

## Background

### Different analyses of pitch accent in Egyptian Arabic:

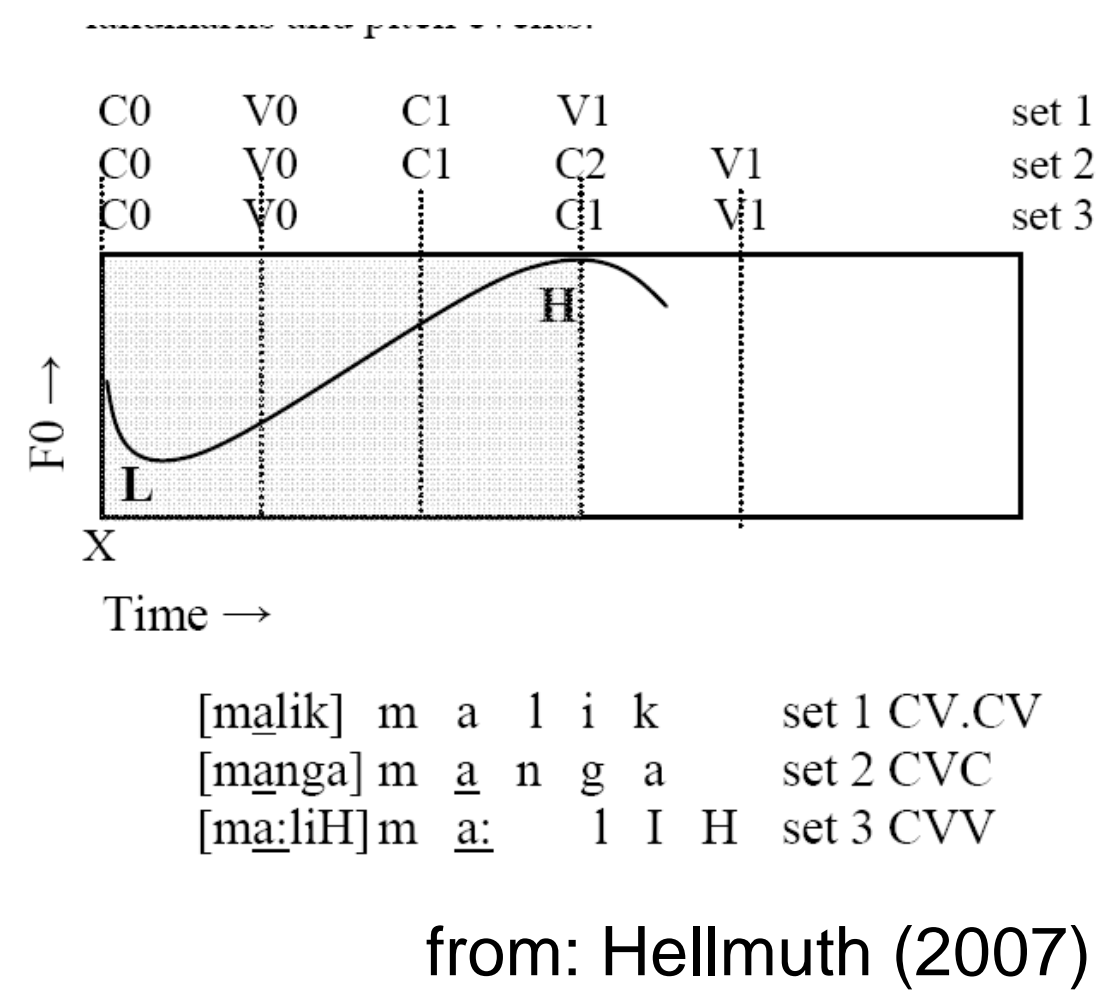
Rifaat (1990): prenuclear LH, nuclear HL

