

On focus of negation

Chizuru Nakao (University of Maryland, College Park)

Abstract:

This paper examines properties of “fragment negation” (e.g. “John ate an apple, not an orange.”) and claims that it is derived by focus movement followed by IP-ellipsis. Similarly to other fragment constructions such as sluicing (Ross 1969, Merchant 2001), fragment answers (Merchant 2004) and *why*-XP fragments (Yoshida 2008), it exhibits a number of properties to indicate that it has an underlying clausal structure (e.g. connectivity effects, P-stranding generalization, etc.). The paper also considers why the type of focus movement involved in fragment negation (as well as fragment answers and *why*-XP fragments) is only applicable in elliptical environments. An analysis is given, where focus movement, which is usually covert, is allowed to be pronounced in the top copy position only when the bottom copy is included in an ellipsis site.