

<https://helda.helsinki.fi>

The Realization of Information Focus in Catalan

Cruschina, Silvio

Multidisciplinary Digital Publishing Institute

2022-12-09

Cruschina, S.; Mayol, L. The Realization of Information Focus in Catalan. Languages 2022, 7, 310.

<http://hdl.handle.net/10138/351578>

Downloaded from Helda, University of Helsinki institutional repository.

This is an electronic reprint of the original article.

This reprint may differ from the original in pagination and typographic detail.

Please cite the original version.

The Realization of Information Focus in Catalan

Silvio Cruschina ^{1,*}  and Laia Mayol ^{2,*} ¹ Department of Languages, University of Helsinki, 00014 Helsinki, Finland² Department of Translation and Language Sciences, Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Roc Boronat 138, 08018 Barcelona, Spain* Correspondence: silvio.cruschina@helsinki.fi (S.C.); laia.mayol@upf.edu (L.M.)

Abstract: Answers to wh-questions are the most widespread method to elicit information focus. When studying the syntax of focus, however, this method is problematic because the most natural answer to a wh-question is often a fragment that only includes the focus. This problem has led to considerable controversy in the literature about the position in which information focus is realized, particularly for Spanish, but also for Catalan. In order to enhance the naturalness and reliability of the question-answer test, we designed an experiment with a new elicitation technique (i.e., *questions with a delayed answer*) in which some material is inserted between the question and the point in which the participant is asked to answer the question, so that the Catalan participants would spontaneously utter a full sentence instead of a fragment, without being explicitly instructed to do so. The material of this production experiment was then adapted in a rating experiment on the acceptability of preverbal and postverbal information foci in Catalan. The results of this second study confirm the findings of the production experiment: postverbal focus is always preferred over preverbal focus, both in the case of subjects and objects.

Keywords: information focus; Catalan; questions with a delayed answer; production experiment; acceptability judgements; subject focus; object focus



Citation: Cruschina, Silvio, and Laia Mayol. 2022. The Realization of Information Focus in Catalan.

Languages 7: 310. <https://doi.org/10.3390/languages7040310>

Academic Editors: Mara Frascarelli and Giorgio Carella

Received: 4 November 2022

Accepted: 1 December 2022

Published: 9 December 2022

Publisher's Note: MDPI stays neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.



Copyright: © 2022 by the authors. Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

1. Introduction

In this paper we address the question of the syntactic position in which information focus is realized in Catalan. In this language, like in other null-subject Romance varieties, there are two possibilities for the syntactic realization of focus: the focal phrase can appear either in a postverbal or in a preverbal position, as shown in (1) and (2), where the focus is marked in bold:¹

- (1) a. Ha pagat **el Joan**.
has paid the Joan
b. **El Joan** ha pagat.
the Joan has paid
'Joan paid.'
- (2) a. La Maria s'ha comprat **un Mercedes**.
the Maria REFL=has bought a Mercedes
b. **Un Mercedes** s'ha comprat la Maria.
a Mercedes REFL=has bought the Maria
'Maria bought a Mercedes (for herself).'

These two options, however, are not completely free and interchangeable. There is a general consensus that the unmarked position for narrow focus is the postverbal one, independently of its syntactic category and grammatical function (see [Vallduví 2002](#); see also [López 2009](#), sct. 2.4.4). The preverbal position, by contrast, is restricted to specific interpretations and pragmatic functions associated with focus. In particular, it is only available to foci that imply a correction of a given alternative (*corrective* or *contrastive focus*) or unexpectedness with respect to more likely alternatives (*mirative focus*) (see [Cruschina](#)

2012, 2019, 2021 and references therein on other Romance languages), as illustrated in (3) and (4):

- (3) a. **El Joan** ha pagat, no la Maria. (*corrective focus*)
 the Joan has paid not the Maria
 'Joan paid, not Maria.'
- b. No m'ho puc creure! **El Joan** ha pagat! (*mirative focus*)
 not me=it=can.1SG believe.INF the Joan has paid
 'I can't believe it! Joan paid!'
- (4) a. **Un Mercedes** s'ha comprat l'Eva, no un Seat. (*corrective focus*)
 a Mercedes REFL=has bought the=Eva not a Seat
 'Eva bought a Mercedes (for herself), not a Seat.'
- b. Increïble, no m'ho esperava! **Un Mercedes** s'ha
 Unbelievable not me=it=expected.1SG a Mercedes REFL=has
 comprat l'Eva!
 bought the Eva
 'Unbelievable! I was not expecting this! Eva bought a Mercedes!'

In the absence of these additional meanings, however, the data are more subtle and somehow controversial. This is the case of *information focus*, which we here define as the type of focus that introduces new information and gives rise to a contextually open set of alternatives, with no direct contrast with given alternatives, as in corrections, nor with (contextually) more likely alternatives, as in counter-expectational (mirative) readings.

A classical method to elicit information focus is by means of a wh-question, where the wh-phrase in the question corresponds to the focus constituent in the answer (cf. 5–8). When studying the syntax of focus, however, this method is problematic because the most natural answer to a wh-question is very often a fragment that only includes the focus, while the given background material is elided (cf. (6a) and (8a); see Merchant 2004). This problem makes it rather difficult to investigate the position that information focus occupies within the sentence, leading to considerable controversy and divergent views in the literature, particularly for Spanish, but also for Catalan. Indeed, when the answer is not a fragment, it is still a matter of dispute whether information focus should occur in the default postverbal position (cf. 6b, 8b), or can be fronted to a preverbal position (cf. 6c, 8c).²

- (5) Qui ha pagat?
 'Who paid?'
- (6) a. **El Joan.**
 b. Ha pagat **el Joan.**
 c. **El Joan** ha pagat.
 'Joan (paid).'
- (7) Què s'ha comprat l'Eva?
 'What did Eva buy for herself?'
- (8) a. **Un Mercedes.**
 b. (L'Eva) s'ha comprat **un Mercedes.**
 c. **Un Mercedes** s'ha comprat (l'Eva).
 '(Eva bought) a Mercedes (for herself).'

The goal of this study is to investigate the distribution of information focus in Catalan on the evidence of a new elicitation technique that overcomes the above-mentioned problem with fragment answers and that improves the 'naturalness' of the relevant methodology. After a thorough review of the question-answer test (cf. Section 2), the different views reported in the previous studies are discussed in Section 3, with a special attention to the methods adopted to elicit information focus. To overcome the previous potential methodological problems and weaknesses, a new elicitation technique is presented in

Section 4. We implemented this technique both in a production and in an acceptability-judgement experiment, which will be described in Sections 5 and 6, respectively. The experimental results are further discussed in Section 7, together with some final remarks and suggestions for future research.

2. The Question-Answer Test

In crosslinguistic research, answers to wh-questions are still “the most widespread and most widely used test for focus” (Van der Wal 2016, p. 265) and, in particular, for information focus.³ Despite its simplicity, the question-answer test can be easily misunderstood, and in fact misused, when the method is confused with the definition, that is, when any constituent addressing the wh-question is taken to be the focus of the answer or, if different pragmatic types of focus are distinguished, when the answering constituent is automatically analysed as an instance of information focus. In our view, it is fundamental to pay attention to the following aspects related to this test:

- (9) a. Only congruent answers contain a narrow focus.
- b. The most natural answers are fragments.
- c. Not all foci in answers to wh-questions are information foci.

Let us consider these three aspects individually.

2.1. The Question-Answer Congruence

It is important to restrict the question-answer test to congruent answers. According to the question-answer congruence, the focus of an answer to a wh-question is the part of the answer that directly corresponds to the wh-phrase in the question (cf. (5)–(8) above). This congruence is generally described with reference to main prominence: the constituent that bears the main prominence of the answer (marked in bold in our examples) must correspond to the wh-question in the question (see Paul [1880] 1995; Halliday 1967; von Stechow 1990; Roberts [1996] 2012; Schwarzschild 1999; Krifka 2001, 2011; Reich 2002; and Zimmermann and Onea 2011, among others):

- (10) a. #L'Eva s'ha comprat un Mercedes.
- b. L'Eva s'ha comprat **un Mercedes**.

Sentence (10a) is not a congruent answer to the question in (7) because the focus constituent of the answer does not correspond to the object wh-phrase *què* ‘what’ in the question. In (10b), by contrast, this correspondence holds, so we have a congruent answer. Pretheoretically, congruent answers can be considered the most simple and straightforward answers to wh-questions. However, it is possible to respond to a wh-question with a variety of non-congruent, yet felicitous answers:

- (11) A: Where is Diesel from?
 B: Diesel is an Italian clothing company.
- (12) Who taught you to paint?
- (13) a. I learned it by myself.
 b. I had a private teacher.
- (14) A: Who did Mary see yesterday on the street?
 B: Mary saw that John went to the barber shop.
- (15) A: Who went to Italy on a holiday?
 B: John went to Siena.

(11B) clearly resolves the issue opened in question (11A), so it surely is a pragmatically felicitous answer to that question. It is nevertheless not a congruent answer, in that, the DP *an Italian clothing company* does not directly correspond to the wh-constituent of the question and thus, it does not count as a narrow focus. The same holds true of (13a) and (13b), which are both possible felicitous answers to the question (12). In these sentences, which lack

a narrow focus, main prominence is by default assigned to the rightmost constituent. If the subject corresponding to the *wh*-constituent in the question were prosodically marked as focus (i.e., *I learned it by myself, I had a private teacher*), the pragmatic felicity would be overturned. The reply (14B) does contain a constituent (i.e., *John*) that roughly corresponds to the *wh*-constituent of the question (14A), providing the missing information. This is however not an exact correspondence, since the *wh*-phrase of the question is the direct object of the verb *see*, while in the answer, *John* is the subject of the complement clause. In this case too, the focal prosodic marking of this constituent (i.e., *Mary saw that John went to the barber shop*) would undermine the felicity of the response.

