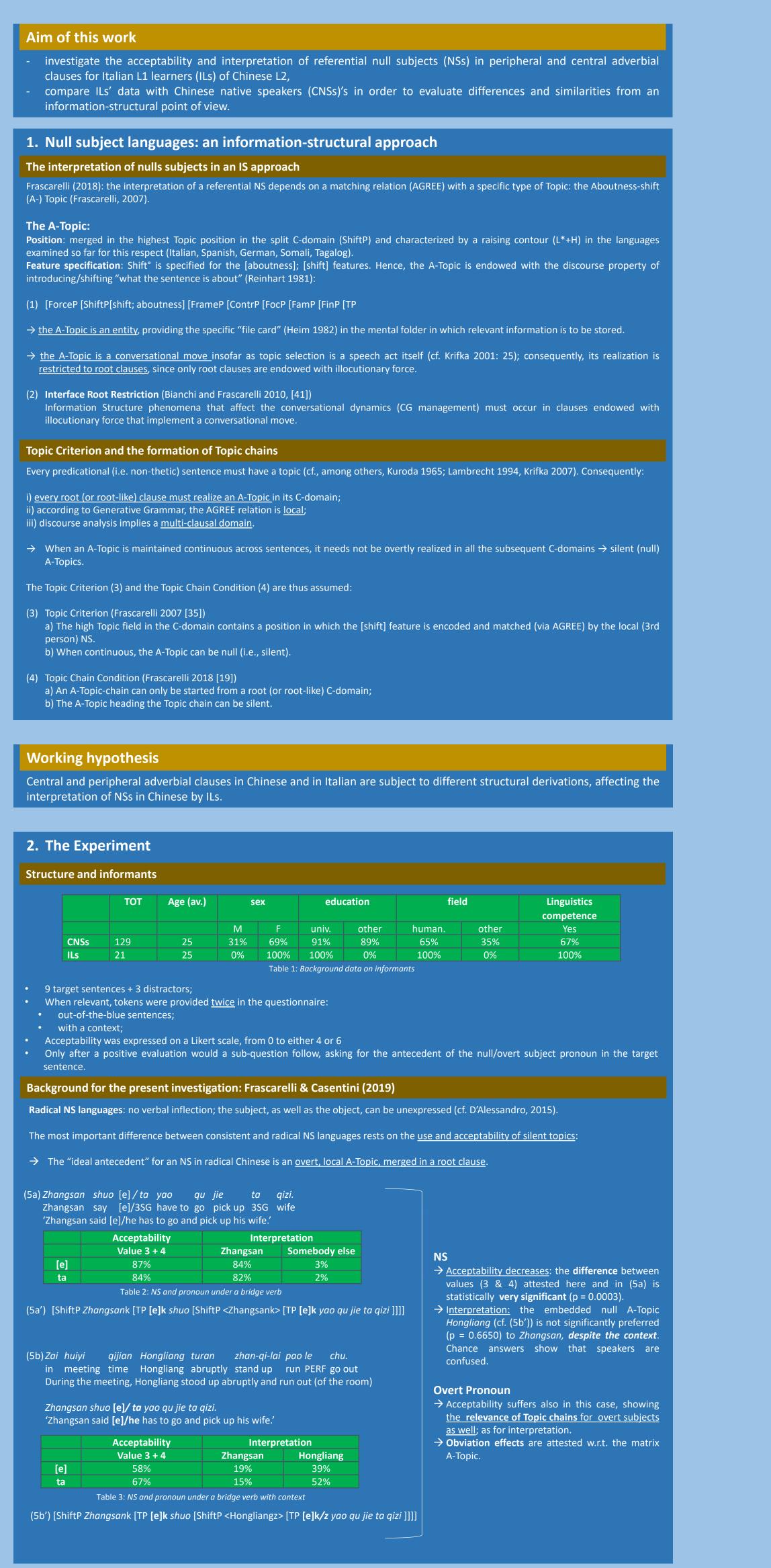
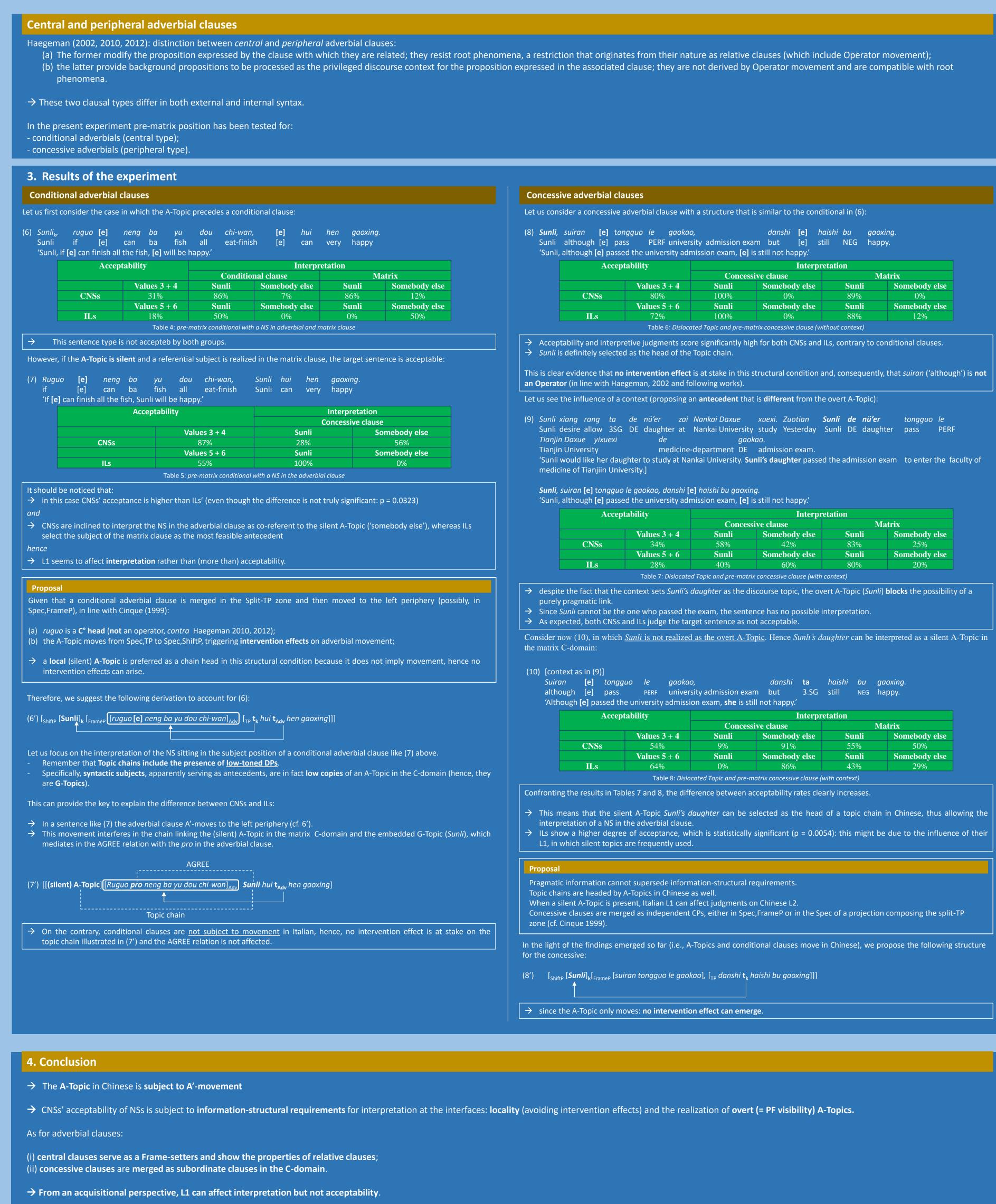
