

# Hot and heavy: The phonetic performance of fatness and *fujoshi* in 'Kiss Him, Not Me'

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## Background

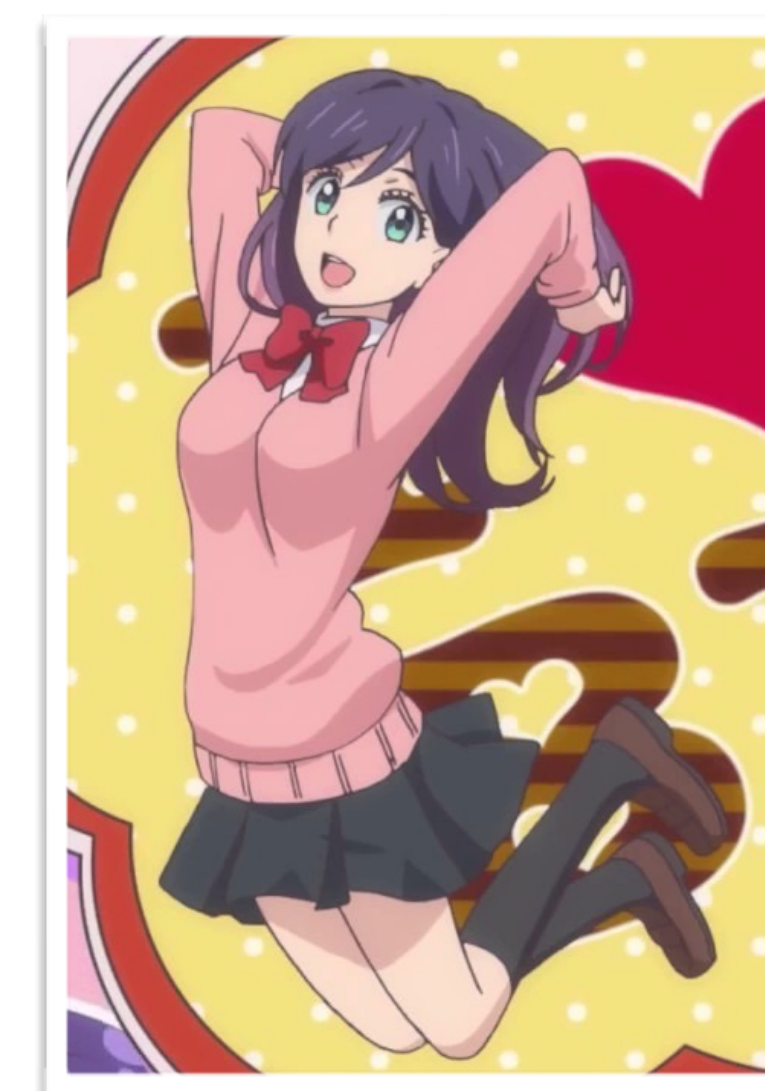
- Japanese anime is a rich source of mediatized data for sociophonetics [4]
  - Particularly in gender performance & Japanese femininities [6],[7],[8]



- 私がモテてどうすんだ (2013/2016)
- Heroine: Serinuma Kae, high-school *fujoshi* 腐女子 (“rotten girl”)
  - A female fan of Boys’ Love (BL):
    - Media depicting romantic/sexual relationships between males
    - Fantasizes about pairing up her attractive male classmates
    - Depicted as fat
    - Has friends, but no romance
- Rapid weight-loss from traumatic death of favourite anime character
  - Now seen as sexually desirable by her classmates
  - Her mission: “Kiss Him, Not Me!”



## Where does phonetics fit in?



• Serinuma’s transformation is linguistic as well!

• Pre-transformation/post-transformation voices differ

- Perceptually:

	Pre-transformation	Post-transformation
average pitch	lower	higher
pitch range	wider	narrower
phonation	lowered larynx	breathier
vowel space	centralized	wider

- Post-transformation voice typical of *shōjo* heroines

- But what happens when Kae talks about her *fujoshi* desires?

- Her voice reverts back to characteristics of her previous, pre-transformation phonetic bundle

