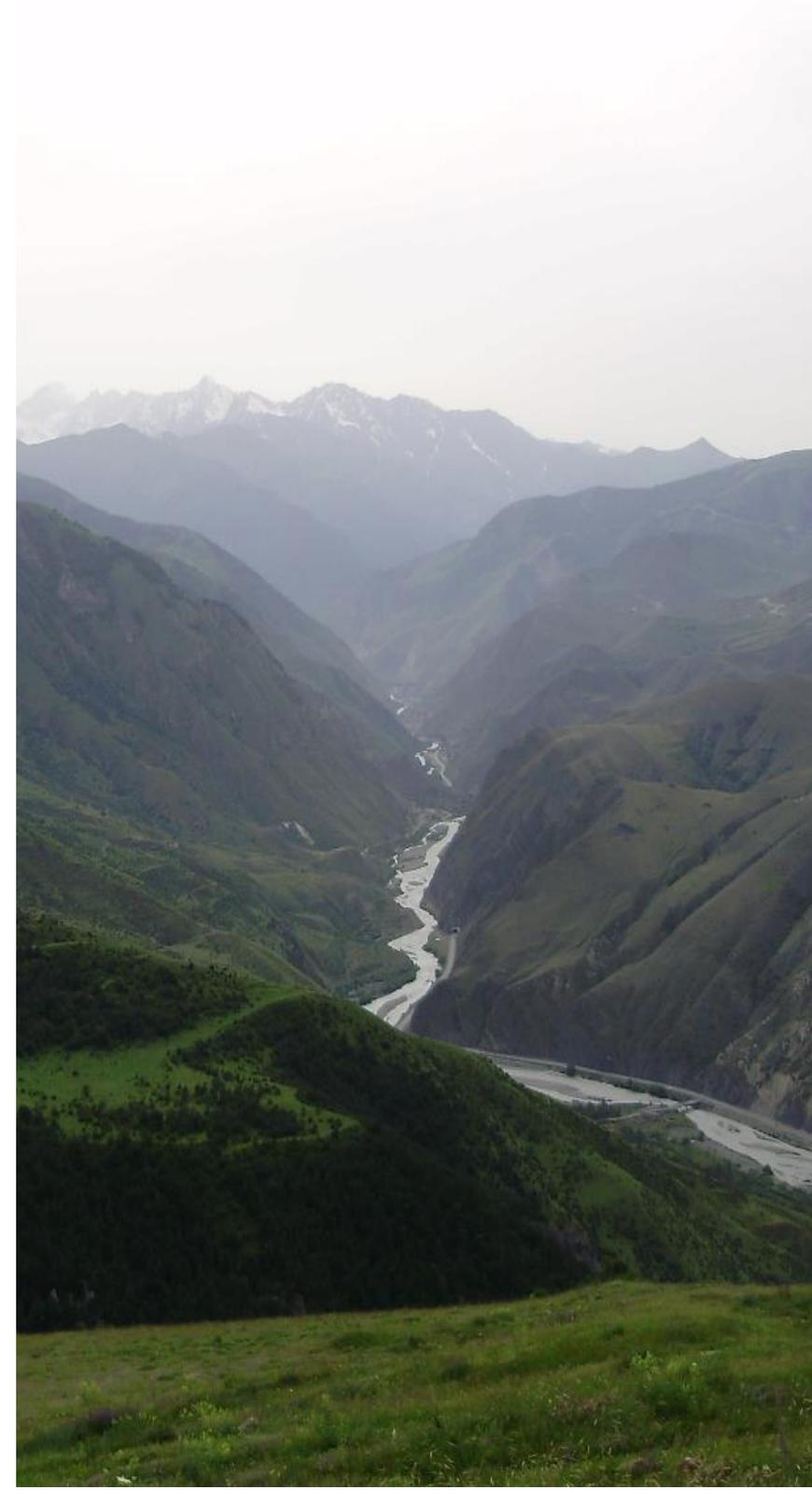


**Verb height indeed determines prosodic  
phrasing:  
evidence from Iron Ossetic**

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**NELS 51, UQAM, Montréal**  
6-8 November 2020

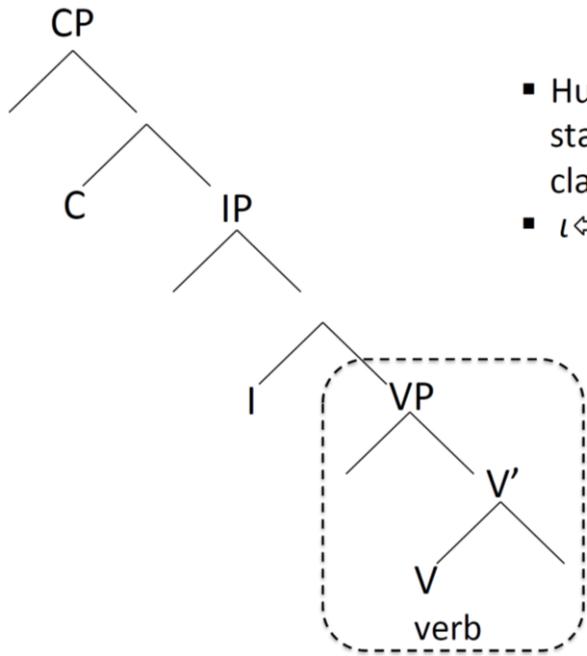


## In a nutshell

- We provide novel evidence in favor of flexible mapping between an **Intonational Phrase ( $\iota$ )** and syntactic constituents, based on evidence from Iron Ossetic (East Iranian).
- $\iota$  is commonly assumed to map onto a **syntactic clause**, but a ‘clause’ has been variably defined: as a syntactic unit, a semantic/information-structural unit, etc.
- Hamlaoui & Szendrői (2015; 2017):  **$\iota$  is flexible** and corresponds to the highest projection that hosts verbal material, together with its specifier (**HVP**, ‘highest verbal projection’/ ‘highest projection of the verb’).

