

Subpart of Focus Fronting Is Discourse Subordination

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1. Introduction

In this paper, we make three specific claims about German information structure and the interface between information structure and syntax. (1) First, the phenomenon known as ‘Subpart of Focus Fronting’ in German is in fact constrained by discourse context, contra the current literature (Fanselow & Lenertová 2011 on German and Czech). (2) Second, information structure should be present in the syntax, minimally via a discourse subordination feature on C (cf. Asher & Lascarides 2003). (3) Third, methodologically, the Question-Answer paradigm alone is not sufficient to diagnose the complete information structure of the answer; topicalization may occur out of a putative focussed phrase.

These claims speak to the ongoing debate about the place of information structure in the syntactic derivation. A growing body of literature asserts that no discourse contextual features at all should be present in the derivation. This literature has roots in Chomsky (1995)’s Inclusiveness Condition, which argues against sentence or discourse-level features being present in the numeration. Since then, the strongest formulation is Horváth (2010)’s ‘Strong Modularity Hypothesis’, which hypothesizes a complete disconnect between information structure and syntax. For this hypothesis, all apparent syntactic effects of information structure (such as topicalization, focus fronting, etc.) are in fact due to prosodic constraints, optional prosodic movement (cf. Zubizarreta 1998’s *p*-movement), or null information structural operators.

A crucial datum for the Strong Modularity Hypothesis is ‘Subpart of Focus Fronting’ (henceforth, ‘SFF’), a phenomenon reported in German and Czech. Fanselow & Lenertová (2011) present data such as (1a–b). They assert that the two utterances (b) and (b’) are completely optional in context, because both are felicitous responses to the question *What happened?* This assumes that a question completely controls for the information structure of the answer. The movement in (1b’) is both syntactic \bar{A} -movement but also constrained by prosody: only the linearly leftmost stressed phrase may undergo movement. Taking all this into consideration, Fanselow & Lenertová argue that prosodic operations may apply in the syntactic derivation. Furthermore, they suggest that all apparent information structural effects in the syntax are in fact due to this optional prosody-driven movement.

- (1) a. Q: What happened?
b. [*Er hat die FLINTE ins KORN geworfen*]_{FOC}. GERMAN
he has the gun into-the grain thrown
A: ‘He has given up.’ [Lit.: ‘He has thrown the gun into the grain.’]
b'. [*Die FLINTE hat er ins KORN geworfen*]_{FOC}.
the gun has he into-the grain thrown
A: He has given up.’ [Lit.: ‘He has thrown the gun into the grain.’]

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This paper will argue for the opposite conclusion based on a reappraisal of the same data. Specifically, we argue that the question *What happened?* is ambiguous between two readings: one that can be paraphrased as *Then what happened?* and one that can be paraphrased as *Why?* These readings are demonstrated by the English discourses in (2–3).

- (2) a. First, I went to the store. Then I went to the bank. Then...
 b. Q: What happened? / Then, what happened? / #Why?
 c. A: I came home.
- (3) a. John hasn't come in to work the past few days.
 b. Q: What happened? / #Then what happened? / Why?
 c. A: He got the flu.

This difference is significant, because it is precisely the discourse context reported to license topicalization. Based on work by López (2009), we demonstrate that topicalization is possible in exactly a context like (3), but infelicitous in a context like (2). Using concepts from Segmented Discourse Representation Theory (Asher & Lascarides 2003), we describe the former context as ‘discourse subordination’, and the latter as ‘discourse coordination’.

Looking back at the German data in (1), we show that SFF is possible in discourse subordination contexts like (3), but infelicitous in discourse coordination contexts like (2), just like Catalán topicalization. We support Fanselow & Lenertová (2011)’s analysis of SFF as prosodically constrained \bar{A} -movement, but assert that there must be a discourse subordination feature that triggers the prosodic constraint in the first place, using Cophonology theory (e.g. Inkelas & Zoll 2007). In the end, we urge information structure studies to look beyond the Question-Answer paradigm for discourse effects that involve more than two utterances.