Let us finally consider the more subtle case in (15). Sentence (15B) is an appropriate and felicitous reply to the question in (15A); we also have a direct correspondence between the constituent of the question that provides the sought information and the *wh*-phrase in the question, which are both grammatical subjects. In fact, *John* in (15B) is a contrastive topic in the sense of Büring (1997, 2003, 2016) (see also Krifka 2007; Frascarelli 2017; Kamali and Krifka 2020). With contrastive topics, the question under discussion is divided into sub-questions, and each sentence that contains a contrastive topic answers one sub-question involving a predicate that applies separately to each member of a salient set. Like focus, a contrastive topic involves a set of alternatives, but unlike focus, it does not imply the exclusion of the other members of the set. Indeed, (15B) counts as a partial answer (Krifka 1999) and suggests a continuation with reference to the other members of the set (*John went to Siena, Mary went to Padua, Paul went to Venice, etc.*). Prosodically, a contrastive topic is distinctly marked by a specific pitch accent, which is different from the pitch accent associated with narrow focus (Büring 1997, 2003, 2016).

Therefore, when applying the question-answer test, it is essential to distinguish between pragmatically appropriate or felicitous answers that address the open issue introduced in the *wh*-question (i.e., the question under discussion) and congruent answers.⁴ Only the latter guarantee the presence of narrow focus in the answer. Following von Stechow (1990), congruence can be defined as a particular semantic relation between questions and answers, whereby the focus in the answer shares the same set of alternatives introduced in the question:

- (16) Who saw Ede yesterday?
- (17) a. #Wolfgang saw Ede yesterday.
 b. **Wolfgang** saw Ede yesterday.
 (adapted from von Stechow 1990, p. 68)

The alternatives determined by question (16) are the propositions of the form ‘*x* saw Ede yesterday’. Among the possible answers in (17), only (17b) shares the same set of alternatives (i.e., the same background, which stays constant in the set of alternatives) and is therefore a congruent answer. (17a) determines different alternatives of the form ‘Wolfgang saw *x* yesterday’. This semantic definition of the question-answer congruence allows us to characterize as non-congruent not only those answers in which the focus constituent does not directly correspond to the *wh*-phrase in the question (cf. 11B, 13b, 14B, 17a), but also those answers in which it is possible to identify a corresponding constituent that provides the missing information, yet this cannot be viewed as a narrow focus because it does not share the same alternatives as the question (cf. 13a, 15B).

2.2. Fragment Answers

Congruent answers allow for so-called short or fragment answers (see Merchant 2004; Krifka 2006). Since a congruent answer shares the same background as the question, it is not necessary to repeat these given parts: ellipsis of the given material would most naturally apply, yielding a fragment answer. Merchant (2004) argues that fragment answers are derived from full sentences by the fronting of the focal fragment constituent to a dedicated focus projection in the left periphery of the sentence and the ellipsis (i.e., PF-deletion) of the remnant sentence constituent in the response, corresponding to TP (see also Brunetti 2004):

- (18) A: Who did she see?
 B: [John] she saw.
 (Merchant 2004, pp. 673–75)

For ellipsis to apply, the deleted material must be given. More specifically, it must satisfy an identity condition by paralleling the propositional content of an antecedent in the immediate previous discourse. The elided material has to be truth-conditionally identical to the antecedent, and not necessarily morphosyntactically equivalent (Merchant 2001, 2004, 2018).

Fragment answers consist minimally of the focus phrase that satisfies the question-answer congruence. More importantly, in natural and spontaneous speech, fragments are more common and natural than full sentences. Vallduví (1992), among others, argues that non-fragment answers (what he calls ‘theme-containing utterances’) are most natural in contexts in which the question they address is not maximally salient at the time of utterance. The most natural answer to (19A) is the fragment *fish*, while the non-fragment answer *We are having fish for dinner* in (19B) would be rather marked. The same non-fragment answer, however, becomes necessary in (19B’) to indicate that this utterance is not addressing the immediately preceding question in (19A’) (i.e., *Can’t we order pizza?*), but rather the previous question in (19A), which was no longer maximally salient at the time of utterance.

- (19) A: What are we having for dinner?
 B: **Fish**. / We are having **fish** for dinner.
 A’: Oh, not again! We are having fish several days a week! Can’t we order pizza?
 B’: We are having **fish** for dinner.
 (Mayol and Vallduví 2020, p. 534)

Any linguistic investigation that makes use of the question-answer test must take into account the congruence requirement, the possibility of replying with fragments and the fact that non-fragment answers are most natural when they address a question that is not maximally salient.

2.3. The Type(s) of Focus in Answers to *wh*-Questions

Let us now consider the pragmatic types of focus that are found in answers. As already mentioned, information focus introduces new information, and is typical of answers to *wh*-questions. If the different pragmatic types of focus are defined according to the degree of contrast that they imply (Cruschina 2021), or that they establish in a specific discourse relation (Repp 2016), information focus is the least contrastive, since it only—and weakly—contrasts with the other possible alternatives in the (open) focal set; no contrast holds with alternatives that are given or salient in the context. In this sense, information focus can be defined as the neutral type of focus that does not involve any special implicature or pragmatic exploitation of the alternatives.

The idea that a *wh*-question triggers information focus is so widespread that the question-answer test is often assimilated to the definition: information focus is the type of focus found in answers to *wh*-questions. It is important to emphasize, however, that the use of a focus to answer a *wh*-question is not *per se* a sufficient condition for the definition of information focus, in that not all foci in answers to questions are necessarily information foci; other types can also occur in this context (Escandell Vidal and Leonetti 2019, p. 208). In particular, mirative focus can also appear in an answer to a question (Cruschina 2021, pp. 21–22):

- (20) A: Quin nom li han posat al gos? (*Catalan*)
 ‘How did they call the dog?’
 B: **Pepet** li han posat! Quin nom més absurd per a un gos!
 ‘They called it Pepet! What an absurd name for a dog!’
- (21) A: ¿Quién está tocando el piano? (*Spanish*)
 ‘Who’s playing the piano?’
 B: ¡No me lo puedo creer! ¡**Juan** está tocando! (No tenía idea de que sabía tocar . . .)
 ‘(I can’t believe it!) Juan is playing! (I had no idea he could play . . .)’
- (22) A: Chi è entrato? (*Italian*)
 ‘Who came in?’
 B: Ma pensa un po’ . . . **George Clooney** è entrato! Chi l’avrebbe mai detto!?
 ‘Guess what... George Clooney came in! Who would have thought so!?’
 (Belletti and Rizzi 2017, p. 45)

The focus in the replies in (20–22) provides the missing information requested in the corresponding question. The background in the answer is the same as in the question (at least truth-conditionally), thus meeting the question-answer congruence requirement. The focal alternative denoted in these replies, however, implies a contrast with other alternatives that in the speakers’ common ground, either as previous knowledge or as expectations, are considered more likely. This is the typical implicature associated with mirative focus (Bianchi et al. 2015, 2016; Cruschina 2021).⁵

To sum up this section, we have seen that the question-answer test provides a good tool for identifying focus. In order to make an appropriate use of this test, however, it is necessary that it complies with the question-answer congruence requirement, which very often yields fragment answers. In addition, the foci elicited by means of this test are not necessarily and automatically information foci. The role of the focal set of alternatives in the interpretation of the focus is crucially to identify the exact focus type. An inaccurate use of the question-answer test, or a misconception of information focus, may give rise to empirical challenges and controversial data, misleading scholars both on conceptual and on methodological grounds. This problem will be discussed in more detail in the following section.

3. Eliciting Information Focus: Methodological Questions

With respect to the question of the syntactic position in which information focus is realized, a certain tension exists in the literature. This tension seems to depend on the methodology adopted to elicit information focus (see Uth and García García 2018; Cruschina 2021). All studies make use of the question-answer test, but different data are reported according to whether introspection or a quantitative analysis is used. On the one hand, those scholars who based their data on their own intuitions and introspection claim that information focus, including subjects, must appear in a postverbal position, at the end of the sentence, as shown in (23) and (24) (see e.g., Zubizarreta 1998; Ordóñez 2000; Büring and Gutiérrez-Bravo 2001; Gutiérrez-Bravo 2006, 2008 on Spanish; López 2009; Cruschina 2022 on Romance, more generally). For example, Vallduví (2001) claims that (25A1) is much more neutral than (25A2), which conveys some added value. Therefore, narrow focus on the subject yields subject inversion (cf. also Belletti 2004).