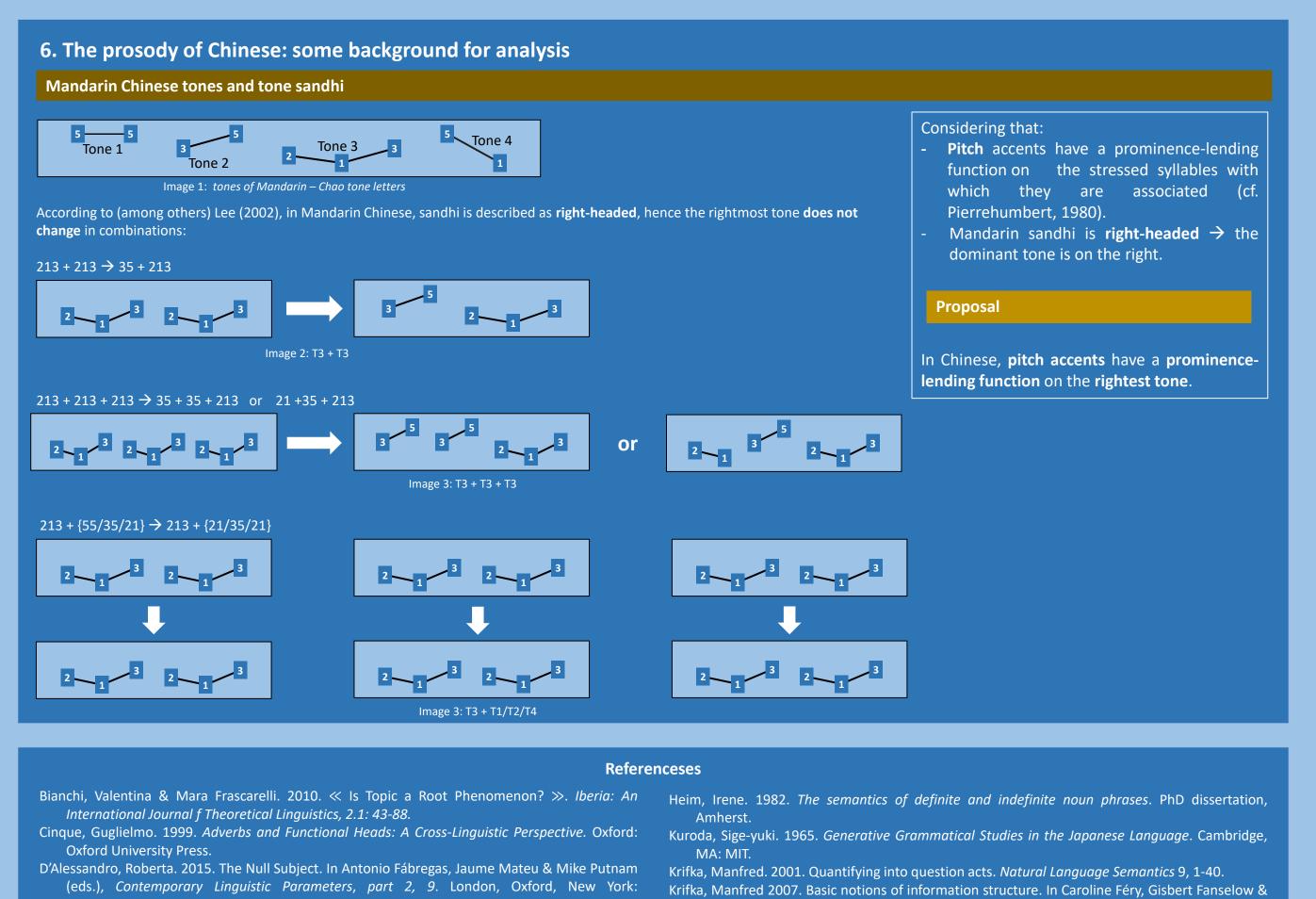
The acceptability and interpretation on Null Subjects in Italian L1 learners of Chinese L2.

An interface (syntax-prosody) analysis of Topic chains in adverbial clauses.

