

How much information structure is there in syntax? Evidence from SCCs and agreement

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The interaction of information structure (IS) and syntax is a widely discussed topic. Different types of approaches can be roughly divided by whether or not information structural notions are represented in syntax. On one end of the spectrum we find cartographic approaches (Rizzi 1997) which include syntactic features and projections that express information structural concepts. On the other end, approaches such as Reinhart's (1995) contend that IS is not part of syntax at all but a post-syntactic interface. Syntax generates structures which are filtered out by interface constraints if they do not match a particular IS.

Both views have been extensively discussed both on a theoretical and empirical level. We add to this discussion by providing challenging data involving specificational copular clauses (SCCs, including clefts, for example 'My best friend is Samira') and non-local agreement configurations. We propose that IS can feed back into syntax such that IS properties are paired with syntactic features. This way, rather than filtering out certain structures, only those structures are generated which satisfy information-structural requirements in the first place.

References:

- Reinhart, Tanya. 1995. Interface strategies. Utrecht: OTS Working papers.
Rizzi, Luigi. 1997. The fine structure of the left periphery. In Liliane Haegeman (ed.), *Elements of grammar*, Dordrecht: Springer.