- (23) Q: ¿Quién te regaló la botella de vino? (*Spanish*)
 who to-you gave the bottle of wine
 ‘Who gave you the bottle of wine (as a present)?’
 A1: # **María** me regaló la botella de vino.
 María to-me gave the bottle of wine
 A2: Me regaló la botella de vino **María**.
 to-me gave the bottle of wine María
 ‘María gave me the bottle of wine (as a present).’
 (Zubizarreta 1998, pp. 125–26)

- (24) Q: ¿Quién compró los discos? (*Spanish*)
 who bought the records
 'Who bought the records?'
 A1: Los compró una muchacha.
 them.ACC bought a girl
 A2: #Una muchacha los compró.
 a girl them.ACC bought
 'A girl bought them.'
 (Gutiérrez-Bravo 2006, pp. 110–11)
- (25) Q: Qui va venir? (*Catalan*)
 who PST come?
 'Who came?'
 A1: Va venir el Pere.
 PST come the Pere
 A2: #El Pere va venir.
 the Pere PST come
 'Pere came.'
 (Vallduví 2001)

On the other hand, some researches have more recently questioned this claim on the basis of experimental and quantitative data. In particular, both for Spanish and for Catalan, it has been argued that information focus can occur sentence-initially, especially when it corresponds to the subject (see Gabriel 2010; Hoot 2012, 2016; Vanrell and Fernández-Soriano 2013, 2018; Jiménez-Fernández 2015a, 2015b; Leal et al. 2018; see Heidinger 2021 for a detailed overview on Spanish; and Frascarelli and Stortini 2019 on Italian).⁶ Gabriel (2007, 2010), for example, reports data on Argentinian dialects of Spanish based on semi-spontaneous elicitation, which show that sentence-initial narrow focus (SVO) is rather frequent in Spanish. In particular, he shows that the availability of this order depends on the sentence structure: final focal subjects are preferred in intransitive structures or in transitive sentences with a cliticized object, while a preverbal information-focus subject is preferred in the case of transitive structures with a full object, as shown in (26) and in (27). Based on this evidence, Gabriel (2010, p. 189) concludes that “it can be stated that the mechanisms of syntactic focus marking, i.e., the use of a particular syntactic construction in a given pragmatic context, is governed by strict rules to a lesser degree than suggested in much of the literature”.

- (26) A: ¿Quién secuestra a Tarzán? (*Argentinian Spanish*)
 who kidnaps ACC Tarzan
 'Who kidnaps Tarzan?'
 B: **Blancanieves** secuestra a Tarzán.
 Snow White kidnaps ACC Tarzan
 'Snow White kidnaps Tarzan.'
 (Gabriel 2007, p. 67)

- (27) A: ¿Quién le da el diario a su hermano? (*Argentinian Spanish*)
 who to-her gives the newspaper to her/his brother
 'Who gives the newspaper to her/his brother?'
 B: **María** le está dando el diario a su hermano.
 María to-him is giving the newspaper to her brother
 'María is giving the newspaper to her brother.'
 (Gabriel 2010, p. 202)

Similar data are reported for European Spanish and Catalan dialects in Vanrell and Fernández-Soriano (2013, 2018), for constituents other than subjects (cf. (28) and (29)):

- (Basque-Country Spanish)
- (28) a. A: ¿Qué le dio el marineroal viejo?
 what DAT=give.PST.3SG the sailor to-the old-man
 ‘What did the sailor give to the old man?’
 B: **La carta** le dio el marineroal viejo.
 the letter DAT=give.PST.3SG the sailor to-the old-man
 ‘The sailor gave the letter to the old man.’
 b. A: ¿Qué sacó María sin problemas?
 what take-out.PST.3SG María without problems
 ‘What did Maria take out without any difficulties?’
 B: **El coche** sacó María sin problemas.
 the car take-out.PST.3SG María without problems
 ‘Maria took out the car without any difficulties?’
 (Vanrell and Fernández-Soriano 2013, p. 61)
- (Balearic Catalan)
- (29) a. A: Què va entrar, na Maria, amb dificultat?
 what put-in.PST.3SG the Maria with difficulty
 ‘What did Maria take in with some difficulty?’
 B: **Es cotxe** va entrar na Maria amb dificultat.
 the car put-in.PST.3SG the Maria with difficulty.
 ‘Maria took in the car with some difficulty.’
 (Central Catalan)
- b. A: A qui va enviar la carta, el mariner?
 to whom send.PST.3SG the letter the sailor
 ‘Who did the sailor send the letter to?’
 B: **A la dama** va enviar la carta el mariner.
 to the lady send.PST.3SG the letter the sailor
 ‘The sailor sent the letter to the lady.’
 (Vanrell and Fernández-Soriano 2013, p. 61)

It could well be that dialectal variation or language contact are responsible for these contrasting views and data; however, similar findings are reported for other varieties of Spanish, especially with respect to preverbal focal subjects (see, e.g., Muntendam 2009, 2013 for Andean Spanish; Hoot 2012, 2016; and Uth 2018 for Mexican Spanish; Leal et al. 2018 for Mexican and Chilean Spanish; Jiménez-Fernández 2015a, 2015b for Southern Peninsular Spanish; and Sánchez-Alvarado 2018 for Asturian Spanish). Thus, these factors cannot alone be the explanation for the contrasting views and the growing challenge to the consensus view on the distribution of focus. Here we discuss some methodological issues.

Most of the quantitative studies were interested in the prosody of focus constructions and in syntactic variation, so they included production tasks, as well as acceptability judgments. The different focus configurations were elicited by means of picture-based tasks (see Gabriel 2007, 2010; Muntendam 2009; Vanrell and Fernández-Soriano 2013; Feldhausen and Vanrell 2014, 2015, among others; see also Leal et al. 2018 for the use of video clips). In particular, in the prosodic studies on Romance languages, a *Discourse Completion Task* (DCT) was used to elicit narrow focus. DCT consists of a questionnaire containing different scenarios designed to elicit a specific speech act or structure; the participants complete the task by each taking a turn of dialogue (Kasper and Dahl 1991; Brown 2001). In the studies on information focus, the DCT involved the question-answer test: a question was inserted at the end of a contextualized scenario and the participants had to answer that question (see Vanrell et al. 2018 for a detailed overview of the DCT method in this area of research).

The DCT method has the advantage of eliciting (semi-)spontaneous speech, allowing the informants to freely utter the answer that they consider most appropriate in the corresponding scenario. Moreover, it is possible to control both the context (pragmatic factors) and desired aspects of the target sentences (e.g., syntactic properties). The use of pictures in the above-mentioned studies, however, might have affected—or in fact compromised—the results. On the one hand, images may help the participants to better understand the scenario or the story, and may also guide them to produce the desired utterances. On the

other hand, the use of pictures to answer a question can give rise to a sense of obviousness: if the participants are asked to reply to questions about what is evident in the images, they might express that the answers are obvious. This problem was already pointed out by Uth (2014, p. 95) with reference to the task used in Gabriel (2007, 2010): “the informants very probably end up with the most likely pragmatic enrichment, i.e., the encoding of the obviousness and/or the certainty of the assertions they make when answering the corresponding Wh-questions. [. . .] The participants are questioned about what they see on the pictures, and even if they manage to properly reenact the ‘game’, the answers are still more than obvious” (see also Vanrell et al. 2018). What happens in these situations is that an important default assumption is missing in this task: speaker ignorance, that is, the assumption that a speaker asks a question because they do not know the answer (see Farkas 2020). The fact that the pictures were already illustrating the answer to the question presumably favoured a non-canonical interpretation of the question. As we know (cf. Section 2.3), answers to wh-questions do not necessarily and exclusively involve information focus, but may involve other focus types. The motivation for a preverbal occurrence of the focus (presumably, fronted) may then well lie on the special interpretation associated with the focus constituent.

A further potential weakness of the DCT methods used in these studies has to do with the way the problem of fragment answers was tried to be avoided (cf. Section 2.2). The elicitation task often included precise instructions given to the participants, who were explicitly asked to repeat in their answer the predicate or all the constituents appearing in the question (cf., e.g., Gabriel 2007, 2010; Vanrell and Fernández-Soriano 2013, 2018) or, at least, to use complete sentences, “including as many details as possible” (cf. Leal et al. 2018, pp. 230–231; see Sánchez-Alvarado 2018 for a different solution to this problem). This instruction not only limits the freedom of the participants in their replies, but forces them to avoid the most natural and spontaneous tendency to reply with a fragment answer—or even to refrain from the cliticization of given objects.

In sum, most of the experiment and quantitative studies on narrow focus in Romance neglected important characteristics of the question-answer test, which are crucial for a full and accurate functionality of this test (cf. Section 2). We assume that only congruent answers were analysed in these studies; however, no specific measures had been taken to control for two important aspects: the naturalness of fragment answers, which goes hand in hand with the fact that full sentences are less natural answers, and the specific interpretation of the focus. In the next section, we propose some changes to the DCT method that can be seen as improvements to remove—or at least ameliorate—the weaknesses that we have just discussed.

4. A New Elicitation Technique: Questions with a Delayed Answer (QDA)

In order to enhance the naturalness and reliability of the question-answer test, we designed an improved version of the DCT, giving careful consideration to the characteristics discussed in (9) (cf. Section 2) and repeated here below:

- (9') a. Only congruent answers contain a narrow focus.
 b. The most natural answers are fragments.
 c. Not all foci in answers to wh-questions are information foci.

Let us start with the problem of fragment answers (9b). Any syntactic study of focus needs full sentences in order to determine its syntactic distribution within the sentence. However, instead of explicitly instructing the informants to produce full sentences in contexts in which fragments would be more natural answers, we introduced a special elicitation technique that overturns the preference for fragments over full sentences. This technique consists in the insertion of some lexical material between the question asked in the first turn of dialogue, within the imaginary scenario and the point in which the participant is asked to answer the question, as shown in (30) and (31), where the question is marked in bold. We label this technique *Questions with a Delayed Answer* (QDA). As typical of DCT, the participants were placed in a role-playing situation with the experimenter in an

online session: the experimenter presented a scenario in which one of the characters asked a question, and the participant was asked to provide a natural answer to such a question:

- (30) You go to your parents' place. You show your mum a watercolour portrait of yourself. She asks "Who drew it?". At that point you get a phone call. Somebody got the wrong number. You hang up and, to answer your mum, you say:
- (31) You are watching a film with your roommate. Since she wakes up really early every day, she falls asleep and misses the ending. When you switch off the TV, she wakes up and asks you: "What did they find? I don't think I'll watch this movie again. I'm sure I would fall asleep again." To reply you say:

This simple strategy favours the spontaneous production of full sentences. Given the lack of proximity between the answer and the question, the ellipsis of the background material (cf. Section 2.2) does not apply or proves less natural, while the use of a non-fragment answer becomes preferred to address the non-maximally salient explicit question. As a result, the participants spontaneously uttered full sentences instead of fragments, without being explicitly instructed to do so. In addition, they freely made use of the cliticization of given objects, as well as of dislocation of given arguments, without having to repeat all constituents appearing in the question.