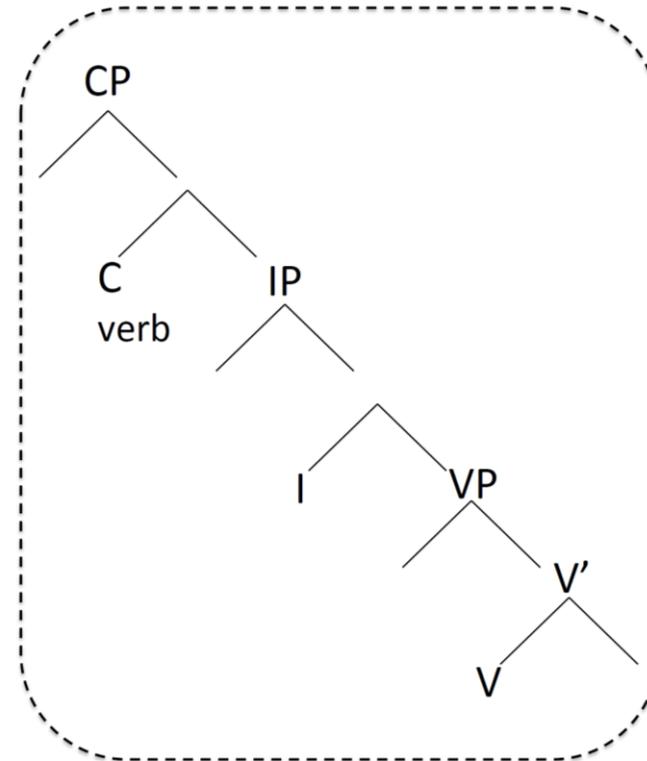
⇒ A **prediction** that it makes is that  $\iota$ -size is also determined by HVP in languages where the height of the verb varies with utterance type.

# Flexible $\iota$ -mapping



- Hungarian: no Aux, V stays low in neutral clauses
- $\iota \leftrightarrow \text{VP}$

11



- Italian/ English *wh*-questions
- German: V2
- $\iota \leftrightarrow \text{CP}$

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(Szendrői 2017)

# Iron Ossetic: basics

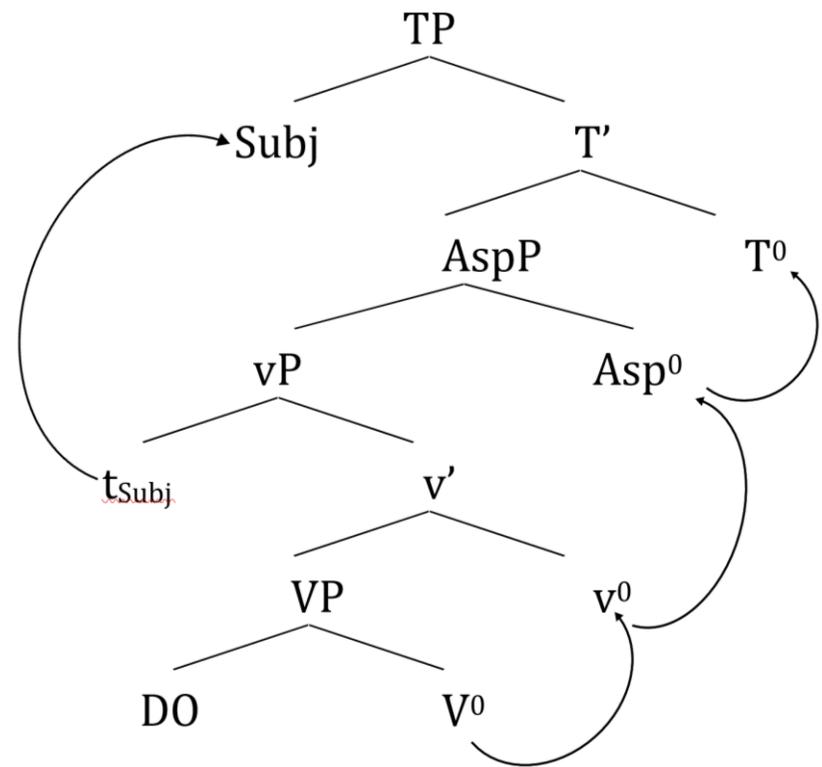
## Highlights of grammar:

- East Iranian, spoken in North and South Ossetia
- SOV, but word order largely determined by information structure
- mostly left-branching/head-final
- rich morphology
- a system of aspectual prefixes
- second-position pronominal clitics



## Iron Ossetic: basics

- Left-branching up to TP
- Finite verb assembled by head movement.
- Aspectual prefixes occupy  $\text{Asp}^0$
- Subject generated in Spec,vP and moves to Spec, TP.



## Discourse projections

If an utterance contains a

**narrowly focused constituent**

**wh-phrase**

**negative indefinite**

they appear immediately preverbally.

