Focus without movement: Syntax-prosody interface in Georgian
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1 Introduction
What is the relationship between syntax and information structure?

A. Information structure (IS) is embedded in syntax:
   -- a constituent is moved to a particular position because of its IS status;
   -- syntactic representations are specified for various IS categories; consequence: extensive peripheries, rich set of criteria based on semantic properties ([TOPIC], [CONTRASTIVE], [EXHAUSTIVE], [WH], etc.)

(1) \([\text{TopP}] \cdots \text{TopP} [\text{FocP}] \cdots \text{TopP} [\text{FocP}] \cdots \text{TopP} [\text{vP}] \cdots\]
   IS domain IS domain

B. Information structure is read off syntactic structure:
   -- syntactic configurations are not uniquely associated with specific IS statuses;
   -- IS categories such as focus can be obtained in heterogeneous syntactic positions.

(2) \([\text{CP}] \cdots \text{TP} \cdots \text{vP} \cdots \]

Goal of this talk: argue for position B using a subset of novel data from Georgian.

Outline:
- Georgian: Introduction (section 2)
- Focus and its properties (section 3)
- Prosody of Georgian focus (section 4)
- Non-focused material (section 5)
- Conclusions (section 6)

2 Georgian: Introduction
(3) Some basic properties of Georgian (Kartvelian):
   a. generally head-final;
   b. complex agreement system + extensive pro-drop (Bejar 2003);
   c. flexible word order;
   d. apparent preverbal focus position, similar to Basque and Hungarian.

(4) Less commonly attested properties:
   a. not consistently head-final (Asatiani & Skopeteas 2012; Skopeteas & Fanselow 2010)
   b. no cross-clausal A-bar movement (Harris 1981: 17, 18, 166; Harris 1984: 75-77)
   c. weak/non-existent word-level stress (Vicenik & Jun 2014)

2.1 Georgian as a head-final language
Small clauses are strictly head-final (Johnson & Tomioka 1997):
      M.NOM G.-DAT clever-ADV consider.PRS.3SG
      ‘Manana considers Gela smart.’

Verbal idioms with the internal argument/PP manifest verb-final order (Asatiani & Skopeteas 2012; Skopeteas & Fanselow 2010):
   (6) Manana-m pex-eb-i gač’ima.
      Manana-ERG legs-PL-NOM stretch.AOR.3SG
      ‘Manana died.’ (lit: stretched her legs)
   (7) Manana [tr nems-is q’undz-ši]
      M.NOM needle-POSS needle’s.eye-LOC
      go.through.AOR.3SG
      ‘Manana did everything possible.’ (lit.: went through a needle’s eye)

Verb-initial orders are unacceptable in the declaratives
(but are possible in yes-no questions; more on this in 2.2):
   (8) *Šeč’ama Manana-m alubali.
      eat.AOR.3SG M-ERG cherry.NOM
      (‘Manana ate the cherry.’)
2.2 Unexpected of a head-final language

(9) VO orders are common and robust
a. Both VO and OV orders occur frequently in discourse and can be found in all-new contexts (Skopeteas & Fanselow 2010);


No verb raising: only low verbal negation available (see also Lomashvili 2011: 81-82, 93-94):

(10) Sam-ze nak’leb st’udent’-s ar ecodineba es p’asuxi.
three-on less student-DAT not know.FUT DEM answer
‘Fewer than three students will not know the answer.’
NOT: ‘It won’t be the case that fewer than three students will know the answer.’ (~3 > NEG; *NEG > ~3)

(11) Manana-m p’uri išviatad ar gamoacxo.
Manana-ERG bread.NOM seldom not bake.AOR.3SG
‘Manana seldom did not bake bread.’
(seldom > NEG; *NEG > seldom)

No evidence for object shift for nouns or pronouns:

(12) a. Nino c’iṭel k’aba-s edzeb-da,
N,NOM red dress-DAT look.for-PRF.3SG but 3SG
magram (is) ver ip’ov-a (is).
NEG find-AOR.3SG 3SG
‘Nino was looking for a red dress, but didn’t find one.’

b. Nino edzebda c’iṭel k’abas, magram (is) ver ip’ova (is).