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Haili you xiao yu you guo. En zhe ge shihou Milaoshu (A-Topic H+L*) ye jie ... xia dao haidi. Pierrehumbert, Janet. 1980. The Phonology and Phonetics of English Intonation. Ph.D. Xianzai tamen (A-Topic H+L*) lai dao haibian chi bingjiling. rascarelli, Mara & Marco Casentini (exp. July 2019). The interpretation of null subjects in a Reinhart, Tania. 1981. Pragmatics and linguistics: an analysis of sentence Topics. Philosophica, 27, 'In the sea a small fish swims. Eh this time Micky Mouse [A-Topic] also 'jie'... goes under the sea. Now they [A-Topic] arrived on the beach and (are) eat(ing) an ice-cream.' A-Topic, <u>as expected</u>.

7. The experiment: the prosody of Topics and topic chains

The experiment Informants: 6 Chinese native speakers were asked to describe a short story running on a PowerPoint presentation in which Goofy and Micky Mouse are enjoying a day at the seaside. The video consists of 8 scenes (slides + movements), in which the two characters perform a sequence of actions which could induce the production o A-, C- and G-Topics. Specifically they: (1) meet in front of a house (together); (2) bring different items to the seaside (together); (3) build a castle in the sand (together); (4) swim underwater (one appears before the other); (5) eat an ice-cream (ice-creams have different colors); (6) go back home (together); (7) relax in the living room (in different ways); (8) go to sleep (with different objects in their hands). We collected a total of **93 sentences** with overt Topics (either A-Topic or G-Topic), which were then analyzed through the PRAAT software. In order to support the results emerging from the test, a second analysis was conducted on the data collected from two interviews and a monologue found on the web (33 sentences items). The G-Topic The A-Topic → In our data, when a new topic is introduced, it is always signaled by a **complex tone**, with a final **fall of** → G-Topics are always realized with a L* contour (consistent cross-linguistically). the Fundamental Frequency (F0). → This kind of tonal event can be described as a H+L*. → This contour is realized consistently, <u>independent of the underlying tone</u>. yi qi yao chu qu wanr Image 7: *G-Topic – L* contour* Image 6: A-Topic – H+L* contour (1) Image 5: A-Topic – H+L* contour (1) (14) Dao le wanshang, yueliang he xingxing dou chu lai le. (13) Di er tian, Gaofei he Milaoshu xiangyu zai mu wu qian. (15) Tamen yiqi yao chu qu wanr. Lit: '(Once) night has arrived, the moon and the stars come out.' 'They want to go to have fun together.' 'The following day, Goofy and Micky Mouse meet in front of the wooden house.' Topic chains: an example The topic chains produced by our informants are consistent with the topic chains condition (4). As an illustration, consider the following examples: 1 Gaofei he Milaoshu (A-Topic H+L*) zai haibian mmm wanr shazi. Tamen (G-Topic L*) zai shatan shang zhu ... jianzhu ... jianzao le yi zuo chengbao. Tamen (G-Topic L*) wanr de hen kaixin. 'Goofy and Micky Mouse [A-Topic] are playing with sand on the beach. They [G-Topic] are one the beach building ... building ... building a castle. They [G-Topic] are joyfully playing.' Image 8: Topic shift → The topic chain is started by an A-Topic. (16) Xianzai tamen lai dao haibian chi bingjiling. → G-Topics (in the form of pronouns) are realized for **topic continuity**. 'Now, they arrived on the beach (they) are eating ice-cream.' Notice that a pronoun is not always realized with an L* contour. Consider the following example: **Conclusion : Prosodic interface** This preliminary prosodic analysis provides evidence for the fact that: a systematic connection exists between prosody and discourse, also in a tone language like Chinese; (ii) the realization of discourse-connected tonal contours is **not influenced by the underlying (lexical) tone**; (iii) G-Topics are low-toned crosslinguistically. Nevertheless, the complex tone associated with the **A-Topic** is not the same as the tone emerged from the → When the pronoun is not used for topic continuity, but to propose a **Topic shift**, it is marked as an analyses realized so far on typologically different languages (Italian, Somali, German, Spanish, Tagalog),

possibly due to phonological properties of Chinese. The source of such tonal difference is left open for