

### VP structure and focus/accent structure: evidence from code-switching.

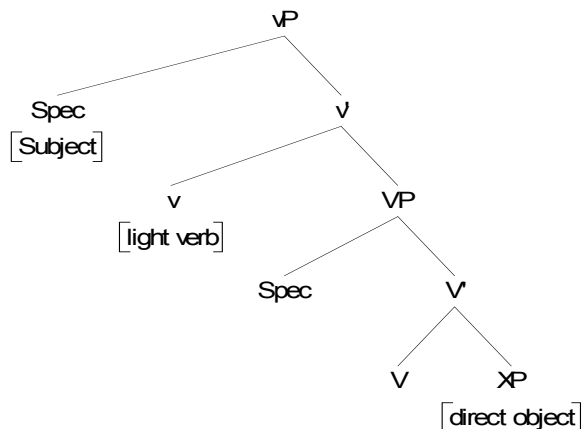
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In code-switching varieties, it is common to find a structure consisting of a light verb in one language (L1) followed by the main predicate with its arguments in the other (L2), as in (1). More intriguingly, the syntactic structure as well as the stress patterns of  $\alpha$  follows the rules and restrictions of L1 rather than L2:

- (1) *Juan ha hecho* [ $\alpha$             verkaufen die Bücher].  
Juan has done            sell        the books  
'Juan has sold the books.'  
*Juan ha hecho* --> L1, Spanish  
*Verkaufen die Bücher* --> L2, German

In (1), the word order of  $\alpha$  is VO, as in Spanish, not as in German. The prosodic structure requires accent on *die Bücher* regardless of the focus structure, again as in Spanish. In particular, it is not grammatical to deaccent the object as a mark of givenness, as is common in German (see Zubizarreta 1998 for explicit comparison of Romance and Germanic). This is very surprising, we would expect  $\alpha$  to follow a German pattern if it is true that "code-switching" involves actual "switching" from one language to another. The empirical aim of this talk is to present an account of this phenomenon.

Recent grammatical theorizing posits a complex structure for transitive predicates in which a light verb selects for the lexical verb. The so-called internal argument is an argument of the lexical verb while the external argument belongs to the light verb (see Chomsky 1995 among many others):



(2)

A vP forms a phase, a relatively autonomous syntactic unit that interfaces with interpretive modules (Chomsky 2001a, b) and which defines a phonological phrase and the accent structure within that phrase (Kratzer and Selkirk 2006). The light verb is described as the head of a phase, a constituent whose features determine all the syntactic operations within the phase (although, as far as we know, there have been no claims that there is a connection between the properties of v and accent structure).

The structure in (2) is normally opaque because of incorporation of V into v. Following González (2005) we can take (1) to be a transparent example of the structure in (2), in which the lexical verb is not incorporated into, as shown in (3):

(3) *Juan ha* [<sub>VP</sub> t(*Juan*) *hecho* [<sub>VP</sub> verkaufen die Bücher]

We claim that phase theory provides an elegant account of the otherwise perplexing properties of (1). Since the head of the phase is *hecho*, a Spanish word, the rest of the phase (the VP) must have a Spanish grammatical structure. More surprisingly, the head of the phase also determines that the focus and accent structures of VP must be Spanish-style.

Before we close, we need to mention that  $\alpha$  can also appear in the OV order:

(4) *Juan ha hecho* [ <sub>$\beta$</sub>  die Bücher verkaufen].

However,  $\beta$  is only apparently a typical German structure. As a matter of fact, two pieces of evidence indicate that the complement is incorporated into the lexical verb. First, while in a normal German clause an adverb can stand between the complement and the lexical verb, this is not the case in (4). Second, the accent and the focus must obligatorily fall on the verb, a pattern typical of incorporating structures (Baker 1996). In German, the complement would be stressed and focused in a sentence with focus on the complement, the VP or the entire sentence.

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