Parametric variation in Romance synchronic V2 through the lens of French

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Abstract

In this article I provide an analysis of XVS order in (Modern) standard French, and reconcile it with comparative analyses of XVS in (Modern) Romance by taking into account recent conceptual accounts for topic and focus. I concentrate on XVS clauses in Modern standard French where X is an adverbial or an adjectival phrase, and provide empirical evidence for the assumption that – contrary to what is often assumed – these are similar to XVS clauses in Romance and not subject to a special syntactic licensing constraint distinguishing them from other Romance languages. I claim that XVS clauses in (Modern) standard French display systematicity in that the initial element X is either [+anaphoric] or [+scalar] and that this is the result of micro-parametric rather than nano-parametric variation: the sentence-initial AdjPs and AdvPs in XVS are no individual lexical items but belong to a lexically defined subset of AdvPs and AdjPs. Instances of XVS introduced by a [+scalar] constituent are argued to be subsets of Romance mirative focus fronting, while those introduced by a [+anaphoric] constituent are subsets of Romance resumptive preposing. I argue that XVS in standard French is productive with fronted *rare* 'rare' and *nombreux* 'numerous', because these adjectives are both [+anaphoric] and [+scalar]. This shows that V2 is still active in standard French.

1. Introduction

This article is about a word order configuration which sharply distinguishes standard French, where these structures are still found, from colloquial French, where they are fully banned: XVS word order (i.e. fronted constituent X – verb – nominal subject)[1] in declarative root clauses (1-3).[2] Although I will not enter into detail with respect to the V2 or non-V2 status of Medieval Romance and French, and the reason why it was lost (Benincà 2006, Kaiser & Zimmerman 2011, Labelle 2006, Ledgeway 2007, Larrivée 2022, Wolfe 2020, 2021), XVS patterns such as (1-3) could be considered to be instances of V2 (Poletto 1998, Rizzi 1990, Rizzi 1996), to the extent that they combine constituent preposing and obligatory V-movement (see Holmberg 2015 & Ledgeway 2007: 123).[3]

(1)   Les murs de la salle oscillaient sous mon regard ; mais
        'The walls of the room swayed under my gaze; but'
        plus encore[4] balançaient   mes   pensées.
        even more   swayed   my   thoughts.
        'my thoughts swayed even more'
        (Gide, cited in Le Bidois 1952: 169)

(2)   Il [Alexandre] écrivait avec une sorte de distraction concentrée, comme on crayonne sur le bloc du téléphone: on écoute de moins en moins et c'est le dessin qui s'impose.
        'He [Alexander] wrote with a kind of concentrated distraction, like when you doodle on a phone notepad: you listen less and less and it's the drawing which takes over.'
        Ainsi   écrivait   Alexandre,
        in that way wrote   Alexandre,
        'That's how Alexander wrote, (…)'
        ... se réfugiant dans les pleins et les déliés de cette écriture sage, de ce crayonnement appliqué.
        'taking refuge in the loops and lines of sober penmanship, of assiduous doodling.'
        (Pennac, cited in Lahousse 2015: 211)

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[1]   I focus on XVS configurations in which the postverbal subject can be nominal. Although I do mention some constructions with a pronominal (clitic) postverbal subject, the main focus is on nominal subjects, because, in contrast to clitic subjects, these also occur in XVS in other Romance languages.

[2]   In embedded clauses (e.g. relatives) XVS is never obligatory (Lahousse 2011) and, hence, is not an instance of V2.

[3]   In colloquial French, V-movement resulting in VS word order is completely lost, except from some quasi-lexicalized instances of pronominal VS in interrogatives. However, constituent fronting in combination with SV word order is available, see section 4.1. below.

[4]   In the examples, I indicate in bold the fronted constituent, both in the original example and the English translation. I only gloss the relevant XVS structure.

(3)   Cette fois, [...], l'invective américaine s'est déchaînée sans retenue. Fait exceptionnel, les dirigeants américains se sont joints au concert.
'This time, [...] the American invective went wild without restraint. Exceptionally, the American leaders joined the concert.'
Particulièrement venimeuse fut l'accusation   largement répandue
particularly   venomous was the-accusation very   widespread
des   Français ingrats (…).
of-the French   ungrateful
'**Particularly venomous** was the widespread accusation of the ungrateful French.'
(*Le Monde*, cited in Lauwers & Tobback 2020: 473)

Although XVS in interrogative clauses is also an instance of V2, I do not address it here, as it has been extensively studied, especially in generative work, see a.o. de Bakker (1997), Déprez (1988, 1990), de Wind (1995), Drijkoningen (1990), Hulk & Pollock (2001), Kayne & Pollock (1978, 2001), Kampers-Manhe et al. (2004), Kellert (2017), Rizzi (1996), Wolfe (2021).[5]

It has often been observed that XVS is more restricted in standard French than in other Romance languages (see Leonetti (2017) for a recent overview), but it is not fully known *to what extent* French XVS is different, for various reasons. One reason is that, in the spirit of the pro-drop parameter, French has often been set apart from other Romance languages such as Spanish and Italian, to the extent that French grammar seems to need a 'licenser' or 'trigger' for VS (Kayne & Pollock 1978, 2001).[6] This accounts for the contrast between the grammatical examples (1-3) and the ungrammatical instances of VS without a fronted constituent (4a), but not for the contrast between fronted elements which can occur in XVS, as (1-3), and those which cannot, as in (4b).

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[5]   I also exclude from this overview instances of "locative inversion" (i), i.e. XVS where X is an explicit (or implicit) spatio-temporal topic (Bresnan 1994, Corr 2016, Collins 1997, Cornish 2001, Gournay 2007, Lahousse 2003, 2007, 2011, Sheehan 2010, 2016, Tortora 1997, 2001, see Sluckin et al. 2021 for a recent overview). In this context, VS is not obligatory: it alternates with SV word order and, hence, is not an instance of V2 word order:

(i)   **En septembre apparaissent les grosses araignées**. Elles tissent leurs toiles scintillantes et polygonales d'une branche à une autre.
'**In September come the fat spiders**. They spin their glittering polygonal webs from branch to branch.'
(Simon 1981, cited in Lahousse 2011: 63)

[6]   V1, with narrow focus on the subject, and in which no preverbal empty locative can be assumed to occupy position X (see Bentley & Cruschina 2018), was already restricted in later Old French (in contrast to Old Italo/Ibero-Romance, see Roberts 1993, Sitaridou 2012, Vance 1997), and only persists in high register French with an exhaustive interpretation of the subject. It is called *heavy NP shift*, *strong focalization V(O)S*, *elaborative VS*, see Kampers-Manhe et al. (2004), Kayne & Pollock (2001), Marandin (2003), Pollock (1985), Rizzi & Shlonsky (2006), Lahousse (2005, 2006, 2011). See Lahousse & Lamiroy (2012) and Leonetti (2017) for a Romance comparative view of these cases. I follow Sheehan (2010) in that a unified analysis of narrow focus V1 and XVS is not possible.