Once we were able to ensure that the problem in (9b) did not hold, it was easier to control the other two characteristics of the question-answer test. Firstly, only congruent answers were considered in the analysis of the results, in order to make sure that we were dealing with sentences featuring a narrow focus (9a). Felicitous answers that did not meet the congruence requirement (cf. Section 2.1) were excluded, even when they addressed the question under discussion or indeed resolved the issue opened in the question. Secondly, to control the interpretation of the focus (9c), no images were used: the informants were thus free to produce the answer they deemed most fitting and appropriate in the given context. Moreover, the scenarios were designed in order to guarantee a neutral interpretation of the focus (i.e., to elicit information focus), without any contextual cues that could hint at or trigger special meanings. To encourage participation, we used proper names of relatives, friends, and specific places familiar to the informants (see Billmyer and Varghese 2000; cited in Vanrell et al. 2018).

We used the QDA-technique in a production experiment, which will be described in the next section. An additional rating experiment based on acceptability judgements was later carried out to explore the degree of acceptability in the perception of patterns that were absent or very marginal in production. The latter will be described and discussed in Section 6.

5. The Production Experiment

We created 16 scenarios in Catalan featuring the QDA-technique. The grammatical category of the *wh*-phrase in the question was manipulated in order to have subject and object questions—and hence, have subject and object foci in the answers.⁷ In particular, 8 scenarios featured a question about the subject (e.g., 'Who drew it?' in (32)) and 8 contained a question on the object (e.g., 'What did they find?' in (33)).

- (32) *Entres a casa dels teus pares. Li ensenyes a la teva mare un retrat que t'han fet amb aquarel·la. Ella et pregunta: "Qui ho ha dibuixat?". En aquell moment reps una trucada. Era algú que s'equivocava. Penges i per respondre a la teva mare dius:*
'You go to your parents' place. You show your mum a watercolour portrait of yourself. She asks "Who drew it?". At that point you get a phone call. Somebody got the wrong number. You hang up and, to answer your mum, you say:'

- (33) *Estàs veient una peli amb la teva companya de pis. Com que cada dia es lleva molt d'hora, s'adorm i es perd el final. Quan tu apagues la tele, ella es desperta i et pregunta: "Què han trobat al final? No crec que torni a veure aquesta peli. Total, al final sempre m'adormo." Per respondre dius: 'You are watching a film with your roommate. Since she wakes up really early every day, she falls asleep and misses the ending. When you switch off the TV, she wakes up and asks you: "What did they find? I don't think I'll watch this movie again. I'm sure I would fall asleep again." To reply you say:'*

Two types of delay were created. The lexical material between the question and the answer was either part of the narration or description of the scenario (32), or it was a continuation by the same speakers who uttered the question (33). This difference did not affect the results (cf. below). In both cases, an explicit question is posed, which is not maximally salient by the time the speaker can reply to it. The experiment also included 16 fillers, without delay and with other types of questions (polar or alternative questions).

A total of 20 participants (15 females, 5 males, mean age = 22) took part in the online elicitation sessions with the experimenter and received a compensation of 15€ for their time. They were all native speakers of Catalan. We elicited 320 target answers (16 stimuli × 20 participants) which were transcribed and annotated. Only 24 (7.5%) answers were fragments, meaning that the experimental stimuli with QDAs were largely successful in eliciting full sentences.⁸ We performed the analysis on a subset of 216 answers, which had been annotated as congruent: the participants directly addressed the relevant question and did so by repeating the same verb used in the scenario; in the answer there was therefore a focus constituent (prosodically marked as such) that directly corresponded to the wh-phrase in the question, and the background in the answer paralleled the background in the question, thus fully meeting the congruence requirement (cf. Section 2.1). As mentioned in the previous section, this was necessary to ensure that the information focus in the answer was an instance of narrow focus, either on the subject or the object, with a given background. Examples of non-congruent answers that were excluded from the analysis are given in (34) and (35). The sentences in (34a) and (34b) are felicitous answers to the questions in (32) and (33), respectively, which in fact address the question under discussion and resolve the issues opened in the corresponding question (i.e., they provide an informative answer to the question). However, they do not meet the congruence requirement, in that they do not feature a focus structure with a narrow focus and a given background.⁹ In (35), in particular, we can see examples of different ways of reacting to a question, leading to non-congruent answers to (33) in which the speaker confesses their inability (35a) or lack of willingness (35b) to resolve the issue introduced in the question:

- (34) a. *Era una persona que feia retrats amb qui ens hem trobat.*
'It was a person who made portraits and who I have met.'
b. *Era la típica pel·lícula que sempre acaben trobant el tresor.*
'It was the typical film where they always end up finding a treasure.'
- (35) a. *Realment no m'hi estava fixant gaire, així que realment no ho he vist.*
'Actually I was not paying attention at all, so I didn't actually see it.'
b. *Si vols saber-ho, l'hauràs de veure.*
'If you want to know it, you have to watch it.'

Figure 1 shows the results of the analysis of the 216 congruent answers, which were annotated according to the grammatical category (subject vs. object), the position of the focus (postverbal vs. preverbal), or whether a cleft was used to mark the focus in the answer:¹⁰

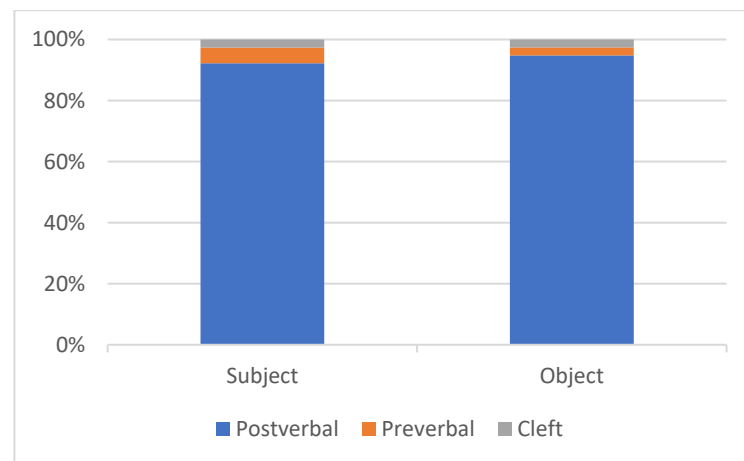


Figure 1. The production experiment: The realization of information focus by category and position.

Participants overwhelmingly produced postverbal foci both for subjects (90.9%) and object (94.8%), as exemplified in (36) and (37), respectively, along with a marginal number of preverbal (subject = 5.1%; object = 2.6%) and clefted foci (subject = 4.0%; object = 2.6%), as in (38).

- (36) a. M'ho ha dibuixat **la** **Marta.** (VS)
 me=it=has drawn the Marta
 'Marta has drawn it for me.'
- b. L'ha dibuixat **la** **meva** **amiga.** (VS)
 it=has drawn the my friend
 'My friend has drawn it.'
- (37) a. Han trobat **el** **tresor** **perdut.** (VO)
 have.3PL found the treasure lost
 'They have found the lost treasure.'
- b. Han trobat **una** **caixa** **amb** **or.** (VO)
 have.3PL found a trunk with gold
 'They have found a trunk chest with gold.'
- (38) a. **La** **Cristina** ho ha dibuixat. (SV)
 the Cristina it=has drawn
 'Cristina has drawn it.'
- b. He estat **jo** que ho he dibuixat. (subject cleft)
 have.1SG been I that it=have.1SG drawn
 'It was me who has drawn it.'
- c. **En** **Pere** és qui ho ha dibuixat. (subject cleft)
 the Pere is that it=has drawn
 'It's Pere who has drawn it.'

As for the non-focal, given argument, in 85% of the instances it was realized as a null (i.e., 37a,b) or clitic (i.e., 36a,b) pronoun, as expected. That is, despite the delay, the given arguments were still highly active in the participants' discourse model. In the other 15% of cases, the non-focal argument was realized as a strong pronoun or a DP, doubled with a clitic, in the case of objects. This type of realization was particularly frequent in those contexts that naturally lend themselves to a contrastive interpretation. For example, in (39), the context establishes a clear contrast between what the speaker wants to drink and what the addressee wants to drink, which is why a strong subject pronoun is used as a contrastive topic. Something similar happens in (40), where the speaker may want to draw a contrast between 'these pills' and some other pills, which is achieved by means of a left-dislocation. In this example, left-dislocation also serves the function of restating the topic of the sentence after the delay created in the description of the scenario:

- (39) a. *Vas al bar amb un amic que fa temps que no veus. Seieu i el teu amic et pregunta: “Què vols prendre?”. Abans que puguis contestar, el teu amic rep una trucada. Parla per telèfon durant un minut i després penja. Per respondre la seva pregunta dius:*
 ‘You to go a bar with a friend you haven’t seen in a long time. You sit and your friend asks: “What do you want to drink?”. Before you can answer, your friend gets a call. She speaks on the phone for a minute and hangs up. To answer her question, you say:’
- b. Jo vull una cervesa, i tu?
 I want.1ST a beer and you?
 ‘I want a beer, and you?’
- (40) a. *En els últims anys has tingut alguns problemes de salut i t’has visitat amb diversos especialistes. Avui t’està visitant la teva metgessa de capçalera i esteu parlant de la medicació que prens. Et pregunta: “Qui et va receptar aquestes pastilles?” Quan estàs a punt de contestar, una enfermera entra a la consulta i ella i la doctora parlen durant un parell de minuts. Després l’enfermera marxa. Per respondre la pregunta de la doctora, dius:*
 ‘You’ve had some health issues during the last years and are seeing several specialists. Today your family doctor is seeing you and you are discussing the medication you are currently taking. She asks “who prescribed these pills?”. As you are about to answer, a nurse enters the office. The doctor and the nurse talk for a couple of minutes and then the nurse leaves. To answer the question the doctor had asked you say:’
- b. Aquestes pastilles me les va receptar el dermatòleg.
 These pills me=them=prescribed the dermatologist
 ‘The dermatologist prescribed these pills to me.’

