
MODELING TOPIC/FOCUS: EVIDENCE FROM RUSSIAN EVENTIVE NOMINALIZATIONS

Asya Pereltsvaig

Asya.Pereltsvaig@gmail.com

LANGUAGES DIFFER AS TO HOW MUCH TOPIC/FOCUS CAN AFFECT SYNTAX



English

SVO, *VOS, *VSO

Mary bought a book.

*Bought a book Mary.

*Bought Mary a book.

Italian

SVO, VOS, *VSO

Maria ha comprato il giornale.

Ha comprato il giornale Maria.

*Ha comprato Maria il giornale.

Belletti, Adriana. 2004a. Aspects of the low IP area. In *The Structure of IP and CP. The Cartography of Syntactic Structures, Vol. 2*, ed. Luigi Rizzi, 16-51. Oxford: OUP.

Russian

SVO, VOS, VSO

Maša kupila gazetu.

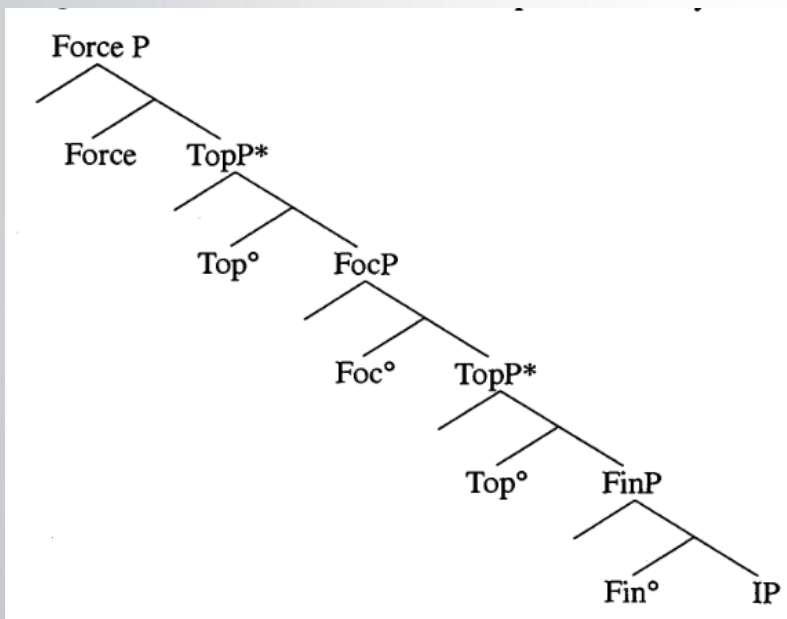
Kupila gazetu Maša.

Kupila Maša gazetu.

TWO APPROACHES TO MODELING TOPIC/FOCUS



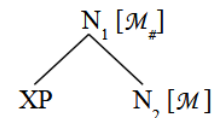
Cartography



Rizzi, Luigi. 1997. The Fine Structure of the Left Periphery. In *Elements of Grammar*, ed. Liliane Haegeman, 281-337. Dordrecht: Kluwer.

Anti-cartography

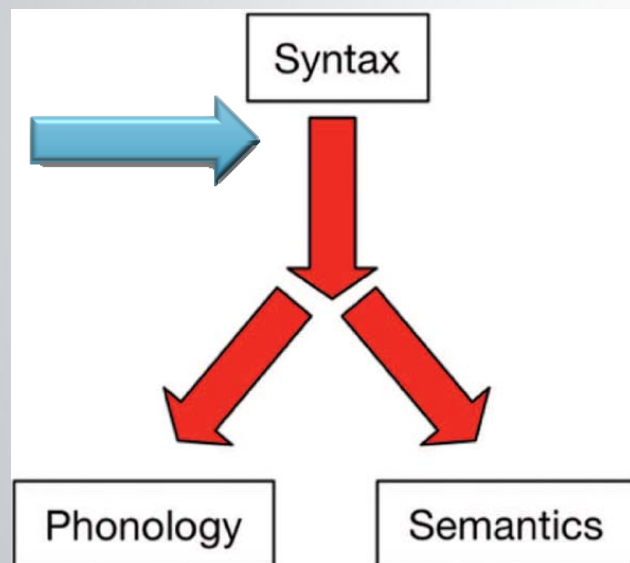
- a. *Comment Mapping Rule*
If XP in (10) is interpreted as topic, then interpret N₂ as comment.
- b. *Background Mapping Rule*
If XP in (10) is interpreted as focus, then interpret N₂ as background.



Neeleman, Ad and Hans Van de Koot. 2008. The nature of discourse templates. *Journal of Comparative Germanic Linguistics* 11: 137–189.

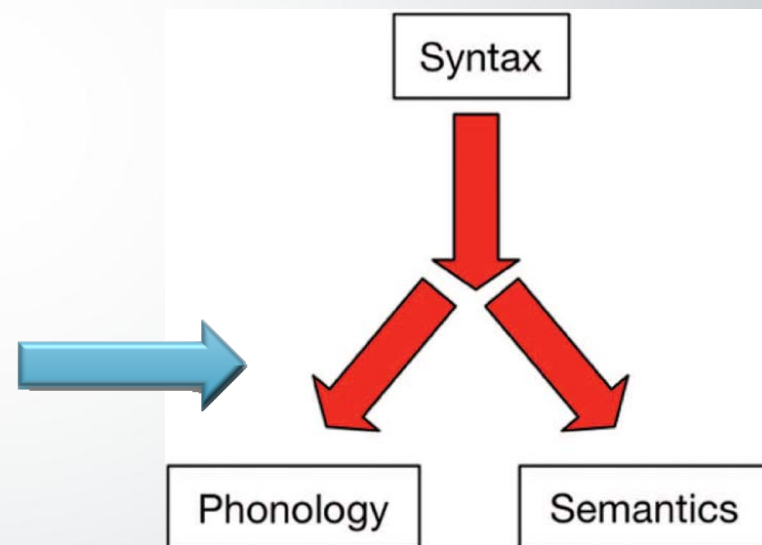
ON THE NATURE OF THE TOPIC/FOCUS PARAMETER(S)

Cartography



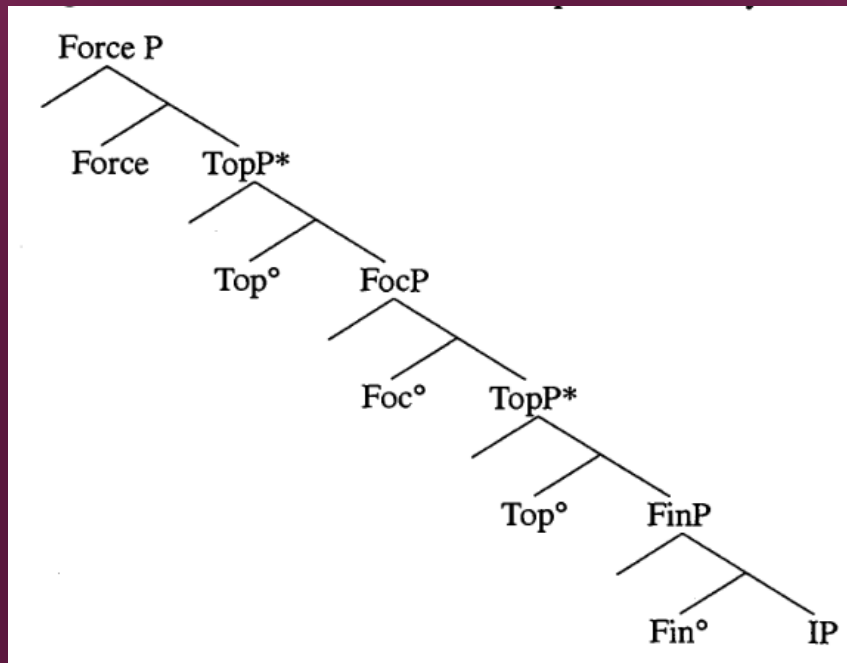
“languages differ in the type of movements that they admit or in the extent to which they overtly realize each head and specifier” (Cinque & Rizzi 2008: 46)

Anti-cartography



variation in the “mapping rules that associate syntactic representations with representations in information structure” (Neeleman & Van de Koot 2008: 269)

