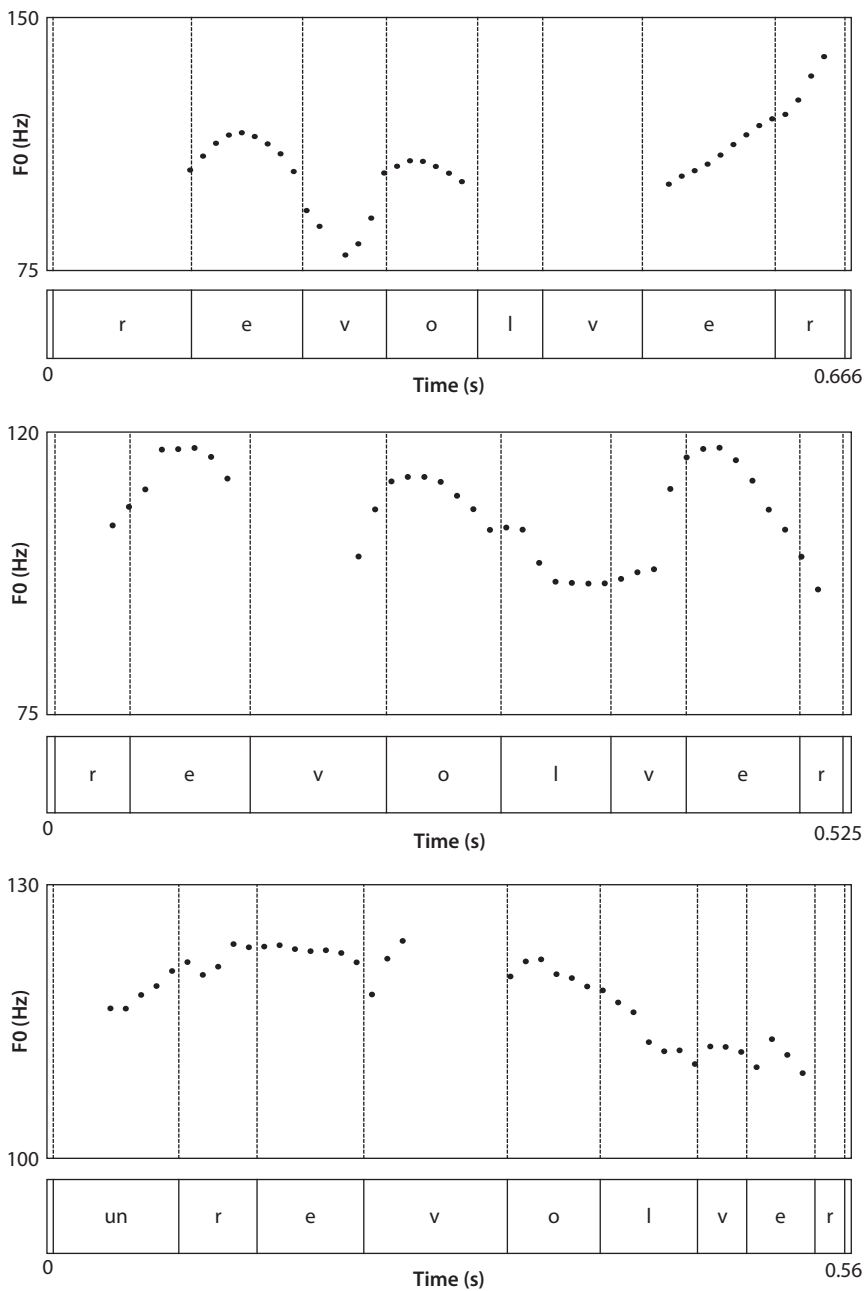
Figure 6. The target word *revolver* uttered by the speaker Ismael N. with a rising (LH) contour in line 3 (top panel) and a rising-falling (LHL) contour in line 6 (middle panel) of Excerpt 3. The third panel shows Basil B.'s production *un revolver* in line 4.

the content of the interaction, and his use of the LHL contour on *revolver* could be taken as indexing immediate alignment with his friends. However, as we have just seen, Ismael N.'s proposal to call the object shown on the picture *revolver* (line 3) follows rather than precedes Basil B.'s suggestion to call it *pistolet* (line 2). This means that it is Basil B. and not his friend Ismael N., the ratified speaker of the exchange, who is momentarily taking control of the floor and issuing the first interpretation of the picture. Thus, initiative rather than reactive style-shifting appears to be a more suitable interpretation for Ismael N.'s conversational move and use of the LHL contour in line 6: he proactively chooses among the available linguistic resources in order to reorient the exchange and signal change in footing, i.e., he reasserts his ratified role as the primary designated speaker of the exchange. This means that he is actively engaged in the construction of common ground rather than simply accommodating to others in such a negotiation process. And yet, this interpretation also only seems to capture one aspect of the above interaction. The question remains: what might have motivated Ismael N. to pronounce the word *revolver* twice in a row with two different intonations (lines 3 and 6), if not his readiness to reassert common ground with Basil B. and the other members of the audience who seemed to like this word (line 4)? Clearly, while the first iteration of *revolver* seems to have been addressed to the interviewer (line 2), *revolver* with the LHL intonation (line 6) was destined to Ismael N.'s overhearers: his friends in the audience. Thus, an analysis in terms of both initiative and reactive style-shifting seems equally relevant. Both contours are equally meaningful in indexing the co-construction of the interpretation of a target word suggested by the picture, but the neutral rising contour was preferred with the interviewer, while the marked rising-falling contour was selected with members of the peer groups. As opposed to all other occurrences of this contour in the previous excerpts, however, there is no sign of actual competition for the floor in Excerpt 3. The speaker and his proactive audience jointly negotiate common ground on the target word, with the LHL contour cueing a strong assertion rather than initiation of, or response to, a challenge.