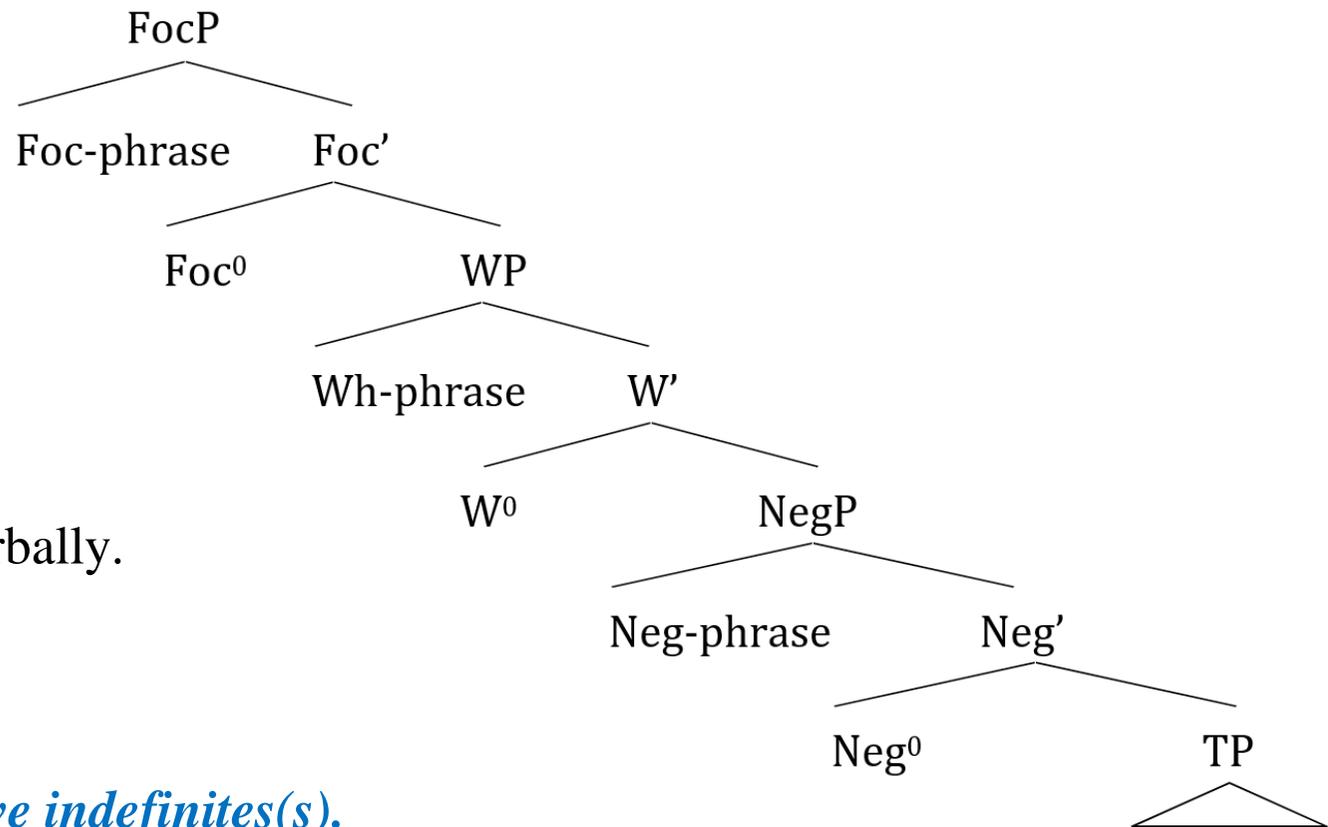
If co-occurring,

*focus* > *wh-phrase(s)* > *negative indefinites(s)*.

Preverbal constituent(s) = Spec, XP(s)

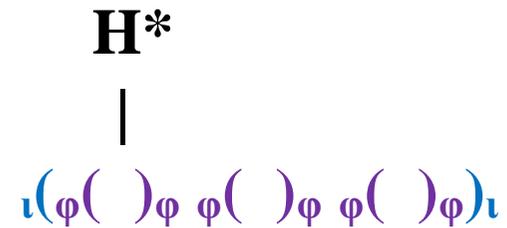
Verb = X<sup>0</sup> of the lowest discourse projection with a non-empty specifier

If a discourse projection is empty, it is not projected



## Iron Ossetic prosody: basics

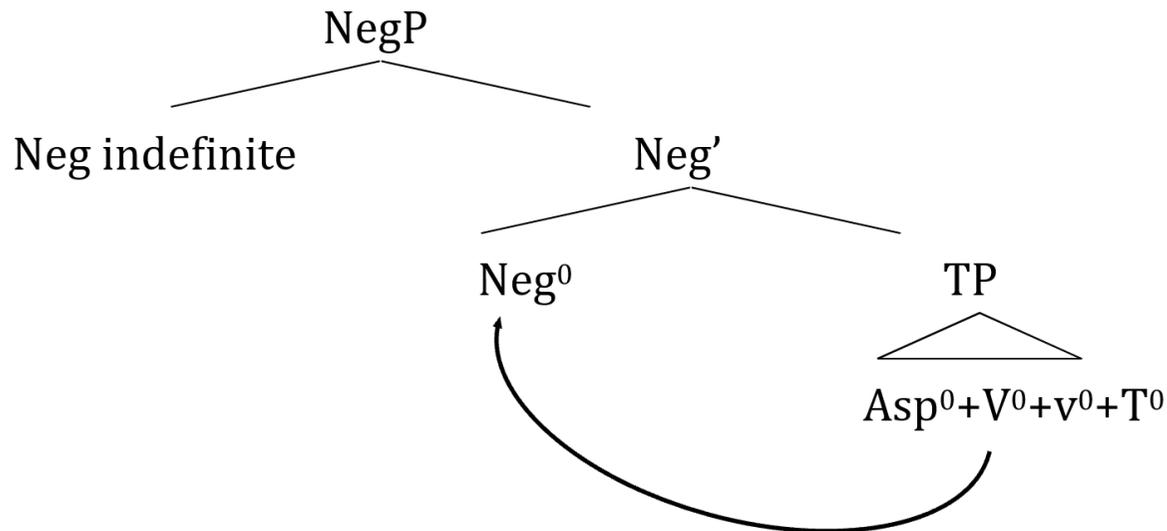
ɪ in Iron Ossetic consists of one or more φs