THREE PILLARS OF CARTOGRAPHY



1. THE ONE FEATURE ONE HEAD (OFOH) PRINCIPLE:

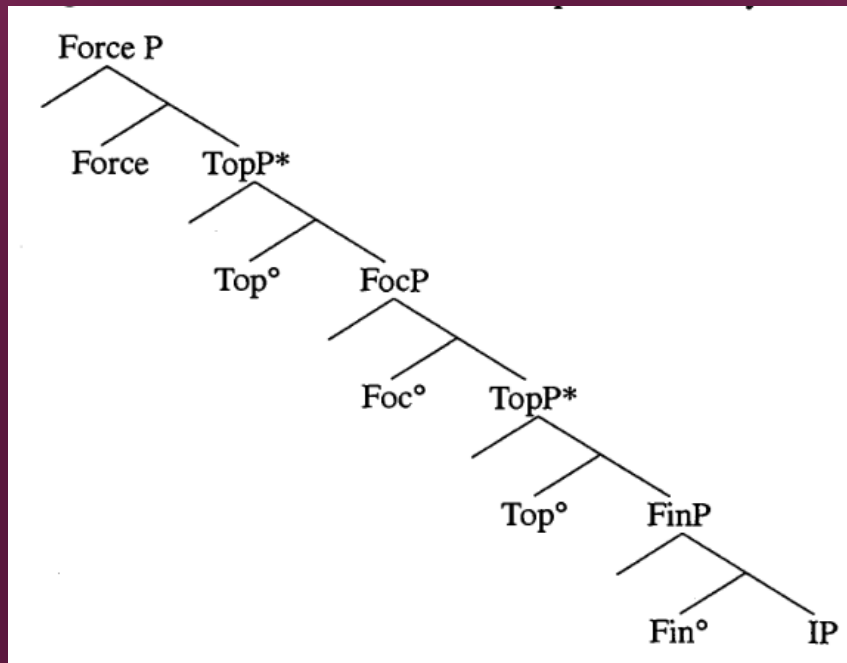
Each morphosyntactic feature corresponds to an independent syntactic head with a specific slot in the functional hierarchy.

(Cinque & Rizzi 2008: 45)

Cinque, Guglielmo and Luigi Rizzi. 2008. The cartography of syntactic structures. *Studies in Linguistics* 2: 42-58.

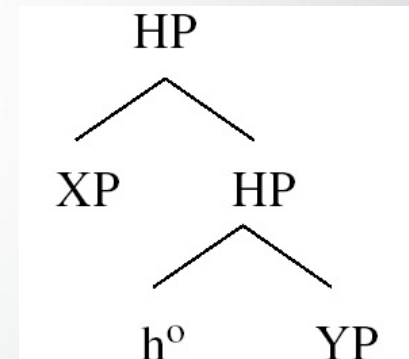
Van Craenenbroeck, Jeroen. 2009. Alternatives to cartography: an introduction. In *Alternatives to Cartography*, ed. Jeroen Van Craenenbroeck, 1-14. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.

THREE PILLARS OF CARTOGRAPHY



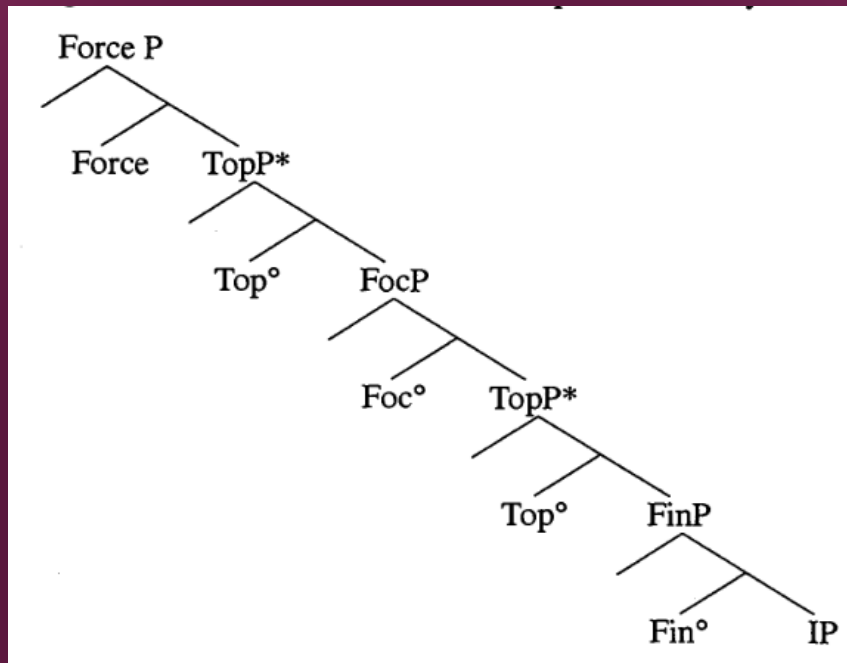
2. CARTOGRAPHY & ANTISYMMETRY:

- Right-branching structures
- Spec-Head-Compl orders
- No multiple specs
- No adjunction
- Heavy use of remnant movement



Kayne, Richard. 1994. *The anti-symmetry of syntax*.
Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

THREE PILLARS OF CARTOGRAPHY




3. TRIGGERED MOVEMENT:


Each functional head is endowed with a specific morphosyntactic feature, and it attracts phrases with a matching feature to its specifier.

It is unexpected if the movement of a certain phrase X would have interpretive effects on another phrase Y not directly involved in the movement operation.

Van Craenenbroeck, Jeroen. 2009. Alternatives to cartography: an introduction. In *Alternatives to Cartography*, ed. Jeroen Van Craenenbroeck, 1-14. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.



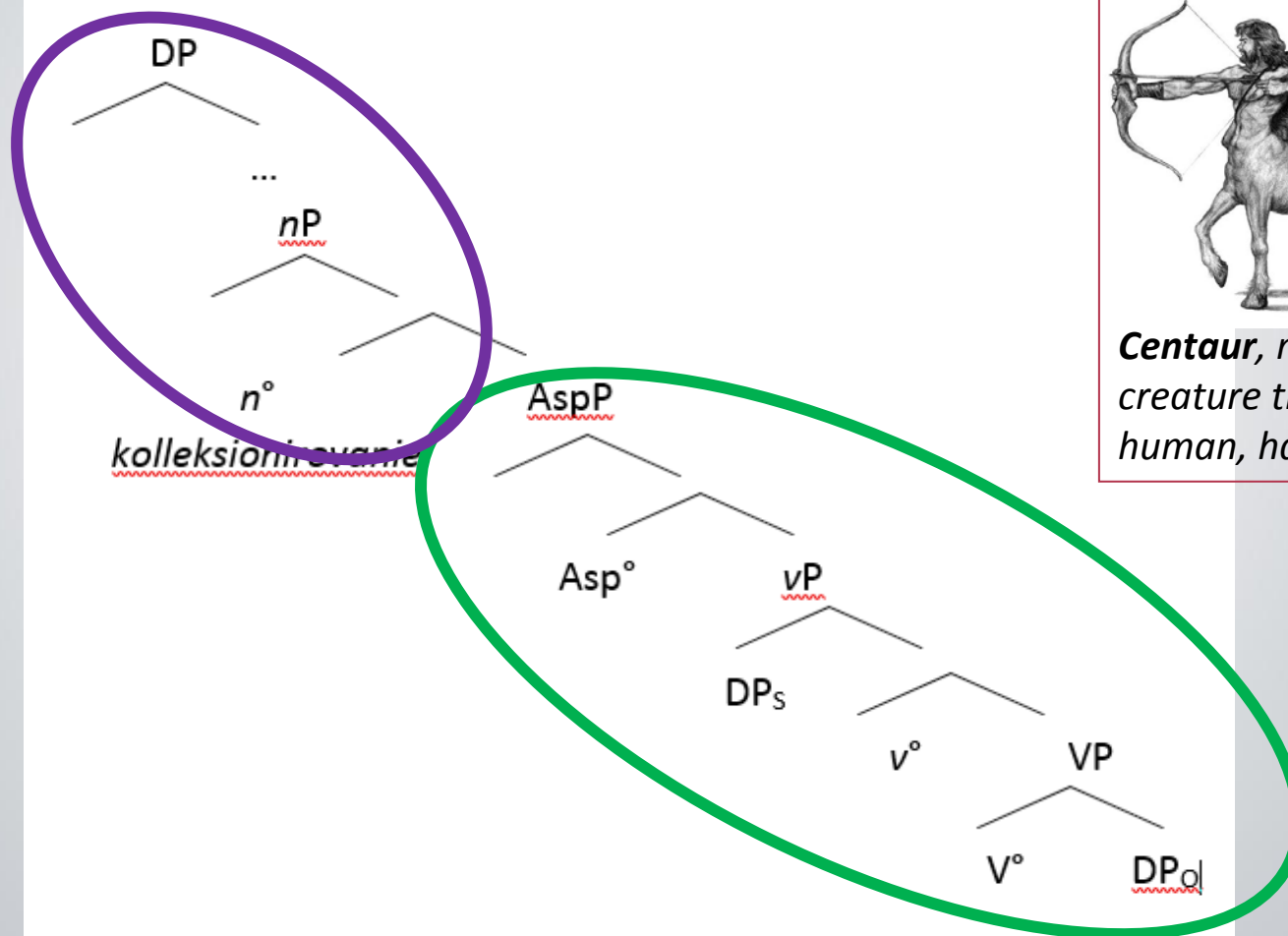
CLAIM: RUSSIAN EVENITIVE NOMINALIZATIONS
CHALLENGE THE CARTOGRAPHIC APPROACH TO
TOPIC/FOCUS AND MAKE A DENT IN EACH OF THE 3
PILLARS



RUSSIAN EVENTIVE NOMINALIZATIONS: BACKGROUND

- (1) a. O S
kollekcionirovanie redkix monet professorom lks
collecting [rare coins]._{GEN} [professor X]._{INSTR}
'professor X's collecting of rare coins'
- b. S O
kollekcionirovanie professorom lks redkix monet
collecting [professor X]._{INSTR} [rare coins]._{GEN}
'professor X's collecting of rare coins'

ASSUMED STRUCTURE OF RUSSIAN EVENTIVE NOMINALIZATIONS



Centaur, mythical creature that is half-human, half-horse.