Rastegar-El Zarka (1997): H\*L

Rifaat (2005): H\*, H\*L, L\*H

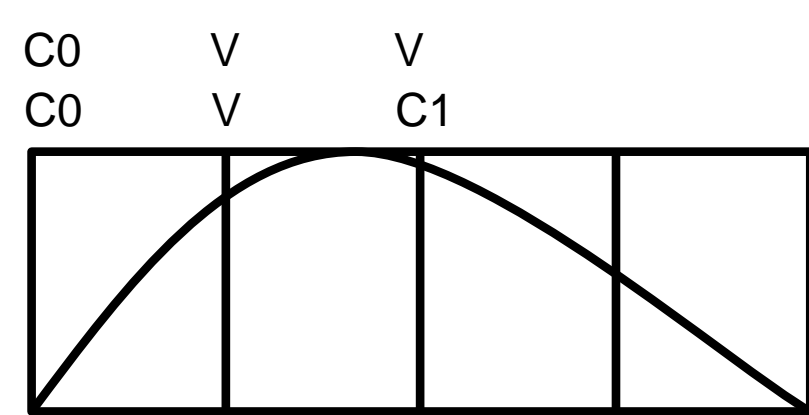
Hellmuth (2006): LH\*

experimental alignment study



R.-El Zarka (1997) for Egypt.

Formal Arabic: H\*L



∅ Difference due to level of formality?

## Data - Methodology

• \_\_\_\_\_: investigation of information structure in EA

### •Data:

•spontaneous and semi-spontaneous speech: stories, conversation, information structure experiment

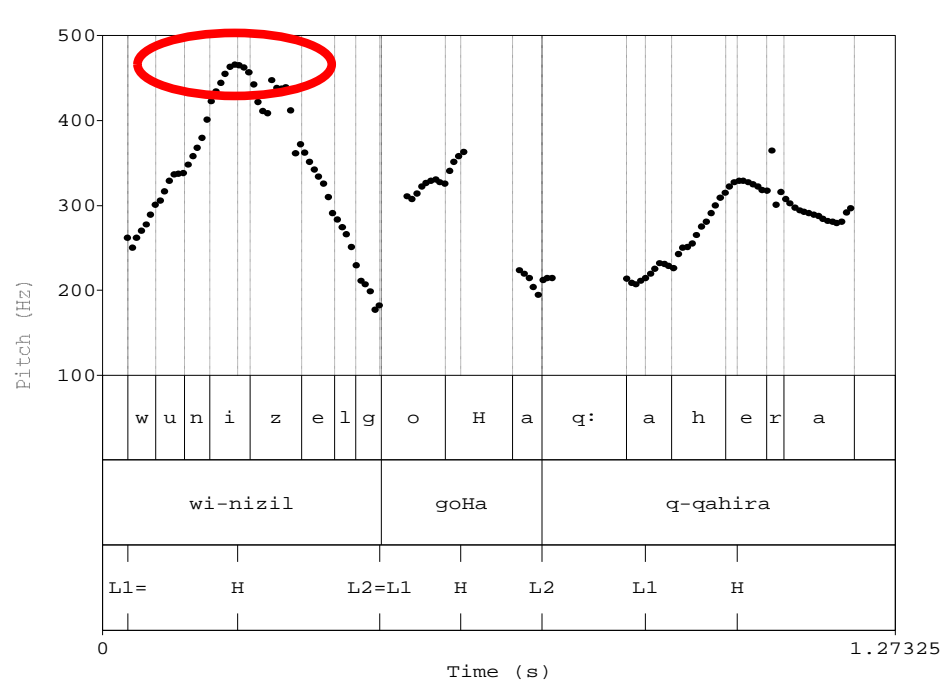
•information structure: translation task (3 speakers) (D2 information structure project, SFB Universität Potsdam)

•alignment experiment: EFA vs. ECA (Hellmuth & El preparation)