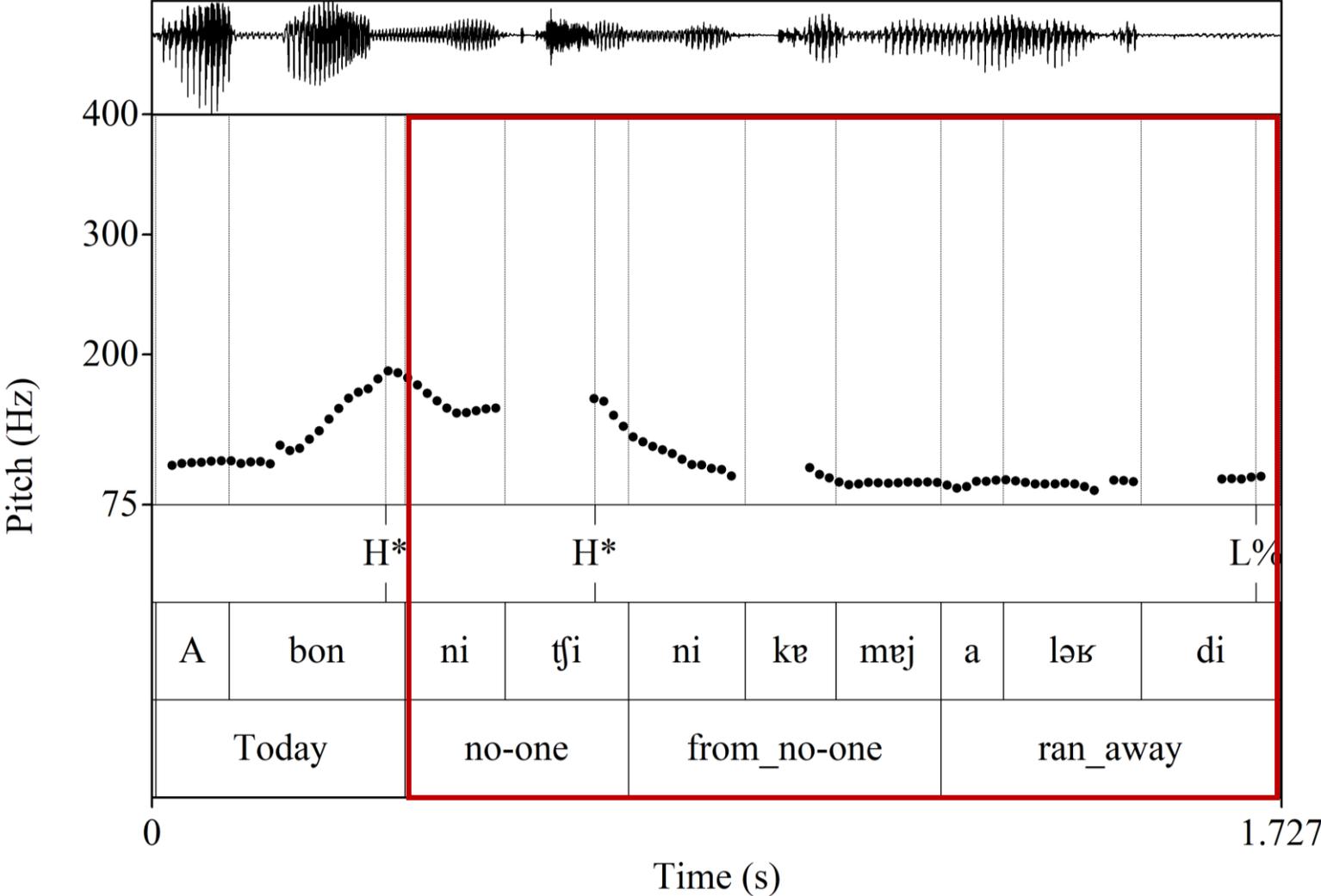
only the initial φ of an ɪ carries a high pitch accent H\*

## Negative indefinites

- (17)  $\varphi(\textit{abon})_{\varphi} \iota(\varphi([\textit{NegP ni-tfi}]_{\varphi} \varphi([\textit{NegP ni-kem-ej}]_{\varphi} \varphi([\textit{Neg}' a-l\textit{ə}k\textit{d-i}]]))_{\varphi} \iota$ .  
 today                      NEG-who                      NEG-who-ABL                      PRV-run.away-PST.3SG  
 ‘Today no-one run away from anyone.’