To test for the statistical significance of the results in Figure 1, mixed-effect logistic regressions were performed, using R (R Core Team 2013) and *lme4* (Bates et al. 2015). A mixed-effect logistic regression, with grammatical function of focus as a fixed effect, and items and participants as random effects, shows that the realization of preverbal subjects is not significantly higher than preverbal objects ($b = 0.84, p = 0.38$)¹¹. Our production experiment therefore shows that information foci in Catalan are predominantly produced in a postverbal, sentence-final position, irrespective of the grammatical category, and in line with the previous studies based on introspection. However, in order to gather further information about native speakers’ intuitions on the syntax of focus, and to compare the results of our QDA-production experiment with a different task, we additionally conducted a rating experiment on the acceptability of preverbal and postverbal information foci in Catalan. The results of this second experiment are consistent with those of the production experiment, but are not as clear-cut.

6. The Acceptability Judgement Experiment

To test the acceptability of preverbal focus in Catalan, in the context of an answer to a wh-question (i.e., with information focus), we conducted an experiment with 390 native speakers of Catalan. The same QDA-scenarios were used as in the production experiment (cf. (30) and (31)), but an answer to the question was additionally provided. The answer was taken from the elicited data in the production task and was the target of the rating task. The experiment had a (2 × 2) factorial design that involved two independent factors with two levels each: (i) *syntactic category* (subject vs. object) and (ii) *focus position* (preverbal vs. postverbal).

We tested a total of 32 stimuli, that is, 16 stimuli (8 with subject questions, 8 with object questions) in two conditions (preverbal vs. postverbal foci). The two factors were manipulated between items and within subjects. Each item was shown in two versions, which differed from one another with respect to the position of the focus (with a preverbal and with a postverbal focus), but the context was kept the same in both versions; the stimuli were then divided into two lists, so that each participant was only presented with one stimulus per item (i.e., each item under one condition only), so that the same lexical material of the target sentence was only judged once. Each list consisted of 16 experimental stimuli plus 16 fillers, and each subject was randomly assigned a list. The order of the trials was pseudo-randomized, each trial was presented individually, and the participants

were not able to modify their answers. Each session started with a brief sociolinguistic questionnaire and a short familiarization practise.

In (41) we can see an example of the answer to the subject question contained in context in (32) under the two conditions, while (42) exemplifies the answers to the object question in (33):

- (41) a. Ho ha dibuixat una amiga.
 b. Una amiga ho ha dibuixat.
 'A friend drew it.'
- (42) a. Han trobat un tresor.
 b. Un tresor han trobat.
 'They found a treasure.'

The experiment was presented to the Catalan native speakers through an online interface.¹² The subjects were asked to rate the degree of acceptability of each sentence in the relevant context using a 7-point Likert scale. The results of this study confirm the findings of the production experiment: postverbal focus is always preferred over preverbal focus, both in the case of subjects and objects. Crucially, as we can see in Figure 2, the mean score assigned to postverbal subjects is almost the same as that of postverbal objects (postverbal subjects = 5.30, postverbal objects = 5.67).

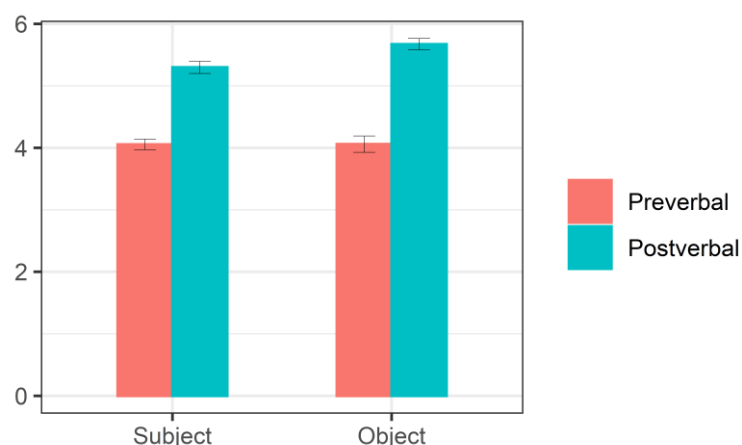


Figure 2. The acceptability rating experiment: Average scores by category and position.

In the preverbal position, subjects and objects received the same rating (preverbal subjects = 4.06, preverbal objects = 4.06).¹³ To test for the statistical significance of the results, a mixed-effect logistic regressions was performed, with grammatical function, position of the focus, and their interaction as fixed effects, as well as items and participants as random effects¹⁴. The role of the position of focus is significant ($b = 3.12, p < 0.001$), while grammatical function ($b = -0.79, p = 0.24$) or the interaction between the two fixed effects ($b = 0.73, p = 0.49$) is not.

Interestingly, these results show that preverbal foci are not judged as completely ungrammatical and are still (marginally) acceptable, even though to a lesser extent than postverbal foci. We will go back to this issue in the next section.

To account for individual variation and for the possible different use of the Likert-scale by the participants, the responses were converted into z-scores across focus category and position, as shown in Table 1. While postverbal foci received mean positive ratings (i.e., above the mean), the mean ratings for preverbal foci are negative (i.e., below the mean). In the postverbal position, objects receive higher ratings than subjects, presumably because this coincides with their default position. In the preverbal position, there is no difference between subject and object.

Table 1. Average normalized scores by category and position.

	Mean Normalized Rating
Preverbal subject	−0.36
Postverbal subject	0.27
Preverbal object	−0.35
Postverbal object	0.44

We close this section with a note on the adjacency between the verb and the postverbal focus in Catalan. A further problem with the previous studies concerns the use of answers that were less natural, not only because they consisted of full sentences (as immediate answers to *wh*-questions), but because the postverbal focus constituent was not adjacent to the verb. Several scholars have pointed out that narrow focus needs to be sentence-final in Spanish, reporting examples with an intervening object between the verb and a focal subject (cf. (23) above from Zubizarreta 1998, pp. 125–26). Adjacency with the verb seems to be required in Catalan, which does not readily accept either VOS or VSO (see Ordóñez 2000; Vallduví 2002; Vanrell and Fernández-Soriano 2013; Leonetti 2017; Cruschina 2022 and references therein).¹⁵

In this respect, it is therefore important to point out that VOS and VSO were never realized in our Catalan production experiment, and we therefore avoided them in our rating experiment. Given arguments are always cliticized and dislocated in Catalan (Vallduví 1992, 1995; Mayol 2007; Villalba 2009, 2011; Leonetti 2017), thus guaranteeing the adjacency between the verb and the postverbal focus.

7. Discussion and Conclusions

Our findings provide experimental evidence in support of the theoretical view, mostly based on native speakers' intuitions and introspection, that informational foci are realized in a postverbal position in Catalan. From a methodological viewpoint, we believe that our QDA-technique offers significant advantages in striving for natural and neutral answers in the elicitation of informational focus, making the most of the question-answer test. These results are neat and clear-cut in production. The acceptability experiment further confirms this view, but at the same time shows that preverbal foci are not judged as ungrammatical by native speakers.

To understand the reasons for the marginal acceptability of preverbal foci in the rating experiment is not an easy task; several possible explanations come to mind. Firstly, it could well be that the production experiment was more successful in maximizing the question-answer test because it involved a direct interaction with the experimenter, which in turn guarantees more control over possible extraneous variables that could have interfered with the experiment, which might have affected the pragmatic interpretation of either the question or the answer. In addition, in the rating task, the experimental stimuli were presented in a written format. As pointed out by Escandell Vidal and Leonetti (2019), in the absence of prosodic information it is not possible to ascertain whether speakers were interpreting an SVO order with a marked initial focus subject (SVO) or rather a sentence with an unmarked SVO order. This is indeed a shortcoming of written stimuli, but at the same time it cannot be the full explanation of our results because the OVS order was also judged as marginally acceptable.

We did consider the possibility of using audio-stimuli in the acceptability experiment; however, we decided not to do it because it would expose the study to other types of problems and complications. The experimental subjects may pay too much attention not only to the position of the main stress (i.e., to the *nuclear pitch accent*, NPA), but also to the type of pitch accent (PA). We know that the prosodic realization of a pitch accent depends on the type of focus: the PA associated with corrective focus is different from the PA of an information focus, and it is presumably also from that of a mirative focus.¹⁶ The specific type of NPA, moreover, may also be subject to dialectical variation. Since our main goal

was the syntax of focus, we wanted judgements on the syntactic position of focus rather than on its prosodic realization. Furthermore, from the production experiment we know that information focus is barely realized in a preverbal position; thus, the prosodic pattern associated with a preverbal focus may have sounded artificial and unnatural. Indeed, we would have had to ask a native speaker to produce a sentence with a prosodic pattern that is hardly natural and use these recordings as audio-stimuli. For these reasons, we decided to go for written stimuli. We also ruled out the possibility of using a forced choice task, since we would have expected a predominant choice of postverbal foci, without any information about the other option.

