Constraint-based Syntax and semantics in honor of Danièle Godard

Abstracts

Annie Zaenen (Stanford)

Configurationality and subjecthood

Some 40 years ago, one invoked the notion of subject without qualification, the main question being whether one should consider it as a primitive or as a derived notion. Since then typological studies have called to notion in question as a universal. I will review some of that literature and show that in some languages there is no clearcut notion of 'highest syntactic argument'. In others, however, specifically in the Germanic languages I will show there is a rather clearcut notion of subject based on various syntactic diagnostics.

Elisabet Engdahl (U Gothenburg)

Prepositional passives in Scandinavian – the role of affectedness

Whereas animacy often plays a role in control constructions (only animate arguments can exert voluntary control), it's less common to refer to animacy in the analysis of grammatical relation changing constructions such as the passive, at least not in Germanic and Romance. Nevertheless, this is needed in order to account for the choice of passive form in so-called prepositional passives in the mainland Scandinavian languages. Based on a large corpus study, we show that prepositional passives such as *Hon var rädd för att bli skrattad åt* ('she was worried about being laughed at') are primarily used when the subject is psychologically affected by the event.

Prepositional passives can be formed with both selected and unselected prepositional phrases. In active sentences there is no requirement that the complement of the preposition should be animate. This constraint seems to arise in the formation of the passive, which calls for an analysis where the relation changing operations need to be sensitive not just to the syntactic category of the complement or adjunct, but also to semantic properties of the referents. We argue that this type of constraint is best modelled in a sign-based grammar architecture where syntax and semantics interact and constrain each other compositionally.

François Mouret (Rennes 2, Nouméa)
Indicative/Subjunctive alternation and coordination In French

As is well-known, indicative and subjunctive may alternate in French complement clauses under certains conditions (Grévisse & Goosse 2011). According to Godard & De Mulder (2011), there are three cases at hand: (i) 'mixed predicates' that allow for the two moods in their complement clause without lexical change (1), (ii) predicates that allow for both moods too, but with a meaning difference (2), and (iii) 'polarity mood', namely mood alternation induced by negation or interrogation in environments where only one mood is normally possible (indicative in (3a,b), subjunctive in (3c,d)) ; this latter case being analyzed by Godard (2013) as an instance of competition between two systems in contemporary French, one, leading to the polar mood, that follows from semantics, and the other one, frozen, resulting from grammaticalization of the mood encountered in the affirmative sentence whatever the environment is.

(1)   Il semble que Jean dit$_{IND}$ / dise$_{SUBJ}$ la vérité.

     'It seems that Jean is telling the truth.

(2)   a. Je comprends que Jean dit$_{IND}$ la vérité.

     'I understand that Jean is telling the truth'

     b. Je comprends que Jean dise$_{SUBJ}$ la vérité.

     'I find it understandable that Jean tells the truth'

(3)   a. Je pense que Jean dit$_{IND}$ / *dise$_{SUBJ}$ la vérité.

     'I think that Jean is telling the truth'

     b. Je ne pense pas que Jean dit$_{IND}$ / dise$_{SUBJ}$ lavérité.

     'I don't think that Jean is telling the truth'

     c. Je doute que Jean dise$_{SUBJ}$ / *dit$_{IND}$ lavérité.

     'I doubt that Jean is telling the truth'

     d. Je ne doute pas que Jean dise$_{SUBJ}$ / dit$_{IND}$ la vérité.

     'I don't doubt that Jean is telling the truth'

On the other hand, it is well-accepted nowadays that conjuncts in coordinate structures may differ with respect to various morphosyntactic features provided semantic type identity and syntactic compatibility with some common (and unique) shared context (Partee & Rooth 1983, Sag et al. 1985, Bayer 1996). Assuming Godard's approach of mood alternation, one thus expects coordination of indicative and subjunctive in complement clauses to be acceptable in case (i), and ruled out elsewhere, by violation of the so-called 'anti-pun ordinance' (Zaenen & Kartunnen 1984). Data, however, are somewhat unclear in this area, leading to subtle judgements and variation across speakers *contra* Huot (1986), except for

case (ii) where unacceptability seems to make no doubt:

(4)   a.   %Il semble que Jean dit$_{IND}$ la vérité et qu'il soit$_{SUBJ}$ convaincant.

       b.   %Il semble que Jean dise$_{SUBJ}$ la vérité et qu'il est convaincant.