(4)   a.   * Ø   *écrivait Alexandre.*
                wrote   Alexander
       b.   * ***Probablement*** *écrivait Alexandre.*
                probably   wrote   Alexandre

A second reason is due to the *terminology of discourse-pragmatic (information-structural) categories* used in descriptive work, which disallows generalizations across individual analyses. For instance, Kaiser & Zimmerman (2011: 375), on the basis of Grevisse & Goosse (2007: 477-479), argue that sentence-initial adjectival attributes (e.g. (3) above) are interpreted as "focalized". They however define focus as "special attention (…) to some syntactic constituent by means of its syntactic highlighting" by its preposing. These authors seem to conflate (different types of) topics and foci, which makes it hard to compare their analysis with accounts based on more refined notions of information structure. Similarly, in Lahousse (2011: 106), I used the notion of "notional stage topic" (*topique scénique notionnel*), which refers to an abstract location (Fournier 1997), to describe instances of XVS such as (1), in which X refers to the previous context, and the notion of "restrictive focus" (Erteschik-Shir 1997: 12) to describe instances of XVS such as (2) and (3).[7] However, these notions are not used in other work on XVS in Romance, which hinders comparison across analyses of different Romance languages.

Thirdly, in those cases where XVS in present-day standard French is included in a diachronic analysis of V2 in French (Wolfe 2021) or in a synchronic analysis of XVS in Romance (Leonetti 2017, Cruschina 2021), the scope and extension of the works often entail a non-exhaustive description of French, which also blurs the comparison to some extent.

Against this backdrop, the goal of this article is to bridge the gap between (i) existing analyses of XVS in French, which do not incorporate a comparative Romance and diachronic perspective, and which are not based on recent conceptual frameworks for topic and focus, and (ii) (synchronic) comparative Romance analyses (Cruschina & Remberger 2017, Leonetti 2017, Cruschina 2021), and (diachronic) French analyses (Wolfe 2021), which do not take into account the finer details of French XVS. Taking into account both the morphosyntactic (section 2) and discourse-pragmatic (information-structural) status (section 3) of the fronted constituent, I will argue that XVS in French, whether X is an adverbial phrase (1-2) or an adjectival phrase (an adjectival attribute) (3), is a subset of two classes of XVS attested in Romance: *resumptive preposing* (section 3.1) and *focus preposing* (section 4). Hence, instances of XVS in standard French are no fossilized "vestiges of an older language state" (Kaiser & Zimmerman 2011) of Romance V2 and French XVS is not subject to a special syntactic licensing constraint distinguishing it from other Romance languages. Rather, I will show that the distribution of XVS in French displays systematicity – and even productivity in some specific instances – and the variation can be considered the result of a combination of micro- and nano-parameters (Biberauer & Roberts 2012, 2015, 2017, Biberauer et al. 2014,

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[7]   A "restrictive focus" (Erteschik-Shir 1997, 2007), just as a contrastive focus, "require[s] a context-specified set" but "differ from contrastive ones in that the context set need not be as clearly defined and therefore the complement of the selected element is not eliminated" (Erteschik-Shir 2007: 49-50).

and Roberts 2014a, 2014b, 2019) operating on the mapping of syntax and IS, i.e. on the discourse value of the fronted constituent X.

2. Syntactic types of X in XVS: parametric variation

2.1. Fronting of direct (NP) and indirect (PP) objects
In contrast with other Romance languages, *fronted NP objects* in XVS, hence OVS, are fully banned in present-day standard French.[8]

(5)   * Le livre   de Proust lisait la comtesse.
            the book   of Proust read   the countess
            'The countess read Proust's book.'

This is the result of the major syntactic evolutions French underwent, including the rigid placement of the nominal object in postverbal position, a process which started around the thirteenth century (Prévost 2002, 2020, Lahousse & Lamiroy 2012, Marchello-Nizia & Prévost 2020, Sleeman 2020). Hence, this is an instance of micro-parametric variation. The unavailability of OVS also explains why standard French seems to disallow quantifier fronting in XVS and fronting of demonstratives (Leonetti 2017: 909, 912). All examples of quantifier fronting (6) and fronting of demonstratives (7) in Romance given in the linguistic literature are instances of object fronting (the examples below are cited in Leonetti 2017: 912, 908–909):

(6)   a.   **Bastante   trabajo**   tengo ya.
               enough   work   have.PRS.1SG already
               'I have enough work already.'
               (Spanish, Leonetti & Escandell-Vidal 2009)
       b.   **Poucos   colegas**   consultei.
               few   colleagues consult.PST.1SG
               'I consulted few colleagues.'
               (Portuguese, Costa & Martins 2011)
       c.   **Algú**   hi   trobaràs,   a la casa.
               someone   CL   find.FUT.2SG   at the house
               '(For sure) you will find someone at the house.'
               (Catalan, Quer 2002)
       d.   **Qualcosa**   farò   (non preoccuparti).
               something   do.FUT.1SG   not worry.IMP
               'Something I will do (don't worry).'
               (Benincà et al. 1988, Cinque 1990)

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[8]   Although quotative inversion (Collins & Branigan 1997), i.e. VS in incised clauses with *verba dicendi* (i) could be considered an instance of OVS, according to Sasse (2006: 273), this is a fossilized case of VS that does not necessarily hinge on the discourse-pragmatic status of the sentence-initial citation (see also Vermandere & Lahousse 2016 for arguments on Italian).
         (i)   Non, dit   Jean/-il.
                no   said John/he
                'No, John/he said.'

(7)   a.   **Isso**   quería   o director.
             that   want.IMP.PST.3SG   the dean
             'That's what the dean wanted.'
             (Portuguese, Costa & Martins 2011)
       b.   **Eso**   creo   yo.
             that   think.PRS.1SG   I
             'That's what I think.'
             (Spanish, Leonetti & Escandell Vidal 2009)
       c.   **Això**   em   van dir.
             that   me   tell.PST.3PL
             'That's what I was told.'
             (Catalan)

With respect to fronted *indirect object PPs* in XVS, I have shown in Lahousse (2011: 65-67) that they have a temporal or a (concrete or abstract) locative interpretation, and, hence, belong to the larger class of locative inversion which I do not consider here because it is not an instance of V2 (see footnote 5).