Overall, despite the less straightforward results, we believe that the QDA-technique is able to elicit more reliable data in the case of a rating task, and that our results just reflect a real scenario with respect to the mapping between syntax/prosody and information structure. From an information-structure viewpoint, some syntactic configurations are more natural than others. In Catalan, postverbal foci satisfy all prosodic and syntactic requirements, which lead to the realization of a prosodically marked focus in a syntactic marked position, that is, the rightmost position within the sentence. Deviations from this order, however, do not give rise to ungrammaticality, but are perceived by native speakers as more marginal or deteriorated. This different “weight” of the divergent configurations in terms of grammaticality could also (at least partially) be at the origins of the contrasting views discussed in Section 3.

This hypothesis is confirmed by the comparison of the rating-task scores with the scores assigned to some fillers. In our experimental design, some fillers were intentionally ungrammatical (cf. 43) or pragmatically odd (cf. 44):

- (43) A: *Estàs passejant amb el teu pare pel centre de la ciutat. Passeu davant d'una llibreria i t'atures davant de l'aparador. Et quedes mirant fixament un llibre. El teu pare et pregunta "Coneixes aquest llibre?". Per respondre dius:*
 'You are walking in the city centre with your father. You walk past a bookshop and you stop in front of the shop window. You stare at a book. Your father asks you: "Do you know this book?". To reply you say:

B: A mi interessant sembla.
 to me interesting looks

Grammatical version: *(A mi) em sembla interessant*
 'It looks interesting to me.'

- (44) A: *És dissabte al matí. Estàs al sofà, mirant el mòbil. Ve la teva mare i et diu: "Vaig a comprar una mica de roba. Vols venir?". Per respondre dius:*

It's Saturday morning. You are on the sofa, looking at your mobile phone. Your mother comes and tells you: "I am going to buy some clothes. Do you want to come along?". To reply you say:

B: No m'agrada el tenis.
 not me=please.3SG the tennis
 'No, I don't like tennis.'

Such fillers were included in order to encourage the participants to use all different values of the Likert-scale. As expected, they received lower scores: the mean score for the ungrammatical fillers was 1.10, while the mean score for the pragmatically odd fillers was 2.12. If we compare these scores with those assigned with preverbal foci, it seems clear that the participants deliberately chose middle values of the scale to signal marginality or deterioration (or else, lower preferences) rather than an ungrammaticality or pragmatic oddity.

It is already well known from the literature that Catalan specific mapping rules operate at the interface between syntax and prosody, on the one hand, and information structure, on the other. These rules are responsible for the alignment between focus and the postverbal position, where the focus constituent is assigned the NPA, as well as the dislocation of the non-focal given material that facilitates the focus–NPA alignment (see [Vallduví 1992](#);

Mayol 2007; Villalba 2009, 2011). In light of our experimental findings, we hypothesize that these rules are stricter in production, while violations of these rules in perception yield marginality and lower preferences. Focus fronting of the information focus in answers to wh-questions, therefore, is certainly dispreferred over postverbal focalization, but it does not give rise to full ungrammaticality.

Further research is certainly needed to verify this hypothesis. It would be interesting to test whether the marginality of preverbal foci depends on the type of focus, proving more acceptable with corrective and/or mirative focus. The comparison with other languages could also be revealing. Spanish, for example, makes less consistent use of information-structure operations than Catalan (see Villalba 2011; Leonetti 2017). We would thus expect violations of the mapping rules between syntax and information structure to be more tolerated in Spanish than in Catalan. We hope to be able to address and answer these open questions in future work.

Author Contributions: The two authors have contributed equally to this research article. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Funding: This research has been partially funded by project PGC2018-094029-A-I00 from the Spanish State Research Agency (AEI) and the European Regional Development Fund (FEDER, UE).

Institutional Review Board Statement: The study was approved by the Institutional Committee for Ethical Review of Projects of the Universitat Pompeu Fabra (Approval number: 210; Date of approval: 20 July 2021).

Informed Consent Statement: Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

Data Availability Statement: The data presented in this study are openly available in OSF at <https://doi.org/10.17605/OSF.IO/WQ8JK>.

Acknowledgments: We would like to thank Martí Freixas for his help with the transcription and codification of the data for the production experiment, and Domenico Pardo for his assistance with the preparation of the rating experiment. We are also grateful to Valentina Bianchi for her useful comments on a previous draft of this paper. Earlier versions of this work were presented at the 31st Colloquium on Generative Grammar (Palma de Mallorca, 1–3 June 2022), at a GLiF Seminar (Grup de Lingüística Formal/Formal linguistics research group, Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona, 9 June 2022), at the 4th edition of the *Jornades de lingüística catalana a Viena* (Vienna, 20–21 June 2022) and at the 9th Experimental Pragmatics Conference (XPRAg 2022, IUSS, Pavia, 22–24 September 2022); we thank the audiences of these events for their suggestions and observations. Finally, we dedicate this article to the memory of Manuel Leonetti, whose work on focus and information structure, as well as his passion and commitment as a linguist have been an inspiration to us all.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Notes

- ¹ A specific orthographic convention is adopted, and is often also recommended, in Catalan grammars (see Vallduví 2002), according to which the sentence-initial focalized constituent is separated by the rest of the sentence by means of a comma, while postverbal foci are left unmarked. In the following examples, we diverge from this convention for the reader's convenience and for consistency reasons, so as to have the same marking for postverbal and preverbal foci. See also Section 6 on this issue.
- ² It is natural to wonder what and where these focus positions are in the syntactic structures. Preverbal objects are clearly fronted to a left-peripheral position (i.e., Spec/Foc, Rizzi 1997). By contrast, this question is more controversial for preverbal subjects. Two hypotheses come to mind: (a) preverbal subjects are sitting in the canonical subject position (Spec/TP) and are only marked as focal by sentence stress (nuclear pitch accent), or alternatively (b) they actually undergo (string vacuous) focus fronting to Spec/Foc. Even if this is not directly relevant to the purposes of this paper, we assume that, when prosodically marked as focal, preverbal subjects too involve movement (Focus Fronting) to a dedicated projection (FocP). See Bocci (2013), Feldhausen and Vanrell (2014, 2015), and Hoot (2016) for evidence and discussion. For the sake of simplicity, however, in this paper we will use the descriptive term preverbal to refer to fronted foci. Note also that in some studies preverbal subjects are also called subjects in situ, since they occupy the canonical subject position in the unmarked SVO order.
- ³ The question-answer test is also a classical method to determine the extension of the focus, that is, the distinction between narrow and broad focus (Rooth 1992; Krifka 2007; Lambrecht 1994; Kasimir 2005; Roberts [1996] 2012; Beaver and Clark 2008; Reich 2002, among others). In this paper, however, we will only deal with narrow focus.

4 There are many other felicitous ways of reacting to a question, such as admitting that one is not able to resolve the issue introduced with the question (iB1), requesting further information with a new interrogative speech act (iB2), denying the question presupposition (iB3), or even refusing to attempt to resolve the issue (iB4). These are all felicitous but non-congruent answers.

- (i) A: What did Mary buy in that shop?
 B1: I don't know.
 B2: Do you mean in the clothing shop?
 B3: She didn't buy anything.
 B4: Ask her yourself!

5 Another interpretation that can also be associated with the focus constituent in an answer is obviousness (see Uth 2014). When yielding this interpretation, the focus is no longer a neutral information focus, but could be analysed as a type of mirative focus derived from a reverse order of the expectations (Cruschina 2021). See Uth (2014); Fließbach (2016); and Reich (2018) for a different account of obviousness analysed in terms of evidential and epistemic marking.

6 Some experimental studies, however, do support the claim that focal subjects are mainly realized postverbally in (Peninsular) Spanish. See Feldhausen and Vanrell (2014, 2015).

7 It has been shown that the type of verb can influence the syntactic realization of focus (see, e.g., Gabriel 2007, 2010, Frascarelli and Stortini 2019). However, since we wanted to alternate the grammatical category of the wh-phrase between subject and object, we only included transitive verbs in our experimental stimuli. In addition, to favour the naturalness of the stimuli, the direct object was often cliticized in subject questions (cf. 32), while the subject was omitted in object questions (cf. 33).

8 The 24 fragment answers that were elicited are quite evenly distributed among the 16 experimental items. All except one item elicited between 0 and 3 fragment answers (3 items with 0 fragments, 8 items with 1 fragment, 1 item with 2 fragments, 3 items with 3 fragments). There was one item that elicited 5 fragment answers. In that item, the question (*Who won?*) was about a football match being watched on television. The fact that the television was present as a physical object in the context may have increased the possibility of using a fragment even after a delay.

9 A total of eighty non-congruent answers were produced. The number of non-congruent answers per item varied from 0 to 10 and was quite evenly distributed. The two items that elicited the most non-congruent answers lent themselves to this kind of answers. For example, one of the questions was *Who taught you how to play guitar?* and many non-congruent answers were of the type *I learned by myself through YouTube tutorials* or *I learned at a music school*.

10 In fact, with the exceptions of the answers in (38b, c), most of the clefts produced were pseudo-clefts of the kind illustrated in (i) for subject clefts and in (ii) for object clefts:

- (i) a. El qui em va receptor les pastilles va ser el doctor d'aquí el costat.
 the who me=prescribed the pills was the doctor of here the side
 'He who prescribed me those pills was the doctor from next-door.'
- b. Qui va matar la dona del tren va ser el lladre que li havia robat el bolso.
 who killed the woman of-the train was the thief who her=had stolen the bag
 'He who killed the woman from the train was the thief who had stolen her bag.'
- (ii) a. L'assignatura que he suspès ha estat alemany.
 the subject that have1.SG failed has been German
 'The subject that I failed was German.'
- b. El que he esborrat és el cotxe del darrere.
 the what have.1SG deleted is the car from-the back
 'What I deleted is the car in the background.'

11 The model contained random intercepts for items and participants (elicitedOrder ~ grammaticalFunction + (1 | participant) + (1 | item)). The model with random slopes for items and participants did not converge.