•qualitative analysis

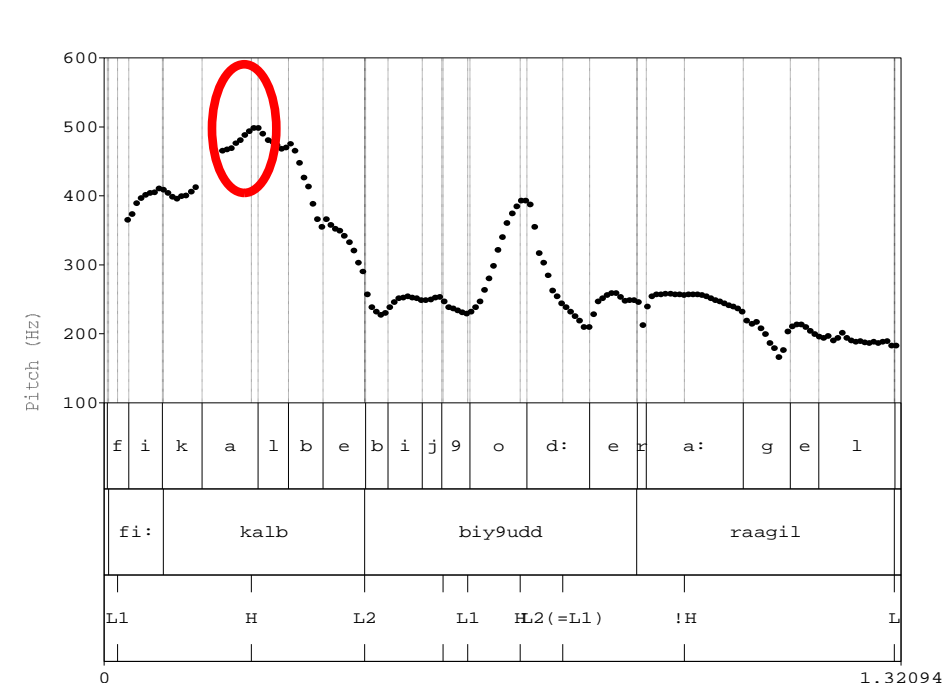
## Information structure

### ∇ „neutral declarative“: sentence focus



VSO (narrative)

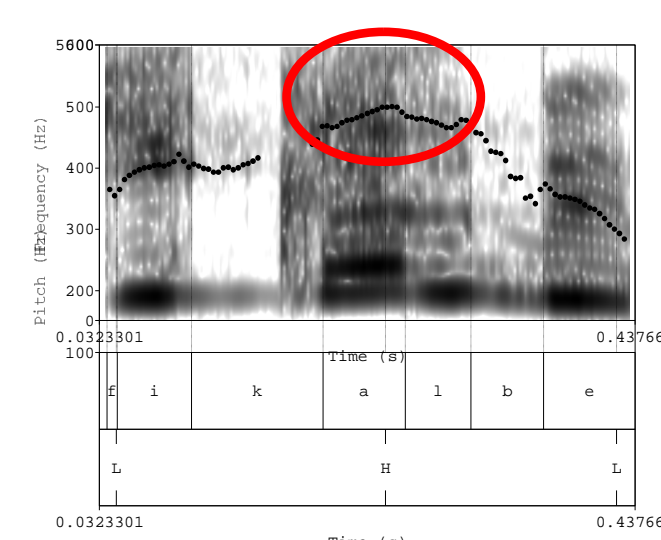
and-went-Sg.m. GoHa Cairo „and Goha went to Cairo.“



existential construction (read speech)