2.2. Fronting of AdvPs: 2 types of adverbs
With respect to the preposing of AdvPs, i.e. so-called adverbial inversion, Wolfe (2021: 120) mentions, following Guimier (1997: 43-55) and Grevisse & Goosse (2016), a semantically non-homogeneous list of adverbs such as *peut-être* 'perhaps', *sans doute* 'probably, in all likelihood' and *probablement* 'probably', *encore* 'again', *toujours* 'nonetheless, however'. Other adverbs in this class are *à peine* 'barely', *tout au plus* 'at most', *du moins* 'at least', *au moins* 'at least', *en vain* 'in vain', *aussi bien* 'therefore, consequently' (Jonare 1976, Guimier 1996). Since these adverbs do not seem to share a lexico-semantic property, they are individual lexical items, i.e. exceptions, and, hence, display nano-parametric (Ledgeway 2015: 121-122) rather than micro-parametric variation, according to the parametric approaches put forward by Biberauer & Roberts (2012), Biberauer et al. (2014), Biberauer & Roberts (2015, 2017) and Roberts (2014a, 2014b, 2019). The exceptional (idiosyncratic) status of these adverbs is independently confirmed by the fact that they combine with pronominal, but not nominal postverbal subjects, and, hence, are no full-fledged examples of residual V2.[9]

(8)   a.   Peut-être viendra-t-il.
             maybe   come.3SG.FUT-he
             'Maybe he'll come'
             (Modern French, Rowlett 2007: 208)
       b.   * Peut-être   viendra   Jean.
               maybe   come.3SG.FUT   John

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[9]   The different behavior of pronominal and nominal inversion is not an isolated fact in present-day French: in colloquial French, pronominal inversion subsists to some extent in interrogatives, in contrast with nominal inversion, which is fully banned. From a syntactic perspective, the possibility of pronominal (but not nominal) inversion after these adverbs, could be due to the different syntactic position of nominal and pronominal postverbal subjects, and the locus of verb movement, see Wolfe (2021) for an overview and discussion.

There is however also a series of adverbs allowing both nominal (9) and pronominal (10-11) inversion in XVS (see Lahousse 2011: 98-99): *ainsi* 'so, in this way' (2, 11)[10], *aussi* 'therefore, consequently' (Jonare 1976: 168), *pas davantage* 'no more' (9, 10), *moins encore* 'even less', and *plus* 'more' preceding another adverb, such as *plus justement* 'more exactly', *plus volontiers* 'more willingly' or *plus encore* 'even more' (1).[11]

(9)   L'esprit de coterie et de chapelle n'est plus de mise aujourd'hui.
        'The spirit of cliques and chapels is no longer relevant today.'
        Pas davantage ne   le sont les nuances politiques du   passé
        not more   NEG it are   the nuances political   of-the past
        'Neither are the political nuances of the past...'
        (de Lesdain, cited in Le Bidois 1952: 169)

(10)   Monsieur de Coantré ne s'était nullement soucié de se chercher une situation…
        'Monsieur de Coantré had not bothered to look for a position...'
        Pas davantage ne se   soucia-t-il   au lendemain
        not more   NEG REFL   bothered-he at-the day-after
        de ma visite   à son oncle.
        of my visit   to his oncle
        'Nor did he bother the day after my visit to his uncle.'
        (Montherlant, cited in Le Bidois 1952: 169)

(11)   Riche, heureux, adulé à son tour, jouissant de toutes les voluptés, gourmand, débauché,
        'Rich, happy, idolized as well, enjoying all types of voluptuousness, gourmand, licentious'
        ainsi   vivait-il   à Venise (…)
        so   lived-he   in Venice
        'that's the way he lived in Venice (…)'
        (Richepin, cited in Molinier 2013: 123)

This raises the question what distinguishes the AdvPs mentioned above which allow both pronominal and nominal VS, from the adverbs allowing only

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[10]   *Ainsi* 'so' VS is relatively frequent and the word order in clauses introduced by *ainsi* has been extensively studied (see, a. o., Guimier 1997, Molinier 2013, Karssenberg & Lahousse 2018).
[11]   The adverb *tant* 'so much' (i) at first sight seems to belong to this series, but, when it appears in sentence-initial position, it functions as a conjunction introducing a causal (or justificational) subordinate clause:
        (i)   je m'ingéniai à l'éviter,
               'I tried hard to avoid her'
               tant   m'affligeait le déclin de cette femme
               so-much me-afflicted the decline of this   woman
               'since the decline of this woman afflicted me so much'
               (Simon, cited in Jonare 1976: 104)

pronominal VS. The answer is straightforward: in my view, the main property distinguishing both lists of adverbs is the [+anaphoric] nature of the AdvPs allowing both nominal and pronominal VS; they are all anaphorically anchored, to the extent that they refer to the preceding context. Hence, the AdvPs allowing both pronominal and nominal VS in XVS are not exceptions, not specific, individual lexical items, but rather form a lexically definable subclass of AdvPs. With this respect, they constitute an instance of micro-parametric variation.

2.3. Two classes of fronted AdjPs (adjectival attributes)
With respect to the fronting of AdjPs, i.e. adjectival attributes, it has been argued that a restricted class of monosyllabic adjectives including *tel* 'such', *vrai* 'true', *rare* 'rare, few' and *seul* 'only' can undergo focalization in combination with V-movement, resulting in XVS word order (Marchello-Nizia & Prévost 2020: 1167, see also Wolfe 2021: 120):

(12)   Tel   est   mon avis
        such   be.3SG   my view
        'Such is my view'
        (Wagner & Pinchon 1962: 519)

However, as Lauwers & Tobback (2020: 470) notice, *tel* VS is highly lexicalized: in present-day standard French, it cannot be considered a case of V2 with fronting of *tel*, because the counterpart without fronting is ungrammatical (13).

(13)   *Mon avis est   tel.
         my   view be.3SG   such

Moreover, *seul* 'only' VS is not an example of V2: it only alternates with SV word order and not pronominal VS, and nominal VS modified by *seul* 'only' has very specific syntactic and information-structural properties: it is an instance of VOS (i.e. heavy NP shift), i.e. narrow focus V1 with an exhaustive interpretation (see footnote 6).