PRONOUNS COME FIRST

(2) a.

S

O

kollekcionirovanie **imi**

marok

collecting

they._{INSTR}

stamps._{GEN}

‘collecting of stamps by them’

b.

O

S

kollekcionirovanie **ix**

det'mi

collecting

they._{GEN}

children._{INSTR}

‘collecting of them by children’

HEAVY DPS COME LAST

(3) a.

S

O

podderžka Siriej èkstremistskix organizacij i gruppirovok, veduščix
support Syria._{INSTR} [extremist organizations and groups, conducting
aktivnuju silovuju bor'bu protiv Izrailja
active forcible fight against Israel]._{GEN}

‘Syria’s support of extremist organizations and groups that are active power
struggle against Israel’ [from *National Corpus of Russian*]

b.

O

S

podderžka drugix slojev razvitymi institutami social'nogo gosudarstva
support [other layers]._{GEN} [developed institutions welfare state]._{INSTR}

‘the support of other classes by the developed institutions of a welfare state’ [from
National Corpus of Russian]

PLAN OF THE TALK:



Quickly go over 1-3 (discussed in more detail in Pereltsvaig, to appear)

1. Are the two orders derivationally related?
2. Which order represents the order of merger (“basic order”) and which one is derived?
3. Is the other order derived by A- or A'-movement?

Then discuss in more detail 4-6

4. What is the landing site for this movement?
5. Topic/focus in eventive nominalizations
6. Recap: Russian eventive nominalizations and cartography

ARE THE TWO ORDERS DERIVATIONALLY RELATED AND, IF SO, WHICH IS THE “UNDERLYING” ORDER?

- Yes, the two orders are derivationally related because they do not differ in any of their essential properties (argument structures, aktionsart, adverbial modification, etc.); for details, see Pereltsvaig (to appear)
- By Antonyuk's (2015) Scope Freezing Generalization (= basic order is ambiguous, derived order has surface scope only), the S>O is basic and the O>S order is derived.

Pereltsvaig, Asya. To appear. Word Order and the Structure of Eventive Nominalizations in Russian. In *Proceedings of FASL 27*. Ann Arbor, MI: Michigan Slavic Publications.

Antonyuk, Svitlana. 2015. *Quantifier Scopepe and Scope Freezing in Russian*. PhD dissertation, SUNY Stony Brook.

CONFIRMATION OF THE “UNDERLYING” S>O ORDER

- (5) a. kasanie snarjada bëder
touching crossbar._{GEN} hips._{GEN}

S > O

‘touching of the crossbar at the hips’ [Google hit]

NOT: ‘touching of the hips at the crossbar’

- b. upravlenie kuxarkoj gosudarstvom
managing cook._{INSTR} state._{INSTR}

S > O

‘managing of the state by a cook’ [Google hit]

NOT: ‘managing of the cook by the state’

CONFIRMATION OF THE “UNDERLYING” S>O ORDER

- (6) a. Mat' ljubit doc'.
mother._{NOM/ACC} loves daughter._{NOM/ACC}

‘Mother loves daughter.’

NOT: ‘Daughter loves mother.’

S > O

- b. Avtobus obognal trolleybus
bus._{NOM/ACC} passed trolleybus._{NOM/ACC}

‘The bus passed the trolleybus.’

NOT: ‘The trolleybus passed the bus.’

S > O

Jakobson, Roman. 1936/1984. Beitrag zur Allgemeinen Kasuslehre. Gesamtbedeutungen der Russischen Kasus. In *Russian and Slavic Grammar*. Studies by Roman Jakobson, ed. Linda R. Waugh and Morris Halle, 59-103. Berlin: Mouton.

Sekerina, Irina. 1997. Scrambling and Configurationality: Evidence from Russian Syntactic Processing. In *Proceedings of FASL 4*, 435-463. Ann Arbor, MI: Michigan Slavic Publications.

HOW IS THE O>S ORDER DERIVED FROM THE “UNDERLYING” S>O ORDER?

(7)

O

S

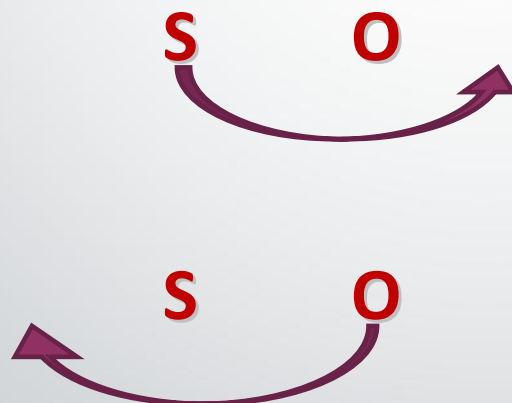
razrušenie Ierusalima Vespasianom
destruction Jerusalem._{GEN} Vespasian._{INSTR}
'destruction of Jerusalem by Vespasian'