# Negative indefinites

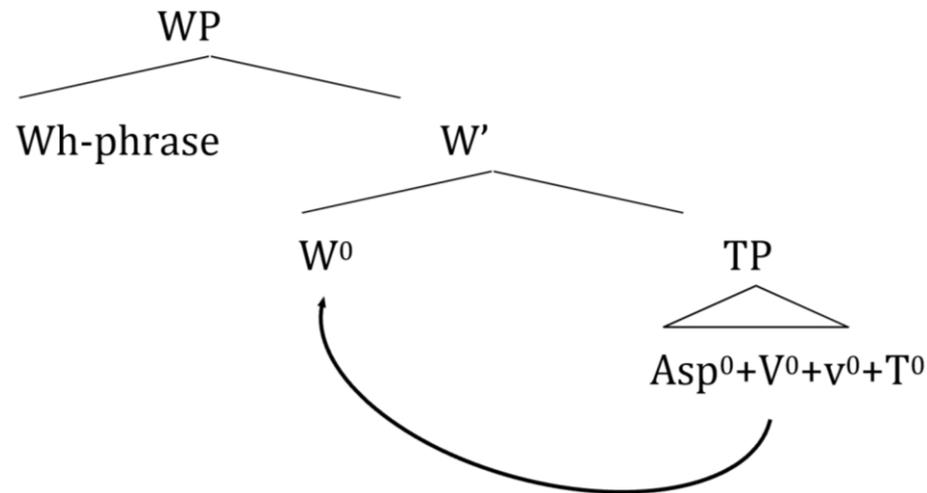


## Wh-questions

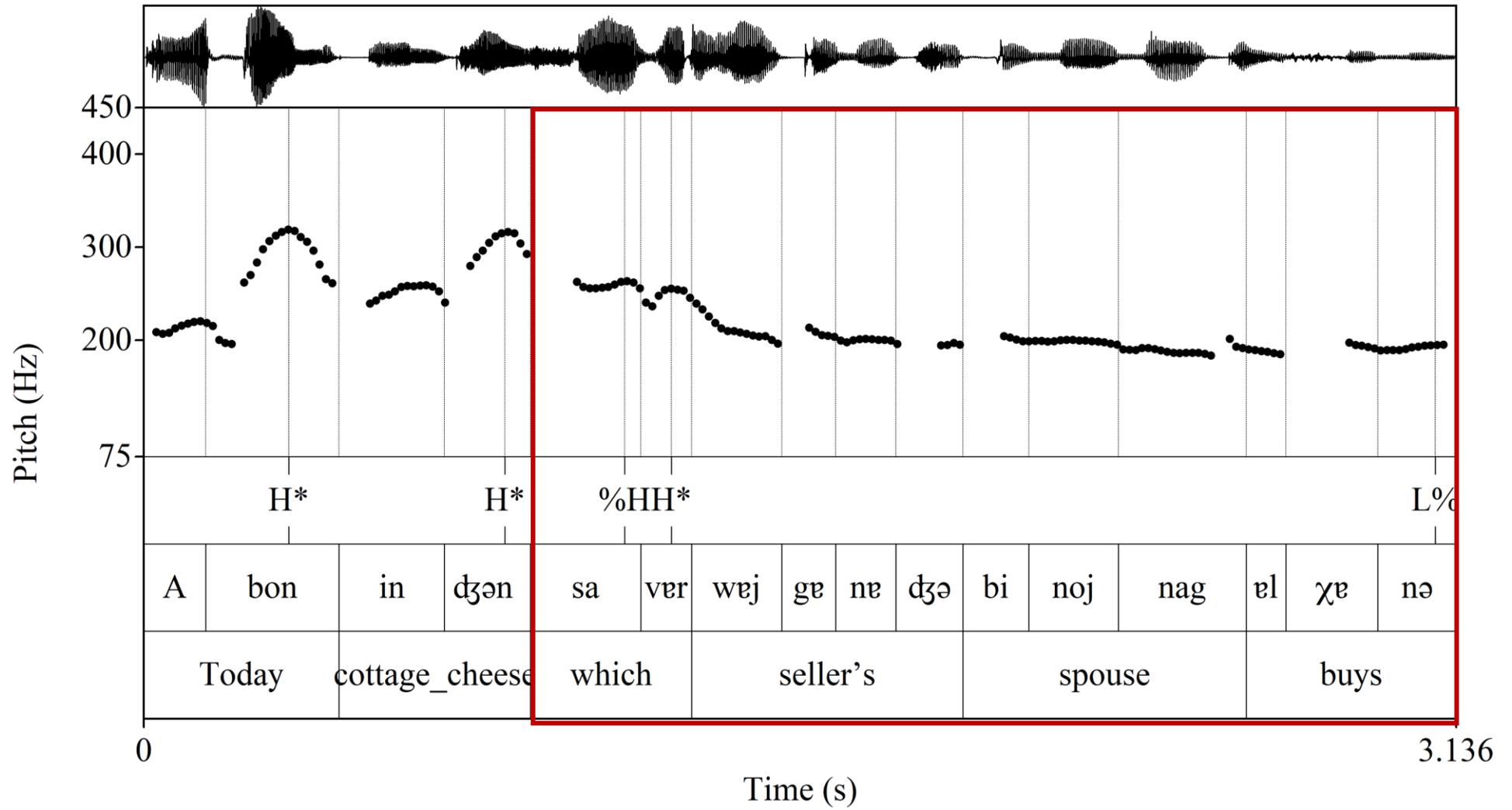
(21)  $\varphi$ ( *Abon* ) $\varphi$   $\varphi$ ( *indʒən* ) $\varphi$   $\iota$ ( $\varphi$ ([<sub>WP</sub> *saver wejgenədʒə binojnag*]) $\varphi$ )  
 today cottage.cheese which seller's spouse

$\varphi$ ([<sub>WP</sub> *elχənə*]) $\varphi$ ) $\iota$ ?  
 buys

‘Which seller’s spouse buys cottage cheese today?’