The statement that only a restricted class of monosyllabic adjectives allow V2 in standard French is further contradicted by classical descriptive work (Blinkenberg 1928, Jonare 1976, Le Bidois 1952) and more recent descriptions on the basis of corpus research (Lahousse 2011, Lauwers & Tobback 2020), which show that a larger set of non-monosyllabic adjectives show up in the XVS configuration. Lauwers & Tobback (2020: 490-491), for instance, on the basis of careful and detailed corpus research, show that the most frequent adjectives in XVS are, besides *rare* 'rare' and *nombreux* 'numerous' (cf. infra) and a large number of hapaxes, *important* 'important', *intéressant* 'interesting', *significatif* 'significant', *grave* 'serious', *caractéristique* 'characteristic', *inquiétant* 'disturbing', *innombrable* 'innumerable', *grand* 'tall', *différent* 'different', *remarquable* 'remarkable', *intéressant* 'interesting' and *délicat* 'delicate', which can themselves be modified by an adverb such as *plus* 'more' or complemented by a prepositional

phrase (e.g. *proche de* 'close to').[12] These adverbs are not individual exceptions: as argued by Lahousse (2011: 102-107) and Lauwers & Tobback (2020), they belong to two lexically defined subclasses of AdjPs.

A first class of AdjPs are anaphorically anchored; they have the feature specification [+anaphoric]: their head adjective is either inherently anaphoric or comparative (such as *supérieur* 'superior' or *pareil* 'similar', Lauwers & Tobback 2020: 472), combines with comparative degree adverbs or focus particles such as *plus* 'more' (14) or *aussi* 'also' (Lauwers & Tobback 2020: 472), or is anaphoric to the extent that it repeats an adjective given in the prior context (15):

(14)   En 1840, l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres accordait une première médaille à Jollois, (…), pour un mémoire sur (…).
'In 1840, the Academia of Inscriptions and Literature awarded a first medal to Jollois, (…), for a thesis on (…).
Plus importante encore a   été   l'oeuvre de Th. Vacquer
more important   even   has been the-work of Th. Vacquer
'**Even more important** has been the work of Th. Vacquer'
(Lavedan, cited in Lauwers & Tobback 2021: 471)

(15)   Il lui tenait (…) des discours aussi sentimentaux
'He would also give her sentimental speeches'
(**sentimentaux** sont aussi ceux que   tant de   jeunes nobles...
sentimental   are also   those which so many young aristocrats
tiennent à quelque ravissante jeune fille...).
give   to some   pretty   young girl…
'(sentimental also, are those which so many young aristocrats deliver to pretty young girls…)'
(Proust, cited in Le Bidois 1952: 181).

In a second class of fronted AdjPs in XVS, the head adjective inherently refers to a scale, i.e. an ordered paradigm of emotions or properties, a quantity or degree of intensity as *vif* 'vivid, furious' in (16) (Lahousse 2011: 102-107), sometimes modified by a degree adverb such as *particulièrement* 'particularly' in (3), or *très* 'very', *singulièrement* 'particularly', *profondément* 'profoundly', *trop* 'too', *bien* 'quite', *assez* 'quite', *plutôt* 'rather', *peu* 'not very', *presque* 'almost' (Lauwers & Tobback 2020).

(16)   Aussi, comme l'autre soir les jeunes époux Michel se trouvaient dans un café du boulevard Gambetta,
'So, like the other evening when the young Michel couple were in a café on Gambetta Boulevard,'

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[12]   Their corpus analysis is based on literary and journalistic French. They analyzed all texts in *Frantext* from 1900-1997, excluding poetry: this subcorpus represents 73.771.502 words and contains 336 instances of AdjVS not including *tel* 'such' VS. Moreover, they extracted 192 instances of AdjPVS, not including *tel* 'such' VS, from the journalistic corpus *Le Monde* (11 months published in 2004, representing a total of 24.379.615 words).

> **vive**   fut la fureur du   chauffeur
> **furious** was the rage   of-the chauffeur
> en voyant Puccini pénétrer dans l'établissement.
> 'the chauffeur was outraged to see Puccini go inside the building.'
> (Pét. Parisien, cited in Blinkenberg 1928: 42)

These fronted AdjPs have the feature [+scalar], and the whole construction points "to a particular (often high) degree on a scale of Adj-ity, without comparing referents" (Lauwers & Tobback 2020: 473).

   Lauwers & Tobback's (2020: 495) productivity measures show that XVS with the [+anaphorical] adjectives, as well as with *rare* 'rare' and *nombreux* 'numerous' is productive, and more frequent in journalistic than in literary prose. In contrast, XVS with high degree scalar adjectives is less productive, which seems to confirm Marchello-Nizia (1996: 98) observation that this type of XVS is marked, archaic and mainly literary or even poetic.

   This difference between productive [+anaphorical] AdjPs and less productive [+scalar] AdjPs in XVS, is also confirmed by the alternation between pronominal and nominal VS: whereas examples of pronominal VS after *nombreux* 'numerous' are easy to find (17), Lauwers & Tobback (2020: 477) only found 5 instances of pronominal inversion with a fronted [+scalar] AdjP in Frantext (18) and add that the status of this construction in standard French is controversial, as already noticed by Le Bidois (1952).

(17)   Car les Nains ne prennent qu'une seule épouse (…) au cours de leur vie, et
       sont fort jaloux pour tout ce qui concerne leurs droits. (…) il y en a qui
       désirent une femme-naine qu'ils ne peuvent obtenir, et n'en veulent point
       prendre une autre.
       'Because the dwarfs only take one spouse during their life, and are very
       jealous for everything concerning their rights. (…) some want a woman-
       dwarf which they cannot have, and do not want to take another one'.
       Et **nombreux sont-ils** à ne pas souhaiter se   marier
       and **numerous** are-they to not NEG want.INF REFL marry
       'And many of them do not want to get married.'
       (*Le Seigneur des Anneaux* 3, https://livre1.com/lis/le-seigneur-des-
       anneaux-3-le-retour-du-roi/chapitre-113/)

(18)   **Faible** es-tu,   de même que lâche,   si tu   cours ainsi...
       weak are-you as well   as   coward, if you walk like-that
       '**Weak** are you, as well as coward, if you run in life like this...'
       (de Saint-Exupéry, cited in Lauwers & Tobback 2020: 477)

2.4. Interim conclusion
The interim conclusion of this section is that the AdvPs and AdjPs occurring in standard French XVS are not exceptions, but the result of micro-parametric variation: the AdjPs and AdvPs which show up in XVS are no individual lexical items but belong to a lexically defined subset of AdvPs and AdjPs, which have the feature specification [+anaphoric] or [+scalar]. Fronted adverbs which do not have

these features, do not allow VS: hence, XVS is not allowed when the sentence-initial element is a sentence adverbial (19a) or a domain adverb (19b):

(19) a.   * ***Cependant** est venue la fille   que tu   n'avais pas invitée.*
            lit. However   has come the girl   that you NEG did not invite.
            'However, the girl that you did not invite came.'
      b.   * ***Légalement** peuvent être organisées des élections.*
            lit. Legally   can   be   organized   elections.
            'Legally, elections can be organized.'
            (Lahousse 2003: 81)

In the next section I will show that, from a discourse-pragmatic (i.e. information-structural) point of view the instances of French XVS described above are subcases of Romance resumptive preposing (section 3) and focus preposing (section 4), which adds to their analysis in terms of a micro-parametric variation.

