

Prosodic challenges for Swedish students of Italian

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Learning Italian in a Swedish context

- Italiano LinguaDue – special issue 2025
- Foreign language / Second language / Third Language
/ Additional Language / Heritage language
- Visibility and priority of segmental vs. prosodic features and patterns in the learning context
- Intuition and empiricism in the research context
- Benefit for the learning and research context

The Interlta Corpus

- PI Professor Camilla Bardel
- Data collection start 2001
- Interviews SU students of Italian and L1 speakers of Italian
- Longitudinal, recorded in Språkstudion
- Annotated lexically, parts of speech
- Hosted by Lingonline (not open)
- Previous research on the data - lexical richness, lexical sophistication, lexical cross-linguistics influence, individual differences in L(n) learning
- First (?) pronunciation study using this data
- Choice of participants: 1) 8 learners at intermediate proficiency level, having one L1 = Swedish, 1 hour / person; 2) 8 L1 Italians, 1 hour / person

Romanska och klassiska institutionen

Interlta

Bakgrundsspråkens roll i tredjespråkets utveckling - målspråk italienska

Projekt finansierat av vetenskapsrådet

Institutionen för ämnesdidaktik

The Interlta Corpus – example from "Göran"

*PIE: tz e hai anche la macchina?
tsk and do you have a car as well?

*GOR: no.
no

*GOR: <ancora no> [>].
<not yet>[>]

*PIE: <no> [<] .
<no> [>]

*GOR: non ho la [/] (.) la &paten +//.
I don't have a [/] (.) a &drive +//

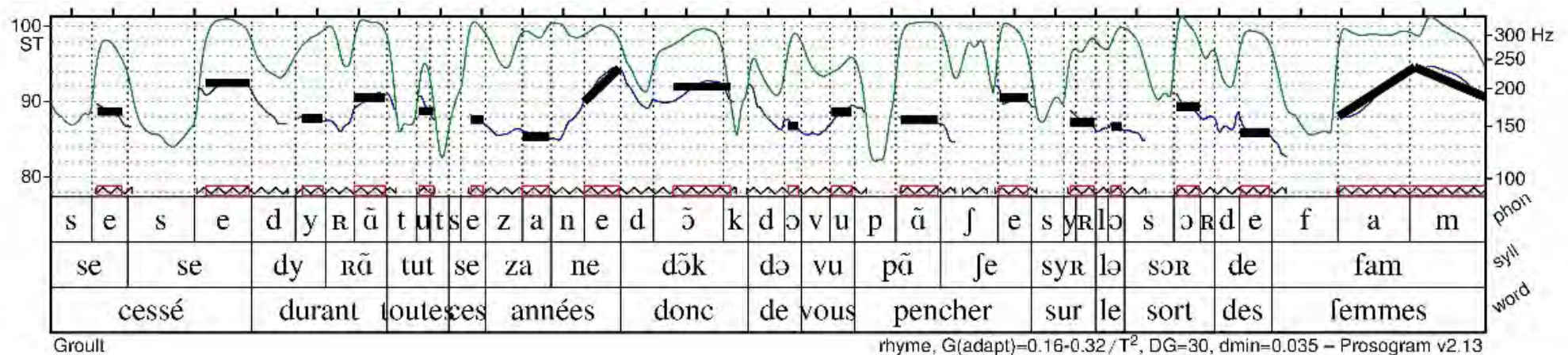
*GOR: come si dice <il &paten> [//] la patente di [//] per guidare ma +...
how do you say this <the &driv> [//] the licence for [//] to drive but +...

*GOR: <spero che hm (.) eh hm: tz> [//] spero di [/] di prenderlo.
<I hope to hm (.) eh hm: tsk> [//] I hope to [//] get it.

*PIE: appena hai la patente verrai in macchina oppure (.) continuerai a
venire con la metropolitana e l' autobus.
as soon as you have a driving licence will you be going [to the university] by car or (.) will
you continue to take the metro or bus.

*GOR: eh hm: non lo so ancora.
eh hm: I don't know yet.

The Prosogram



- Prosodic profiles
- Syllabification
- Stylized pitch
- Metrical patterns

Mertens, Piet (2022) The Prosogram model for pitch stylization and its applications in intonation transcription. in Barnes, J.A. and Shattuck-Hufnagel, S. (eds) (2022) *Prosodic Theory and Practice*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. 259-286. ISBN 978-0-262-54317-0.

Studying speech production in conversation

Marcin Włodarczak, Mattias Heldner

**How do you study speech
production?**



In defense of stylistic diversity in speech research



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ABSTRACT

Recently, the debate about what kind of speech data is most appropriate for linguistic research has intensified. Generally, with 'laboratory speech' defenders on the one hand and 'natural speech' proponents on the other, two seemingly clearly distinct phonetic data types have been identified. In this article, this dichotomy is called into question. Results from previous studies on segmental phonetics, prosody and paralinguistics indicate that the data we are using may indeed have had an immense influence on our results. The research papers in the present Special Issue in Journal of Phonetics provide further evidence for the style-dependency of speech data and hence, on our theories and models. Importantly, they also show that some results remain stable independently of the speaking style under investigation. We claim that these findings do not point to an inherent superiority of one particular type of data used in phonetics research. Instead, we argue for a stronger methodological awareness in investigations of speech phenomena and more cautious interpretations of the findings that we make. We also believe that we need a much better understanding of the extent to which our methods and our ways of collecting speech data influence our results. A generally increased methodological awareness and a higher variety of investigated styles of speech will promote our research progress further than a continuing argument for or against using one particular type of speech data.