(5)   a.   *Je comprends que Jean dit$_{IND}$ la vérité et qu'il soit$_{SUBJ}$ convaincant.

          'I understand that Jean is telling the truth and that he is convincing'

      b.   *Je comprends que Jean dise$_{SUBJ}$ la vérité et qu'il est$_{IND}$ convaincant.

          'I find it understandable that Jean tells the truth and that he is convincing'

(6)   a.   %Je ne pense pas que Jean soit$_{SUBJ}$ convaincant ni qu'il dit$_{IND}$ la vérité.

       b.   %Je ne pense pas que Jean est$_{IND}$ convaincant ni qu'il dise$_{SUBJ}$ la vérité.

          'I don't think that Jean is convincing and that he is telling the truth' (from Huot 1986 :95)

       c.   %Je ne doute pas que Jean soit$_{SUBJ}$ convaincant ni qu'il dit$_{IND}$ la vérité.

       d.   %Je ne doute pas que Jean est$_{IND}$ convaincant ni qu'il dise$_{SUBJ}$ la vérité.

          'I don't think that Jean is convincing and that he is telling the truth'

Building on Godard *et al*. (2013) material and methods, we report the results of an experimental study of acceptability judgements, relying on a questionnaire submitted to first year students in Humanities.

References

- Bayer, S. 1996. The coordination of unlike categories. Language 72, 579-616.

- Partee, B. and M. Rooth. 1983. Generalized conjunction and type ambiguity. In R. Bauerle, C. Schwarze, & A. von Stechow (eds), Meaning, use, and interpretation of Language. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter. 361-383.

- Grévisse, M. and A. Goosse. 2011. Le bon usage. Louvain : Duculot.

- Godard, D. 2013. Indicative and subjunctive mood in complement clauses: formal semantics and grammar writing. In C. Piñon (ed), Empirical Issues in Syntax and Semantics 9, 129-148. Available at www.cssp.cnrs.fr/eiss9.

- Godard, D. and W. De Mulder. 2011. Indicatif et subjonctif dans les complétives en français. Cahiers de lexicologie 98.148–160.

- Godard, D., Hemforth, B. & J.-M. Marandin. 2013. Negation and mood alternation in French: a preliminary experimental study of polarity mood. Online manuscript in honor of Ivan Sag.

- Huot, H. 1986. Le subjonctif dans les complétives : subjectivité et modalisation. La grammaire modulaire, ed. by M. Ronat and D. Couquaux, 81–111. Paris: Ed. de Minuit.

- Sag, I. A., Gazdar, G., Wasow, T. and S. Weisler. 1985. Coordination and how to distinguish categories. Natural Language and Linguistic Theory 3.2, 117-172.

- Zaenen, A. and L. Kartunnen. 1984. Morphological non-distinctiveness and coordination. Proceedings of ESCOL84, 309-320.

Gabriela Bilbîie (Université Bucarest & LLF)
Romanian Subjunctive Interrogatives at the Semantics-Pragmatics Interface

A Balkan 'Sprachbund' property, underestimated in the literature, concerns the huge frequency of the subjunctive in Romanian main interrogative clauses (1a), as in other Balkan languages (1b-c), distinguishing Romanian from other Romance languages, such as French, which don't allow the subjunctive in interrogatives (2a), but require instead the infinitive (2b) or the conditional mood (2c).

(1)   a. Unde **să merg** ? (Romanian)   'Where should I go ?'
           b. Kăde **da otida** ? (Bulgarian)   'Where should I go ?'
           c. Pu **na pao** ? (Greek)   'Where should I go ?'
(2)   a. *Où **que j'aille** ? (French)
           b. Où **aller** ?   'Where to go ?'
           c. Où **pourrais-je aller** ?   'Where should I go ?'

We first show that Romanian occurrences such as (1a) are syntactically root subjunctives, giving evidence against the elliptical approach proposed by Avram (2015), where the subjunctive is considered to be embedded under a covert modal verb.