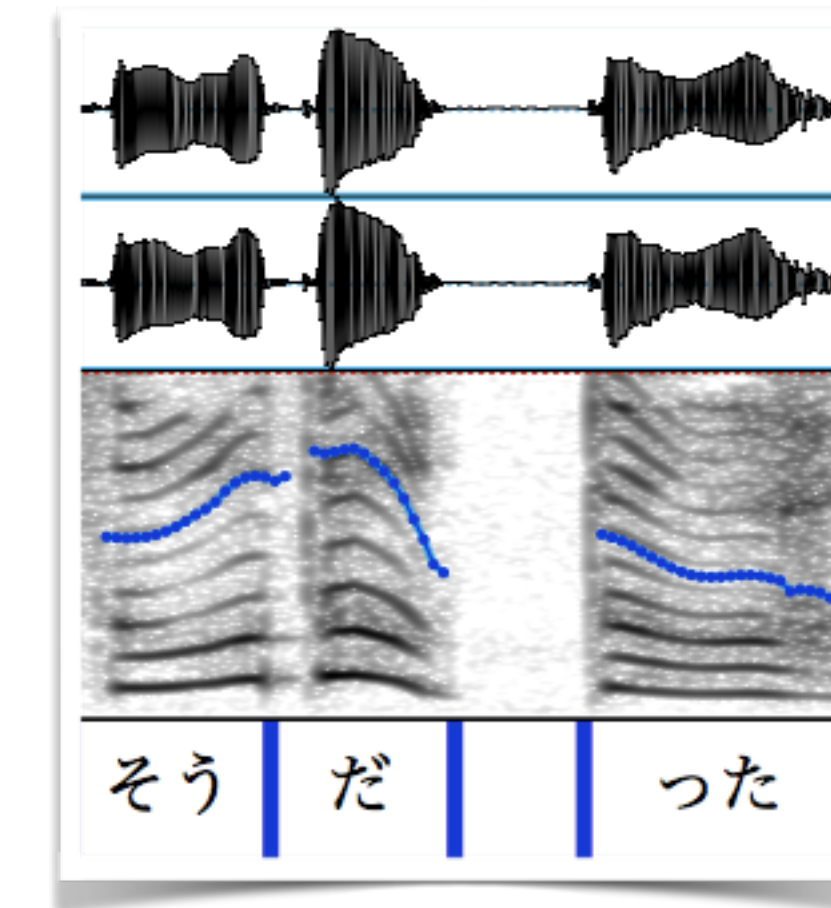


- This study:** acoustic analysis of one part of this bundle, F0

## Data/Methods

- All of Serinuma’s speech from Ep. 1 (additional from Eps. 5, 6, & 9)
- Data tokenized by Intonation Units (IUs) [3], extracted in Elan [2], analyzed in Praat [1]
  - Excluded overlap, background noise/music

- 373 tokens in total:
  - Pre-transformation non-*fujoshi* (95)
  - Pre-transformation *fujoshi* (66)
  - Post-transformation non-*fujoshi* (142)
  - Post-transformation *fujoshi* (70)
- Measurements: mean F0, F0 range (max-min)