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1. Introduction

Recent years have seen a debate between defenders of strictly controlled, experimental data collections based on 'lab speech' (e.g., Xu, 2010) and promoters of more 'naturalistic', 'authentic' or 'ecologically valid' data sets (e.g., Ernestus, 2000; Kohler, Pätzold, & Simpson, 1995; Oertel, Cummins, Edlund, Wagner, & Campbell, 2013). The main reason behind this discussion is our knowledge about style-specific phonetic variation, and different opinions about what data provides a better window to 'the truth'. Although 'speaking style' is a heterogenously used and multiple-dimensional term (cf. Barry, 1995; Blaauw, 1995; Eskénazi, 1993) we can consider it as accepted that the same sentence leads to a different phonetic output depending on whether it has been uttered in the style of a news broadcaster or in a conversation with a friend. On the perception side a news broadcaster speaking in a conversational style would be as unacceptable for listeners as a friend talking to you in a news broadcasting style. This Special Issue aims at providing further arguments for the impact of speaking style diversity on phonetic investigations. Rather than favouring a decision for either style in phonetic data collections, we aim to raise a stronger awareness for the data and methods we use in phonetic research, and for what we can or cannot conclude from the results based on the data that was used.

We agree with a lot of points raised in Xu's article 'In defense of lab speech' in this journal (Xu, 2010). Still, we would like to extend this discussion and add some further points. Researchers focusing on different aspects of phonetic sciences participated in our effort to bring together a broad basis of results indicating how crucial both methods and data are for our insights. Unlike earlier debates in this area, we do not want to argue for or against the superiority of one or another type of phonetic data. Instead, unifying the outcome of the different articles, one of the central take-home messages is the need to investigate *various* styles and their potential effects on the results. This Special Issue shows that style specificity of results is not limited to single areas or few aspects of phonetics

“Results from previous studies on segmental phonetics, prosody and paralinguistics indicate that the data we are using may indeed have had an immense influence on our results.”

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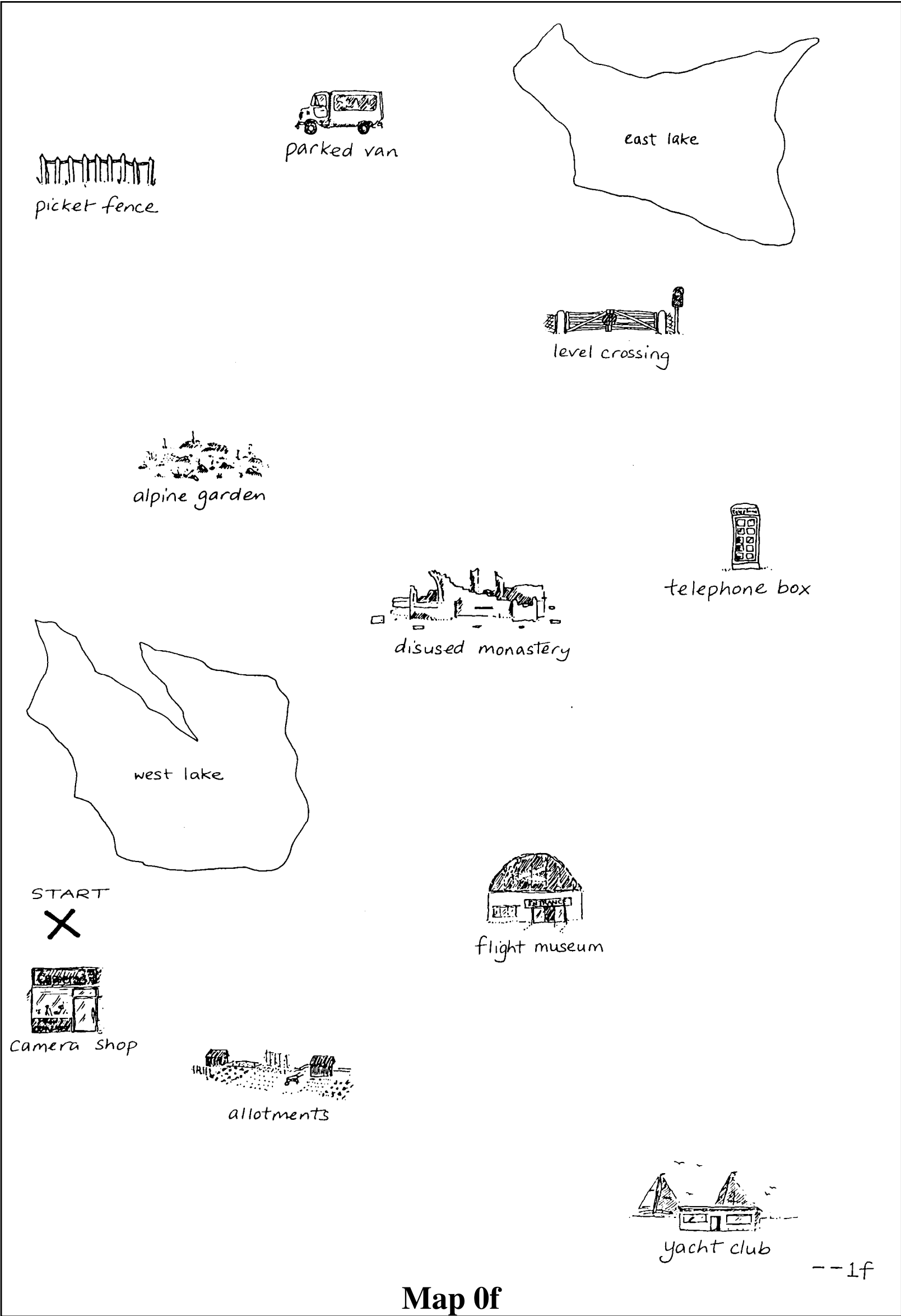
**How do you study speech
production in interaction?**