We then dress an exhaustive typology of subjunctive uses in Romanian interrogatives, based on two discursive strategies : (i) a **Question** / Assertion pair, the subjunctive being used in the first part (i.e. the question), and (ii) a Question / **Question** pair, the subjunctive occurring in the second part (i.e. the second question). These two discursive strategies lead to two main different kinds of uses : (i) **free-context uses** ('out-of-the-blue' utterances), without biased questions, in the first case (the answer covering an open set of possibilities), and (ii) **dialogical uses** (context-dependent utterances) in reactive utterances, generally with biased questions, in the second case (getting closer to rhetorical questions, by limiting the answer to a fixed set of possibilities, e.g. negative answers).

In the light of the empirical data taken into account, two main issues can be identified at the semantic and respectively pragmatic level. First, we observe that most of the subjunctive interrogatives (in particular, free-context uses) involve an implicit modality, i.e. syntactically there is no covert modal involved, but semantically there is an implicit – epistemic or deontic – modality contributed by the subjunctive itself. Second, we observe various uses of the subjunctive (in particular, in dialogical uses and rhetorical questions) with no call-on-addressee (no obligation exerted on the addressee). Overall, subjunctive interrogatives are less directly addressed than those interrogatives using the indicative mood, so they involve a weak call-on-address, as shown by the inacceptability of the subjunctive with pure information-seeking questions and by the acceptability of the special interrogative marker *oare* (signaling the optionality of the answer) in these specific subjunctive interrogatives. Additionally, the subjunctive interrogatives have very rich pragmatic effects which are activated in the dialogue.

Our study shows the rich semantic and pragmatic potential of the subjunctive mood in the interrogatives domain in Romanian, compared to other Romance languages, where the same semantic and discursive effects are covered by several moods (indicative, conditional, infinitive, imperative). The Romanian subjunctive is thus a polyfunctional mood (both a modal and a discursive marker), which is a Balkan peculiarity (Ammam & van der Auwera 2004).

Jesse Tseng (CNRS, Toulouse)

Non-canonical arguments and past participle agreement

A striking result to emerge from the intensive work on constraint-based French syntax is the analysis of French past participle agreement in compound past constructions proposed by Abeillé & Godard (1996), Miller & Sag (1997), which reformalized the traditional rule, which refers explicitly to the linear position of the agreement trigger, in terms of a more abstract grammatical notion of "non-canonically realized argument". This paper revisits the status of the rule in question in light of historical and contemporary evidence from French and related languages, and explores alternative constraint-based approaches to the morphosyntax of the French past participle.

Denis Creissels (DDL, U Lyon 2)

Relativization and individual stage level distinction in the languages of Senegal

An areal feature of the languages spoken in Senegal is that, regardless of their genetic affiliation, they have grammaticalized the distinction between relative clauses expressing a stage-level property of their head, and relative clauses expressing individual-level properties. In the languages in question, individual-level relative clauses are introduced by a complex expression whose literal meaning, originally 'which you know that', has undergone a process of semantic bleaching (and is not immediately perceived by speakers). The 2nd person pronoun or agreement marker it includes can be analyzed as generic, since in West African languages, the generic use of 2nd person pronouns or agreement markers is quite widespread, but it can be found in contexts in which it is clear that the lexical meaning of the verb 'know' is not relevant to its interpretation anymore. Synchronically, as illustrated by the following example from Mandinka (West Mande), it can only be analyzed as a compound relativizer marking the relative clause as expressing an individual-level property of its head.

Sě̌ejò	**mú**	**bèn-dúláa**	**lè**	**tí,**
Sédhiou	ECOP	meet-place.D	FOC	POSTP

lit. 'Sédhiou is a crossroad

mîŋ	**í**	**yè**	**à**	**lôŋ**	**kó**	**síi**	**jámáa**	**lè**	**bé**	**jě̌e.**
REL	2SG	CPL	3SG	know	QUOT	ethnic_group	many	FOC	LCOP	there

which you know that many ethnic groups are there.'

> 'Sédhiou is a place where many ethnic groups can be found.'