Arguably, Excerpt 3 provides a clear indication that initiation and response in interaction can be quite difficult to track, as speakers' communicative moves might be closely intertwined during the conversational exchange. In Excerpt 3, Ismael N. clearly style-shifts in close **inter**action with, if not, attunement to, his interlocutors; he is simultaneously a proactive and reactive agent who jointly constructs a different relational setting and negotiates common ground over the meaning of a word with his audience.

5. Conclusion

In this chapter, we concentrated on the relational dimension of the shifts to and from various intonation contours indexing speakers' footing, i.e. their participant roles in the on-going talk-in-interaction and negotiation of shared meaning. In response to the research questions asked above, we can give a positive answer to question (1): the same speaker does utter the same target words with a different phrase-final intonation in the same setting depending on the type of audience to whom he is directing his answers (e.g. ratified addressee or overhearers). In response to questions (2) and (3), we have also seen that neutral rising and falling contours emerge with all types of participants, while the marked intonation contour typically attributed to working-class youth vernacular in contact with immigrant languages is reserved to members of the peer group. The audience may or may not replicate the use of the contour selected by the speaker.

It might also be noteworthy that the picture of a gun elicited some of the clearest variable, i.e., collaborative and oppositional, conversational moves among the male speakers of this pre-adolescent peer-group. Possible symbolic values associated with emerging images of masculinity, as well as the influence of the media might have played a role in these patterns, which deserve further investigation.[7]

We also illustrated the alternation between various intonation contours used with precise interactional goals. We proposed that shifts from intonation contours more or less marked in listing contexts could be interpreted in terms of style-shifting that indexes some type of affiliation with peers, as opposed to outsiders, present during the conversational exchange. While the typology of reactive and initiative style-shifting was a useful dichotomy, we saw that the interactional dynamics cued by intonation can often be quite intricate and difficult to pin down. Typically associated with the French spoken by descendents of recent immigrants from outside Europe, the marked LHL intonation contour seems to be a contextualized and fully functioning part of a 'we-code' in adolescent peer groups, whose interactions were illustrated briefly in this paper. While the contour is salient, nothing, based on its forms and use in talk-in-interaction, seems to call for the notion of a separate ethnic variety of French. On the contrary, it seems that the influence of immigrant varieties in the French context is better understood as stylistic variation, whose contextual and relational properties in adolescent peer group interactions need to be further investigated.

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Appendix

Table 1. Total number of target words in the corpus. Closed-set single choice items have also been used to elicit vowel data from the speakers

Open-set single choice items (N = 3):

Town of birth: Aubervilliers, Stains, La Courneuve … etc.
Place of residence (sub-division or housing project): Inter, Quatre-Mille, Verlaine … etc.
Class in school: 4eB (quatrième bé), 5eA (cinquième a) … etc.

Closed-set single choice items (N = 97):

Nasal vowels: train, singe, ballon, garçon, lion, blonde, Chaperon, ange, France **(9)**
/i/: fruit, magique, souris, petit, Zinadine **(5)**
/e/: Bé, Cé, Pé, Vé*, dé, bébé, collier, ouvrier, chantier, hérissé, cité, crevé, collier, courbé, épée, fée **(16)**
/ɛ/: alphabet, baies, lacets, pistolet, jouets, lait, muguet, mai, perroquet, rai, quai, peigne, basket, ferme, zèbre, revolver, pelle, mer, corbeille, baguette **(20)**
/a/: chat, rat, A*, dame, Jordan, Zidane, poil, girafe, hippopotame, sabre, étoile, femme/dame, noir, voyage **(14)**
/o/: zoo, peau, dos, seau, animaux **(5)**
/ɔ/: box, bottes, homme, golf, brosse **(5)**
/ø/: feu, pneu, queue, vœu, cheveux **(5)**
/œ/: peur, fleur, golfeur, boxeur, entraîneur **(5)**
/y/: cubes, légumes, massue, mûres, voiture **(5)**
/u/: pou, chou, loup, boue, foot, poule, rouge, nounours **(8)**

* letter of the alphabet