Find speakers

You will be fine with two but
three is better!



Give them a task or don't...



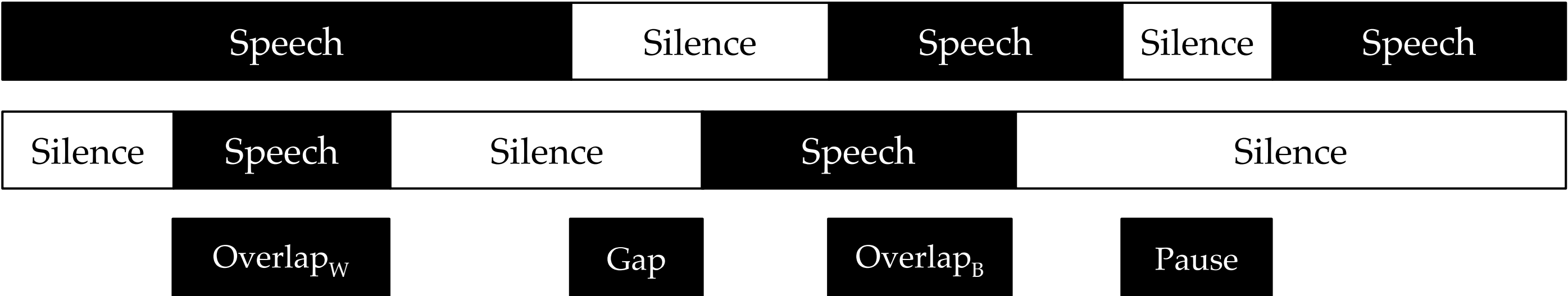