12 Almost all Catalan speakers are also native (or near-native) speakers of Spanish. With this respect, all our participants stated that Catalan was the language spoken at home during their childhood.

13 Since preverbal foci are often marked with a comma in Catalan (see note 1), we ran a second version of the experiment in which both subject and object foci were separated by the rest of the sentence by a comma. This manipulation did not change the results in any meaningful way (postverbal subjects = 5.34, preverbal subject = 4.29, postverbal object = 5.8, preverbal object = 4.31).

14 The model contained random intercepts for items and participants, as well as varying slopes for position of focus (rating ~ position × grammaticalFunction + (1 + position | subject) + (1 + position | item)).

15 It could be that the availability of VOS is subject to dialectal variation in Spanish or that SVO is preferred over VOS (see Gabriel 2007, 2010). The acceptability of SVO could have thus resulted from the comparison with an even less natural structure, as in Hoot's (2012, 2016) study on Mexican Spanish which, on the basis of a judgment experiment with auditory stimuli, shows that preverbal focal subjects are more acceptable than postverbal focal subjects. In this study, the subjects' preferences could have been affected by the intervening given object between the verb and the focal subject, as shown in (iA2) (from Hoot 2016, p. 356).

- (i) Q: ¿Quién compró un carro?
'Who bought a car?'
A1: Mi tío compró un carro.
my uncle bought a car
'My uncle bought a car.'
A2: #Compró un carro mi tío.
bought a car my uncle

According to native speakers, the same order with a dislocated object—resumed by the accusative clitic *lo*—would have been much better in this context (i.e., *Lo compró mi tío*).

A similar problem could have influenced the realization of focal subjects in Leal et al.'s (2018) production experiment, where the presence of a direct object DP and of a postverbal adjunct (usually a PP) could have favoured the production of preverbal focal subjects:

- (ii) Context: Who put a plate on the table?
Answer: [El señor del bigote]_F puso un plato sobre la mesa.
'The man with the moustache put a plate on the table'.

In this experiment, the participants were instructed to use complete sentences and as many details as possible (Leal et al. 2018, pp. 230–31), thus discouraging the natural dislocation or the omission of the given constituents, that is, the constituents already mentioned in the question.

- ¹⁶ See Prieto et al. (2015) and references therein. See Bianchi et al. (2015, 2016) on the prosodic differences between corrective and mirative focus in Italian.

References

- Bates, Douglas, Martin Mächler, Ben Bolker, and Steve Walker. 2015. Fitting linear mixed-effects models using lme4. *Journal of Statistical Software* 67: 1–48. [CrossRef]
- Beaver, David, and Brady Clark. 2008. *Sense and Sensitivity*. Oxford: Blackwell. [CrossRef]
- Belletti, Adriana, and Luigi Rizzi. 2017. On the syntax and pragmatics of some clause-peripheral positions. In *Formal Models in the Study of Language*. Edited by Joanna Blochowiak, Cristina Grisot, Stephanie Durrleman and Christopher Laenzlinger. Cham: Springer, pp. 33–48. [CrossRef]
- Belletti, Adriana. 2004. Aspects of the low IP area. In *The Structure of CP and IP. The Cartography of Syntactic Structures*. Edited by Luigi Rizzi. Oxford: Oxford University of Press, vol. 2, pp. 16–51.
- Bianchi, Valentina, Giuliano Bocci, and Silvio Cruschina. 2015. Focus fronting and its implicatures. In *Romance Languages and Linguistic Theory 2013: Selected papers from 'Going Romance' Amsterdam 2013*. Edited by Enoch O. Aboh, Jeannette Schaeffer and Petra Sleeman. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, pp. 1–20. [CrossRef]
- Bianchi, Valentina, Giuliano Bocci, and Silvio Cruschina. 2016. Focus fronting, unexpectedness, and evaluative implicatures. *Semantics and Pragmatics* 9: 1–54. [CrossRef]
- Billmyer, Kristine, and Manka Varghese. 2000. Investigating instrument-based pragmatic variability: Effects of enhancing discourse completion tests. *Applied Linguistics* 21: 517–52. [CrossRef]
- Bocci, Giuliano. 2013. *The Syntax-Prosody Interface from a Cartographic Perspective: Evidence from Italian*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. [CrossRef]
- Brown, James D. 2001. Pragmatics tests: Different purposes, different tests. In *Pragmatics in Language Teaching*. Edited by Kenneth R. Rose and Gabriele Kasper. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 301–25. [CrossRef]
- Brunetti, Lisa. 2004. *A Unification of Focus*. Padua: Unipress.
- Büring, Daniel, and Rodrigo Gutiérrez-Bravo. 2001. Focus-related word order variation without the NSR: A prosody-based crosslinguistic analysis. In *Syntax and Semantics at Santa Cruz*. Edited by Séamas Mac Bhloscaidh. Santa Cruz: UC Santa Cruz, vol. 3, pp. 41–58.
- Büring, Daniel. 1997. *The Meaning of Topic and Focus: The 59th Street Bridge Accent*. London: Routledge.
- Büring, Daniel. 2003. On D-trees, beans, and B-accent. *Linguistics & Philosophy* 26: 511–45.
- Büring, Daniel. 2016. (Contrastive) Topic. In *Oxford Handbook of Information Structure*. Edited by Caroline Féry and Shinichiro Ishihara. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 64–85. [CrossRef]
- Cruschina, Silvio. 2012. *Discourse-Related Features and Functional Projections*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. [CrossRef]
- Cruschina, Silvio. 2019. Focus Fronting in Spanish: Mirative implicature and information structure. *Probus* 31: 119–46. [CrossRef]
- Cruschina, Silvio. 2021. The greater the contrast, the greater the potential: On the effects of focus in syntax. *Glossa: A Journal of General Linguistics* 6: 3. [CrossRef]
- Cruschina, Silvio. 2022. Focus and Focus Structures in the Romance Languages. In *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Linguistics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 1–48. [CrossRef]
- Escandell Vidal, Victoria, and Manuel Leonetti. 2019. Una nota sobre el foco informativo en español. In *Lengua, Cultura, Discurso. Estudios Ofrecidos al Profesor Manuel Casado Velarde*. Edited by Ramón González Ruiz, Inés Olza Moreno and Óscar Loureda Lamas. Pamplona: EUNSA, pp. 207–24.

- Farkas, Danka. 2020. Canonical and non-canonical questions. Ms.. UC Santa Cruz/Princeton University. Available online: <https://semanticsarchive.net/Archive/WU2ZjIwM/questions.pdf> (accessed on 30 November 2022).
- Feldhausen, Ingo, and Maria del Mar Vanrell. 2014. Prosody, focus and word order in Catalan and Spanish. In *Proceedings of the 10th International Seminar on Speech Production (ISSP), 5–8 May 2014, Cologne, Germany*. Edited by Susanne Fuchs, Martine Grice, Anne Hermes, Leonardo Lancia and Doris Mücke. Cologne: University of Cologne, pp. 122–25. Available online: http://www.issp2014.uni-koeln.de/wp-content/uploads/2014/Proceedings_ISSP_revised.pdf (accessed on 30 November 2022).
- Feldhausen, Ingo, and Maria del Mar Vanrell. 2015. Oraciones hendidas y marcación del foco estrecho en español. *Revista Internacional de Lingüística Iberoamericana* 13: 39–60.
- Fließbach, Jan. 2016. Towards a Phonology of Expectations: Epistemic Modality and Prosodic Variability in Spanish Declaratives. Master's thesis, FU Berlin, Berlin, Germany.
- Frascarelli, Mara, and Tania Stortini. 2019. Focus constructions, verb types and the SV/VS order in Italian: An acquisitional study from a syntax-prosody perspective. *Lingua* 227: 102690. [CrossRef]
- Frascarelli, Mara. 2017. Dislocations and framings. In *Manual of Romance Morphosyntax and Syntax*. Edited by Andreas Dufter and Elisabeth Stark. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, pp. 472–501. [CrossRef]
- Gabriel, Christoph. 2007. *Fokus im Spannungsfeld von Phonologie und Syntax: Eine Studie zum Spanischen*. Frankfurt am Main: Vervuert. [CrossRef]
- Gabriel, Christoph. 2010. On focus, prosody, and word order in Argentinean Spanish: A minimalist OT account. *Revista Virtual de Estudos da Linguagem* 4: 183–222.
- Gutiérrez-Bravo, Rodrigo. 2006. *Structural Markedness and Syntactic Structure: A Study of Word order and the Left Periphery in Mexican Spanish*. Abingdon and New York: Routledge.
- Gutiérrez-Bravo, Rodrigo. 2008. La identificación de los tópicos y los focos. *Nueva Revista de Filología Hispánica* 56: 363–401. [CrossRef]
- Halliday, Michael. 1967. Notes on transitivity and theme in English, Part II. *Journal of Linguistics* 3: 199–244. [CrossRef]
- Heidinger, Steffen. 2021. El foco informativo y la afinidad con el foco. In *La estructura Informativa*. Edited by Manuel Leonetti and Victoria Escandell-Vidal. Madrid: Visor Libros, pp. 319–57. [CrossRef]
- Hoot, Bradley. 2012. Presentational Focus in Heritage and Monolingual Spanish. Ph.D. thesis, University of Illinois, Chicago, IL, USA.
- Hoot, Bradley. 2016. Narrow presentational focus in Mexican Spanish. *Probus* 28: 335–65. [CrossRef]
- Jiménez-Fernández, Ángel. 2015a. Towards a typology of focus: Subject position and microvariation at the discourse-syntax interface. *Ampersand* 2: 49–60. [CrossRef]
- Jiménez-Fernández, Ángel. 2015b. When focus goes wild: An empirical study of two syntactic positions for information focus. *Linguistics Beyond and Within* 1: 119–33. [CrossRef]
- Kamali, Beste, and Manfred Krifka. 2020. Focus and contrastive topic in questions and answers, with particular reference to Turkish. *Theoretical Linguistics* 46: 1–71. [CrossRef]
- Kasimir, Elke. 2005. Question-Answer test and givenness: Some question marks. In *Interdisciplinary Studies on Information Structure (ISIS)*. Working Papers of the SFB632. Potsdam: Universität Potsdam, vol. 3, pp. 1–52.
- Kasper, Gabriele, and Merete Dahl. 1991. Research methods in interlanguage pragmatics. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 13: 215–47. [CrossRef]
- Krifka, Manfred. 1999. Additive particles under stress. In *Proceedings of Semantics and Linguistic Theory (SALT) 8*. Edited by Devon Strolovich and Aaron Lawson. Ithaca: CLC Publications, pp. 111–28. [CrossRef]
- Krifka, Manfred. 2001. For a structured meaning account of questions and answers. In *Audiatur Vox Sapientia: A Festschrift for Arnim von Stechow*. Edited by Caroline Féry and Wolfgang Sternefeld. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, pp. 287–319. [CrossRef]
- Krifka, Manfred. 2006. Association with focus phrases. In *The Architecture of Focus*. Edited by Valéria Molnár and Susanne Winkler. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, pp. 105–36. [CrossRef]
- Krifka, Manfred. 2007. Basic Notions of Information Structure. In *The Notions of Information Structure*. Edited by Caroline Féry, Gisbert Fanselow and Manfred Krifka. Potsdam: Universitätsverlag, pp. 13–55.
- Krifka, Manfred. 2011. Questions. In *Semantics. An International Handbook of Natural Language Meaning*. Edited by Klaus von Heusinger, Claudia Maienborn and Paul Portner. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, vol. 2, pp. 1742–58. [CrossRef]
- Lambrecht, Knud. 1994. *Information Structure and Sentence Form*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. [CrossRef]
- Leal, Tania, Emilie Destruel, and Bradley Hoot. 2018. The realization of information focus in monolingual and bilingual native Spanish. *Linguistic Approaches to Bilingualism* 8: 217–51. [CrossRef]
- Leonetti, Manuel. 2017. Basic constituent orders. In *Manual of Romance Morphosyntax and Syntax*. Edited by Andreas Dufter and Elisabeth Stark. Berlin: De Gruyter, pp. 887–932. [CrossRef]
- López, Luis. 2009. *A Derivational Syntax for Information Structure*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Mayol, Laia, and Enric Vallduví. 2020. Utterances with themes as strategies to address a broad Question Under Discussion. In *Proceedings of Sinn und Bedeutung 24*. Edited by Michael Franke, Nikola Kompa, Mingya Liu, Jutta L. Mueller and Juliane Schwab. Osnabrück: Osnabrück University, vol. 1, pp. 533–46.
- Mayol, Laia. 2007. Right-dislocation in Catalan. *Languages in Contrast* 7: 203–19. [CrossRef]
- Merchant, Jason. 2001. *The Syntax of Silence: Sluicing, Islands, and the Theory of Ellipsis*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Merchant, Jason. 2004. Fragments and ellipsis. *Linguistics and Philosophy* 27: 661–738. [CrossRef]

