

## Editorial Preface

The present issue grew out of two sources. The main one was the workshop on *Adding and Omitting* (A & O) held during the DGfS Conference organized in Konstanz at the beginning of 1999 by our ZAS project on *Syntax der Fokusbildung*. The purpose of the workshop was to bring together people working on topicalization (addition of expressions, in a sense) and ellipsis (omission, i.e. deletion of linguistic material) and their relations and interaction. Since the workshop was very successful and met with a great deal of interest on the part of both participants and outsiders, we decided to collect and publish the papers that were presented. Towards the end of 1999, a follow-up workshop on *Ellipsis and Information Structure* was organized by Kerstin Schwabe and Susanne Winkler (Tübingen). The papers given at this second meeting were supposed to be an integral part of the publication as well. More and more people got involved, further developing our common understanding of the *topic* phenomenon, so that there was too much material for a single volume. We therefore decided to split the enterprise into two volumes. The ellipsis papers are to be published by 'Benjamins' this year in *Interpreting Omitted Structures*.

The present volume contains papers that bear mainly on issues concerning the topic concept. This concept is of course very broad and diverse. Also, different views are expressed in this volume. Some authors concentrate on the status of topics and non-topics in so-called topic prominent languages (i.e. Chinese), others focus on the syntactic behavior of topical constituents in specific European languages (German, Greek, Romance languages). The last contribution tries to bring together the concept of discourse topic (a non-syntactic notion) and the concept of sentence topic, i.e. that type of topic that all the preceding papers are concerned with.

In *Topic Structures and Minimal Effort*, Yen-hui Audrey Li considers topic-comment constructions against the background of the Minimalist Program. Chinese topic structures can be derived by movement or base-generated. When there are two options for interpreting a structure, the one with less effort, i.e. the one without movement and reconstruction, is adopted. In structures with resultative compound verbs, [V1 (action) + V2 (result)], the object position is not projected if this position is optionally subcategorized and the object does not occur overtly ('minimal projection'). Only if the object is required is topicalization possible.

Liejiong Xu's article *The Topic-Prominence Parameter* aims to recast the properties of topic-prominent languages and their differences from subject-prominent languages as documented in the functionalist literature into the framework of the Principle-and-Parameter approach. It provides a configurational definition of the topic construction called Topic Phrase (TP) with the topic marker as its head. The availability of TP enables topic prominent languages to develop various topic structures with properties such as morphological marking; cross-categorial realization of topics and comments; and multiple application of topicalization. The article elaborates on the notion of topic prominence. A topic prominent language is characterized as one that tends to activate the TP and to make full use of the configuration. Typically, it has a larger number and variety of highly grammaticalized topic markers in the Lexicon and permits a variety of syntactic categories to occur in the specifier position and the complement position of TP.

Based on Mandarin and Shanghainese data, Danqing Liu in *Identical Topics and Topic-Prominent Languages* investigates a special type of topic-comment structures which is characterized by the fact that a topic is fully or partially copied by a corresponding element located in the following part of the clause. Liu points out that topic-copying seems to be a better candidate for characterizing topic-prominent languages than the topic types treated by Chafe (1976). In Liu's system, 'identical topics', i.e. both a topic and its copy, can occur between the subject and the verb or in even lower positions.

Marie-Claude Paris' paper *Where has the new information gone? The Chinese case* argues against the opinion that Chinese is more iconic, as far as the relationship of information structure and syntactic structure of sentences is concerned. She claims that the pairing of affirmative and interrogative sentences might be a better approach to locating where the new information lies in a Chinese utterance.

Following Rizzi (1997), Kleanthes K. Grohmann's article *Prolific Domains and the left Periphery* presents a programmatic sketch of a clause structure in which clauses are split into three prolific domains: the V-, the T- and the C-Domain. Central to his notion of prolific domain is the condition that any given XP finds a unique address in each of these domains. Derivations are constructed over domains. Implementing Uriagereka's (1999) notion of 'multiple spell out', he suggests that the relevant pieces of information are shipped to LF and PF each time a domain is established. This implies a modification of the standard T-model where PF and LF are fed successive-cyclically.

Artemis Alexiadou investigates the syntactic behavior of topical constituents in several null subject languages in her paper *Clausal structure and information structure in Romance and Greek*. She comes to the conclusion that Greek, Italian and Spanish differ considerably in the preverbal as well as in the postverbal domain. The reason lies in the fact that the variations follow from the different clausal structures of these languages that turn out to be not less important than the properties of pro-drop.

Werner Frey's paper *Über die syntaktische Position des Satztopiks im Deutschen* (About the sentence topic's syntactic position in German) argues for a specific topic domain within the German middle-field. German thus is shown to be discourse-configurational with respect to the notion of topic. This leads to a number of interesting insights concerning basic issues such as the potential number of topics, the availability of topics in embedded sentences, and the relation between scrambling and topicality. Furthermore the claim that the 'strong' interpretation of an indefinite implies its status as a topic is refuted. Also it is shown that topic preposing in the middle field has different syntactic and pragmatic properties compared to movement to the prefield. Some theoretical consequences of these differences are discussed.

Michael Grabski's paper *Satztopik und Diskurstopik in Elaborationskontexten* (Sentence topic and discourse topic in elaboration contexts) starts with a semantic differentiation between the notions of 'sentence topic' and 'discourse topic'. Sentence topic is conceived of as part of a semantic predication in the sense of Kim's (1998) work, whereas discourse topic is defined, as in Asher's (1993) Segmented Discourse Representation Theory, as a discourse constituent that comprises the content of the larger discourse. The main body of his contribution serves to investigate the connection between the two types of topic. To restrict the context of investigation, a specific relation between discourse constituents, Elaboration, is chosen. If Elaboration holds between two discourse constituents, one of them can be identified as the explicit discourse topic with respect to the other one. Sentence topic and comment, within elaborating sentences, seem to interact with the discourse topic in a specific way: whereas comment information seems to be used to infer a 'dimension' for extending the discourse topic, the role of sentence topics is to mark 'indices' for predication along that dimension. The roles of sentence topic and comment are modelled by means of channel theoretic devices.

Special thanks go to Mechthild Bernhard for her helping hand in preparing the contributions for publication.

Berlin, December 2000

André Meinunger (on behalf of the editors)  
(andre@zas.gwz-berlin.de)