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Abstracts:

THE SYNTACTIC STRUCTURE OF FRENCH AUXILIARIES

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While a consensus has been reached about the monoclausality of the Romance construction with an auxiliary verb and its verbal complement, questions remain about its syntactic structure. We focus here on French auxiliaries—the past tense auxiliaries (*avoir* and *être*), and the passive auxiliary (*être*)—which are unique in French in contributing only tense and aspect and triggering obligatory clitic climbing. Three syntactic structures have been proposed for such auxiliaries: a VP complement analysis, a verbal complex analysis, and a ‘flat’ VP analysis. We show here, working within a HEAD-DRIVEN PHRASE STRUCTURE GRAMMAR framework and basing our arguments on classical constituency tests, bounded dependencies, and lesser-known properties of a subset of manner adverbs, that the flat-structure analysis is to be preferred for tense auxiliaries, which take as their complements the bare participle as well as the complements subcategorized by this participle and ‘inherited’ from it. In contrast, the passive auxiliary, which we identify with the copula, has a predicative complement with different realizations: either an ordinary phrase, ‘saturated’ for its complements, or a ‘partial’ complement, where the predicative head lets some or all of its complements be inherited by the auxiliary. Our analysis allows for a solution to the well-known problem of auxiliary selection, which, we argue, should not be taken as an indicator of syntactic structure but is best handled via lexical constraints.

ENGLISH SUBJECTLESS TAGGED SENTENCES

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A colloquial English sentence like *Fooled us, didn't they?* contains a finite main verb but no expressed subject. The identity of the missing subject of *fooled* is recovered from the tag subject *they*: compare *Fooled us, didn't she?*, *Fooled us, didn't you?* This article argues (1) that such subjectless tagged sentences (STSs) pose a problem for grammatical approaches based on movement and empty categories and (2) that STSs receive a revealing analysis as part of a finely articulated family of tagged sentence constructions when viewed within a nonderivational, constructional, multiple-inheritance-based approach.

PERSON AND NUMBER IN PRONOUNS: A FEATURE-GEOMETRIC ANALYSIS

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The set of person and number features necessary to characterize the pronominal paradigms of the world's languages is highly constrained, and their interaction is demonstrably systematic. We develop a geometric representation of morphosyntactic features which provides a principled explanation for the observed restrictions on these paradigms. The organization of this geometry represents the grammaticalization of fundamental cognitive categories, such as reference, plurality, and taxonomy. We motivate the geometry through the analysis of pronoun paradigms in a broad range of genetically distinct languages.

FROM SPEECH PERCEPTION TO MORPHOLOGY: AFFIX ORDERING REVISITED

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This article presents corpus and experimental evidence in support of a parsability-based account of affix ordering in English: an affix that tends to be easily parsed out during speech perception should not occur inside an affix that does not. This generalization holds both at the affix level and the word level. At the affix level, this maxim, when combined with an understanding of the role of frequency and phonotactics in morphological processing, can account for the patterns generally attributed to level ordering. At the word level, it can explain the so-called dual-level behavior of some affixes—an affix may resist attaching to a complex word that is highly decomposable but be acceptable when it attaches to a comparable complex word that favors the direct access route in speech perception. Only a parsing account can afford this set of phenomena a unified explanation.

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