2. Discourse subordination in Catalán

In this section, we demonstrate that topicalization may occur in the answer to *What happened?* in Catalán, provided the utterance is in a discourse subordination relation. This runs counter to many linguists’ conception of the Question-Answer paradigm. To account for this, we present a new caveat to the paradigm.

The Question-Answer paradigm is an old and highly robust result. In short, the form of the question controls for the information focus of the answer. For instance, a *wh*-question targeting the object will control for object focus in the answer. This pattern has been noticed at least since Paul (1880[1891]), and certainly since Halliday (1967). The pattern is so robust that it underlies many, if not all theories that pertain to information structure (Lambrecht 1994; Rooth 1992’s Alternative Semantics; Roberts 1998’s Question Under Discussion; many others). Furthermore, the Question-Answer paradigm remains a fieldwork diagnostic *par excellence* for information focus (e.g. Aissen 2015). A basic representation of the Question-Answer paradigm is given in (4).

- (4) a. Q: What happened? A: [My brother cooked rice]_{FOC}.
 b. Q: What did your brother do? A: He [cooked rice]_{FOC}.
 c. Q: What did your brother cook? A: He cooked [rice]_{FOC}.
 d. Q: Who cooked the rice? A: [My brother]_{FOC} cooked rice.
 e. Q: What did your brother do to the rice? A: He [cooked]_{FOC} it.

A number of scholars additionally contend that the Question-Answer paradigm controls for the complete information structure of the answer. Two underlying assumptions here are that information structure is composed of two concepts: ‘topic’ and ‘focus’, and that topic and focus are in a complementary relationship: everything that isn’t a focus is a topic, and vice versa. For Erteschik-Shir (1997, 2007), for example, the topic in the answer to (4b) must be *he*, and the only topic in the answer to (4a) is a silent ‘stage-topic’, because the entire sentence is focussed. Fanselow & Lenertová (2011) also use this logic: if a phrase is focussed according to the Question-Answer paradigm, it can have no other information structural qualities.

The contention that the Question-Answer paradigm says anything about topic, however, does not hold up in Catalán. To demonstrate this, we must first explore topicalization in the language. Topicalization in Catalán involves syntactic right-dislocation ('clitic right-dislocation', CLRD) or left-dislocation ('clitic left-dislocation', CLLD). López (2009) goes through great lengths to show that this topicalization has nothing to do with the traditional notions of topic, like aboutness and old information; instead, topicalization is a reflection of discourse relations.

As for discourse relations, one of the major results of Segmented Discourse Representation Theory (Asher & Lascarides 2003) is a bifurcation in the kinds of relations two utterances can have in a discourse. 'Discourse coordination' involves two utterances that describe separate events. This relation can have temporal sequencing (X. *Then*, Y) or other semantics like 'result' (X. *As a result*, Y; X. *Also*, Y.). 'Discourse subordination' involves two utterances, such that one utterance expands or elaborates on the other (X. *Because* Y; X. *More about* X). An individual utterance can have multiple relations, and these relations can hold between non-local utterances. Consider the discourse in (5). Both (b) and (d) are subordinate to (a), because they elaborate on John's nice dinner. Utterance (c) is subordinate to (b), as it elaborates on John's cooking of the tofu. Finally, (b) and (d) are in a coordinating relation, as they describe separate events in narrative sequence. Note that utterance (d) has both a coordinating and subordinating relation, and both of these relations are with non-local utterances (a and b, respectively).

- (5) a. John had a nice dinner
 b. First, he cooked some tofu.
 c. He likes tofu very much.
 d. Then, he ate the tofu.

In Catalán, topicalization is only felicitous in discourse subordination contexts, as shown in (6). (6b) is clearly in a discourse coordination relation, as it describes a separate event from cooking meat. Accordingly, topicalization (here, CLRD) is infelicitous; the object must be in-situ. By contrast, (6b') is a discourse subordination of (6a), as it expands upon the event of cooking meat. In this case, topicalization is felicitous, perhaps even preferred.