Add gear



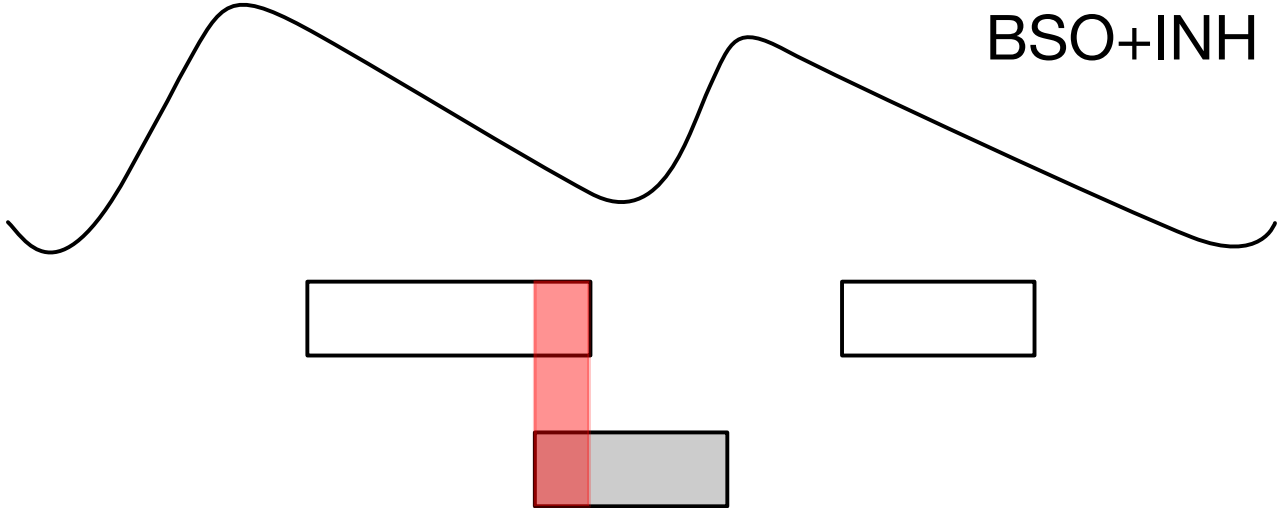
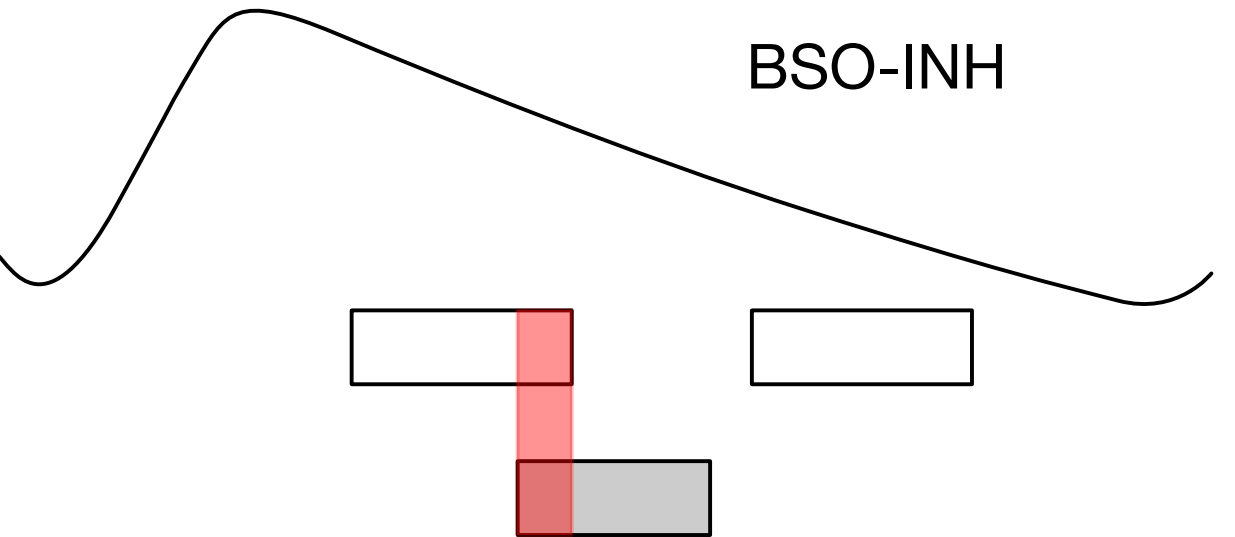
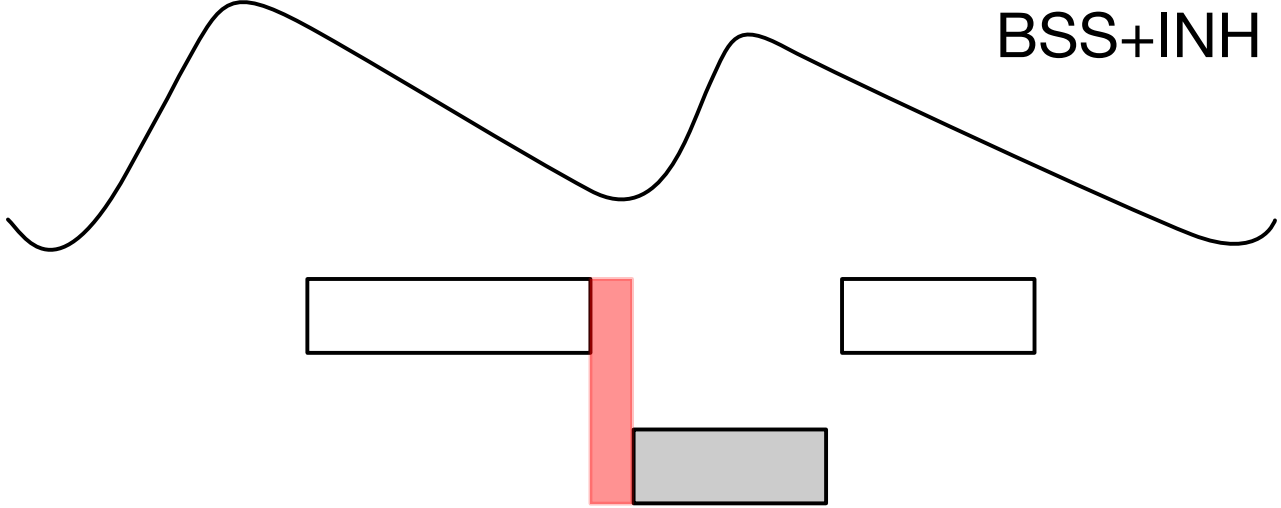