(CPL = completive D = default determiner, ECOP = equative copula, FOC = focus marker, LCOP = locational copula, POSTP = postposition, QUOT = quotative (acting here as a complementizer), REL = relativizer, SG = singular)

Henriette de Swart (Utrecht University)
Time in translation

Linguists ave long been interested in ways languages refer to time. With today's large corpora, computational linguists have started to apply these insights to improve automatic translation programmes. That proves to be quite a challenge: although languages like English, Dutch, German, French and Spanish all have simple past (e.g. sang), simple present (sings) and perfect (has sung) verb forms in their grammar, they don't use them under the same (sentential/discourse) conditions. The perfect is the bottleneck: has sung reports on a past event of singing that has current relevance, so it shares features of the past as well as the present tense. How the perfect is used in a particular language depends on how the grammar distributes the range of past and present meanings over the various verb forms. Instead of avoiding the cross-linguistic variation, we embrace it to unveil the meaning of the perfect through parallel corpus research. Translation equivalents provide us with form variation across languages in contexts where the meaning is stable. Mining, analysing and comparing the verb forms chosen by translators enables us to develop a temporal semantic map of the perfect. Beyond temporal reference, the investigation of meaning in translation provides a new methodology for cross-linguistic semantic research.

Francis Corblin (IJN, Paris Sorbonne)
« Pure » indexicals and others

Kaplan (1989b) distinguishes pure indexicals (*I, here, now*) from true demonstratives (*that, this man*), on the basis that the former do not require a demonstration for reaching their intended referent. He recognizes nevertheless, following Bennett, that « some indexicals have both a pure and a demonstrative use »:, '*Here*' is a pure indexical in "*I am in here*" and is a demonstrative in "*In two weeks, I will be here* [pointing at a city on a map]". (Bennett 1978).

In this paper, I will focus on the distinction between the so-called "pure" indexicals (no demonstrative use) and other indexicals, a distinction Kaplan implicitly assumes by using "some" " in the above formulation. By so doing, I think it is possible to clarify the fundamental distinction between demonstratives and indexicals. What I will try to do is to establish that all indexicals in principle, as any other referential terms, can be associated with a demonstration, but that the effect of combining this mode of fixing the reference with their indexical basic interpretation will produce different effects depending on the *sort* of entity (discrete/non-discrete, spatial/temporal, atom/plurality) they are bound to denote in virtue of their linguistic meaning. I will consider the paradigmatic case of Kaplan, *I, here, now*, but also *you, we* and *you,* treated in Recanati (2001) as "impure indexicals".

The conclusion is that it is useful to draw a clearcut distinction between indexicals and demonstratives,and that the distinction between pure and impure indexicals has no conceptual substance. The so-called pure indexicals are just indexicals which, for independent reasons due to the sort of entity they denote, cannot take advantage of an associated demonstration for restricting more precisely their intended referent.

References

- Bennett, M. 1978 Demonstratives and Indexicals in Montague Grammar, Synthese, Vol. 39, No. 1, Logic and Linguistics, Part II (Sep., 1978),Springer, pp. 1-80.

- Kaplan, David 1989a: "Afterthoughts", in J. Almog, J. Perry and H. Wettstein 1989, pp. 565-614.

- 1989b: "Demonstratives", in J. Almog, J. Perry and H. Wettstein1989, pp. 481-563.

- Recanati, F. 2001. Are 'here' and 'now' indexicals?. Texte,, 127/8, pp.115-127.

Jean-Pierre Koenig, Karin Michelson (Buffalo SUNY)
Quantification in Iroquoian

Cross-linguistic studies of quantification in the last twenty years have shown that languages use a wide range of means to quantify the number of entities involved in events. But, some putative universals have emerged, e.g., that all languages have quantifiers that express relations between sets (Peters and Westerståhl 2008). In this paper, we present a comprehensive analysis of quantification over entities in Oneida (Northern Iroquoian). Quantification is expressed by (defective) verbs in Iroquoian that mean something like 'amount to' that head the equivalent of internally headed relative clauses. Thus, an English sentence such as He picked up three leaves would be translated by a sentence that can be literally glossed as 'He picked them up, the leaves that amounted to three.' We show that, interestingly, one consequence of the grammatical means used to express quantification over entities is the absence of essentially proportional quantifiers in Oneida (corresponding to most or three quarters of) in Oneida and that instances where speakers need to quantify over a subset of entities from a larger set are handled through inferences.

