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Double focus in general American English

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This study investigates the acoustic realization of double focus in statements and declarative questions in English. Five speakers produced eight sets of utterances with alternating focus (medial, final, or double) and sentence type (statement or declarative question) conditions. F0 analyses indicate that the effect of double focus on the global pitch range and the local pitch target is somewhat moderate when compared to that of single focus: 1) Post-focus pitch range suppression shows a smaller magnitude in double- than in medial-focused statements, 2) Post-focus pitch range raising is less dramatic in double- than in medial-focused questions, and it ends before the stressed syllable of the second focus in double-focused questions, in order to realize a rising pitch target for the on-focus stressed syllable, and 3) pitch targets of on-focus stressed syllables are more fully realized (i.e., showing steeper slopes or higher registers) in single- than in double-focused sentences. Duration analyses indicate that the length of the double-focused item is in between those of the corresponding single- and non-focused item, with the single-focused stressed syllable having the longest duration. These findings demonstrate a delicate balance among the realization of lexical stress, focus, and sentence type in English.