S

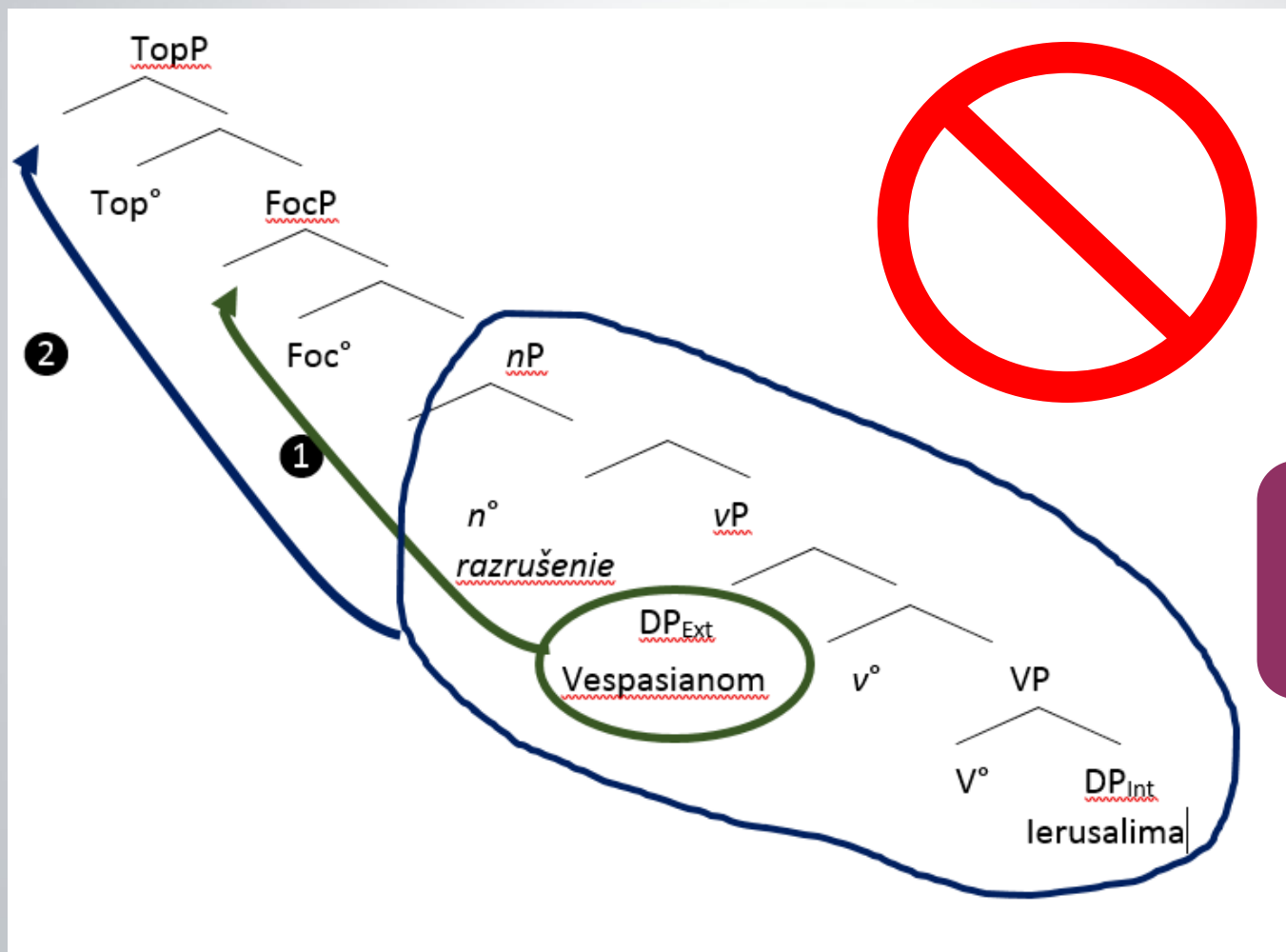
O

S

O



OPTION 1: S MOVES RIGHTWARD OVER O (= EVACUATION OF S + REMNANT MOVEMENT)



By this analysis, the evacuated S must be DP-final

S IN O>S ORDER IS NOT ALWAYS FINAL, BUT CAN BE IN-SITU!


**Judgements for non-contrastive interpretation!*

(8) a. raskladyvanie veščej **uborščicej** po mestam
putting things._{GEN} cleaner._{INSTR} in places

‘putting things in their places by the cleaner’

b. ?raskladyvanie veščej po mestam **uborščicej**
putting things._{GEN} in places cleaner._{INSTR}

‘putting things in their places by the cleaner’



Problem for
remnant
movement
analysis

S IN O>S ORDER IS NOT ALWAYS FINAL, BUT CAN BE IN-SITU!

**Judgements for non-contrastive interpretation!*

(9) [Context: A: This year I had a chance to see “Eugene Onegin” at the Metropolitan, “Queen of Spades” at the Mariinka, and “Boris Godunov” at the Bolshoi. B: And what was the most memorable event of this theatrical season?]

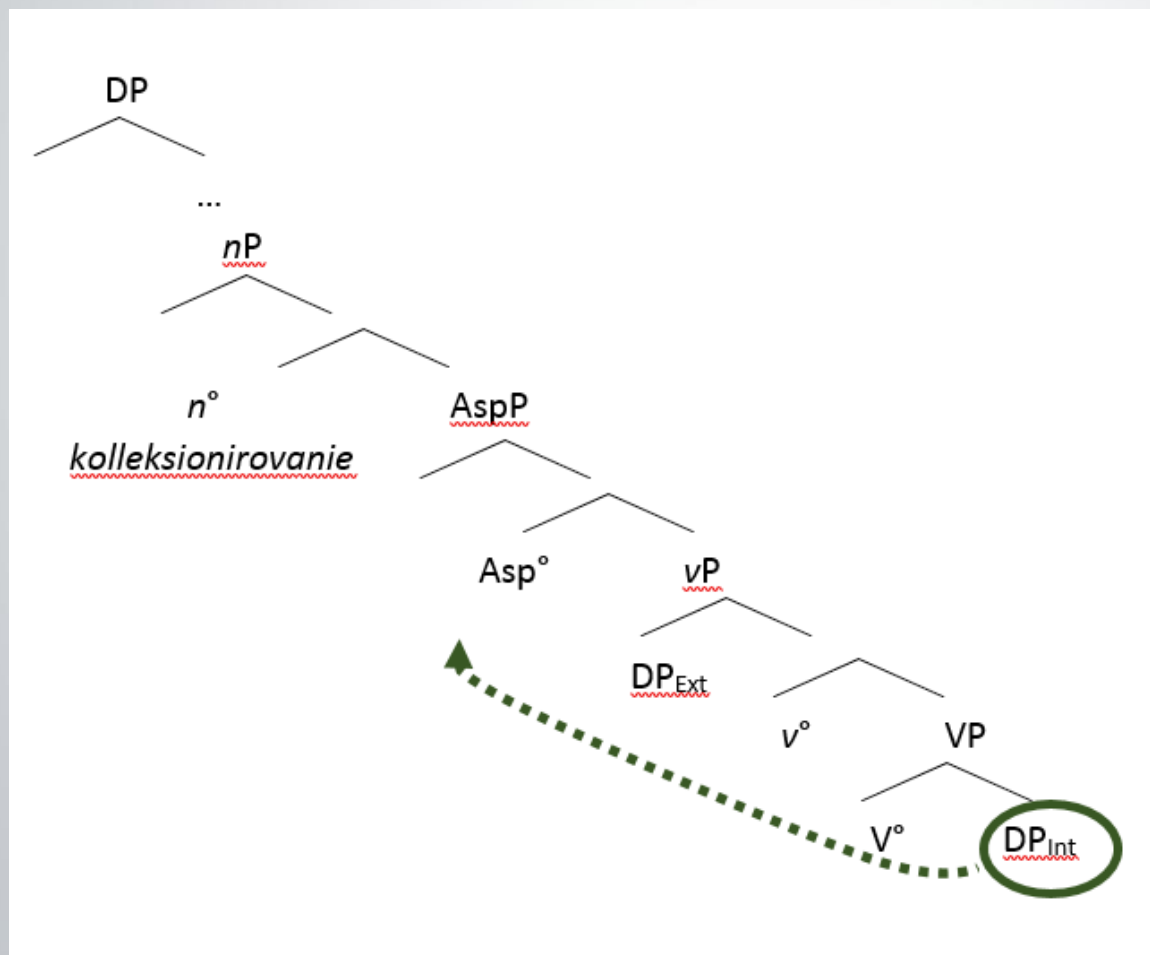
- a. ispolnenie arii Onegina **Mariusom Kvečiny** v Metropoliten-operi
 performing [aria Onegin]._{GEN} M.K._{INSTR} at the Metropolitan
- b. *ispolnenie arii Onegina v Metropoliten-operi **Mariusom Kvečiny**
 performing [aria Onegin]._{GEN} at the Metropolitan M.K._{INSTR}

[contrastive interpretation only!]

- c. ispolnenie **Mariusom Kvečiny** arii Onegina v Metropoliten-opere
 performing M.K._{INSTR} [aria Onegin]._{GEN} at the Metropolitan
 ‘a performance of Onegin’s aria by Mariusz Kwiecien at the Metropolitan’