# Wh-questions

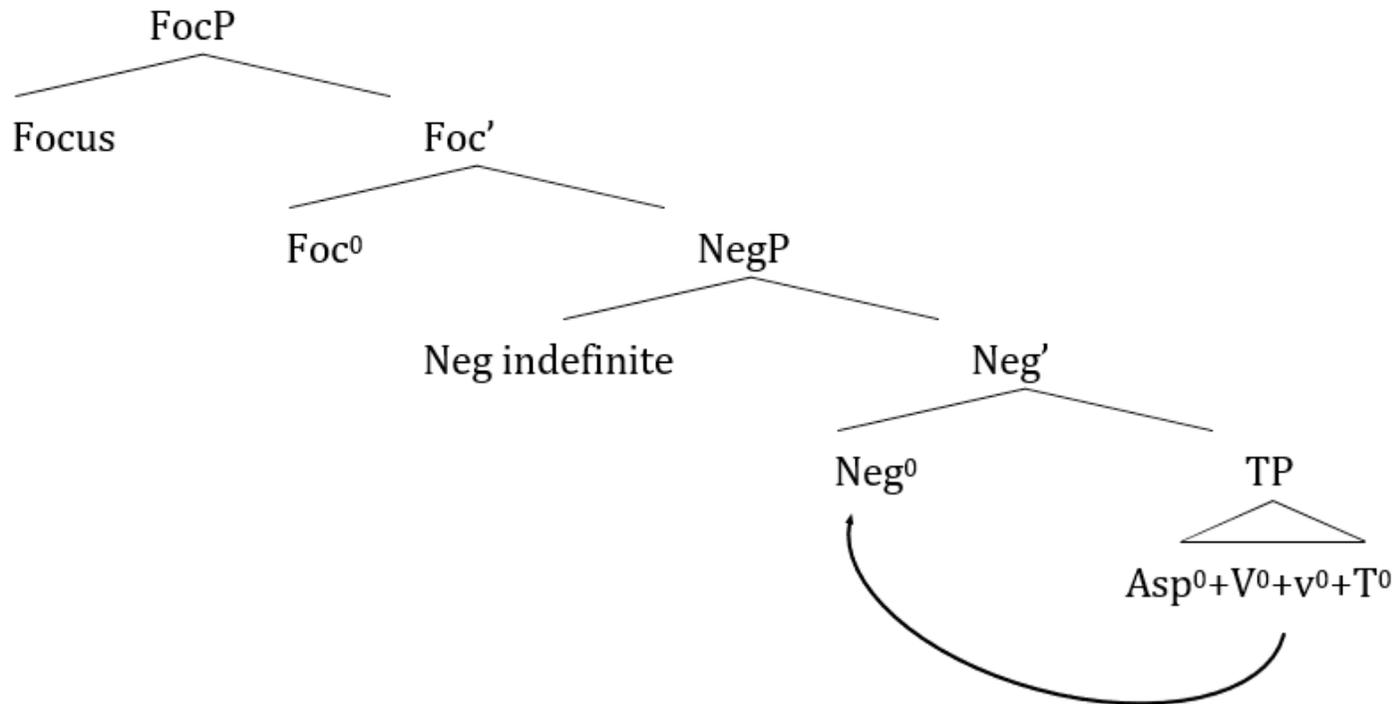


# Narrow foci

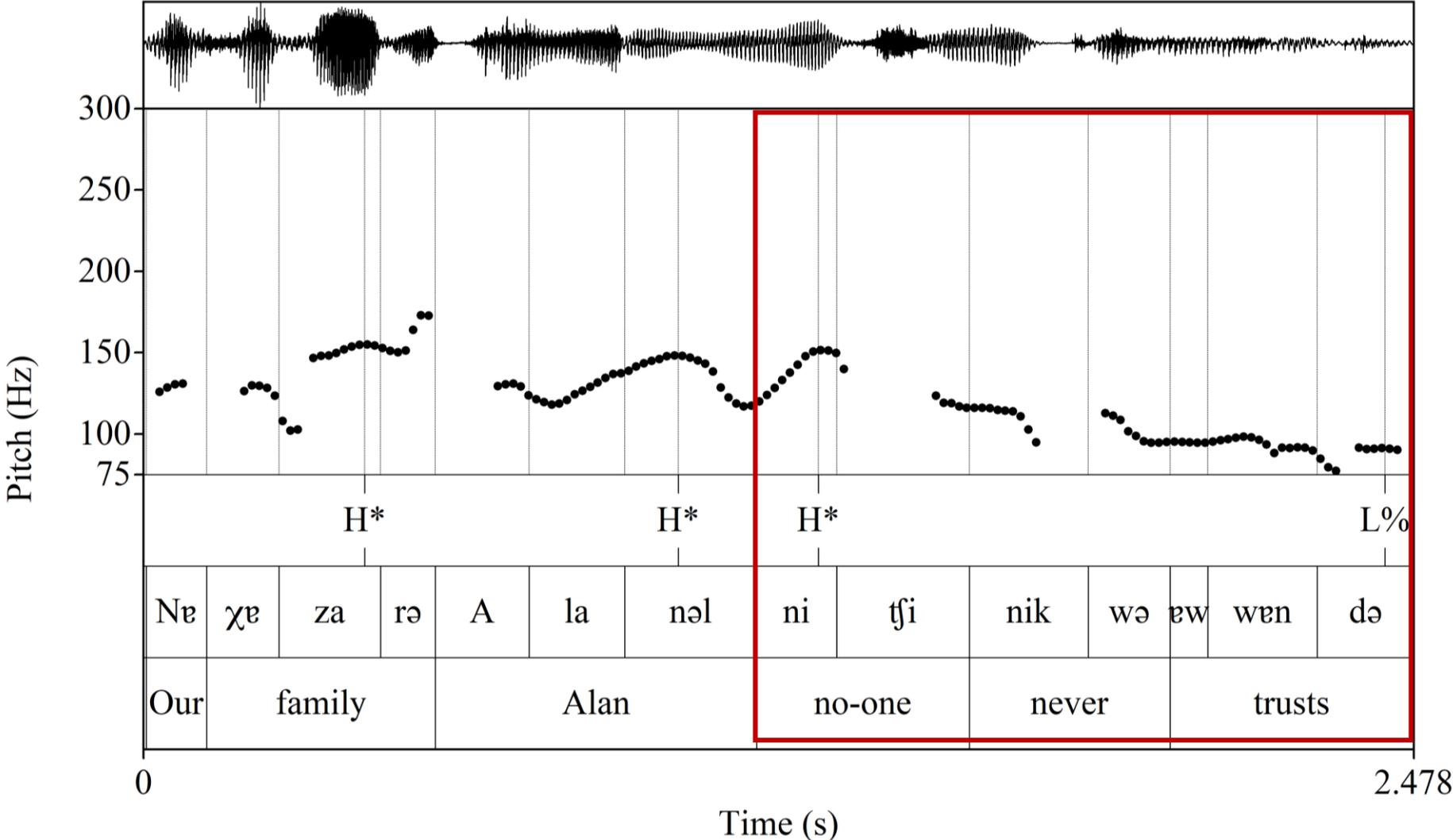
(25) ('Who does no-one ever trust in your family?')

$\varphi(n\bar{e} \quad \chi\bar{e}z\bar{a}r\bar{\partial})_{\varphi}$     $\varphi(\textit{alan}\bar{\partial})_{\varphi}$     $\iota(\varphi(\textit{nitfi})_{\varphi})_{\varphi}$     $\varphi(\textit{nik}^w\bar{\partial})_{\varphi}$     $\varphi(\textit{e}w\bar{w}\bar{e}n\bar{\partial})_{\varphi}\iota$ .  
 our family.in   Alan.SUP   no-one   never   trusts

'In our family, no-one ever trusts ALAN.'



# Narrow foci



## More complex cases...

⇒ extras in the slides + supplementary handout (\*a lot\* more information there!)

### To conclude:

- The **flexible  $\iota$ -mapping approach** successfully accounts for the properties of  $\iota$ -formation in Iron Ossetic.
- The Iron Ossetic facts provide **support** for the flexible  $\iota$ -mapping approach, which has not been tested on languages that have multiple projections available for verb raising, depending on context.