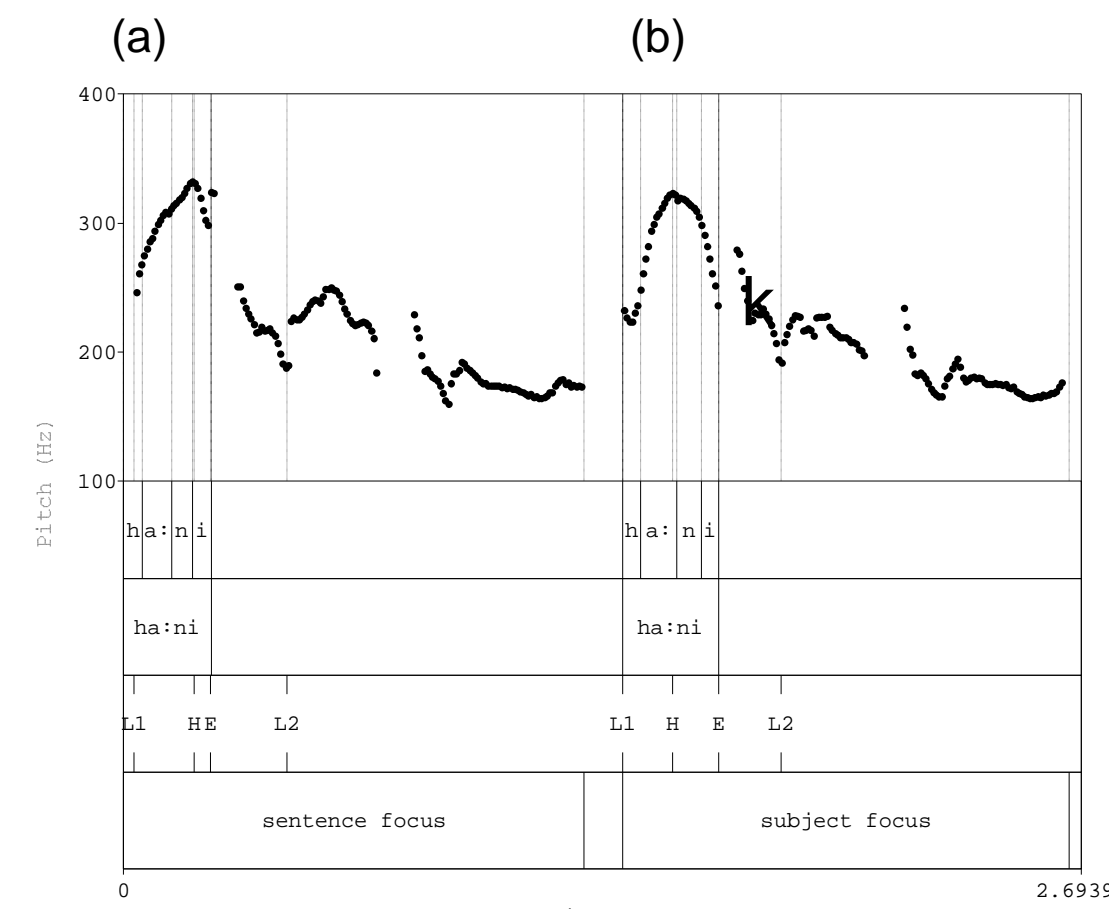
EXIST dog ASP-Sg.m.-bite man „a dog is biting a man“.

CVC  
|  
H

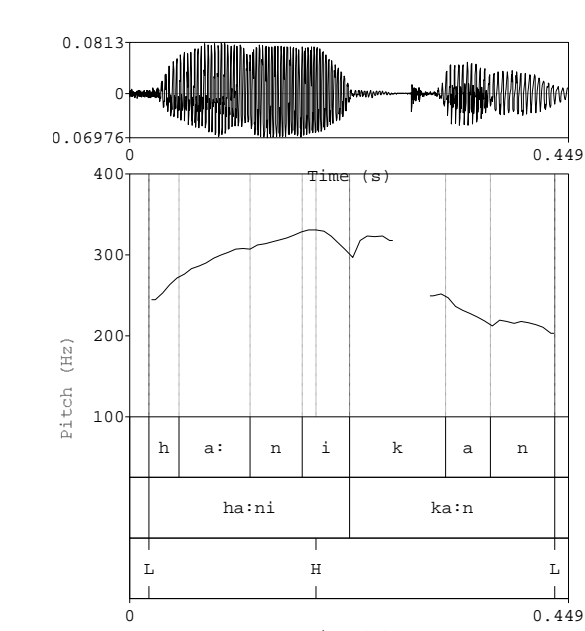


H within stressed syllable, L2 at word end

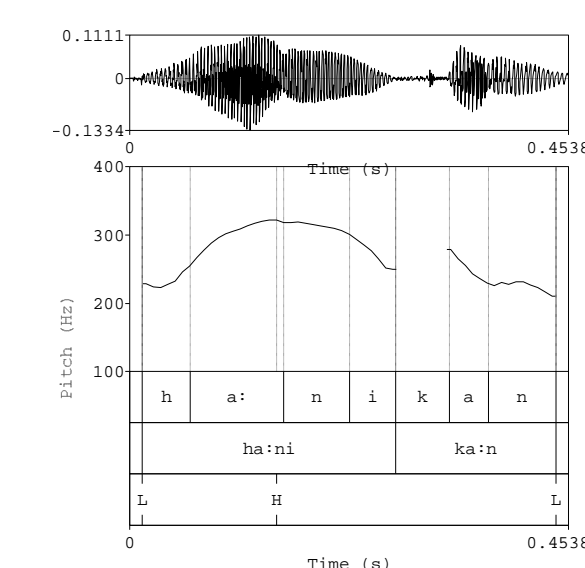
### ∇ topical vs. focal



haani kaan biyil9ab fi-l-gineena  
Hani was ASP-Sg.m.-play in-the-garden „Hani was playing in the garden.“ (panel (a): What do you see when you came home yesterday?“; panel (b): „Who was playing in the garden?“