3. Anaphoric preposing

Many authors have highlighted the existence in Romance of an XVS configuration in which the fronted X anaphorically refers to the previous context; this type has been called *deictic, anaphoric* or *resumptive preposing* (Benincà et al. 1988, Cardinaletti 2009, Cinque 1990, Costa & Martins 2011, Leonetti & Escandell Vidal 2009). Fronted anaphoric constituents can be demonstratives, as in (7) above and (20), or constituents containing a comparative element such as *allo stesso modo* 'in the same way' in Italian (21) and *mejor* 'better' in Spanish (22).

(20)   A carta   já   vai   longa de.mais,   e   **disso**   me
        the letter already goes long too.much   and   **of-this**   me
        penitencio.
        impose-penance
        'This letter is getting too long, and that is what I apologize for.'
        (Portuguese, João Lobo Antunes, cited in Costa & Martins 2011: 240)[13]

(21)   **Allo   stesso modo** si   comportò   suo figlio.
        at-the same way   CL   behave.PST.3SG   his son
        'His son behaved in the same way.'
        (Italian, Cinque 1990, cited in Leonetti 2017: 908)

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[13]   Costa & Martins (2011) consider this example an instance of "contrastive focus fronting" (CFF), following Zimmermann's (2007) definition of contrastive focus on the basis of a contrast with the speaker's beliefs (cf. section 4.2. below). However, this contradiction of speaker's beliefs is not that clear in example (20) above. Hence, part of the constructions considered by Costa & Martin as CFF seem to be instances of resumptive preposing in Leonetti's (2017) sense. Note also that the fronted constituents in the clearest instances of CFF in Costa & Martins (2011), which clearly contradict speaker's beliefs (such as example (30) in section 4.2. below), are *not* anaphoric in the sense intended by Leonetti (2017).

(22)   A: – ¡Qué   bien   huele!
              how   well   smell.PRS.3SG
        'How good it smells!'
        B: – Y   **mejor**   sabrá.
              and   **better**   taste.FUT.3SG
        'And it will taste better.'
        (Spanish, Leonetti 2017: 910)

According to Leonetti (2017: 907), these fronted constituents are not focal, because they do not have a contrastive interpretation and are pronounced without emphatic stress. Neither are they aboutness-topics, because in this case, a resumptive clitic would appear. The author argues that these cases of XVS are "related to the absence of a topic-comment partition and gives rise to a presentational reading", they correspond to "a single informational chunk" and do not have "any overt informational partition" (Leonetti 2017: 911). Similarly, Costa & Martins (2011: 240) argue about such cases in European Portuguese that "the fronted constituent establishes a connection with the discourse background, but the sentence as a whole conveys new information" and patterns "in this respect like presentational sentences". It is indeed clear that in the examples above, the part of the sentence introduced by the fronted constituent provides new information with respect to the discourse context, i.e. introduces a new state of affairs or a new discourse participant.

        Similar examples of fronted anaphoric constituents with a presentational meaning also appear in French, with a fronted anaphoric adverb or AdvP, such as *ainsi* 'so' (23)[14] and *plus encore* 'even more' (1) or *pas davantage* 'not more' (9), or a [+anaphoric] AdjP (14-15).

(23)   Il   resta   un   moment   sans   bouger,   espérant   que   la   nuit   durerait
        toujours.
        'He stayed without moving for a while, hoping the night would never end.'
        Ainsi doivent espérer les condamnés à mort.
        so   must   hope   the condemned to death
        'In this way must also hope men condemned to death.'
        (Carrère, Frantext, cited in Lahousse 2011: 94)[15]

In these cases, the whole construction is used to introduce a new discourse referent (the referent of the postverbal subject) on the basis of a property which it shares with a previously given referent: the newly presented men condemned to death hope in the same way as the referent indicated by *il* 'he' in (23). In (1), too, the sentence is presentational, to the extent that it introduces a new discourse referent *mes*

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[14]   This is an instance similar to *so*-inversion in English (Haegeman 2000, Wood 2008), which has been claimed to have an additive meaning and is an instance of polarity focus.
[15]   The corresponding example with *ainsi* SV word order is not ungrammatical, but *ainsi* functions as a discourse marker, and has the interpretation 'hence', rather than as an anaphoric manner adverb with the interpretation 'so, in this way'.

pensées 'my thoughts' by comparing it to the walls in the previous context; in (14) the work of Vacquer is introduced in the context by means of a comparison with the work of somebody else, and in (15) the speeches of young aristocrats are added to the speeches of the referent of *il* 'he' in the previous context.

Hence, standard French has instances of resumptive preposing just as other Romance languages, with fronting. The set of fronted constituents in French anaphoric preposing, which is limited to [+anaphoric] AdjPs and AdvPs, is a subset of the constituents in Romance, because of micro-parametric changes leading to the unavailability of OVS, which disallows fronted object quantifiers and demonstratives (see section 2.1.).

4. Focus fronting

4.1. Background

There is an extensive literature on focus fronting in Romance (24), and quite some debate as how to classify and characterize these structures (see references in Jiménez-Fernández & Camacho Taboada 2014, Jiménez-Fernández 2015, Bianchi et al. 2015, 2016, Cruschina & Remberger 2017, Cruschina 2021).

(24)   Manzanas compró   Pedro (y   no   peras)
        apples   bought.3SG Pedro (and not pears)
        'Pedro bought apples, and not pears.'
        (Spanish, Zubizarreta 1999: 4239)

Cruschina (2021) offers a detailed cross-linguistic overview of focus fronting, arguing that variation is an effect of the existence of different types of focus, depending on the nature of the set of alternatives typically involved in focus (Krifka 2007, Cruschina 2021): it can be a "contextually open set (*information focus*), unexpectedness with respect to more likely alternatives (*mirative focus*) or a correction of given alternatives (*corrective focus*). A special subtype of information focus, namely, *exhaustive focus*, additionally implies the exhaustive identification or the exclusion by identification with respect to the relevant set of alternatives" (Cruschina 2021: 2). Cruschina (2021) proposes a scale of contrastivity (25) and argues that focus fronting is selective across languages, and sensitive to the specific type of contrast: the more a constituent is contrastive (and, hence, occurs to the right of the scale), the more it is likely to trigger fronting across languages. Hence, fronting of different types of focus are different grammatical operations.