Thank you ~ Merci beaucoup ~ бузныг

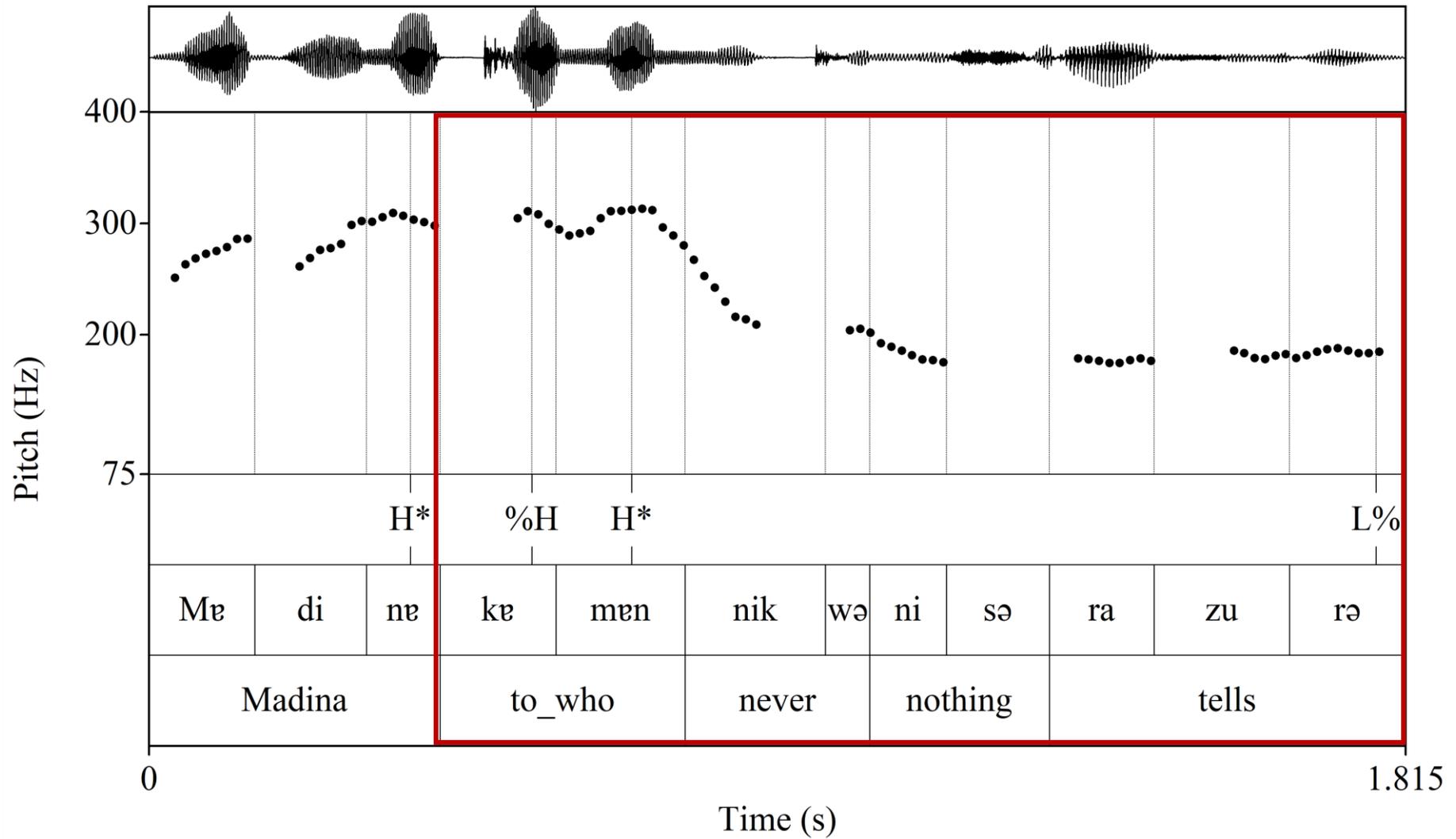
## Wh-questions with negative indefinites

- (26) *mədɪnə*    *kɛmɛn*    *nikʷə*    *nisə*    *ra-zur-ə?*  
Madina    who.DAT    never    nothing    PRV-tell-PRS.3SG  
‘Who does Madina never tell anything?’

$\varphi(\text{Wh})_{\varphi} \iota(\varphi(\text{Neg})_{\varphi} \varphi(\text{V})_{\varphi})_{\iota}$     ←    predicted by the flexible  $\iota$ -mapping hypothesis

$\iota(\iota\varphi(\text{Wh})_{\varphi} \varphi(\text{Neg})_{\varphi} \varphi(\text{V})_{\varphi})_{\iota}$     ←    actually attested