- (6) a. *El Joan va cuinar la carn.* CATALÁN
 the John PAST cook.INF the meat
 'John cooked the meat.'
- b. *#Després se la va menjar, la carn.*
 afterwards CL CL.ACC PAST eat.INF the meat
 INTENDED: 'Afterwards, he ate the meat.' [Coordination with (a)]
- b'. *Li agrada molt, la carn.*
 CL.DAT like.3SG much the meat
 'He likes the meat very much.' (López 2009: (2.56)) [Subordination of (a)]

With this in mind, consider the novel data in (7–8). Topicalization in (7c) is infelicitous, as expected, because the entire sentence is focussed. However, topicalization in (8c) is felicitous; in fact, *not* topicalizing is degraded (8c'). We propose that discourse relations are also relevant here. (7c) is in a discourse coordination relation, while (8c) is in a discourse subordination relation. The difference here is that a question intervenes between (a) and (c) utterances. It should be noted that Asher & Lascarides (2003) explicitly allow such relations: in their theory, questions have the same discourse relations as their corresponding answers (i.e. 'coordination_q' in 7b; 'subordination_q' in 8b).

- (7) a. First, the café was renamed. Then it was moved. Then...
 b. *¿Què va passar?* Q: 'What happened?' (cf. 'Then what happened?')
 c. *#[Es va tancar, el cafè]_{FOC}.*
 CL PAST.3SG close.PART the café
 INTENDED: 'The café closed.' [Coordination with (a)]
 c'. *El cafè va tancar.* 'The café closed.'
- (8) a. Paolo stopped working at the café.
 b. *¿Què va passar?* Q: 'What happened?' (cf. 'Why?')

- c. [Es va tancar, el cafè]_{FOC}.
 CL PAST.3SG close.PART the café
 ‘The café closed.’ [Subordination of (a)]
- c'. ^{??}*El cafè va tancar.* INTENDED: ‘The café closed.’

Topicalization in Catalán, thus, is constrained by discourse relations, not by the Question-Answer paradigm. It cannot be held that the Question-Answer paradigm controls for the complete information structure of the answer; the topic relation could covertly hold with a prior utterance. To obviate this, a caveat must be added to the Question-Answer paradigm, outlined in (9) below. Caution should be taken to embed the Question-Answer pair in a discourse coordination relation to avoid the effects shown above.

- (9) CONTEXT: Start of the conversation
- a. First, my brother cut the vegetables.
- b. Q: Then what happened? A: [My brother cooked rice]_{FOC}.
- c. Q: Then what did your brother do? A: He [cooked rice]_{FOC}.
- d. Q: Then what did your brother cook? A: He cooked [rice]_{FOC}.
- e. Q: Then who cooked the rice? A: [My brother]_{FOC} cooked rice.

3. German Subpart of Focus Fronting

With our revised Question-Answer paradigm, we will reappraise SFF in German. To elaborate further, Subpart of Focus Fronting is the term used to refer to the fronting of stressed phrases to the initial, preverbal position (‘prefield’, ‘Vorfeld’). The stressed phrase generally must be the focus or a part of the focussed phrase. Various analyses of SFF exist (e.g. Fanselow 2002; Frey 2006), but there is significant data in favor of Fanselow & Lenertová (2011)’s approach.

Fanselow & Lenertová demonstrate convincingly that SFF is prosodically constrained. If there are two stressed phrases, as in (10), only the linearly leftmost stressed phrase may undergo SFF. In (10b’), the stressed phrase *die Flinte* ‘the gun’ blocks SFF of *ins Korn* ‘into the grain’.

- (10) a. Q: What happened?
- b. [*Er hat die FLINTE ins KORN geworfen*]_{FOC}. GERMAN
 he has the gun into-the grain thrown
 A: ‘He has given up.’ [Lit.: ‘He has thrown the gun into the grain.’]
- b'. [*Die FLINTE hat er ins KORN geworfen*]_{FOC}.
 the gun has he into-the grain thrown
 A: He has given up.’ [Lit.: ‘He has thrown the gun into the grain.’]
- b". *[*Ins KORN hat er Die FLINTE geworfen*]_{FOC}.
 into-the grain has he the gun thrown
 INTENDED: A: He has given up.’