- Merchant, Jason. 2018. Ellipsis: A survey of analytical approaches. In *The Oxford Handbook of Ellipsis*. Edited by Jeroen van Craenenbroeck and Tanja Temmerman. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 19–45. [CrossRef]
- Muntendam, Antje. 2009. Linguistic Transfer in Andean Spanish: Syntax or Pragmatics? Ph.D. thesis, University of Illinois, Champaign, IL, USA.
- Muntendam, Antje. 2013. On the nature of cross-linguistic transfer: A case study of Andean Spanish. *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition* 16: 111–31. [CrossRef]
- Ordóñez, Francisco. 2000. *The Clausal Structure of Spanish: A Comparative Study*. New York: Garland. [CrossRef]
- Paul, Hermann. 1995. *Prinzipien der Sprachgeschichte*, 10th ed. Tübingen: Niemeyer. First published 1880. [CrossRef]
- Prieto, Pilar, Joan Borràs-Comes, Teresa Cabré, Verònica Crespo-Sendra, Ignasi Mascaró, Paolo Roseano, Rafèu Sichel-Bazin, and Maria del Mar Vanrell. 2015. Intonational phonology of Catalan and its dialectal varieties. In *Intonational Variation in Romance*. Edited by Sonia Frota and Pilar Prieto. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 9–62. [CrossRef]
- R Core Team. 2013. *R: A Language and Environment for Statistical Computing*. Vienna: R Foundation for Statistical Computing. Available online: <http://www.R-project.org/> (accessed on 30 August 2022).
- Reich, Ingo. 2002. Question/answer congruence and the semantics of wh-phrases. *Theoretical Linguistics* 28: 73–94. [CrossRef]
- Reich, Uli. 2018. Presupposed modality. In *Focus Realization in Romance and Beyond*. Edited by Marco García García and Melanie Uth. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, pp. 203–28. [CrossRef]
- Repp, Sophie. 2016. Contrast: Dissecting an elusive information-structural notion and its role in grammar. In *Oxford Handbook of Information Structure*. Edited by Caroline Féry and Shinichiro Ishihara. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 270–89.
- Rizzi, Luigi. 1997. The fine structure of the left periphery. In *Elements of Grammar. Handbook in Generative Syntax*. Edited by Liliane Haegeman. Dordrecht: Kluwer, pp. 281–337. [CrossRef]
- Roberts, Craige. 2012. Information Structure: Towards an integrated formal theory of pragmatics. *Semantics and Pragmatics* 5: 1–69. First published 1996. [CrossRef]
- Rooth, Mats. 1992. A theory of focus interpretation. *Natural Language Semantics* 1: 75–116. [CrossRef]
- Sánchez-Alvarado, Covadonga. 2018. The realization of focus in Asturian Spanish. *Journal of Portuguese Linguistics* 17: 1–28. [CrossRef]
- Schwarzschild, Roger. 1999. GIVENness, AvoidF and other constraints on the placement of accent. *Natural Language Semantics* 7: 141–77. [CrossRef]
- Uth, Melanie, and Marco García García. 2018. Introduction. Core issues of focus realization in Romance. In *Focus Realization in Romance and Beyond*. Edited by Marco García García and Melanie Uth. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, pp. 1–30. [CrossRef]
- Uth, Melanie. 2014. Spanish preverbal subjects in contexts of narrow information focus: Non-contrastive focalization or epistemic-evidential marking? *Grazer Linguistische Studien* 81: 87–104.
- Uth, Melanie. 2018. Focus realization at the prosody-syntax interface. Yucatecan Spanish opposed to Standard Mexican Spanish. In *Focus Realization in Romance and Beyond*. Edited by Marco García García and Melanie Uth. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, pp. 71–98. [CrossRef]
- Vallduví, Enric. 1992. *The Informational Component*. New York: Garland.
- Vallduví, Enric. 1995. Structural properties of informational packaging in Catalan. In *Discourse Configurational Languages*. Edited by Katalin È. Kiss. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 122–52.
- Vallduví, Enric. 2001. El component informatiu i l'estructura dels enunciats. In *La gramàtica i la Semàntica en l'Estudi de la Variació (Actes del Cinquè i Sisè Col·loqui de Lingüística de la Universitat de Barcelona)*. Edited by Mercè Lorente, Núria Alturo, Emili Boix, Maria-Rosa Lloret and Lluís Payrató. Barcelona: Promociones y Publicaciones Universitarias, pp. 113–50.
- Vallduví, Enric. 2002. L'oració com a unitat informativa. In *Gramàtica del Català Contemporani*. Edited by Joan Solà, Maria-Rosa Lloret, Joan Mascaró and Manuel Pérez-Saldanya. Barcelona: Empúries, vol. 2, pp. 1221–79.
- Van der Wal, Jenneke. 2016. Diagnosing Focus. *Studies in Language* 40: 259–301. [CrossRef]
- Vanrell, Maria del Mar, and Olga Fernández-Soriano. 2013. Variation at the interfaces in Ibero-Romance. Catalan and Spanish prosody and word order. *Catalan Journal of Linguistics* 12: 253–82. [CrossRef]
- Vanrell, Maria del Mar, and Olga Fernández-Soriano. 2018. Language variation at the prosody-syntax interface. Focus in European Spanish. In *Focus Realization in Romance and Beyond*. Edited by Marco García García and Melanie Uth. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, pp. 33–70. [CrossRef]
- Vanrell, Maria del Mar, Ingo Feldhausen, and Lluïsa Astruc. 2018. The Discourse Completion Task in Romance prosody research: Status quo and outlook. In *Methods in Prosody: A Romance Language Perspective*. Edited by Ingo Feldhausen, Jan Fliessbach and Maria del Mar Vanrell. Berlin: Language Science Press, pp. 191–227.
- Villalba, Xavier. 2009. *The Syntax and Semantics of Dislocations in Catalan*. Cologne: Lambert Academic Publishing.
- Villalba, Xavier. 2011. A quantitative comparative study of right-dislocation in Catalan and Spanish. *Journal of Pragmatics* 43: 1946–61. [CrossRef]
- von Stechow, Arnim. 1990. Focusing and backgrounding operators. In *Discourse Particles*. Edited by Werner Abraham. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, pp. 37–84.
- Zimmermann, Malte, and Edgar Onea. 2011. Focus marking and focus interpretation. *Lingua* 121: 1651–70. [CrossRef]
- Zubizarreta, María-Luisa. 1998. *Prosody, Focus and Word Order*. Cambridge: MIT Press.