# Wh-questions with negative indefinites



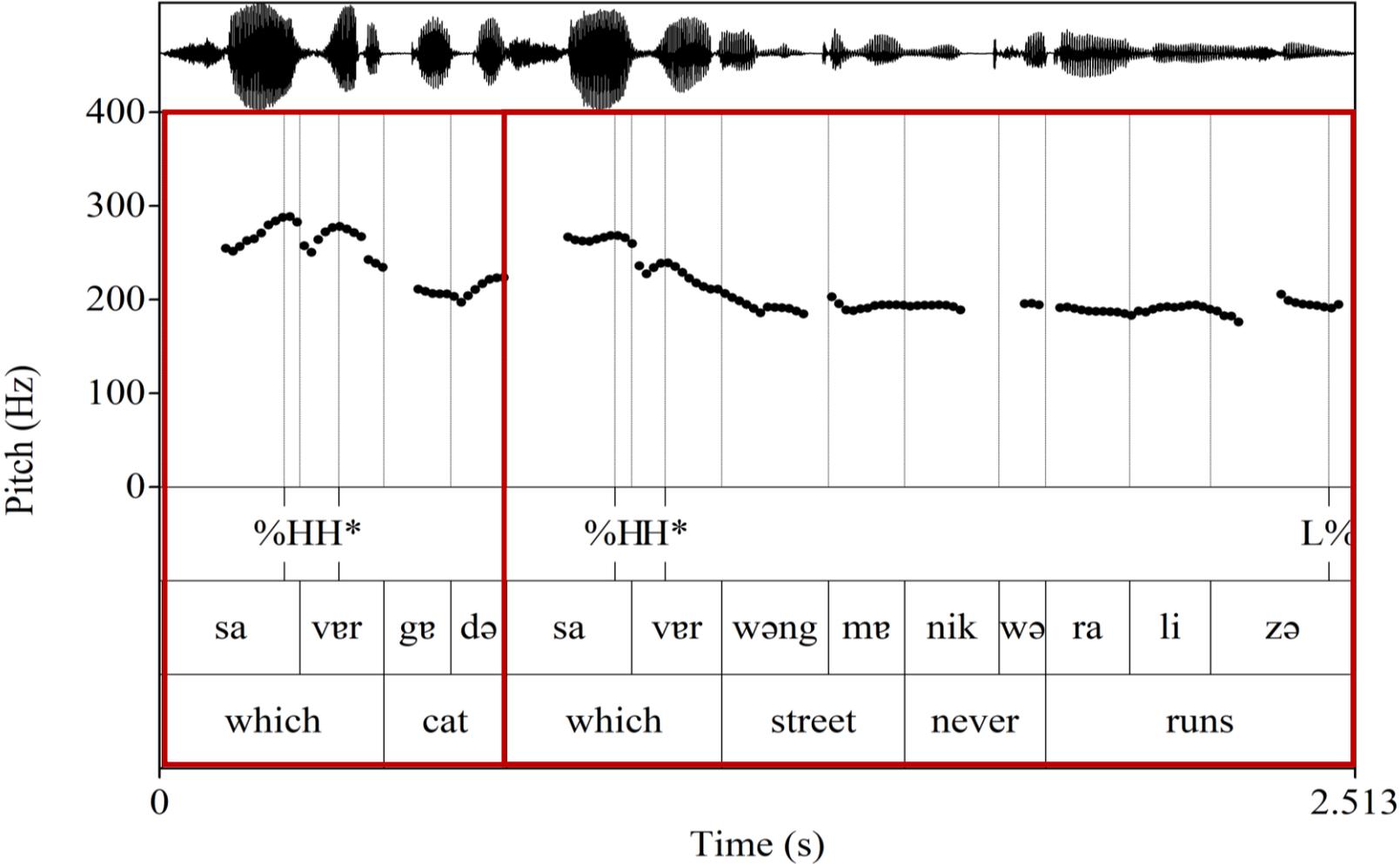
## Multiple wh-questions

- (31) (‘ $\varphi$ (*səvər* *gədə*) $\varphi$   $\iota$ (‘ $\varphi$ (*səvər* *wəŋ-mə*) $\varphi$   $\varphi$ (*nik<sup>w</sup>ə*) $\varphi$   $\varphi$ (*ralizə*) $\varphi$ ) $\iota$ ?  
 which cat                      which street-ALL      never      run.PRS.3SG  
 ‘Which cat never runs along which street?’

$\varphi$ (Wh) $\varphi$   $\varphi$ (Wh) $\varphi$   $\iota$ ( $\varphi$ (Neg) $\varphi$   $\varphi$ (V) $\varphi$ ) $\iota$                       ←      predicted

$\iota$ (‘ $\varphi$ (Wh) $\varphi$   $\iota$ (‘ $\varphi$ (Wh) $\varphi$   $\varphi$ (Neg) $\varphi$   $\varphi$ (V) $\varphi$ ) $\iota$                       ←      attested

# Multiple wh-questions

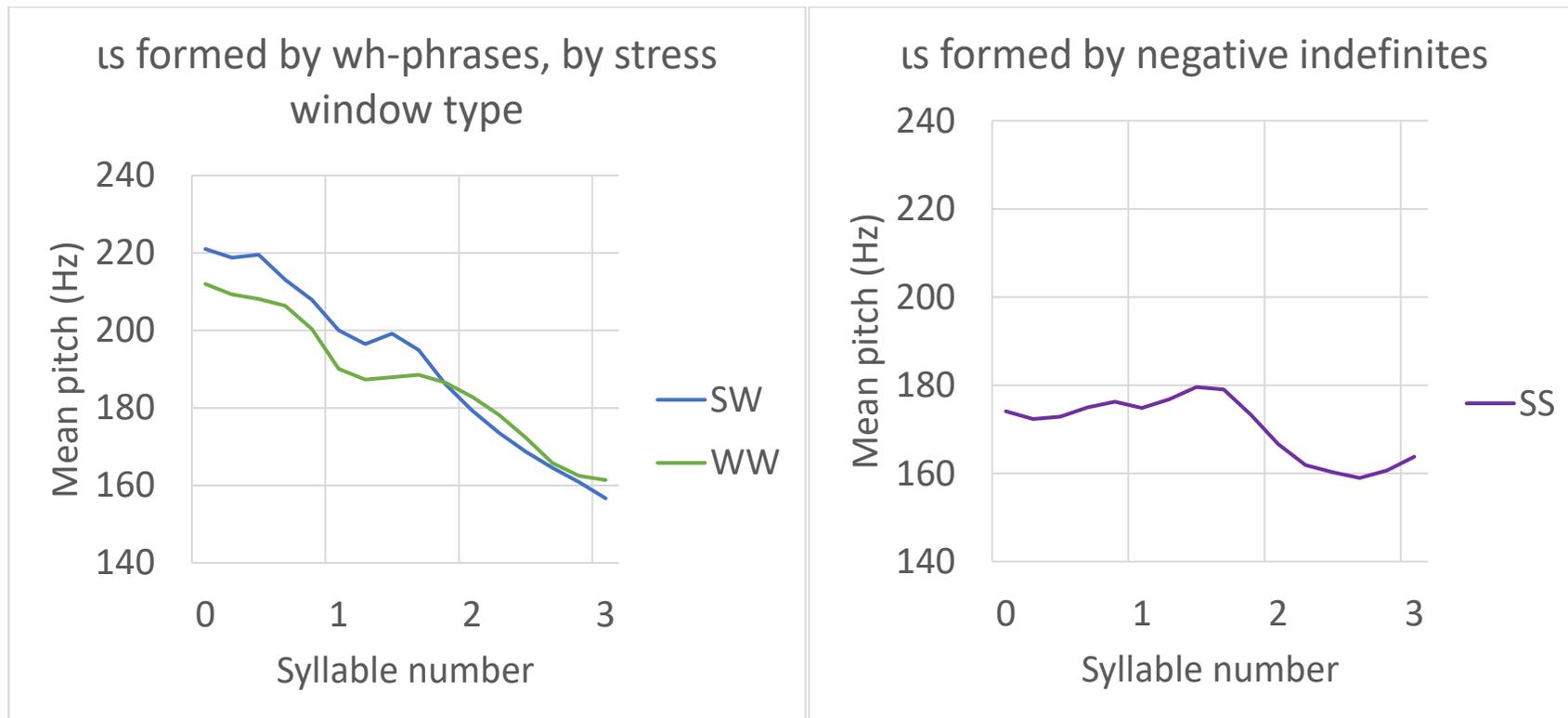


## POST-%H DEPHRASING

### (30) POST-%H DEPHRASING

delete all initial  $\iota$ -boundaries to the right of %H, other than those formed by %H  
(= no ‘ $\iota$ ’ to the right of ‘ $\iota$ ’).

### Evidence for %H:



## Relevant OT constraints

Following Hamlaoui & Szendrői (2015; 2017), we propose that the correspondence between  $\iota$  and syntactic projections in Iron Ossetic adheres to the flexible  $\iota$ -mapping principle, governed by the family of ALIGN-R/L(HVP,  $\iota$ ) constraints:

- the right and left edges of the HVP are mapped onto the corresponding edges of  $\iota$ , respectively.

### **Additionally:**

- the right and left edges of smaller constituents that do not include the clausal spine (e.g. DPs, PPs) are mapped onto the right and left edges of  $\varphi$ , respectively, by ALIGN-R/L(XP,  $\varphi$ );
- the edges of the full ('illocutionary') clause are mapped onto the respective edges of  $\upsilon$  by ALIGN-R/L(CP,  $\upsilon$ ).