Problem for
remnant
movement
analysis

OPTION 2: O MOVES LEFTWARDS OVER S

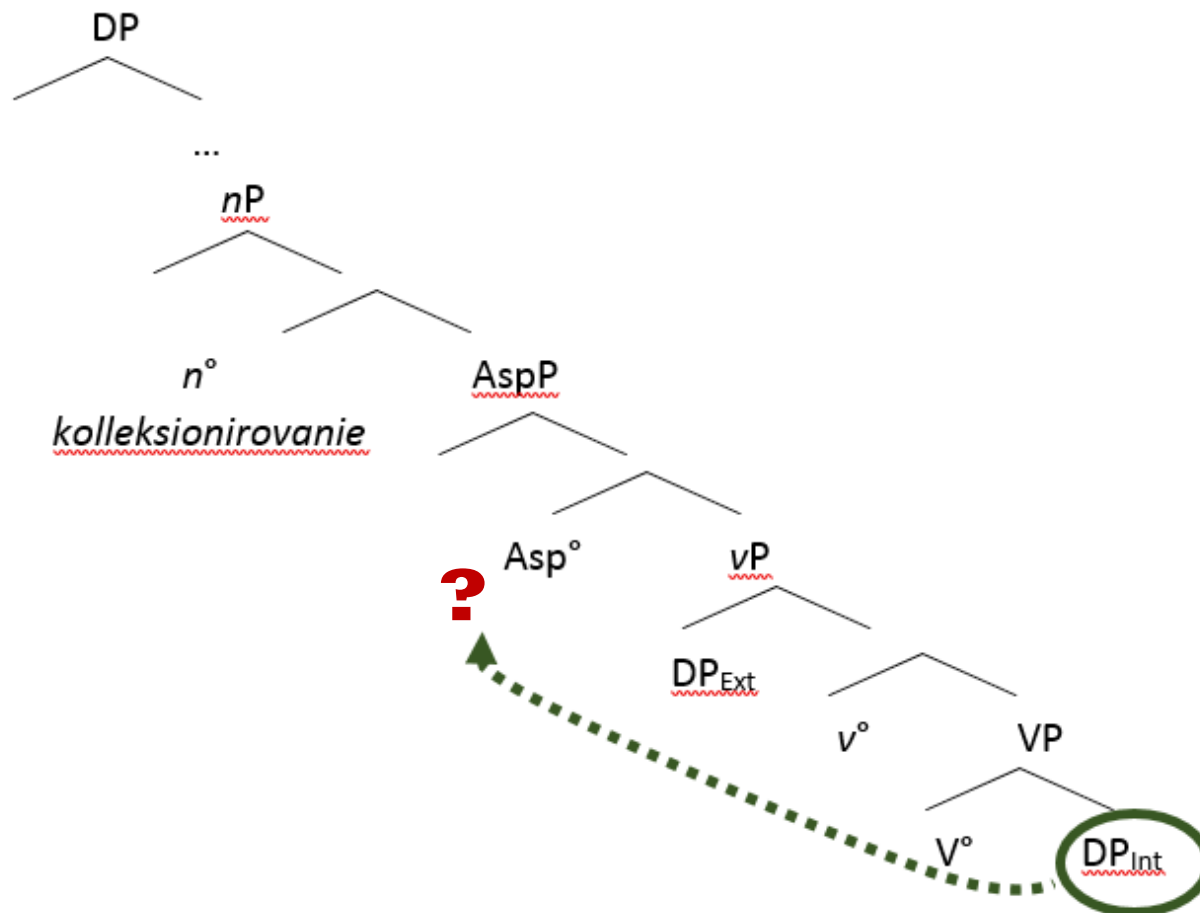


A- OR A'-?

- Evidence from binding and WCO

- (10) a. *podderživanie partnerov drug drugom
supporting partners._{GEN}[each other]._{INSTR}
intended: 'the partners' supporting each other'
- b. podderživanie partnerami drug druga
supporting partners._{INSTR} [each other]._{GEN}
'supporting of each other by the partners'

WHERE DOES THE O MOVE TO?



Spec-AspP

adjunct

Spec-TopP

Spec-FocP

WHAT'S TOPIC? WHAT'S FOCUS?

**Definitions based on Neeleman et al. (2009)*

Topic = “the entity ... introducing a new topic or narrowing down the current topic”

Focus = “the information highlighted in a proposition. For example, in the answer to a *wh*-question, the constituent that corresponds to the *wh*-expression is a focus. The rest of the sentence functions as the background to this focus”

***Arguments in a nominalization cannot be questioned by a dedicated *wh*-expression; **new information focus** is diagnosed as the element not mentioned in linguistic context and not expected to be known from the non-linguistic context.*

“Constituents that are **contrastive** are understood to belong to a contextually given set out of which they are selected to the exclusion of at least some other members of the set. Both topics and foci can be interpreted contrastively.”

NEW INFO FOCUS, WHETHER S OR O, FOLLOWS THE OTHER ARGUMENT

- In a text about Jewish history:

(11) **O** **S**
razrušenie Ierusalima Vespasianom
destruction Jerusalem._{GEN} Vespasian._{INSTR}
'destruction of Jerusalem by Vespasian'

- In a text about Roman history:

(12) **S** **O**
razrušenie rimljanami Karfagena
destruction Romans._{INSTR} Carthage._{GEN}
'destruction of Carthage by the Romans'

CONTRASTIVE FOCUS, WHETHER S OR O, DOESN'T FRONT
TO THE FAR LEFT*

**contrary to Neeleman et al. (2009: 36)'s generalization that "contrastive foci typically occupy positions further to the left"*

(13) Opiši-ka

a. **O** **S**
 *IERUSALIMA razrušenie rimljanami (a ne Karfagena)
 Jerusalem._{GEN} destruction Romans._{INSTR} and not Carthage._{GEN}
 'destruction of JERUSALEM by the Romans (and not of Carthage)'

b. **S** **O**
 *RIMLIJANAMI razrušenie Ierusalima (a ne vavilonjanami)
 Romans._{INSTR} destruction Jerusalem._{GEN} and not Babylonians._{INSTR}
 'destruction of Jerusalem by the ROMANS (and not by the Babylonians)'

CONTRASTIVE FOCUS , WHETHER S OR O, CAN APPEAR IN THE MEDIAL POSITION*

**But for some speakers such structures are somewhat degraded.*

(14) Opiši-ka

a.

O

S

?razrušenie IERUSALIMA rimljanami (a ne Karfagena)
destruction Jerusalem._{GEN} Romans._{INSTR} and not Carthage._{GEN}
'destruction of JERUSALEM by the Romans (and not of Carthage)'

b.

S

O

?razrušenie RIMLIJANAMI Ierusalima (a ne vavilonjanami)
destruction Romans._{INSTR} Jerusalem._{GEN} and not Babylonians._{INSTR}
'destruction of Jerusalem by the ROMANS (and not by the Babylonians)'

CONTRASTIVE FOCUS , WHETHER S OR O, CAN BE FINAL*

**contrary to Neeleman et al. (2009: 36)'s generalization that "contrastive foci typically occupy positions further to the left"*

***Some speakers prefer this order over the previous one.*

(15) Opiši-ka

a. S O
razrušenie rimljanami IERUSALIMA (a ne Karfagena)
destruction Romans._{INSTR} Jerusalem._{GEN} and not Carthage._{GEN}
'destruction of JERUSALEM by the Romans (and not of Carthage)'

b. O S
razrušenie Ierusalima RIMLJANAMI (a ne vavilonjanami)
destruction Jerusalem._{GEN} Romans._{INSTR} and not Babylonians._{INSTR}
'destruction of Jerusalem by the ROMANS (and not by the Babylonians)'

CONTRASTIVE FOCUS , WHETHER S OR O, CAN BE FINAL*: NATURALLY-OCCURRING EXAMPLES

**contrary to Neeleman et al. (2009: 36)'s generalization that "contrastive foci typically occupy positions further to the left"*

***Constrasted elements are underlined.*

- (16) a. sperva prisoedinenie k SSSR, a potom zaxvat L'vova nemcami
first inclusion into USSR and then capture Lviv._{GEN} Germans._{INSTR}
'first the inclusion into the USSR and then the capture of Lviv by the Germans'

<https://vesti-ukr.com/kultura/240899-126-litrov-dlja-prodigy-i-tjazhelye-zvezdy-ua>

- b. zaxvat L'vova nemcami, vsled za kotorymi banderovcy
capture Lviv._{GEN} Germans._{INSTR} after which followers.of.Bandera
'the capture of Lviv by the Germans after which (came) followers of Bandera'

<http://www.km.ru/forum/world/2014/07/10/protivostoyanie-na-ukraine-2013-14/744572-konstantin-sivkov-strelkov-demonstriruet->

Neeleman, Ad, Elena Titov, Hans Van de Koot and Reiko Vermeulen. 2009. A syntactic typology of topic, focus and contrast. In *Alternatives to Cartography*, ed. Jeroen Van Craenenbroeck, 15-51. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.

CONTRASTIVE TOPICS , WHETHER S OR O, PRECEDE CONTRASTIVE FOCUS

(17) Da razve možno sravnivat'

PRT whether possible to.compare

a. razrušenie Stalingrada nemcami i Berlina sojuznikami

destruction Stalingrad._{GEN} Germans._{INSTR} and Berlin._{GEN} allies._{INSTR}

'destruction of Stalingrad by the Germans and of Berlin by the allies'

b. razrušenie nemcami Stalingrada i sojuznikami Berlina

destruction Germans._{INSTR} Stalingrad._{GEN} and allies._{INSTR} Berlin._{GEN}

'destruction by the Germans of Stalingrad and by the allies of Berlin '

CAN WE CAPTURE THESE FACTS BY TOPP/FOCP? PROLIFERATION OF TOPIC AND FOCUS PROJECTIONS

In split CP
("clausal left periphery")
Rizzi 1997

At the edge of vP
("left periphery of vP phase")
Belletti 2004

In split DP
("nominal left periphery")
Giusti 1996, 2006

?

