

Question Answer Congruence and Focus Phrase

Michael Rochemont (UBC)

Well formed question answer sequences respond to the generalization (hereafter QAC) that an appropriate answer to a wh-question must have F-marking on the constituent corresponding to the wh-phrase (e.g. Schwarzschild 1999). F-marking is the privative feature that since Jackendoff 1972 is used to mark the “Focus” of a sentence. I will argue that the notion of focus required for QAC is that of “focus phrase” (Drubig 19xx, Krifka 2006). Schwarzschild claims that one virtue of his proposal is that it derives a version of QAC without the need to interpret focus as focus phrase: by Givenness, only that information in the response that is not Given in the context of the question need be F-marked. In the spirit of Krifka 2006, I will argue that this is mistaken, and that QAC does indeed require F-marking of the focus phrase. Using data from short term answers and *it* cleft answers to questions in English, and presuming movement analyses for both types (see Merchant 2004 for the former specifically), I will argue, island effects notwithstanding, that the full characterization of QAC in both cases requires reference to the focus phrase. Based on observations in Lopez 2010, I will then argue that Catalan QAC, like English, relies on the focus phrase in well formed full and short term answers. Denying the accounts of both Lopez 2010 and Vallduvi and Engdahl 1996, I will explore a different view of the prosodic differences between Catalan and English in the expression of focus and givenness. Finally, I will pursue implications of the focus phrase for stress languages in which there is no evident correspondence between nuclear stress and focus or focus phrase.

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Lopez, L. 2010. Givenness and Discourse Anaphors, in C. Breul & E. Göbbel, eds., **Contrastive Information Structure**, John Benjamins, Amsterdam, pp. 51-75

Vallduvi, E., Engdahl, E. 1996. The Linguistic Realization of Information Packaging. *Linguistics* 34, 459-519.