(25)   information focus > exhaustive focus > mirative focus > corrective focus
        (Cruschina 2021: 2)

It is well-known that the focus field is only rarely activated in standard French (see Wolfe 2021: 119), but Cruschina & Remberger (2017: 509) point out that colloquial French has limited instances of focus fronting. The next table (from Cruschina 2021) shows which languages instantiate which type of focus in focus fronting.

Table 1. Different types of focus in focus fronting across languages (Cruschina 2021: 10)

	information focus	*exhaustive focus*	*mirative focus*	*corrective focus*
French			✓	
Italian/Spanish			✓	✓
Hungarian		✓	✓	✓
Sicilian/Sardinian	✓		✓	✓

Crucially, "French" in this table refers to colloquial French, and instances as (26-27), with a fronted NP object with mirative interpretation (Sabio 2006, Abeillé et al. 2008, 2009, Kerleroux & Marandin 2001, Delais-Roussarie et al. 2004, Authier & Haegeman 2019, see Larrivée 2022 for an overview). Since constituent fronting is not combined with VS word order, it is not an instance of V2.

(26) a. **Des   sauterelles   grillées** ils   mangent dans ce   pays.
         ART.INDEF. grasshoppers grilled they eat   in   this country
         'Grilled grasshoppers they eat in this country.'
     b. **Même   ses   caleçons**   on   lui   a   volé.
         even   his   underwear they from-him have stolen
         'Even his underwear they stole from him.'
         (Authier & Haegeman 2019: 7)

(27)   - Tu as   beaucoup   fumé?
          you have.2SG   a-lot   smoked
        'Did you smoke a lot?'
        - **Deux cigarettes**   j'ai   fumé.
          two   cigarettes I have.1SG smoked
        'Two cigarettes, I smoked.'
        (Sabio 2006: 175)

In the next sections, I will show that standard French too has cases of mirative focus fronting, which, unlike the colloquial French examples, can be considered cases of V2, because they combine with VS word order.

4.2. Mirative focus fronting with [+scalar] adjectives in French[16]
In section 2.3. above, I argued that fronted adjectives can occur with VS word order in standard French if they are [+scalar]. Examples of this configuration are (28) and (29), as well as (16). According to Lauwers & Tobback (2020: 495-497), the adjectives in this type of XVS "emphatically express[es] a salient property of something or someone", and XVS is an emphatic and intensifying construction.

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[16]   Contra Lauwers & Tobback (2020), these XVS cases are not instances of Verum focus (Leonetti & Escandell Vidal 2009), because the focus is not on the polarity of the sentence.

(28)   a.   Ah! **douce** est l'herbe   du   Sahel! ...
                ah   soft   is the-grass of-the Sub-Sahara
                suaves sont les odeurs de tes   jasmins!
                heady are   the scents of your jasmines!
                'Ah! How soft the grass in the Sub-Sahara! …How heady the scent of your jasmines!'
                (Gide 1896, cited in Le Bidois 1952: 179)
        b.   Ah! L'herbe du Sahel est douce! Les odeurs de tes jasmins sont suaves!
                'Ah! The grass in the Sub-Sahara is soft! The scent of your jasmines is heady!'

(29)   a.   Je supplie le lecteur, ..., de ne pas s'imaginer,
                'I beg the reader, …, not to suppose'
                car **grande** serait   sa déconvenue,
                for **huge**   would-be his disappointment
                'for he'd be in for a huge disappointment'
                se   trouver avec 'Candy', en face de quelque spectacle pornographique ou d'inspiration érotique.
                'that he'll find in 'Candy' a show that is pornographic or erotic in any way.'
                (*Paris-Match*, cited in Jonare 1976: 94)
        b.   … car sa déconvenue serait grande, …
                'for his disappointment would be huge'

Both orders AdjVS (28a, 29a), with fronting of the AdjP, and SVAdj (28b, 29b), without fronting of the AdjP, are possible, and both assert that the grass in the Sub-Sahara is soft and the scent of your jasmines is heady (28) and that the disappointment will be high (29). However, fronting of the adjective in AdvVS (28a, 29a) in addition forces a quasi-extreme scalar interpretation, reinforcing the high or low degree (Sleeman 2020), and "point[s] to a particular (often high) degree on a scale of Adj-ity" (Lauwers & Tobback 2020: 473). The examples (28a-29a) additionally convey that the degree of softness and headiness (28) and the degree of the disappointment (29) are higher than expected (see also Rett 2011 on similar cases of inversion exclamatives in English). It is this additional interpretation which Blinkenberg (1928: 42) considers "emotional" and Le Bidois (1952: 179) "affective".

      These instances of fronting in standard French share a series of properties with other instances of fronting in Romance which have been assimilated to mirative focus fronting. First of all, AdjVS in standard French crucially involves the speaker's evaluation of the unexpectedness with respect to the degree of Adj-ity, i.e. they refer to the comparative likelihood of the proposition with respect to alternative propositions with another degree on the scale. This is central in the account of mirative focus proposed by Bianchi et al. (2015, 2016), and is also reminiscent of Zimmermann's (2007) and Costa & Martin's (2011: 238) definition of contrastive focus:

the core property of a contrastive focus is the addition of the speakers' disagreeing attitude regarding what he knows or supposes to be the expectations/convictions of the hearer. This attitude is added to the basic denotation of the sentence. As such, this type of focus signals the contrast between the information given by the speaker and the information that, according to the speaker's beliefs, is previously assumed by the hearer.[17]

For instance, in example (30) from European Portuguese, fronting indicates the existence of a contrast between what the speaker states and what he believes is assumed by the interlocutor, i.e. between the asserted content and what the speaker beliefs (or knows) is the knowledge state of the interlocutor.

(30)   - O   João ontem   não   bebeu.
            The João yesterday not   drank
         'John didn't drink yesterday.'
         - **Toneladas de cerveja** bebeu o   João!
            tons   of beer   drank the João
         (Não me digas que não viste?!)
         (not   me tell   that not saw-2SG)
         'John drank TONS OF BEER. How could you possibly not see?'
         (Costa & Martins 2011: 229-230)

Note that, as is typical for mirative focus (but not for corrective, information and exhaustive focus, Cruschina 2021: 6), the alternatives induced by AdjPVS may but do not have to be present in the context: in the second instance of AdjVS in (28), *suave* 'heady' could be considered an alternative to *douce* 'soft', but in (29), no other degree than *grande* 'tall' is present in or inferable from the context.
        The second property AdjVS in standard French shares with other instances of mirative focus in Romance is its evaluative or "affective" flavour: the speaker evaluates the degree as particularly high. This of course is very similar to well-known cases of fronted constituents in European Portuguese (36), which also occur with scalar and gradable lexical items and have an evaluative or affective interpretation, see overview in Cruschina & Remberger 2017: 520-521).

