

Towards a Theory of Morphosyntactic Focus Marking

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Based on six detailed case studies of languages in which focus is marked morphosyntactically, we propose a novel formal theory of focus marking, which can capture these as well as the familiar English-type prosodic focus marking. Special attention is paid to the patterns of focus syncretism, that is, when different size and/or location of focus are indistinguishably realized by the same form.

The key ingredients to our approach are that complex constituents (not just words) may be directly focally marked, and that the choice of focal marking is governed by blocking.