A battery of tests is presented, which establish that SFF must also be \bar{A} -movement. SFF can license long-distance dependencies, it is sensitive to islands, it licenses parasitic gaps, and idiomatic meaning is reconstructible. The latter of these tests is evident in the examples throughout this paper (e.g. 1,10).

SFF is thus syntactic movement that is also constrained by prosody. To account for this, Fanselow & Lenertová propose an ‘Early Accentuation’ operation: the linearization of structural accents is determined when phrases are merged. In other words, when Merge results in the presence of two stressed phrases in the derivation, the phrases are linearized before the next instance of Merge. The Early Accentuation nicely accounts for the data in (10) and is in line with recent literature supporting the application of prosodic constraints in the syntactic derivation (Richards 2016).

Finally, Fanselow & Lenertová attribute the movement itself to an EPP feature on C, which either attracts an unstressed phrase in the TP domain, like *er* ‘he’ in (10b) or the first stressed phrase, like *die Flinte* ‘the gun’ in (10b’). The EPP feature is unspecific (and not taken to be subject to Locality), so the utterances (10b) and (10b’) are purely in free variation. A crucial prediction of this account is that there should be no discourse context that renders either (10b) or (10b’) infelicitous.

This prediction is not borne out, however, as seen in (11–12). When the question-answer pair in (10) is embedded in a discourse coordination relation (11), SFF is infelicitous. By contrast, when the

pair is embedded in a discourse subordination relation (12), SFF is felicitous, and fronting of the unstressed *sie* is degraded, at least for speakers who accept SFF to begin with.

- (11) a. John tried to climb the wall. He tried a second time. Then a third. Then...
 b. *Was ist passiert?* Q: ‘What happened?’ (cf. ‘Then, what happened?’)
 c. #*[Die FLINTE hat er ins KORN geworfen]*_{FOC}.
 the gun has he into-the grain thrown
 INTENDED: A: ‘He has given up.’ [Coordination with (a)]
 c'. *Er hat die FLINTE ins KORN geworfen.* A: ‘He has given up.’
- (12) a. Jessica used to be in the German department. Now she’s working at Starbucks.
 b. *Was ist passiert?* Q: ‘What happened?’ (cf. ‘Why?’)
 c. *[Die FLINTE hat sie ins KORN geworfen]*_{FOC}.
 the gun has she into-the grain thrown
 A: ‘She has given up.’ [Subordination of (a)]
 c'. *??Sie hat die FLINTE ins KORN geworfen.* A: ‘She has given up.’

This pattern is strikingly similar to that seen in Catalán above. Discourse subordination licenses both topicalization in Catalán and SFF in German, when the question *What happened?* intervenes between the two utterances. It should be noted that the idiom ‘throw the gun into the grain’ sounds archaic to some German speakers. Contexts (13–14) replicate the same effect with the idiom ‘to make theater’.

- (13) a. Hans showed he was a bit upset, but Maria didn’t pick up the clues.
 b. *Was ist passiert?* Q: ‘What happened?’ (cf. ‘What happened as a result?’)
 c. #*So ein Theater hat er gemacht.*
 such a theater has he made
 INTENDED A: ‘He got so dramatic.’ [Coordination with (a)]
 c'. *Er hat so ein Theater gemacht.* A: ‘He got so dramatic.’
- (14) a. Joseph isn’t allowed in the café anymore.
 b. *Was ist passiert?* Q: ‘What happened?’ (cf. ‘Why?’)
 c. *So ein Theater hat er gemacht.*
 such a theater has he made
 A: ‘He got so dramatic.’ [Lit.: ‘He made such a theater.’] [Subordination of (a)]
 c'. *Er hat so ein Theater gemacht.* A: ‘He got so dramatic.’

The same pattern is replicated with non-idiomatic material in (15–16). Note that (15b) involves a different question, which targets predicate-focus. According to the Question-Answer paradigm, this is an insignificant difference, because it still renders *ein Pferd* ‘a horse’ a subpart of the predicate-focus.