(31)   a.   **Muitos livros** lhe   ofereceu   o Pedro!
             many books   DAT.CL   offer.PST.3SG   the Pedro
             'Pedro gave him many books!'
       b.   **Linda casa**   lhe   comprou   o pai!
             beautiful house DAT.CL   buy.PST.3SG   the father
             'His father bought him a beautiful house!'
             (European Portuguese, Ambar 1999: 42)

Thirdly, the fact that these [+scalar] AdjVS constructions in standard French appear as quite abrupt in the textual flow, have an "out of the blue effect" (Lauwers & Tobback 2020 : 473), and can be realized with an exclamation mark (28) or as a side thought disconnected from the main proposition (29), is reminiscent of the

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[17]   This is reminiscent of Reich's (2018) account of presupposed modality, which the author argues should be integrated in information structure.

observation that instances of mirative focus preposing can occur out of the blue in an appropriate discourse context (Cruschina & Remberger 2017: 520).

4.3. Mirative focus fronting with [+anaphoric] adjectives in French
Consider now instances of fronting such as (32), which are special in that the whole sentence is a repetition of material from the preceding context:

(32)   Dije   que   terminaría   el libro,
         say.PST.1SG   that   finish.COND.1SG   the book
         y   **el libro**   he terminado.
         and   **the book**   have.1SG finished
         'I said that I would finish the book, and finish the book I did.'
         (Spanish, Leonetti & Escandell Vidal 2009: 172)

(33)   Tu l'as   pas vu   une seule fois   aux   informations,
         you CL-have.2SG   not seen one single time to-the informations
         pas une fois   tu   l'as vu.
         not one time you   CL-have.2SG seen
         'You didn't see it once in the news, not once did you see it.'
         (French, Abeillé et al. 2009: 138)

To the extent that the fronted constituent is anaphorically linked to the previous context, Leonetti (2017) considers such cases as instances of resumptive preposing. However, these examples do not have the presentational meaning typical of resumptive preposing, in the sense defined by Leonetti (2017) (see section 3 above): they do not provide new information with respect to the discourse context, i.e. do not introduce a new state of a affairs or a new discourse participant. All they do is re-affirming what has been previously said, as if the speaker considered that the previous context was not convincing enough. These examples indicate that the speaker is not sure that the interlocutor is certain about the state of affairs and reasserts the whole sentence to convince him. Hence, again, these cases instantiate a contrast with presupposed (epistemic) modality: the speaker reacts against the supposed uncertainty of the interlocutor. Cruschina & Remberger (2017: 523) too argue that such examples might be considered as cases of mirative focus preposing: although the information is given, which would lead to considering them as resumptive preposing, they could be considered a "confirmation or a reassertion against negative expectations, which, as in the mirative case, exploits the set of focal alternative propositions generated by" focus fronting.
        Exactly the same holds for instances of *ainsi* VS in French such as (2) and (34), in which the whole propositional content is given: their function is to re-assert the propositional content to a supposedly not-yet convinced interlocutor (see also Karssenberg & Lahousse 2018).

(34)   Sentant venir sa mort prochaine, le mage Tambour Billette organise le legs de ses pouvoirs, de son bourdon, de son fonds de commerce. Nous sommes sur le Disque-monde. La succession s'y opère de huitième fils en huitième fils. Logique.

'Feeling his death is imminent, the wizard Tambour Billette organizes the legacy of his powers, of his pilgrim's staff, of his commercial resources. We are in Diskworld. Here, the eighth son succeeds the eighth son. Logical.'

… **ainsi**   procède   le mage
… **in that way**   proceeds   the wizard

'It is in this way that the wizard proceeds'
(https://itunes.apple.com/be/book/la-huitieme-fille/id576357050?l=nl&mt=11 [last accessed 6 January 2022], cited in Lahousse 2015: 212)

The fact that the function of such examples is "to confirm or to re-assert that the event took place in the specific way specified in the discourse context" (Lahousse 2015) is illustrated by the fact that they answer questions like (35) rather than (36):

(35) a.   C'est comme ça qu'il écrivait, Alexandre?
            'Is it in that way that he wrote, Alexandre?'
      b.   Ah oui, c'est comme ça qu'il procède, le mage?
            'Oh yes, is it in that way that he proceeds, the wizard?'
            (Lahousse 2015: 215)

(36) a.   Comment écrivait Alexandre?
            'How did Alexander write?'
      b.   Comment procède le mage?
            'How does the wizard proceed?'
            (Lahousse 2015: 214)

Hence, reaffirmation in order to convince is part of a larger set of conversational moves mentioned in Reich (2018) "that exploit the possibilities of presupposed modality for communicative purposes". I argue that these are special instances of mirative focus.

5. Innovative V2 in standard French

In the preceding sections I have shown that standard French instances of XVS with fronted [+scalar] AdjPs and [+anaphoric] AdvPs and AdjPs can be seen as subsets of resumptive preposing and mirative focus fronting in Romance, and that the variation results from different parameters:

(i)   nano-parameters: the list of adverbs only allowing pronominal VS (section 2.2.).
(ii)   micro-parameters:
              a. the fact that only [+anaphoric] and [+scalar] AdjPs and AdvPs can be fronted (section 2.2. and 2.3.).

b. the fact that no objects can be fronted in standard French, which entails the unavailability of prototypical instances of fronted quantifiers and demonstratives (section 2.1.).[18]

Hence, the distribution of XVS in French is non-accidental and systematic. In what follows, I moreover show that V2 in standard French can be productive in some restricted contexts and is thus not purely vestigial.

On the basis of carefully designed productivity measures, Lauwers & Tobback (2020) show that XVS with fronted *rare* 'rare' (37) and *nombreux* 'numerous' (38) is productive, to the extent that it is significantly more frequent in journalistic than in literary prose. This has also been highlighted by Sleeman (2020): on the basis of an (unbalanced) corpus study on literary texts in Frantext she suggests that *rare* VS and *nombreux* VS are a 'recent' invention.