Alain Kihm (CNRS, LLF)
Haitian copula and types of predication

The copula in Haitian Creole (HC) is realized via three word-forms: se, ye and a null form, which may be viewed as alternative stems of one lexeme. Selecting one or the other depends on the syntactic context as well as on the syntactic-semantic (synsem) type of the predicate. This is illustrated by the following examples:

(1)   *Jan   se   yon pwofesè.*
        John COP INDF teacher
        John is a teacher.
(2)   *Jan   chapantyè.*
        John carpenter
        John is a carpenter.
(3)   *Jan   grangou.*
        John hungry
        John is hungry.
(4)   *Jan   se   grangou.*
        John COP unscrupulous
        John is (an) unscrupulous (person).
(5)   *Jan nan lekol   la.*
        John in   school def
        John is at school.
(6)   *Se   frè   mwen Jan   ye.*
        COP brother 1sg   John COP
        It is my brother that John is.

The literature on the topic (e.g. DeGraff 1992; Kihm 1993; Damoiseau 1985, 1996; Déprez & Vinet 1997; Déprez 2003) will first be briefly discussed.

Then it will be shown that se selects NP or AP complements predicating individual-level properties of the subject (see [1] and [4]); the null form selects NOM, AP or PP complements predicating stage-level properties of the subject (see [2], [3], and [5]); and ye appears before gaps (see [6]).

Finally it will be proposed that such a distribution results from the reinterpration of contrasts already manifested in the 17th century French input to HC by the forms' etyma, namely c'est and est (or il est pronounced /jɛ/) (Haase 1935; Boone 1983; Kupferman 1979).

- Boone, Annie (1983). Les constructions "Il est linguiste" / "C'est un linguiste", Langue française 75, 94-106.
- Damoiseau, Robert (1985). Nature et fonction des monèmes 'se' en créole haïtien. Port-au-Prince: Centre de Linguistique, Université d'Etat d'Haïti.
- — (1996). Les adjectivaux en créole haïtien. In Daniel Véronique (dir.), Matériaux pour l'étude des classes grammaticales dans les langues créoles, 151-161. Aix-en-Provence : Publications de l'Université de Provence.
- DeGraff, Michel (1992). Creole grammars and the acquisition of syntax: The case of Haitian Creole. PhD dissertation, University of Pennsylvania.
- Déprez, Viviane (2003). Haitian Creole se: A copula, a pronoun, both or neither? On the

double life of a functional head. In Dany Adone (ed.), Recent Development in Creole Studies, 135-173. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag.

- — & Marie-Thérèse Vinet (1997). Predicative constructions and functional categories in Haitian Creole, Journal of Pidgin and Creole Languages 12(2), 1-32.
- Haase, Alfons (1935). Syntaxe française du XVIIe siècle. Nouvelle édition traduite et remaniée par M. Obert avec l'autorisation de l'auteur. Paris: Delagrave.

Ahmad Alotaibi, Robert Borsley (Al Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University, U of Essex)
The copula in Modern Standard Arabic

Like its counterparts in many languages, the Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) copula appears with a number of different complements and has both predicational and equative uses. Predicational uses may involve PP, AP, and NP complements, and also verbal complements. Equative uses have a have a distinctive syntax with an optional pronoun between the two arguments. There are also syntactic differences between predicational examples with a non- verbal complement and predicational examples with a verbal complement. The similarities and the differences among the various examples can be captured by postulating a lexical type with a number of subtypes.

The present tense of the copula is only used in a restricted set of contexts. Where a present tense form of the copula might be expected, MSA normally has a verbless clause, traditionally known as a nominal sentence. These clauses look a lot like copula sentences without a copula. Among other things, both allow an existential interpretation with the expletive *hunaaka* 'there'. The similarities and differences between the two sentence types can be captured by assuming that nominal sentences contain a phonologically empty form of the copula with similar but not identical properties to overt forms.