topic  
CVV.CV  
| |  
L H L



focus  
CVV.CV  
| | |  
L H L

topics: late peak  
focus: mid peak  
and fall to L within focussed word

## Discussion

∪ topics: rising gesture

∪ focus: (rising) - falling gesture

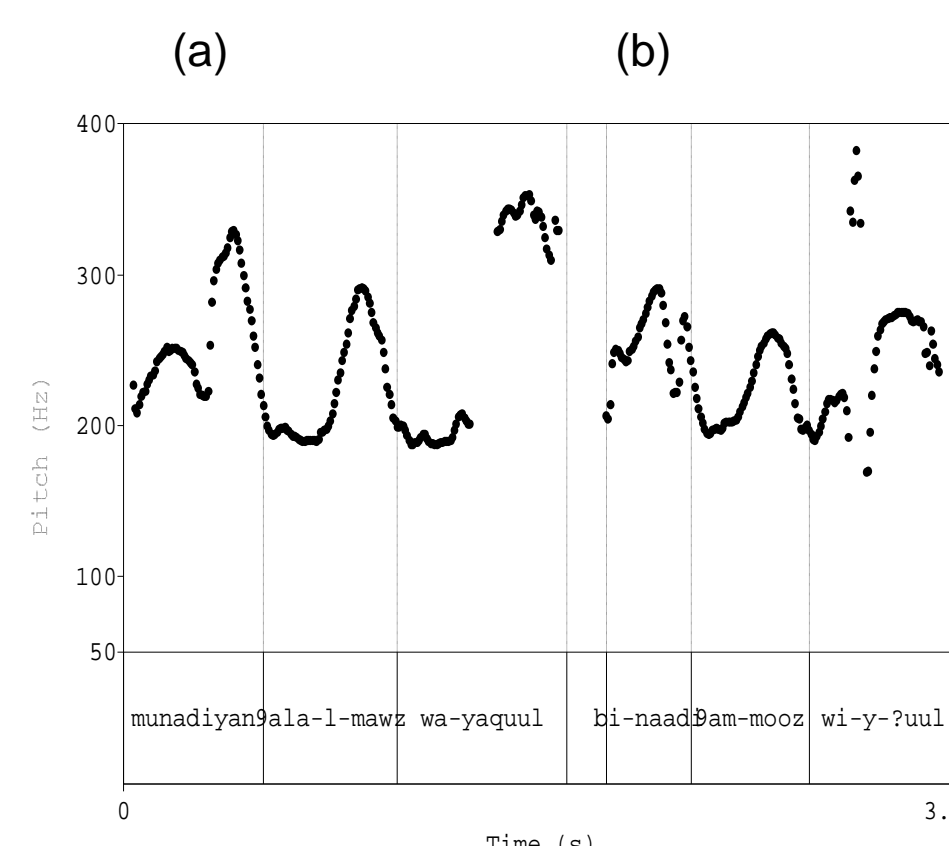
∪ L1 quite stably aligned with onset of stressed syllable (sometimes beginning of word)

∪ H and L2 subject to functional variation

∇ frequency code: rising – uncertainty (questioning) – topical falling – certainty (assertion) – focal (cf. Peters, Kohler & Wesener 2005)

∇ alignment under speaker's control (cf. Gussenhoven 2005)

∇ difference also due to phonological factors (nb. of intervening unstressed syllables, speech style)



formal (a) vs. colloquial (b):

(a) munaadiyan 9ala-l-mawz wa-yaquul

(b) binaadi 9al-mooz wi-y?uul

„praising the bananas, saying...“

(L) H (L)

•not different accents: LH vs. HL

(cf. Bruce 2005 for Swedish)

•alignment and scaling variable: partly due to semantics and pragmatics of text

### References:

- Bruce, G. (2005) Intonational Prominence in Varieties of Swedish Revisited. In: Sun-Ah Jun (ed.) *Prosodic Typology. The Phonology of Intonation and Phrasing*, 410-429, Oxford Univ. Press.
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