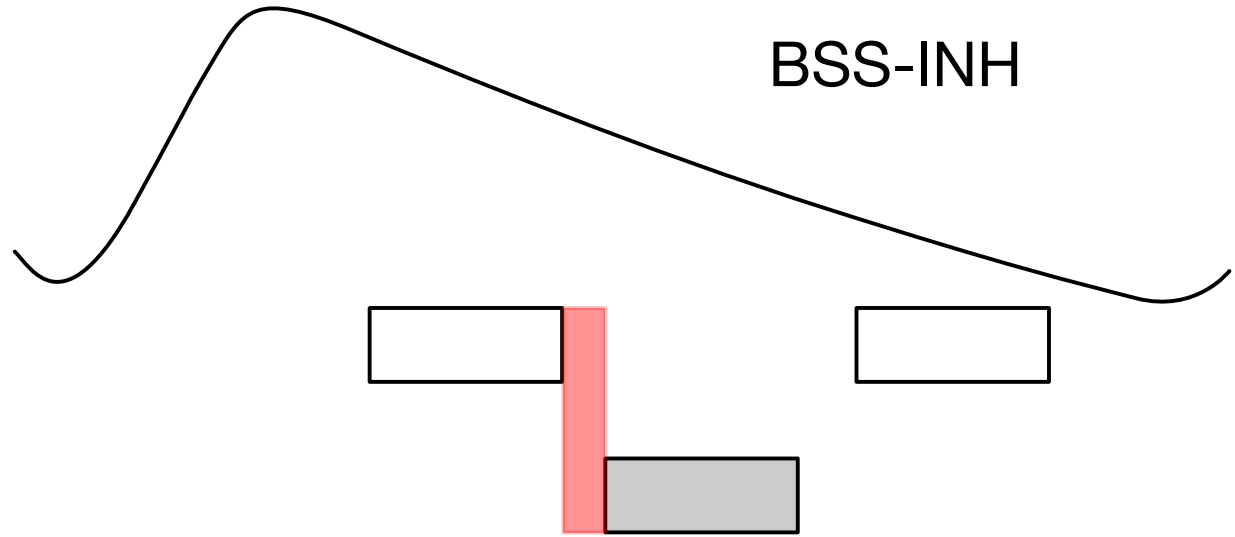
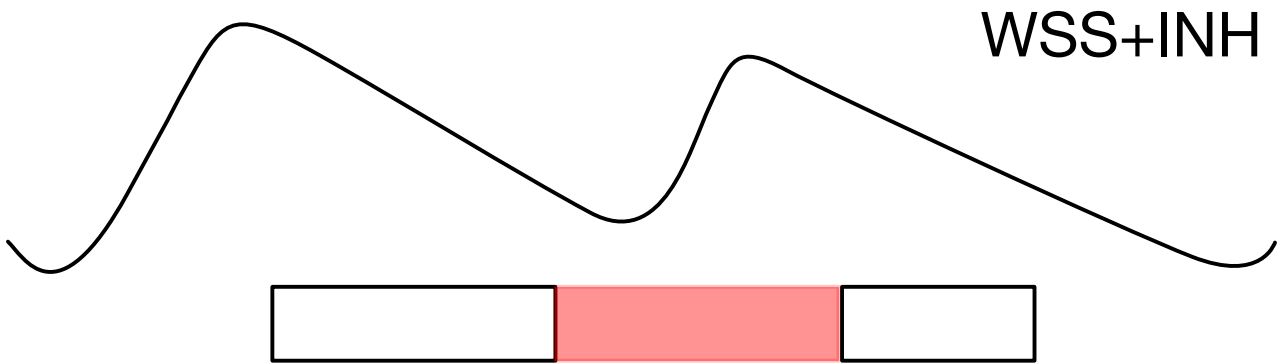
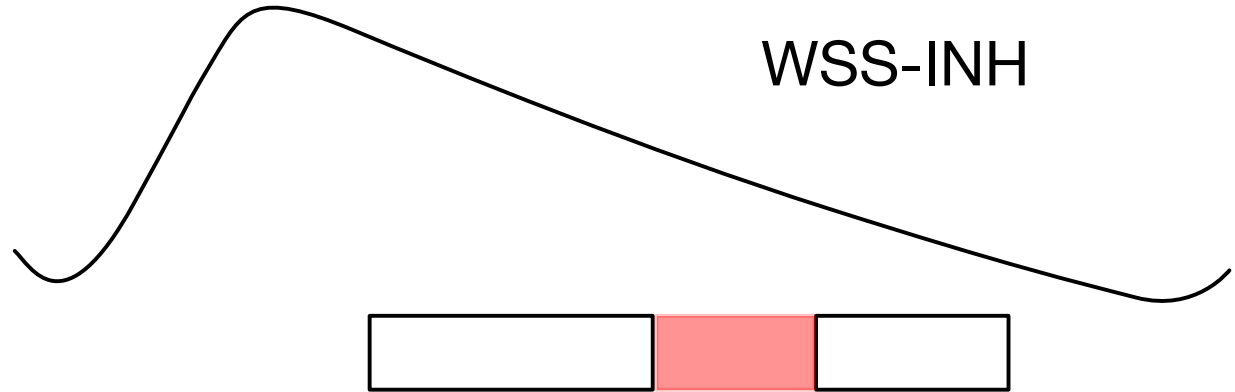
And more gear