CAN WE CAPTURE THESE FACTS BY TOPP/FOCP? PROLIFERATION OF TOPIC AND FOCUS PROJECTIONS

In split CP
("clausal left periphery")
Rizzi 1997

At the edge of *v*P
("left periphery of *v*P phase")
Belletti 2004

In split DP
("nominal left periphery")
Giusti 1996, 2006

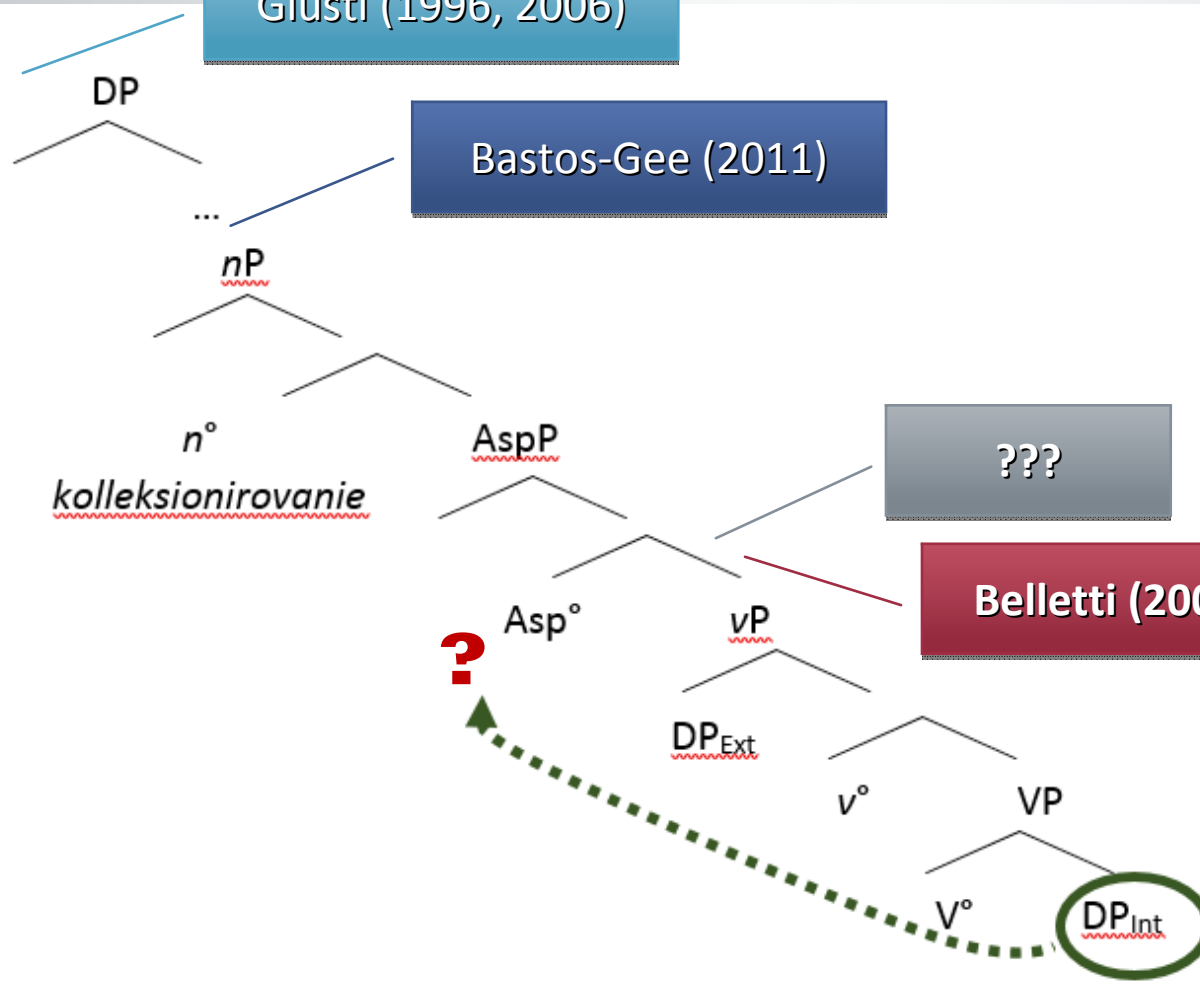
At the edge of *n*P?
("left periphery of *n*P phase")
Bastos-Gee 2011

BUT THIS IS TOO HIGH

TOPP/FOCP IN NOMINALS:

Giusti (1996, 2006)

Bastos-Gee (2011)

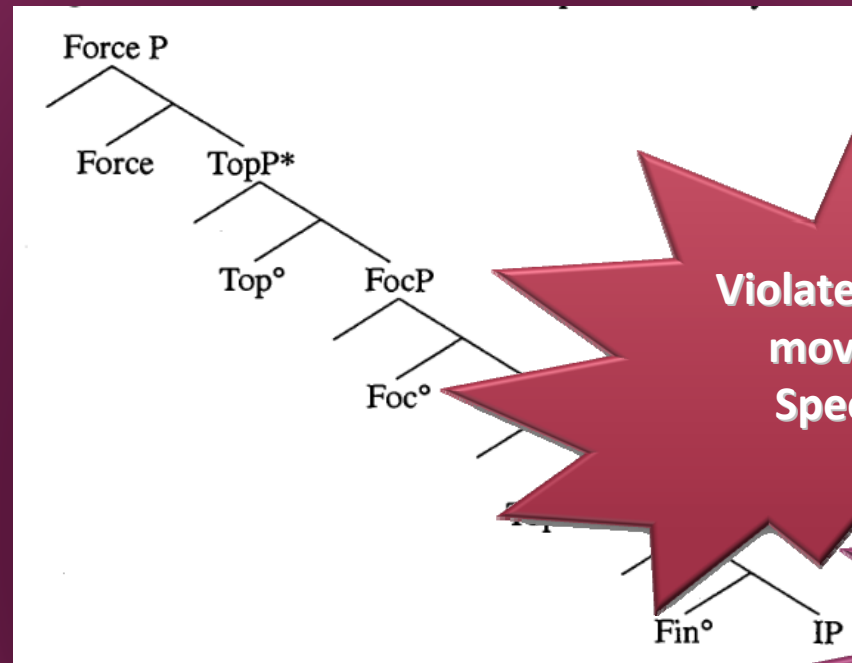


Belletti's data shows that the postverbal subjects in Italian are low, and she concludes that they are *in a low FocP*. But see Brunetti (2004) and Samek-Lodovici (2015, section 3.3.) for arguments that low focused subjects are *in situ*.

THE THREE PILLARS OF CARTOGRAPHY, AGAIN

1. THE ONE FEATURE ONE HEAD (OFOH) PRINCIPLE:

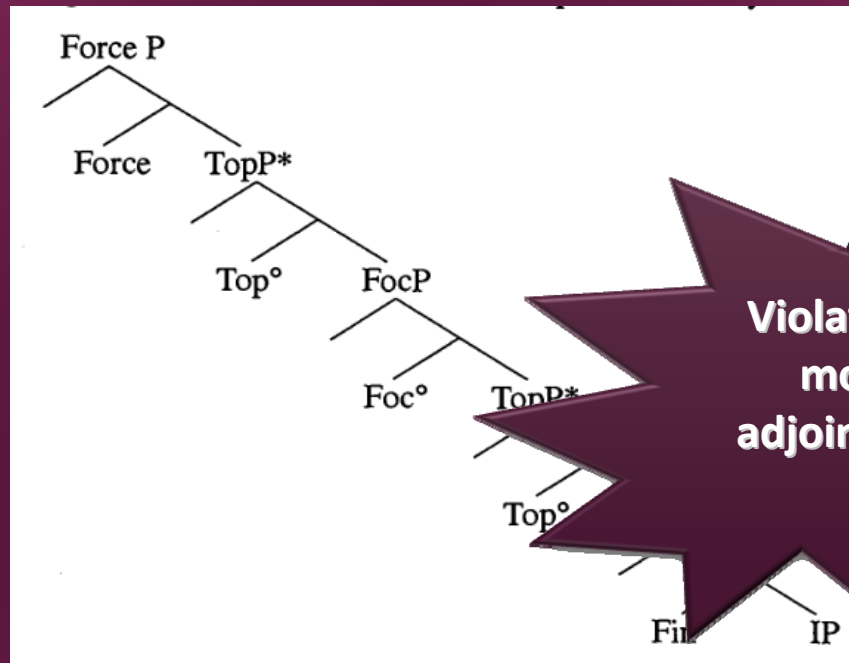
Each morphosyntactic feature corresponds to an independent syntactic head with a specific slot in the functional hierarchy.