We will show that an appropriate type hierarchy and associated constraints can handle the full set of facts, accommodating the similarities and differences among predicational examples with a non-verbal complement and with a verbal complement and equative examples, and the similarities and differences between examples with an overt copula and examples with an empty copula.

Jacques Jayez, Mathilde Dargnat (ISC, ENS Lyon & Atilf, U de Lorraine)
Presuppositions, Discourse relations and QUD

It has been proposed by Simons et al. (2011) that projecting material must be non at-issue, that is, must be most naturally understood as irrelevant to the question under discussion (the QUD in the sense of Roberts, 2012). When the projecting material is felt as relevant, no projection is possible, as in (1), under an interpretation where Bill is sufficiently informed about Harry's and Sally's life to be able to know that Harry is dating Sally if it is indeed the case.

(1) Q Is Harry dating Sally?

  A Bill doesn't know that he is.

However, (2) and similar examples do not fit easily into this picture.

(2) Q What makes you think that Harry is subject to addictions?

  A Well, in spite of many health problems, he didn't stop drinking or smoking.

In a context where it is not common ground that Harry has been drinking and smoking, answer (2-A) aims at communicating that Harry has been showing addictive behavior (drinking and smoking, the presupposition) and that he was unable to put an end to them them (the main content). The two pieces of information are best conceived as deliberately at-issue. Yet the presupposition projects, contrary to Simons et al.'s prediction. Examples of type (2) might be hard to come up with, but they are not impossible. (3) provides an analogous case.

(3) Context: For a financial statement to be validated, it has to be approved by the head of the team plus at least another member. It is not common ground that the head will approve the statement.

  Q What makes you think that the statement will be confirmed?

  A Well, in my opinion, not only the head will approve.

Again, in the projective environment of the negation, the presupposition (the head will approve) projects although it addresses the QUD since the validation depends, among other things, on the approval by the head.

Instead of connecting projection and the property of not addressing the QUD, we propose instead that the constraints on QUD addressing are very similar to what Ducrot (1972) called the ``loi d'enchaînement'' (linking law). Specifically, we will propose a new, weaker version of this law, and clarify its nature and import by accounting for its limits, namely the fact that it concerns only causal, concession and consequence relations, and does not apply to additive relations (Winterstein 2011, Jayez & Reinecke 2016).

References

- Ducrot, O. (1972). Dire et ne pas dire. Hermann.

- Jayez, J. & Reinecke, R. (2016). Presuppositions and salience: An experimental approach. In Proceedings of SALT 26.

- Roberts, C. (2012). Information structure in discourse: Towards an integrated formal theory of pragmatics. Semantics and Pragmatics 5(6).

- Simons, M. et al. (2011). What projects and why. In Proceedings of SALT 20.

- Winterstein, G. (2011). The meaning of the additive :Presupposition and discourse similarity. In Logic, Language and Computation, Springer.

Jonathan Ginzburg (U Paris Diderot, LLF, IUF)

HPSG and incrementality: why not?

In this paper I argue that there are various grammatical phenomena, both lexical and phrasal, the analysis of which must make recourse to incremental (e.g., word by word LR) processing. Does this require the grammar to be incremental?

Although HPSG repeatedly claimed that it was compatible with incremental processing (Pollard and Sag, 1994 et seq), it resisted building this in to the grammar, presumably for reasons of competence/performance hygiene, in contrast to, for instance, Dynamic Syntax (e.g., Gregoromichelaki et al 2016). Building on (Ginzburg and Poesio, 2016) I will argue that much of the competence/performance argumentation should be set aside. Nonetheless, I will suggest that the incremental phenomena at hand can be captured by maintaining a fairly classical view of phrase structure while placing incrementality in the dialogical context. The grammar, however, interfaces very strongly with the context.

References

- C. Pollard and I.A. Sag 1994, Head Driven Phrase Structure Grammar, U of Chicago Press

- E. Gregoromichelaki et al 2016 Language as mechanisms for interaction, Theoretical Linguistics

- J Ginzburg and M. Poesio, 2016, Grammar is a system for classifying talk in interaction, Frontiers in the language sciences