

On The Role of Argument Structure in Focus Projection

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(Luiz Amaral)

ARG-ST list, and the Argument Realization Principle (ARP)

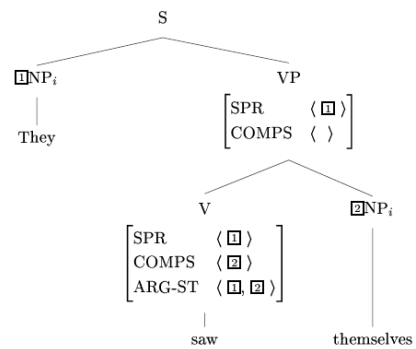
ARP: A word's value for ARG-ST is $\boxed{A} \oplus \boxed{B}$, where \boxed{A} is its value for SPR and \boxed{B} is its value for COMPS.

- a.
$$\left[\begin{array}{l} \text{SYN} \quad \left[\text{VAL} \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{SPR} \quad \langle \boxed{1} \rangle \\ \text{COMPS} \langle \boxed{2} \rangle \end{array} \right] \right] \\ \text{ARG-ST} \langle \boxed{1}\text{NP}, \boxed{2}\text{NP} \rangle \end{array} \right]$$
- b.
$$\left[\begin{array}{l} \text{SYN} \quad \left[\text{VAL} \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{SPR} \quad \langle \boxed{1} \rangle \\ \text{COMPS} \langle \boxed{2}, \boxed{3} \rangle \end{array} \right] \right] \\ \text{ARG-ST} \langle \boxed{1}\text{NP}, \boxed{2}\text{PP}, \boxed{3}\text{VP} \rangle \end{array} \right]$$

(Sag & Wasow 1999, p. 210)

"The elements in ARG-ST list are ordered and they correspond to phrases in the phrase structure tree. We can then see the order of ARG-ST list to impose a ranking of the phrases in the tree."

If A precedes B in an ARG-ST list, we say that A OUTRANKS B.



(Sag & Wasow 1999, p.211)

ARG-STR Hierarchy

The elements in the ARG-ST follow the ordering of the following grammatical functions:

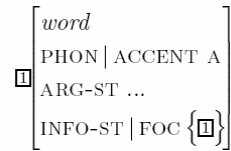
SUBJ < OBJ < OBJ2 < OBL

Chung et al propose that what is relevant for determining the possibility of focus projection hinges upon the argument ranking.

Focus realization

Following Selkirk (1995), they assume that a word accented with the A-accent is FOC-marked.

FOC(US) Realization:



Instantiation Principle and Focus projection

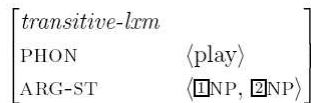
INFO-ST Instantiation Principle (IIP):

- (i) If a DAUGHTER's INFO-ST is instantiated, then the mother inherits this instantiation (for narrow foci and topics), OR
- (ii) The non-agentive lowest ranking argument's FOC is instantiated, then the FOC of the mother is the sign itself (wide focus).

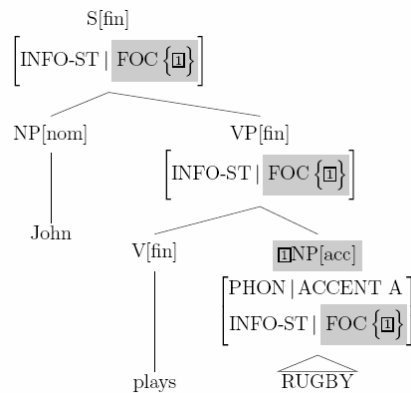
Example: John plays RUGBY.

- a) John [plays [RUGBY]_F]_{FOC}
- b) John plays [[RUGBY]_F]_{FOC}
- c) [John plays [RUGBY]_F]_{FOC}

The ARG-ST of the verb 'play' is:

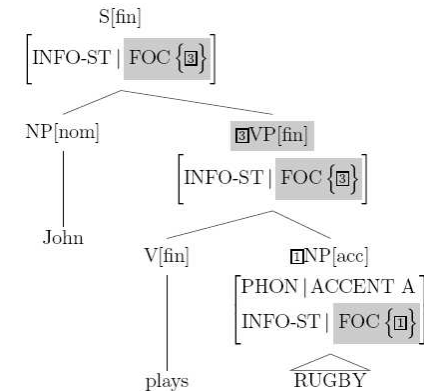


The narrow focus reading is:



Since the object NP is the lowest ranking argument, the focus value on this NP allows its mother to be focused too.