**Violated if the O
moves into
Spec-AspP**

**Also violated by
proliferation of
TopP and FocP
phrases**

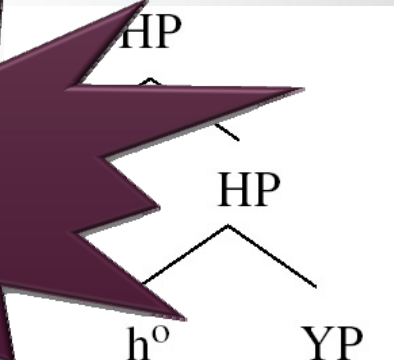
THE THREE PILLARS OF CARTOGRAPHY, AGAIN



**Violated if the O
moves into
adjoined position**

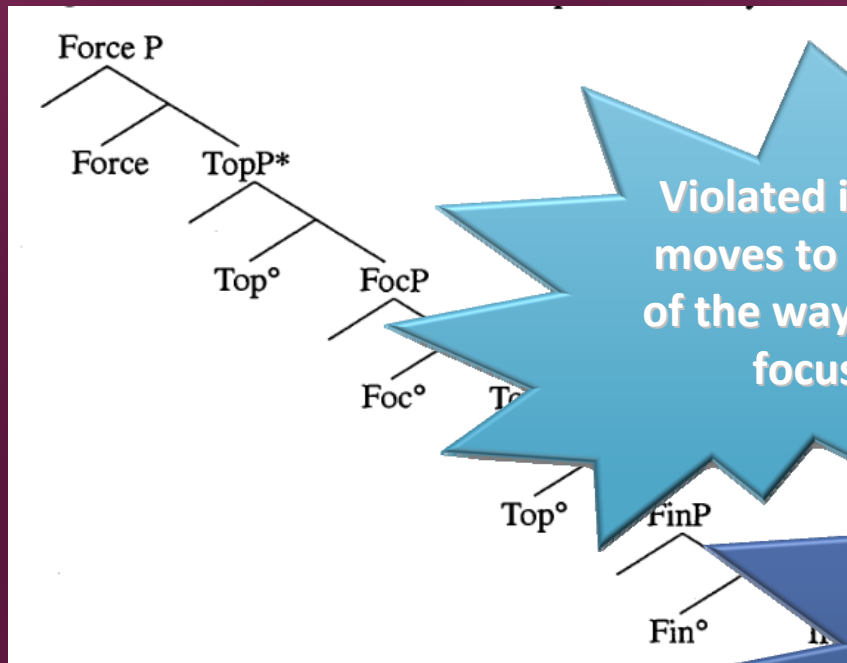
2. CARTOGRAPHY & ANTISYMMETRY:

- Right-branching structures
- Spec-Head-Compl orders
- No multiple specs
- No adjunction



Kayne, Richard. 1994. *The anti-symmetry of syntax*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

THE THREE PILLARS OF CARTOGRAPHY, AGAIN



3. TRIGGERED MOVEMENT:

Each functional head is endowed with a specific morphosyntactic feature, and it attracts phrases with a matching feature to its specifier.

Each movement of a phrase X would have effects on another phrase Y, and only involved in the movement of X.

Violated by the optionality of contrastive focus triggering movement

es to
to Cartography,
in: Walter de

EMERGING ANTICARTOGRAPHIC ACCOUNT



- Three features: [Topic], [Focus], [Contrast] (Neeleman et al. 2009)
- Licensing rules:
 - e.g., [Focus] is licensed in clause- **and nominal**-final position. (Neeleman et al. 2009: 36 + my observation in blue)
- Mapping rules:
 - [Focus] + [Contrast] = IC-2
 - [Topic] + [Contrast] = IC-5

THANK YOU!



- Questions?
- Asya.Pereltsvaig@gmail.com

Thanks to Sergei Tatevosov, Olga Mitrenina, and John Bailyn for providing judgments, critique and thoughtful suggestions, and for the general support of this project!

RECAP: INFORMATION STRUCTURE IN RUSSIAN EVENTIVE NOMINALIZATIONS

- New focus is in-situ, but (if S) it cannot be followed by O.
- Contrastive focus can be in-situ or inverted, but requires intonational emphasis.
- Contrastive topics precede contrastive foci and trigger IC-5.
- In other words, the O may invert to be:
 - out of the way of the S new info focus
 - intonationally emphasized as a contrastive focus
 - intonationally emphasized in a different way as a contrastive topic
- But as a contrastive focus, the O need not invert (for some speakers, cannot invert)

PROLIFERATION OF TOPIC AND FOCUS PROJECTIONS

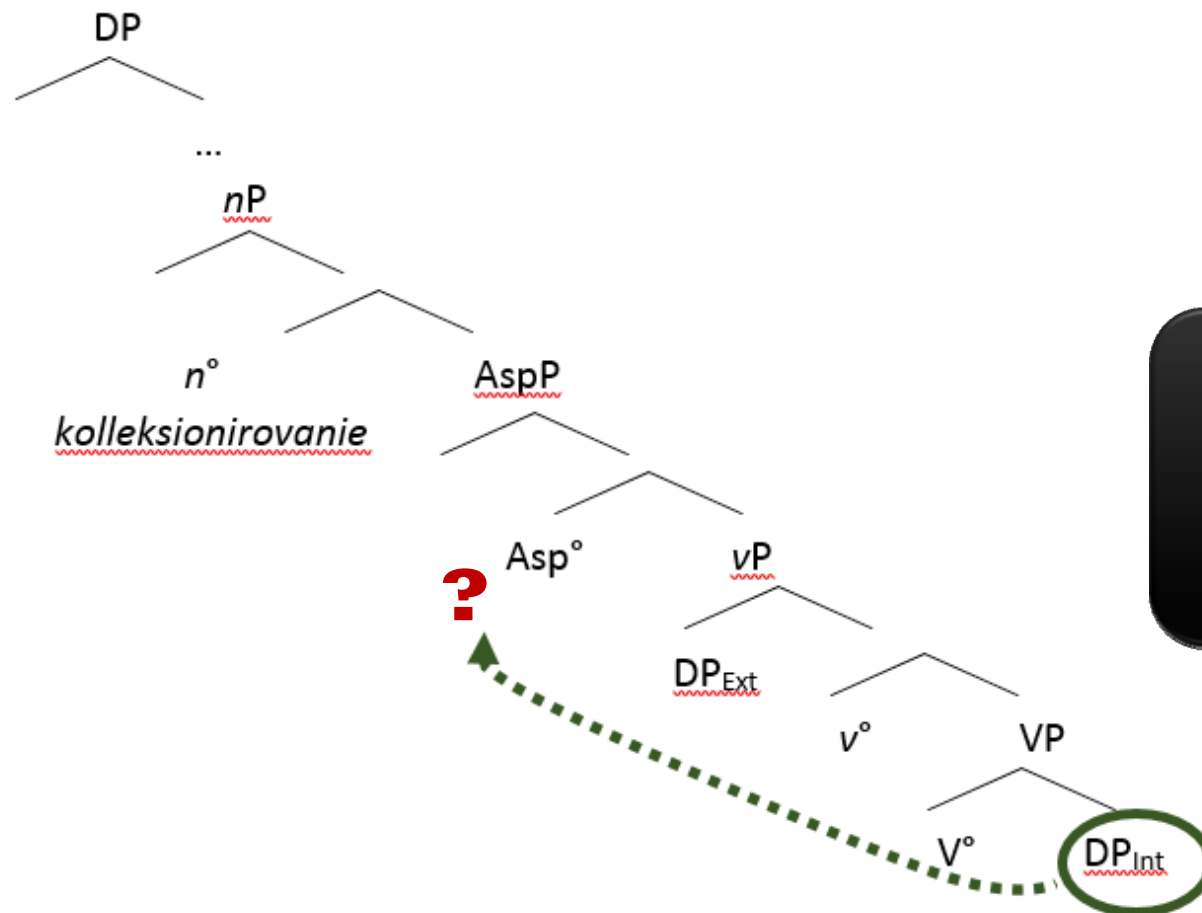
CAN WE USE THIS?



At the edge of vP
("left periphery of vP phase")
Belletti 2004

Belletti's data shows that the postverbal subjects in Italian are low, but it need not entail that they are in a low FocP, *unless one assumes a strictly cartographic approach à la Rizzi (1997)* → circular logic!
See Brunetti (2004) and Samek-Lodovici (2015, section 3.3.) for arguments in favor of *in situ* position of postverbal foci in Italian.

