

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT:

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"Focusing on Reflexives"

November 19, 2014

@ 7 pm

KCB 101

Abstract

Answers to subject questions have focus stress on the subject (Halliday 1967, Krifka 2004, and many, many others).

(1) Q: Who mocked Danny? (Subject Question)

✓ A1: JANET mocked Danny.

✗ A2: Janet mocked DANNY.

This pattern is extremely robust. However, Spathas 2010, Ahn 2012, and Ahn 2014 have noted one apparent exception: sentences with a reflexive pronoun (e.g., *himself*, *herself*, *ourselves*, ...).

(2) Q: Who mocked Danny? (Subject Question)

✗ A1: DANNY mocked himself.

✓ A2: Danny mocked HIMSELF.

Even though the question in (2) is a subject question, focus stress falls on the object, himself. This pattern shows that the linguistic properties of sentences with a reflexive pronoun are different from other sentences -- this talk explores what those differences are, and sheds light on the way syntax, semantics, and phonology are connected.

Refreshments will be served.

This is also a Facebook event: <https://www.facebook.com/events/833168360060702/>

RSVP appreciated but not required.

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