(37)   Les antinazis allemands ont le casque de fer de la Wehrmacht et les ouvriers français et belges le casque rond de l'armée française. (…).
'The German anti-Nazis wear the iron helmet of the Wehrmacht and the French and Belgian workers the round helmet of the French army. (…)'.
Rares sont ceux qui   sourient,
rare are   those who smile
'Few people smile'
(*Le Monde*, cited in Lauwers & Tobback 2020: 473)

(38)   (…) le démon de la pureté sème la ruine et la mort autour de lui. Purification religieuse, épuration politique, sauvegarde de la pureté de la race,
'(…) the demon of purity sows ruin and death around him. Religious purification, political purification, safeguarding the purity of the race,'
nombreuses sont les variations sur ce   thème atroce,
numerous   are   the variations on this theme atrocious
'the variations on this atrocious theme are numerous'
(Tournier, Frantext)

Hence, V2 in standard French has never been completely lost, but is now becoming more frequent in some specific contexts. The question then raises why it is with fronted *rare* 'rare' and *nombreux* 'numerous' that V2 is productive in French. Contra Lauwers & Tobback (2020: 496), who state that these instances are "highly lexicalized", I argue instead that this is because these adjectives are both [+scalar] and [+anaphoric], and hence, combine the features which have been shown to individually favour XVS in standard French. It goes beyond doubt that *rare* and *nombreux* are scalar (gradable) adjectives, and that their fronting can give them a mirative interpretation, i.e. 'more rare, more numerous than expected'. Lauwers & Tobback (2020: 495) also observe that they can "exhibit a slight shift towards a stage-topical status", "appear to be less emphatic and (…) are also harder to stress",

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[18]   Thanks to an anonymous reviewer for pointing out that this is not a macroparameter "in the Biberauer & Roberts sense, according to whom macroparametric effects arise whenever all individual functional heads behave in concert, namely are set identically for the same feature value."

especially when they are "surrounded by anaphoric material", as *dans ce domaine* 'in this domain' in (38):

(38)   **Rares** sont dans ce   domaine
        rare   are   in   this domain
        les états dont l'économie industrielle prospère permet par le jeu du
        commerce l'achat de produits alimentaires.
        'Few states in this field have a prosperous industrial economy that allows
        the purchase of food products through trade'.
        (Wolkowitsch, cited in Lauwers & Tobback 2020: 495)

I would go further and propose that *rare* and *nombreux* have, besides their inherent [+scalar] feature (which results in a mirative interpretation when they are fronted), also an inherent [+anaphoric] feature. The contrast in (39) shows that *nombreux* inherently refers to a discourse antecedent: when an antecedent is only indirectly present, as in (39a) (where giraffes are not mentioned explicitly, but could be argued to be typically present in a zoo), the sentence with fronted *nombreux* turns out to be less acceptable than when the previous context establishes a discourse referent (*des girafes* 'giraffes') out of which *nombreux* singles out a subtype (those who looked sad) by the relative clause in the postverbal subject. Unsurprisingly, Lauwers & Tobback (2020) also mention that *rare* and *nombreux* are especially frequent with subjects containing relative clauses.

(39)   a.   Ils allèrent   au zoo. ?? **Nombreuses** étaient les girafes.
              they went   to-the zoo **numerous**   were   the giraffes.
              'They went to the zoo. There were many giraffes.'
        b.   Au zoo, ils avaient vu des girafes.
              'At the zoo, they saw giraffes.'
              Nombreuses étaient celles qui avaient l'air   triste.
              numerous   were   those   who had   the sight sad
              'Many of them looked sad.'

In some authentic examples, the discourse antecedent of *nombreux* is even spelt out, as in (40):

(40)   Parmi les présents,
        'Between those who were present'
        très peu nombreux étaient sans doute   ceux   qui
        very few numerous were   without doubt   those who
        pouvaient   suivre le texte
        could   follow the text
        'there were undoubtedly only a few who could follow the text'
        (*Sans la miséricorde du Christ*, Frantext)

Hence, in my view, *rare* and *nombreux* are frequent and productive in XVS because they have both the features [+anaphoric] and [+scalar]: they have both an anaphoric-like and a scalar flavour. [19]

In addition, the frequency of *rare*VS and *nombreux*VS could be explained by the fact that they are not competed by clefts in standard French, because adjectival predicates can only marginally occupy the focus of a cleft:

(41)   a.   ??? C'est rare que sont ceux qui…
                     it-is   rare that are   those who…
         b.   ??? C'est nombreux que sont ceux qui …
                     it-is   numerous that are those who…

An anonymous reviewer points out that, as quantifier preposing is banned in modern French, this inverse correlation between focus fronting and clefting mentioned above incorrectly predicts clefts to be available with quantifiers. At first sight, both quantified clefted elements and quantifier preposing indeed seem to be ruled out:

(42)   a.   * Quelque chose, elle aura   fait.
                     something   she will-have done
         b.   * C'est quelque chose qu'elle   aura   fait.
                     it-is something   that-she will-have done

The situation is however more complex: as I show in Lahousse et al. (2014: 71-73), clefted elements in French *c'est* 'it is' clefts can be quantificational if the cleft is *not* narrowly contrastive (defined as contrastive with respect to a restricted set of discourse-given entities) but conveys new information focus, as in the authentic example (42) (for more details, authentic examples, and an account on the basis of feature intervention, see Lahousse et al. 2014: 71-73).

(43)   *… un seul être qui vous manque et **c'est <u>tout</u> qui va mal**...*
             'one being you are missing and it's everything that goes wrong'
             (http://gaganneforever.skyrock.com/)

With respect to the contrast between quantifiers such as *tout* 'everything', which can be clefted, and *quelque chose* 'something', which can apparently not (although more empirical research is needed), I argue that it stems from the specificational nature of *c'est* 'it is' clefts (Akmajian 1979, Lambrecht 2001). In contrast with universal quantifiers such as *tout* 'everything', indefinite quantifiers such as *quelque chose* 'something', are not informative enough to perform the basic semantic function of *c'est* 'it is' clefts, which is to identify the value for a variable in an open proposition.

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[19]   See also Costa & Martins (2011: 242), who argue that contrastive focus fronting in European Portuguese involves the feature set [D-linked, evaluative] or [deictic, evaluative].

6. Conclusion

In this article, I have shown that the grammar of standard French displays instances of V2 word order (XVS) which belong to two types:

(i)   XVS with fronted [+scalar] adjectives, which are subsets of Romance mirative focus fronting, and
(ii)   XVS with fronted [+anaphoric] adverbs and adjectives, which are subsets of Romance resumptive preposing.

Hence, with respect to V2 word order, French does not have a special status in Romance, and is not an 'outlier' (cf. Wolfe 2021). Moreover, the instances of XVS in present-day standard French are not vestigial, but rather display systematic variation: the contexts allowing XVS are subsets of the contexts of Romance XVS, and the result of the interaction between micro- and nano-parameters. Besides being systematic, I have also argued that XVS in standard French is productive with fronted *rare* 'rare' and *nombreux* 'numerous', because these adjectives are both [+anaphoric] and [+scalar]. This shows that V2 is still active in standard French.

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