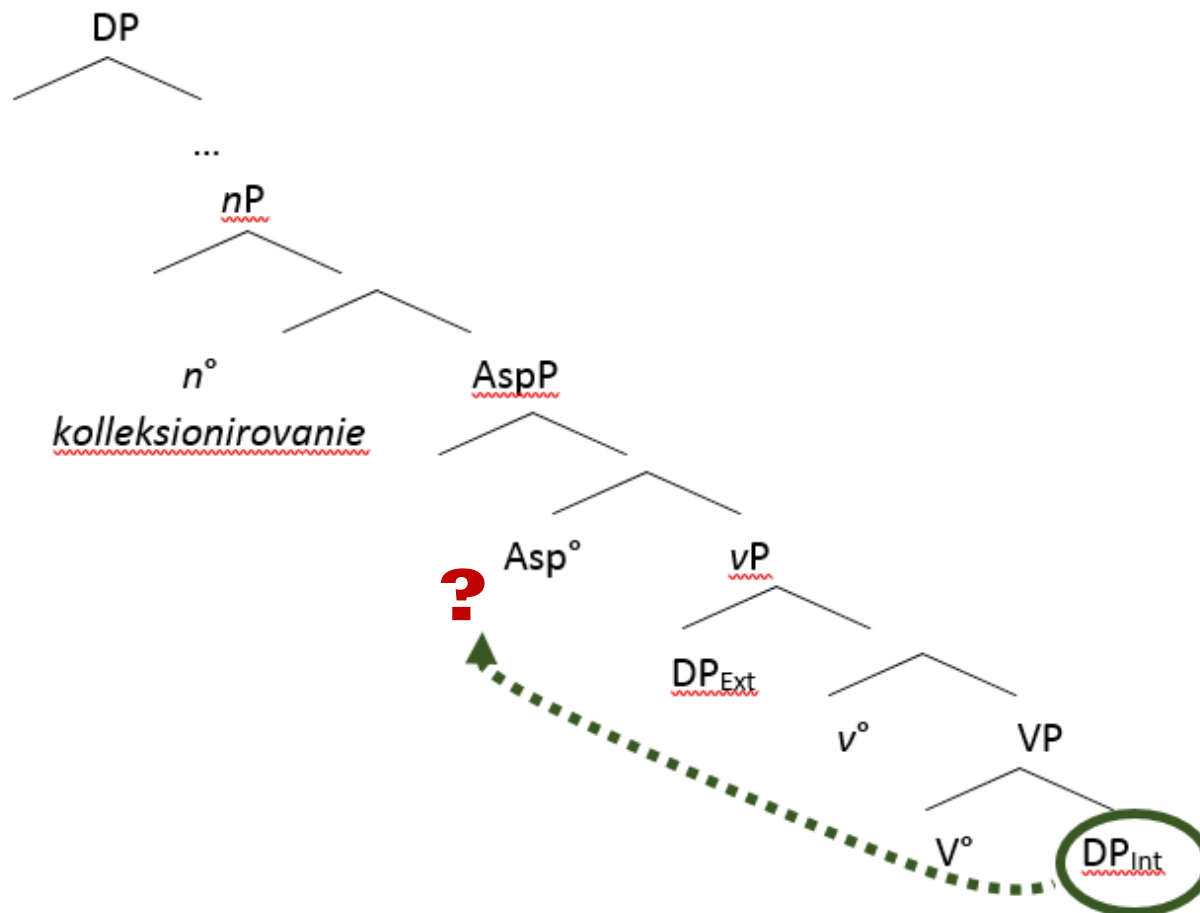
THE INVERSION OF THE INTERNAL ARGUMENT AND CARTOGRAPHY



Spec-AspP

But:
Asp° hosts IMF2 –yva
⇒ violation of the OFOH
principle

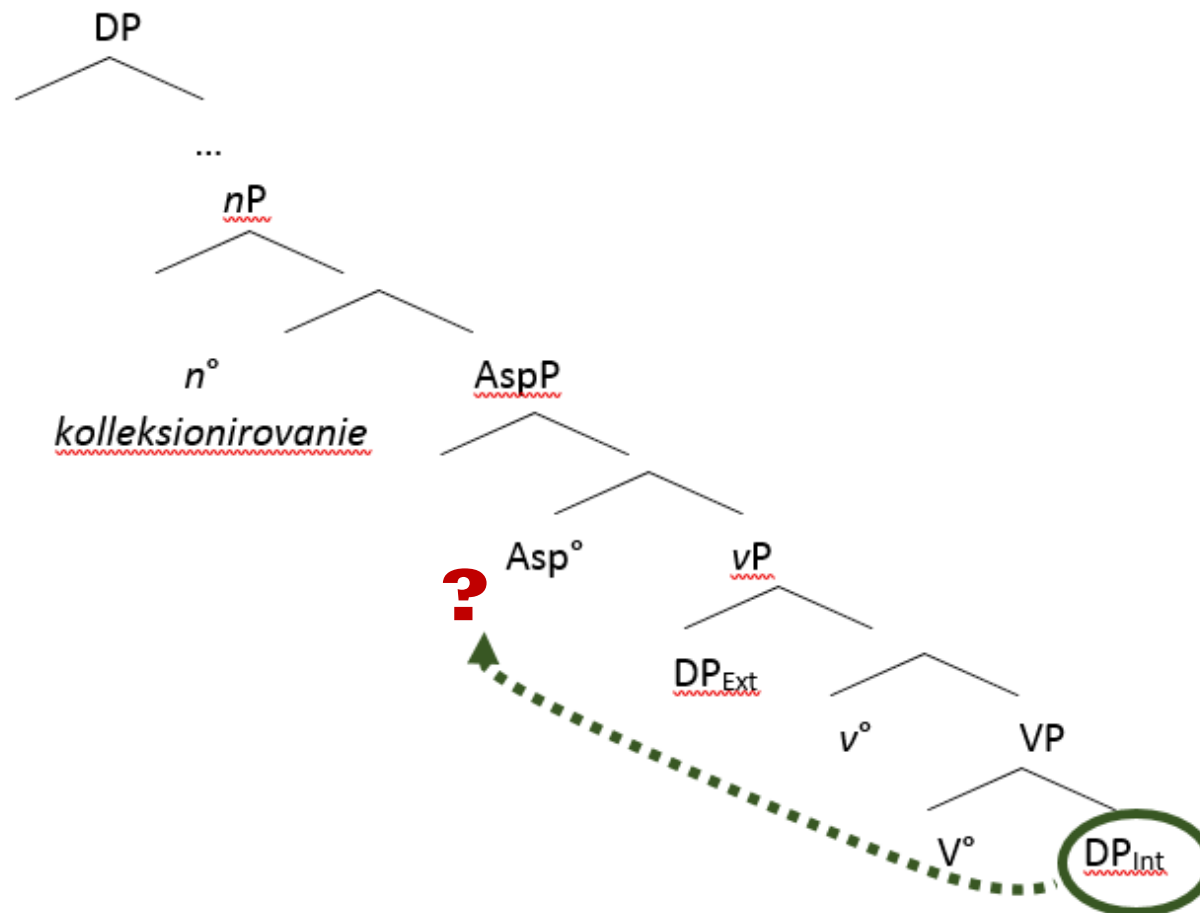
THE INVERSION OF THE INTERNAL ARGUMENT AND CARTOGRAPHY



adjunct

But:
violation of the LCA

THE INVERSION OF THE INTERNAL ARGUMENT AND CARTOGRAPHY



Spec-TopP

Spec-FocP

But:

1. a whole bouquet of TopP and FocP is needed
2. potentially interpretative effects for unmoved element (new focus)
3. optionality of contrastive focus triggering movement

ARE THE TWO ORDERS DERIVATIONALLY RELATED?

Table 1. Properties of the two orders

	Int-Ext	Ext-Int
Argument Structure:		
Agent-Theme	Y (1a)	Y (1b)
Experiencer-Cause	Y (7a)	Y (7b)
Aktionsart:		
Activity	Y (1a)	Y (1b)
Achievement	Y (9a)	Y (9b)
State	Y (7a)	Y (7b)
Manner Adverbials:		
PPs	Y (8a)	Y (8b)
adverbs	Y (8a)	Y (8b)
Aspectual Adverbials:		
<i>za</i> 'in' adverbials	Y (9a)	Y (9b)
<i>v tečenie</i> 'for' adverbials	Y (10a)	Y (10b)
Pluralization possible?	Y (11a)	Y (11b)

WHICH ORDER REPRESENTS THE ORDER OF MERGER ("BASIC ORDER") AND WHICH ONE IS DERIVED?

- Scope Freezing Generalization (Antonyuk 2015: 53): the merged order of arguments allows for scope ambiguity, whereas scope freezing “always results from overt raising of one QP over another to a c commanding position as a result of a single instance of movement”.

- (4) a. otkryvanie kakim-to gostem každoj dveri
opening [some guest]._{INSTR} [every door]._{GEN}
'opening by some guest of every door': $\exists \forall, \forall \exists$
- b. otkryvanie kakoj-to dveri každyd gostem
opening [some door]._{GEN} [every guest]._{INSTR}
'opening by some guest of every door': $\exists \forall, * \forall \exists$



Conclusion: Merge order S > O