

Towards a head-driven account of information structure:
evidence from Japanese and Korean
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In this talk I will advocate a lexically-oriented account of information structure, focushood in particular, on the ground that the focus articulation of a clause varies depending on the type of its head predicate.

While information structure admittedly is essentially a discourse phenomenon, it has often been observed that a predicate, say a verb, has a particular tendency as regards which of its arguments is focused: e.g. for a transitive verb, it is usually the direct object. I argue that this tendency has a direct bearing on the relationship between syntax and information structure, based on cross-linguistic and cross-dialectal evidence in Japanese and Korean. In these languages the use (and its absence) of case-markers is influenced by what this 'default' focus position is: this default position need not be, while other positions must be, marked by a case-marker to be a focus. This lends itself to a lexical specification of the default focus position, an HPSG rendering of which I will demonstrate.

More interesting, however, is a ramification of such an account of a more general kind: it predicts variations across languages. I show data that point to the likelihood that the default focus position could indeed be different for the same type of verb across languages, even across dialects. I will then conclude the talk pointing out another important aspect of the phenomenon in question: a mechanism for the ellipsis of case-marker, where a statistically-oriented, information-theoretic account will be suggested on this point.

La présentation aura lieu dans le cadre du **LingLunch Paris Diderot**, organisé chaque jeudi à l'UFR de Linguistique de l'Université Paris Diderot.
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