

LANGUAGE

JOURNAL OF THE LINGUISTIC
SOCIETY OF AMERICA

VOLUME 86, NUMBER 1

MARCH 2010

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PUBLISHED BY THE LINGUISTIC SOCIETY OF AMERICA

Abstracts:

THE CENTRALITY OF METRICAL STRUCTURE IN SIGNALING INFORMATION STRUCTURE: A PROBABILISTIC PERSPECTIVE

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This article introduces a new way to explain how information structure is signaled prosodically in English. I claim that METRICAL STRUCTURE plays a central role (Ladd 2008, Truckenbrodt 1995). Information structure (defined as in Steedman 1991 and Vallduví & Vilkuna 1998) places strong constraints on the PROBABILISTIC mapping of words onto metrical prosodic structure—that is, foci usually align with nuclear accents and theme/rheme units with prosodic phrases, and themes are less metrically prominent than rhemes. It is shown that focus position, scope, and pragmatic interpretation are then derived by manipulating EXPECTED PROMINENCE within metrical structure. Broadly, the more prominent a word than expected, the more likely a contrastive reading; the less prominent, the more likely a givenness reading. Both constructed and naturally occurring examples from the Switchboard corpus are used.

Keywords: prosody, information structure, probabilistic linguistics, metrical structure, focus, corpus analysis

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LANGUAGE-PARTICULAR SYNTACTIC RULES AND CONSTRAINTS: ENGLISH LOCATIVE INVERSION AND *DO*-SUPPORT

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Locative inversion in English (*under the bridge lived a troll*) is ungrammatical in all of the contexts where *do*-support applies: subject-auxiliary inversion, sentential negation, emphasis or verum focus, VP ellipsis, and VP displacement. Importantly, it is ungrammatical in these contexts whether *do*-support applies or not: it is ungrammatical with other auxiliaries, and it is also ungrammatical in nonfinite clauses of these types, where *do*-support never actually applies. This indicates that all of these contexts have something in common, and that cannot be disruption of adjacency between tense/agreement and the verb because there is no such disruption with other auxiliaries or in nonfinite contexts. These facts therefore argue against the standard last-resort theory of *do*-support, which holds that it is inserted to save a stranded tense/agreement affix, and for a theory like that of Baker 1991. In this theory, VPs have corresponding SPECIAL PURPOSE ([SP]) VPs, and *do* heads a [SP] VP. All of the contexts for *do*-support have in common the featural specification [SP]. Locative inversion involves a null expletive subject, the licensing of which is blocked by a non-[SP] context. All of this argues for a view of syntax with language-particular licensing constraints, features, and rules, within a range of variation proscribed by universal grammar.

Keywords: locative inversion, *do*-support, last resort, language-particular rules, English

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CONVERGENT EVIDENCE FOR CATEGORIAL CHANGE IN FRENCH: FROM SUBJECT CLITIC TO AGREEMENT MARKER

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The status of subject clitics in French has been heavily debated (Kayne 1975, Rizzi 1986, Roberge 1990, Auger 1994b, Miller & Sag 1997, De Cat 2007b, and many others). Distributional properties of French subject clitics have led Kayne (1975), Rizzi (1986), and others to analyze them as argument-bearing elements occupying canonical subject position, cliticizing to the verb only at the level of the phonology. While this hypothesis enjoys a wide following, a growing body of evidence suggests that it fails to capture patterns of subject-clitic use in colloquial French dialects/registers (Roberge 1990, Auger 1994b, Zribi-Hertz 1994, Miller & Sag 1997). Using new evidence from prosodic and corpus analyses, speaker judgments, and crosslinguistic typology, this article argues that (i) European Colloquial French exhibits differences from Standard French that impact how subject clitics are best analyzed, and more specifically (ii) subject clitics in European Colloquial French are affixal agreement markers, not phonological clitic arguments.

Keywords: clitics, agreement, subject doubling, French, language change, language acquisition, prosody

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PHONOLOGICAL MOVEMENT IN CLASSICAL GREEK

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We show that Classical Greek HYPERBATON involves pervasive phonological movement. Hyperbaton moves prosodic constituents to prosodic positions, subject to prosodic boundaries and to prosodic conditions on well-formedness. Syntactic analyses of hyperbaton fail insofar as they require the movement of heads, phrases, and nonconstituents to positions that are difficult to define syntactically. Furthermore, hyperbaton disobeys anti-locality constraints and a host of well-studied syntactic island conditions. We propose that phonological movement arises as the result of constraint interaction in the phonological component, subsequent to the interface between syntax and phonology.

Keywords: Classical Greek, discontinuous constituents, hyperbaton, PF movement, prosodic constituents, syntax-phonology interface

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PREDICTING SYNTAX: PROCESSING DATIVE CONSTRUCTIONS IN AMERICAN AND AUSTRALIAN VARIETIES OF ENGLISH

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The present study uses probabilistic models of corpus data in a novel way, to measure and compare the syntactic predictive capacities of speakers of different varieties of the same language. The study finds that speakers' knowledge of probabilistic grammatical choices can vary across different varieties of the same language and can be detected psycholinguistically in the individual. In three pairs of experiments, Australians and Americans responded reliably to corpus model probabilities in rating the naturalness of alternative dative constructions, their lexical-decision latencies during reading varied inversely with the syntactic probabilities of the construction, and they showed subtle covariation in these tasks, which is in line with quantitative differences in the choices of datives produced in the same contexts.

Keywords: variation, corpus, syntax, psycholinguistics, probability, mixed-effect model, dative alternation

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