Find the turn-taking events.

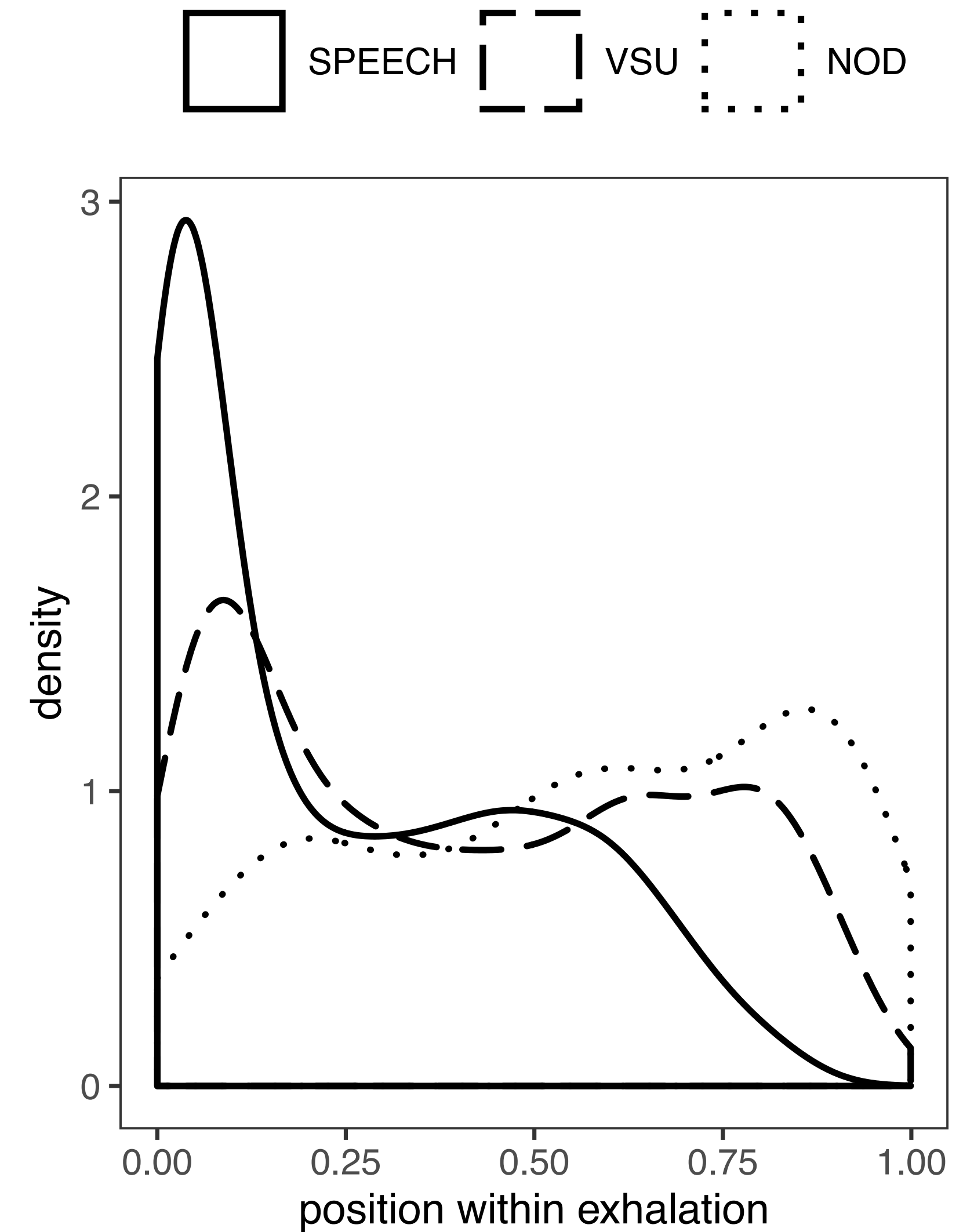


Link them to the other signals.