The wide focus reading is:



Advantages of this analysis.

- 1) It explains why there is no focus projection from elements that are not the lowest ranking one in the ARG-ST list.

Example: The butler [offered the president [some COFFEE]_F]_{FOC}.
 *The butler [offered the PRESIDENT]_F some coffee]_{FOC}.

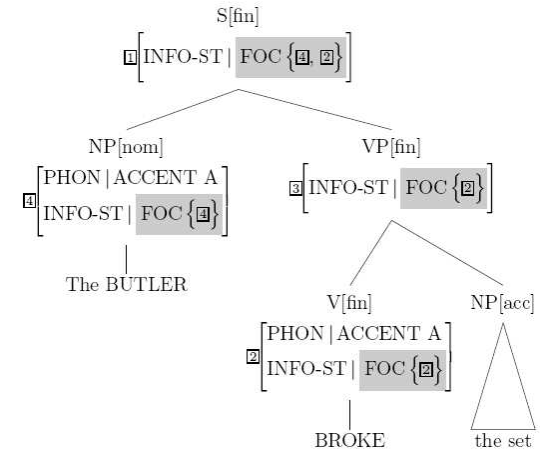
[PHON <offered>
 ARG-ST <NP, NP, NP>]

- 2) It can handle cases where there is a mismatch between informational partitioning and syntactic constituent.

Example from Vallduví and Engdahl (1996):

- What happened to the China set?
- [The BUTLER BROKE] the set.

[The BUTLER BROKE] the set.



Possible Problems

Projection from Adjuncts

- A: What did John cook for Tom?
 A': What did John do?
 B: He [cooked [LASAGNA]_F for Tom]_F.
 B': *He [cooked lasagna [for TOM]_F]_F.

[PHON <cooked>
 ARG-ST <NP, NP>
 ADJUNCT <PP[for]>]

The Nature of the ARG-ST list

In Korean the element in the ARG-ST list that allows for wide focus projection is the **highest** non-agentive ranking argument.

Example: [Mary-eykey [SENMWUL-UL]_F ewuesse]_{FOC}.
 Mary-DAT present-ACC gave.
 'I gave a PRESENT to Mary.'

*[[MARY-EYKEY]_F senmwul-ul ewuesse]_{FOC}.
 Mary-DAT present-ACC gave.
 'I gave a present to MARY.'

The ARG-ST list for the verb 'give' in Korean is:
 ARG-ST <NP[agent], NP[theme], PP[goal]>

Which means that only the NP[theme] allows for wide focus projection.

Since Korean is a free word order language, their treatment can also account for sentences such as:

Example: [[SENMWUL-UL]_F Mary-eykey ewuesse]_{FOC}.
present-ACC Mary-DAT gave.
'I gave a PRESENT to Mary.'

*[senmwul-ul [MARY-EYKEY]_Fewuesse]_{FOC}.
present-ACC Mary-DAT gave.
'I gave a present to MARY.'

OBS: The ARG-ST list for the verb 'give' does not change:
ARG-ST <NP[agent], NP[theme], PP[goal]>

Free word order languages and
the function of the final position for focus projection

Portuguese: Eu contei o segredo ao Paulo.
I told the secret to(the) Paulo.

A: O que você fez? (What did you do?)
Eu [contei o segredo [ao PAULO]_F]_{FOC}.
*Eu [contei [o SEGREDO]_F ao Paulo]_{FOC}.
Eu [contei ao Paulo [o SEGREDO]_F]_{FOC}.
*Eu [contei [ao PAULO]_F o segredo]_{FOC}.

{ PHON <contei>
ARG-ST <NP, NP, PP> }

Notice that the intuition presented for Portuguese also works for English in cases such as:

A: What did you do?

I [gave the present [to MARY]_F]_{FOC}.

*I [gave [the PRESENT]_F to Mary]_{FOC}.

I [gave Mary [The PRESENT]_F]_{FOC}.

*I [gave [MARY]_F the present]_{FOC}.

Though, one could argue that in English there are two ARG-ST lists for the verb 'give':

ARG-ST <NP, NP, **NP**>

or

ARG-ST <NP, NP, **PP**>