- (15) a. Yesterday, I went to a farm.
 b. *Und was hast du heute gemacht?* Q: ‘And what did you do today?’
 c. #*Ein Pferd haben wir gesehen!*
 a horse have we seen
 INTENDED: A: ‘We saw a horse!’ [Coordination with (a)]
 c'. *Wir haben ein Pferd gesehen!* A: ‘We saw a horse!’
- (16) a. Yesterday, I went to a farm, and I was so happy.
 b. *Was ist passiert?* Q: ‘What happened?’ (cf. ‘Why?’)
 c. *Ein Pferd haben wir gesehen!*
 a horse have we seen
 A: ‘We saw a horse!’ [Subordination of (a)]
 c'. *Wir haben ein Pferd gesehen!* A: ‘We saw a horse!’

Finally, metalinguistic judgments should be mentioned. Some speakers categorically reject SFF in all cases except for extreme surprise or contrast. This could be due to a prescriptivist norm against SFF or additional contrast semantics (cf. Frey 2006). Additionally, some noted that speakers in certain regions of Germany would not utter sentences with SFF. Whether SFF is subject to dialect variation or style variation is an interesting question worth further study.

Additionally, some speakers accepted the infelicitous (c) utterances above, like (15c), but only with additional context. These included: “You’re about to say more about the horse” and “You’re starting a list about what people saw (‘We saw a horse’, ‘You saw a pig’, etc.)”. Both of these comments clearly point to discourse subordination. The former hints that elaboration is necessary for SFF. The latter clearly refers to object contrastive topics. According to the literature on the semantics of contrastive topic (Büring 2003; Constant 2014), contrastive topic formally involves a discourse subordination relation, as they require embedded Questions Under Discussion.

All in all, German SFF is in fact constrained by discourse context. Discourse subordination licenses SFF, and it is infelicitous elsewhere. This fact directly contradicts the prediction of Fanselow & Lenertová (2011). And yet, much of Fanselow & Lenertová’s analysis must be correct: SFF is prosodically constrained \bar{A} -movement.

4. Analysis

In this section, we propose adding a discourse subordination feature [DISC.SUB] to C^0 , which triggers a Cophonological constraint re-ranking (Inkelas & Zoll 2007), resulting in SFF. Other analyses using just prosody or existing information structural features like [TOPIC] or [FOCUS] are addressed, but discouraged. Finally, an analysis involving a discourse subordination operator is raised, which could preserve the Strong Modularity Hypothesis.

First, a purely prosodic account of SFF would not explain the data at hand. It is conceivable that discourse subordination just happens to coincide with a special prosodic contour that licenses SFF, obviating the apparent contextual constraint. Such a parallel does not appear to be present in reports of German prosody. While the existing literature does not directly address discourse relations in exactly the way used here, there are signs that the prediction of this analysis is not borne out.

Müller, et al (2006) report the following interactions between pitch, focus, and syntactic position in adult German speech (Figure 1). Focussed phrases are significantly more stressed than non-focussed phrases. Additionally, initial phrases are significantly more stressed than non-initial phrases. The bars in this figure that would correspond with SFF are the black (focussed), initial subject and object bars on the left. If SFF corresponded with a special intonation pattern, one might expect these bars to have substantially greater pitch. However, nothing seems to be special about these cases: stress correlates straightforwardly with focus and syntactic position. A categorical statement about the interaction between prosody and discourse relations, however, would require more directed study. Regardless, any such analysis runs the risk of missing the generalization that SFF correlates with discourse relations.

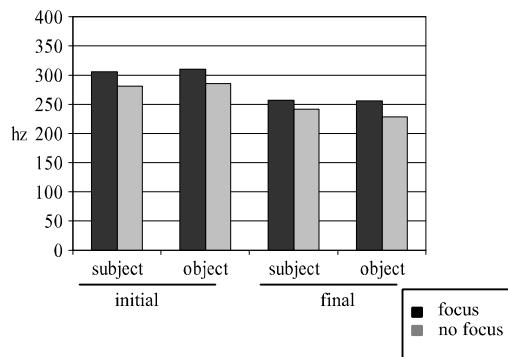


Figure 1: Average adult pitch (from Müller, et al 2006: p. 401)

Second, a purely syntactic account of SFF using existing information structural features would face serious challenges. Given the idiom data (e.g. 1, 10), SFF clearly does not target an anaphoric phrase,

nor does it target a whole focus. Other features like [CONTRAST] (cf. Molnár 2006; Frey 2006) do not explain the data in this paper either, as there appears to be the same level of contrast in contexts like (11) ‘John tried to climb the wall. He tried a second time. Then a third. Then... He gave up’ compared with (12) ‘Jessica used to be in the German department. Now she’s working at Starbucks... She gave up.’