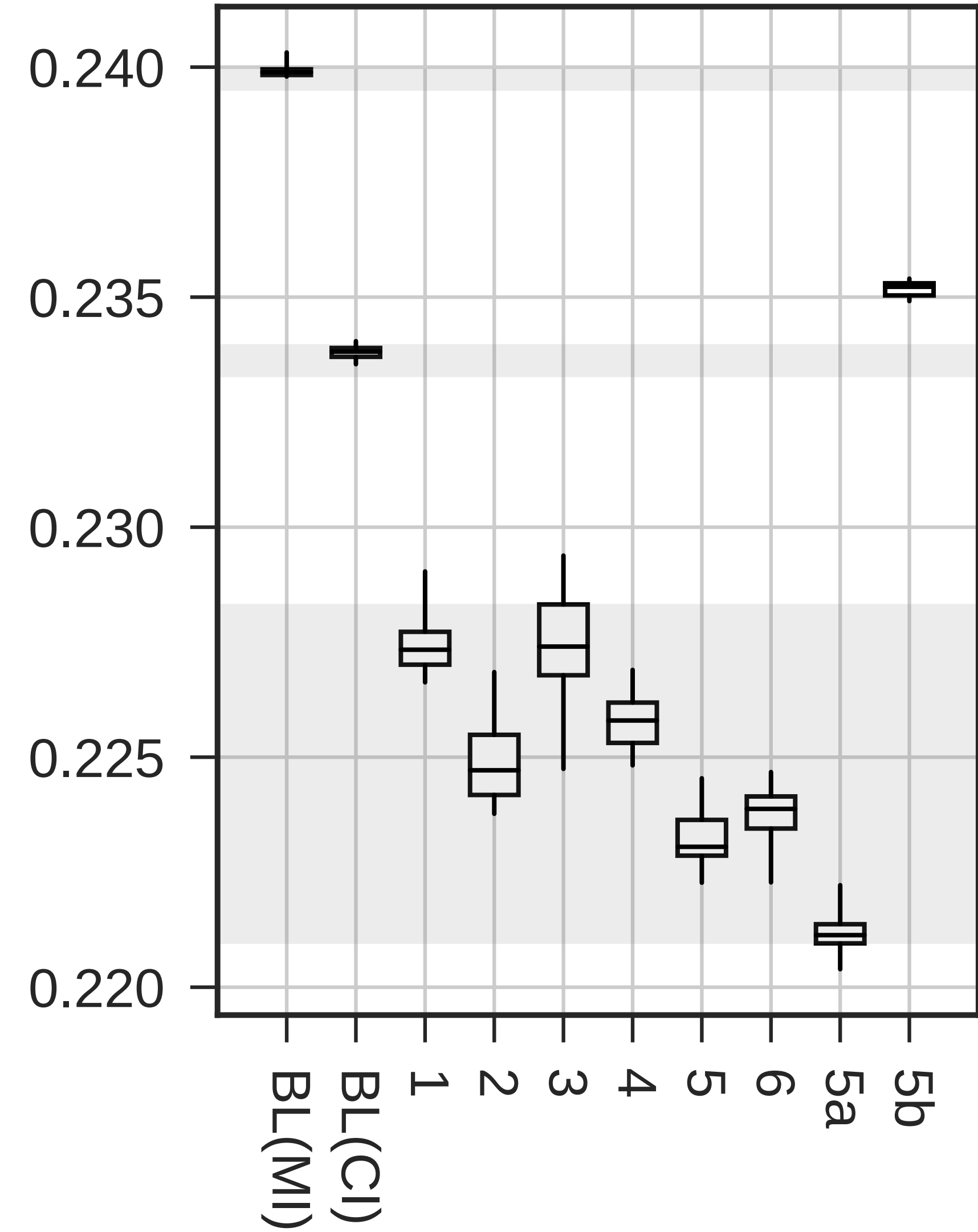


Why bother?

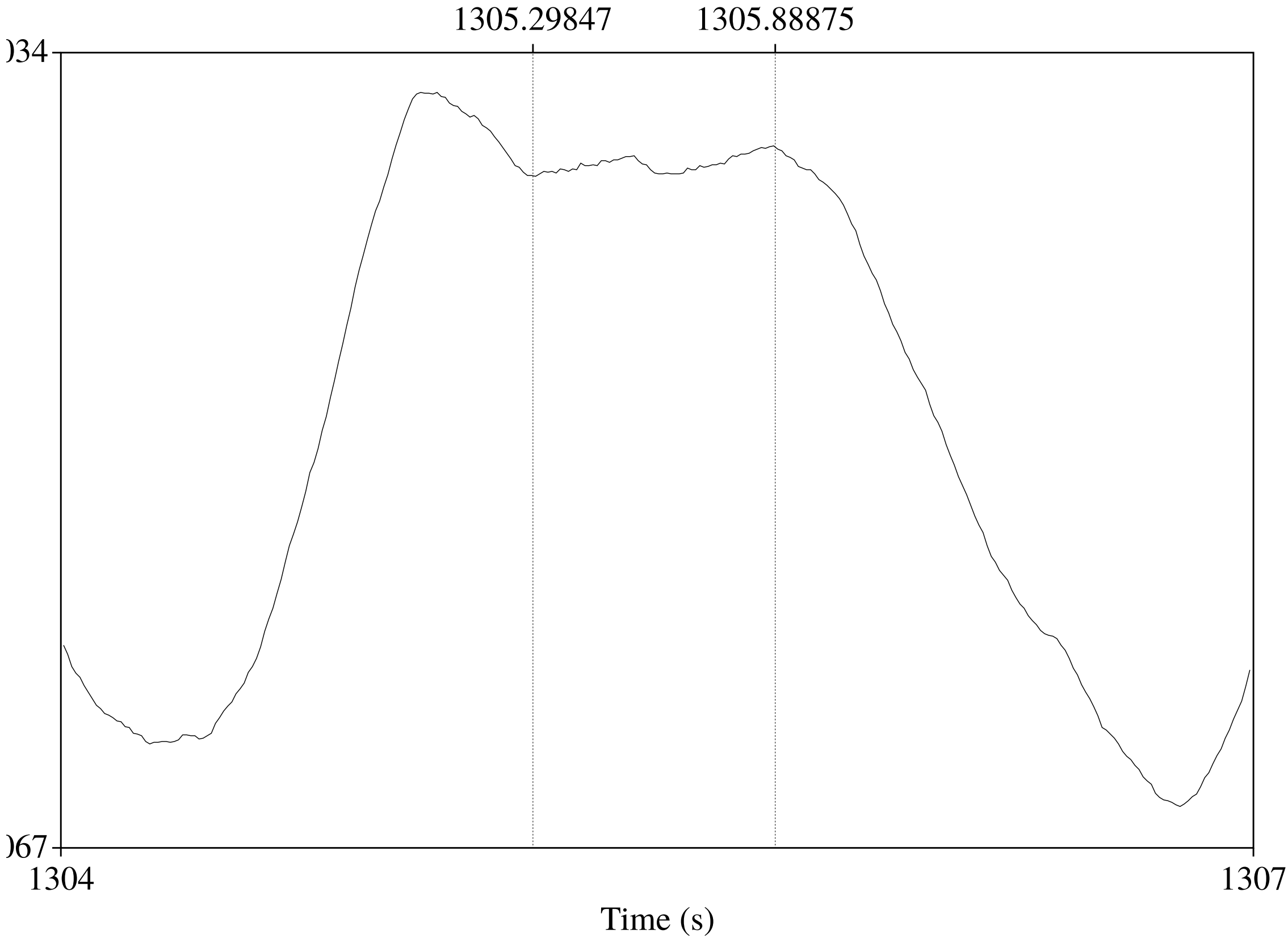
Timing of communicative behaviours within a respiratory cycle



