

## Focus: Domains, Types, and Realizations

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Focus marks salient items in the discourse. In Semantic accounts, focus is marked as a feature ‘F’ on words/phrases in a syntactic representation, but the prosodic realization of this feature is language-specific and can vary depending on various factors such as focus types (e.g., contrastive, presentational, corrective) and the size of focus domain (narrow vs. broad focus). In languages such as Basque and European Portuguese, corrective focus is realized differently from presentational focus (Frota 1998, Gussenhoven 2006, Elordieta 2007). But in English, the realizations of different focus types are controversial. Beckman & Pierrehumbert (1986) and Selkirk (2002) found that presentational and contrastive focus are realized with different pitch accent types, but Bartels and Kingston (1994) found that the only consistent difference distinguishing focus types is the pitch peak values. On the other hand, production and perception studies on English focus (e.g. Gussenhoven 1983, Birch and Clifton 1995, Welby 2003) have shown that sentences with broad focus on VP or the whole sentence are realized the same as those with narrow focus on the sentence final noun. For example, the answer sentences in (1) are produced the same, *She bought a BOOK*, even though their focus domains are different. This data supports the Focus Projection theory which claims that focus on an internal argument can project its focus to its head, and focus on a head can project its focus to its head phrase recursively (Selkirk 1984, 1995; Rochemont 1986, 1988). But as Gussenhoven (1983) has shown, not all internal arguments can project focus. For example, to the question in (2), the first answer is not felicitous, but the second and third are. That is, focus on the whole VP is licensed by the prominence of VP-final item. However, it is not known whether the VP focus sentence is prosodically the same as the sentence produced with narrow focus on the VP-final item.

- (1) a. *What happened?* [She bought a book]<sub>F</sub>  
b. *What did she do?* She [bought a book]<sub>F</sub>  
c. *What did she buy?* She bought [a book]<sub>F</sub>
- (2) *What did the butler do?* \*The butler offered the PRESIDENT some coffee.  
The butler offered the president some COFFEE.  
The butler offered some coffee to the PRESIDENT.

This talk will report results from three phonetic experiments testing whether sentences with different focus domains and focus types are realized the same or not when the sentence has one or two VP internal arguments. Quantitative (f0 and duration) and qualitative (transcription of tones and phrasing) data in English and Korean show that, in both languages, sentences with VP focus are realized differently from those with narrow focus on the VP-final item. For the focus types, corrective focus and wh-question focus differ in duration data for all speakers but do not differ consistently in pitch peak values and pitch accent types. The talk will conclude by comparing focus prosody of English and Korean and discussing the implication of the data to the focus theory.