Instead, we propose a new feature on C^0 : [DISC.SUB], which enters the Numeration in discourse subordination contexts. Much like Fanselow & Lenertová (2011)’s analysis, C^0 is generated with an EPP feature, which unselectively attracts a phrase to Spec-CP. In discourse coordination contexts, this EPP feature attracts an unstressed phrase in the TP domain via Locality. This represents the non-SFF phenomenon, where the unstressed subject typically undergoes movement to Spec-CP.

In discourse subordination contexts, however, the C^0 is generated with the EPP feature along with [DISC.SUB]. This feature does not probe for some kind of topic or focussed phrase. Instead, it triggers a Cophonology (Inkelas & Zoll 2007). According to Cophonology Theory, certain domains of grammar can have sets of Optimality Theoretic constraints with different relative rankings than in other domains. Recent implementations of the theory have implied that syntactic features can be the triggers for separate cophonologies (e.g. Jenks & Rose 2015).

In the [DISC.SUB] cophonology, Locality is treated as a violable constraint. This is desirable, if we cannot explain SFF in terms of a probe-goal relation, and if we take seriously the idea that SFF is a prosodic phenomenon at its core. Fanselow & Lenertová (2011) eschew Locality entirely in their bid to unify SFF and other movement to Spec-CP.

Then, we introduce a constraint particular to SFF: ALIGN-L(φ) (17). This constraint forces a phonological phrase (symbolized as φ) to align to the left of C^0 . Since phonological phrases categorically bear structural/phrasal stress, this constraint effectively penalizes the absence of a stressed phrase in Spec-CP. This ALIGN-L(φ) constraint outranks Locality in the cophonology triggered by [DISC.SUB]. Elsewhere, however, this ranking is abandoned, leaving Locality the highest relevant constraint.

- (17) ALIGN-L(φ): Align a phonological phrase (bearing phrasal stress) to the left of C^0
 Unmarked constraint ranking: LOCALITY > ALIGN-L(φ)
 [DISC.SUB] constraint ranking: ALIGN-L(φ) > LOCALITY

Consider the intermediate derivation in Figure 2. In this derivation, there are three phrases, A, B, and C. Only B and C bear structural stress (marked with metrical tree notation: strong (*s*) and weak (*w*) stress; Liberman 1979, a.o.). C^0 bears an EPP feature, in addition to [DISC.SUB]. The [DISC.SUB] feature triggers the constraint ranking ALIGN-L(φ) > LOCALITY. Figure 3 gives an Optimality Theoretic tableau, using Figure 2 as the input. Input (a) violates the alignment constraint, because the A phrase does not bear stress. This blocks movement of the unstressed A phrase to Spec-CP. In contrast, the (b) input violates Locality, but satisfies the alignment constraint by aligning a stressed phrase to the left of C^0 . Finally, movement of the C phrase is not even a candidate; Early Accentuation blocks its generation.

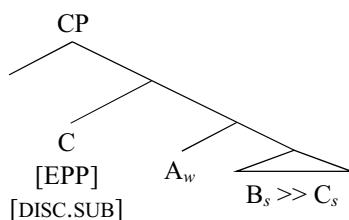


Figure 2: Schematic of the input to the tableau in Figure 3

Input: C_{DS} [EPP]... $A_w B_s C_s$	ALIGN-L(φ)	LOCALITY
a.) $A_w C_{DS}... t B_s C_s$	*!	
b.) $\textcircled{C} B_s C_{DS}... A_w t C_s$		*
c.) Not generated, due to Early Accentuation: $C_s C_{DS}... A_w B_s t$	–	–