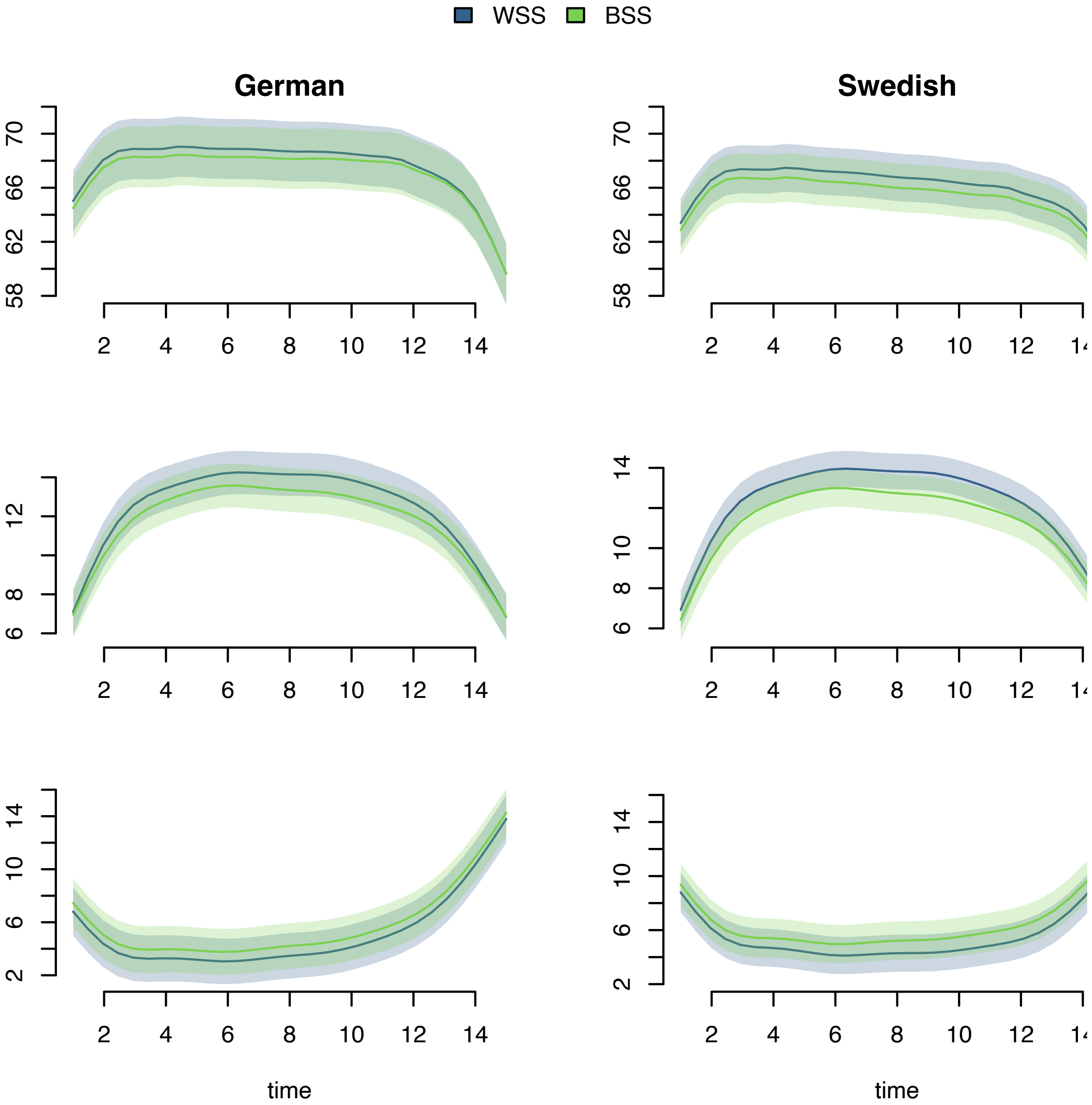
Respiratory turn-taking cues



Hidden turn-taking events



Voice quality variation in conversation



**If you only have
one speaker,
make it fun for
them!**