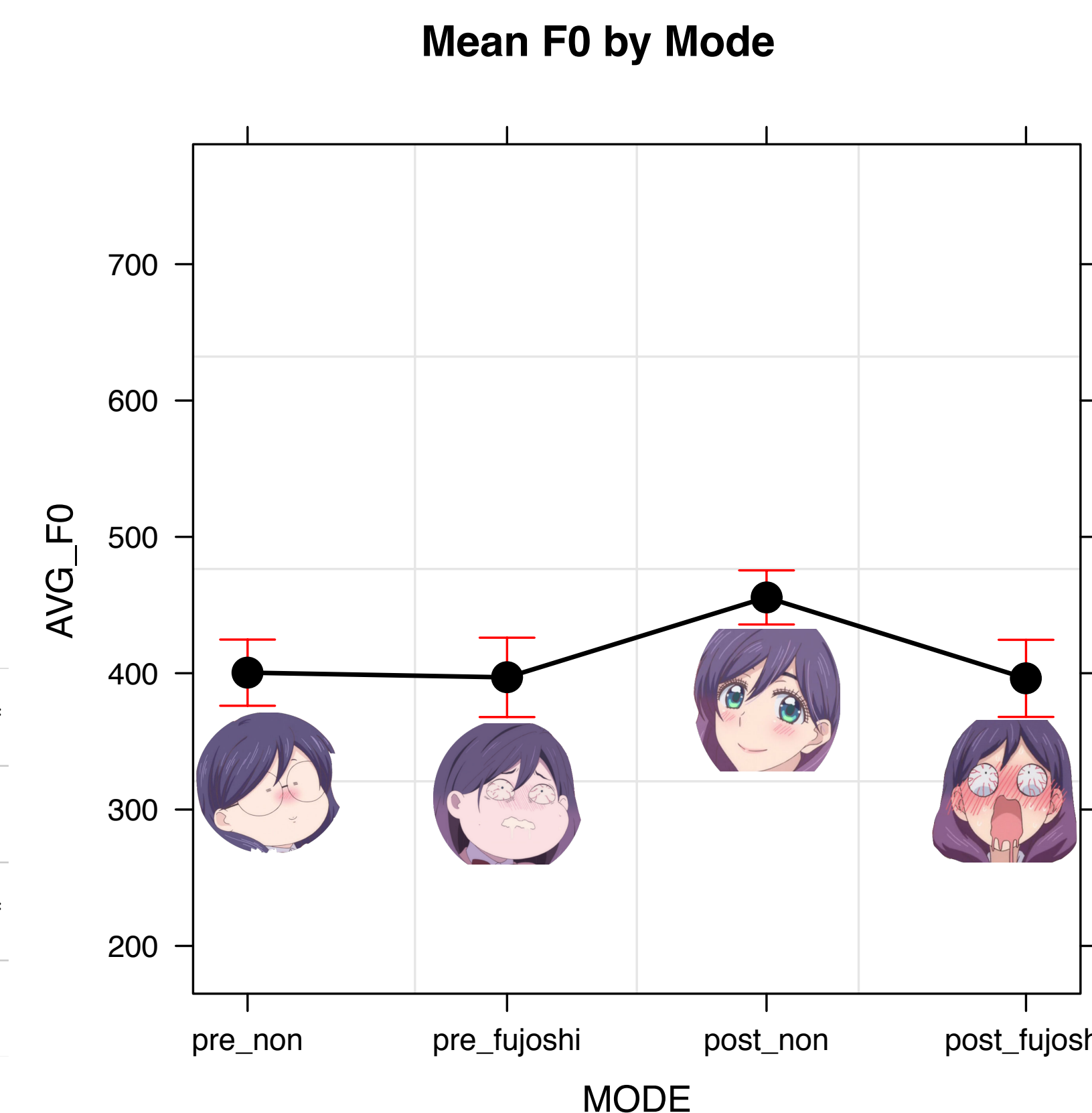


- Statistical methods:
  - Analyzed in R [5]
  - linear models for each variable (AVG\_F0, F0\_RANGE), with MODE as fixed effect

## Results

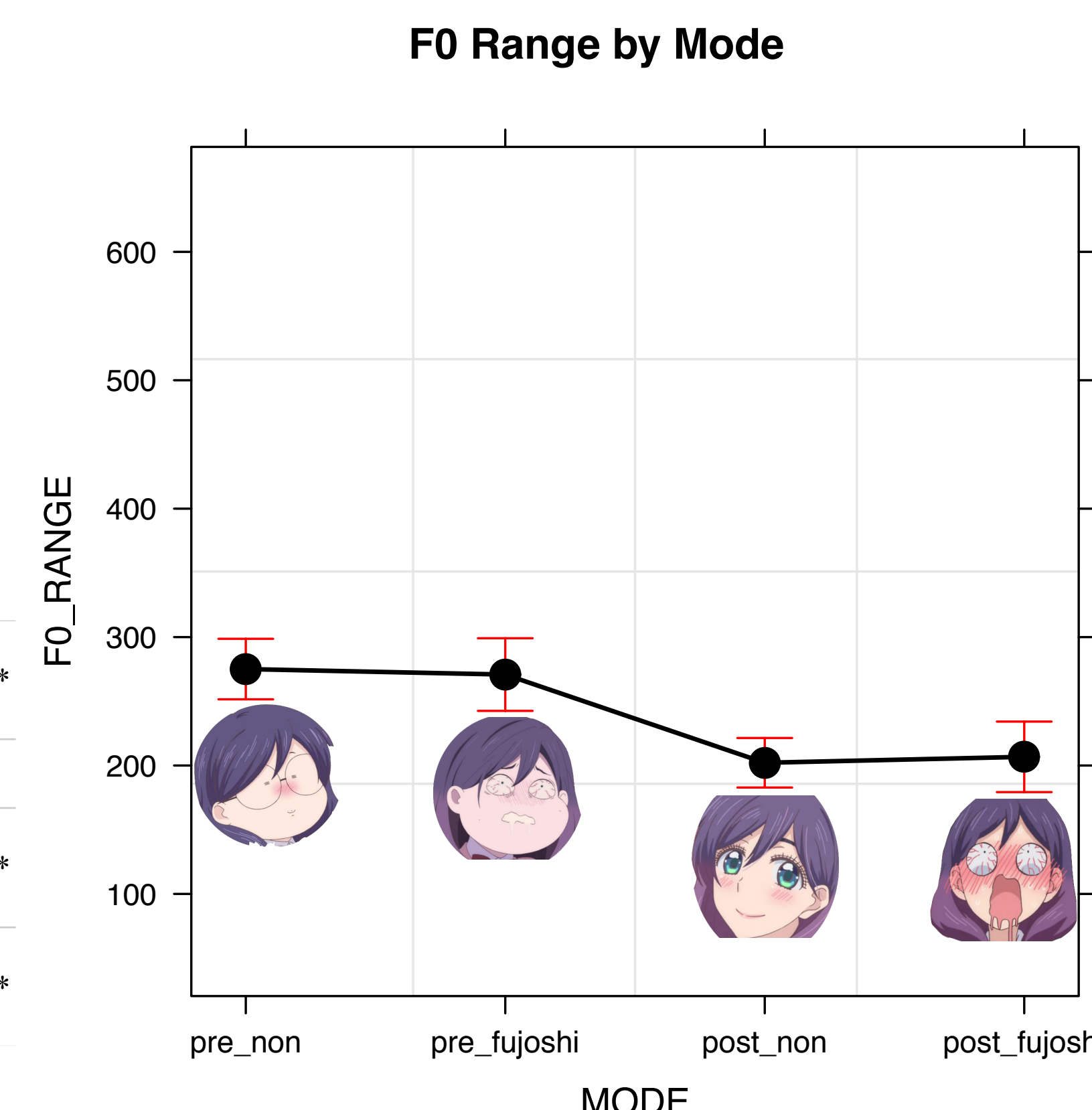
- Mean F0**
  - $R^2=.051$ ;  $R^2_{adj}=.044$
  - Predictor: **Mode** ( $p=.000187$ )
  - Fixed effects:

	Coefficient estimate	Standard error	t-value	Pr(> t )
Intercept	400.41	12.34	32.45	< 2e-16 ***
MODEpre_fujoshi	-3.46	19.27	-0.18	0.858
MODEpost_non	55.18	15.94	3.46	0.0006 ***
MODEpost_fujoshi	-4.19	18.95	-0.22	0.825



- F0 Range**
  - $R^2=.081$ ;  $R^2_{adj}=.074$
  - Predictor: **Mode** ( $p=6.15e-07$ )
  - Fixed effects:

	Coefficient estimate	Standard error	t-value	Pr(> t )
Intercept	275.11	11.98	22.95	< 2e-16 ***
MODEpre_fujoshi	-4.27	18.72	-0.23	0.819
MODEpost_non	-72.97	15.48	-4.71	3.47e-06 ***
MODEpost_fujoshi	-68.351	18.40	-3.71	0.0002 ***



## Discussion

- F0 range differs pre-transformation from post-transformation
- Mean F0 groups modes into two categories:**
  - pre-transformation non-*fujoshi*, pre-transformation *fujoshi*, and post-transformation *fujoshi*
  - post-transformation non-*fujoshi*

- Mean F0 part of a **phonetic bundle** that creates:
  - Equivalence** between:
    - original fatness
    - continued *fujoshi* desires
  - Dichotomy** between:
    - skinniness, 'attractive' femininity
    - fatness and *fujoshi* desires



- Physical feature of fatness is mapped onto phonetic feature(s)**

- In new contexts, this phonetic performance draws indexical associations between the sociocultural category of being a *fujoshi* and the original physical trait

- Wider context of **fatphobia in anime**

- Femininity, desirability, correctness all opposed to fatness
- Reproduces this view of fatness, while adding *fujoshi*-ness

- Kiss Him, Not Me* ostensibly subversive (author, in-jokes for *fujoshi*, female gaze), but:



- Phonetic performance reinforces gendered norms
- Contrasts *fujoshi* desires and fatness against performances of traditional femininity

## Conclusions

- In *Kiss Him, Not Me*, phonetic performance (incl. mean F0 but not F0 range) equates fatness and *fujoshi* desires, juxtaposing both against traditionally desirable femininity
- Future: HQ audio, formant analysis for phonation/vowel spaces; English version

## References

[1] Boersma, Paul & David Weenink. 2015. Praat: doing phonetics by computer. Computer Program, Version 5.4.17, retrieved 25 August 2015 from <http://www.praat.org/>. [2] Brugman, H. & A. Russel. 2004. Annotating Multimedia/Multimodal resources with ELAN. Proceedings of LREC 2004, Fourth International Conference on Language Resources and Evaluation. [3] Chafe, Wallace. 1994. *Discourse, consciousness, and time: The flow and displacement of conscious experience in speaking and writing*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. [4] Podseva, Robert & P. Callier. 2015. Voice Quality and Identity. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics* 35. 173-194. [5] R Core Team. 2015. R: A Language and Environment for Statistical Computing. R Foundation for Statistical Computing, Vienna, Austria. [6] Redmond, Ryan. 2016. Constructing boyishness: A sociophonetic analysis of Japanese anime voice actresses performing male roles. *The Journal of the Acoustical Society of America* 140.3. 3402. [7] Starr, Rebecca. 2015. Sweet voices: The role of voice quality in a Japanese feminine style. *Language in Society* 44. 1-34. [8] Starr, Rebecca, & R. Greene. 2006. *Beyond queerness: The role of voice quality in performing stylized femininities in Japanese*. Presented at New Ways of Analyzing Variation 36, Columbus, OH.