Figure 3: A tableau for the input in Figure 2

This analysis retains the idea that German SFF is largely a prosodic phenomenon. Early Accentuation operates in the syntactic derivation, and a prosodic constraint is responsible for SFF. However, syntax is also needed to constrain SFF: a Locality constraint and a [DISC.SUB] feature. This analysis, thus, retains information structure in the syntax for German SFF, albeit in a limited capacity. If one were to retain the Strong Modularity Hypothesis, barring information structural features in the syntax, one could conceivably reanalyze the [DISC.SUB] feature as an operator with its own EPP feature and cophonology, which is merged above CP in the left periphery (cf. Horváth 2010 for an operator analysis of Hungarian focus movement). An additional mechanism would likely be needed in this case to explain why an unstressed phrase is blocked from undergoing movement to Spec-CP, before the null operator is merged. While such an analysis would satisfy the Strong Modularity Hypothesis and Chomsky's Inclusiveness Condition, we assert that the [DISC.SUB] feature analysis is otherwise more parsimonious, attributing all movement to Spec-CP in German to the featural make-up of C⁰.

5. Conclusion

To conclude, we have shown that German Subpart of Focus Fronting is in fact constrained by discourse context, namely discourse subordination. We also proposed an analysis in which [DISC.SUB], an information structural feature on C⁰, triggers a cophonological constraint re-ranking. This re-ranking results in a stressed phrase undergoing movement to Spec-CP. This analysis combines a feature-based approach to information structure (cf. Rizzi 1997) with a prosody-based approach (cf. Horváth 2010; Fanselow & Lenertová 2011), but runs counter to the strong version of the Strong Modularity Hypothesis, which completely separates information structure from the syntactic derivation.

Additionally, we demonstrated that the Question-Answer Paradigm is not sufficient to diagnose the complete information structure of an utterance. While the paradigm does identify information focus, it is indeterminate with regards to other phenomena like topicalization. To fix this, we propose controlling for the discourse relations of each question-answer pair in order to control for the presence of discourse subordination (cf. 9).

A number of issues remain for further study. First is the question of optionality. Even though SFF is constrained by discourse subordination, it never seems to be properly obligatory. This optionality is often found cross-linguistically for topicalization and focus movement. There are several ways to model this analytically. For one, there could be two C heads: one generated with the [DISC.SUB] feature and one without. In the vein of Mikkelsen (2005)'s analysis of a [TOPIC] feature on T⁰, one could postulate that the C head with [DISC.SUB] is only generated in discourse subordination contexts, but the C head without it could be freely generated in any context. Alternately, the [DISC.SUB] feature could trigger a constraint re-ranking with equal weighting: ALIGN-L(ϕ) = LOCALITY. This would render SFF and movement of the most local unstressed phrase equally likely.

Second, given that this analysis assumes the presence of two C heads: one with the [DISC.SUB] and one without, are there any lexical instantiations of these separate heads? 'Coordination' and 'subordination' are indeed widely noted categories of complementizers, connectives, relativizers, and other words classes. However, it is debatable whether these categories should map directly onto the discourse relational concepts used in this paper (cf. Fabricius-Hansen & Ramm 2008).

Third, could [DISC.SUB] be generated on other syntactic heads? López (2009) considers clitic right-dislocation (CLRD) in Catalán to be triggered by v^0 . Furthermore, López & Winkler (2003) show that English topicalization is possible in vP (in the absence of TP and CP) in certain gapping constructions. If this research is on the right track, [DISC.SUB] may not be particular to CP.

Fourth, can topicalization in other languages be based on [DISC.SUB]? In Catalán, López (2009) showed that topicalization is licensed by discourse subordination, and topicalized phrases must be anaphoric to a discourse accessible referent. Perhaps Catalán topicalization involves a C head generated with [DISC.SUB] and a [+ANAPHORA] feature. Other features like [+CONTRAST] could also be appealed to for languages like English where some notion of contrast accompanies topicalization.

Finally, can the [DISC.SUB] feature or its effects be indexical in the sociolinguistic sense? Several of the German speakers interviewed identified SFF as "rural" or "gossipy". Conversely, the lack of SFF was identified as "learned", "stoic", or "neutral". These judgments could be due to dialect variation, style variation, or even the pragmatic effects of SFF itself.

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