(13) a. Nino tavis saqvarel c’iṭel k’aba-s edzeb-da,
N,NOM own favorite red dress-DAT look.for-PRF.3SG
magram (is) ver ip’ov-a (is).
but 3SG NEG find-AOR.3SG 3SG
‘Nino was looking for her favorite red dress, but didn’t find it.’

b. Nino edzebda tavis saqvarel c’iṭel k’abas, magram (is) ver ip’ova (is).

Complementizers (= C*’s) are clause-initial or second-position clitics
(Aronson 1990 on rom ‘that’; Aronson 1990; Erschler 2015 on tu ‘if, whether’):

(14) a. Manana pikrob-s [rom Rezo (*rom) saxl-s
M,NOM think-PRS.3SG COMP R,NOM COMP house-DAT
(*rom) ašeneh (*rom).
COMP build-PRS.3SG COMP
‘Manana thinks that Rezo builds a house.’ (Erschler 2015:5)

b. C’iṇi (*rom) gušin (rom) Vano-m (rom)
book.NOM. COMP yesterday COMP V.-ERG COMP
T.-DAT COMP N.-GEN-for COMP 1SG-at COMP
daacemin-a (*rom).
give.CAUS-AOR.3SG COMP
‘the book that Vano had Tamaz give Nestan at my place yesterday’ (Foley 2013:11)

c. Nino-s unda icod-e-s (*tu) didi mankana tu
N,DAT want know-OPT-3SG COMP big car.NOM COMP
iqida (*tu) Mariam-ma (*tu) Germania-ši (*tu)
buy-AOR.3SG COMP M,ERG COMP Germany-LOC COMP
‘Nino wants to know if Mariam bough a big car in Germany.’

Verb-initial yes-no questions (YNQs) do not involve verb movement; postverbal material is right-adjointed and coindexed with silent pronominals in the main clause; postverbal adjuncts can come in any order, without change in meaning:

(15) a. Damal-a Mariam-ma alubl-eb-i?
hide-AOR.3SG Mariam-ERG cherry-PL-NOM
‘Did Mariam hide the cherry?’

b. Damala alublebi Mariamma?

c. [pro, pro, damal-a] Mariam-ma, alubl-eb-i?

d. [pro, pro, damal-a] alubl-eb-i, Mariam-ma?

Morphologically complex verb forms are derived via m-merger (Matushansky 2006; Harizanov 2014).

No obligatory movement to Spec,TP; no evidence of expletives (Nash 2017).

Unresolved: case licensing (see Nash 2017 for a discussion).
3 Focus and its properties

Wh-words/focused constituents appear in the immediately preverbal position:

(16) A: Bebia [wh ra-s] alagebda?
  grandma.NOM what-DAT wash.PRF.3SG
  ‘What did grandma clean?’
A’: *[wh Ra-s] bebia alagebda?
B: Bebia [Focus samzareulo-s] alagebda.
  grandma.NOM kitchen-DAT wash.PRF.3SG
  ‘Grandma cleaned the KITCHEN.’
B’: ??[Focus Samzareulo-s] bebia alagebda.

3.1 Properties of the preverbal focus position

Narrow scope strongly preferred:

(17) Sam-ze nak’leb bič’i [Focus q’ovel chanta-s]
  three-on less boy.NOM all bag-DAT
  carry.PRS.3SG
caiqhebs.
  ‘Less than three boys will carry EVERY BAG.’
  (∼3 > every; ∼3 > ∼3)
(18) Masc’avlebeli išviatad [Focus sam-ze nak’leb st’udent’-s]
  teacher.NOM seldom three-on less student-DAT
  mouc’od-ehs.
call-PRS.3SG
gull.
  ‘The teacher seldom calls on LESS THAN THREE STUDENTS.’
  (Seldom > ∼3; ∼3 > Seldom)

Corresponding broad focus utterances allow both wide and narrow scope readings.

Preverbal position hosts expressions with focus-sensitive mxolod
‘only’ and -ac (k’i) ‘even’:

(19) a. Maimun-s mxolod Manana-m ak’oca.
    monkey-DAT only Manana-ERG kiss.AOR.3SG
    ‘Only Manana kissed the monkey.’
b. *Manana-m-ac k’i maimun-i ak’oca.
    Manana-ERG-too yes(=even) monkey-NOM kiss.AOR.3SG
    Focus does not have to be exhaustive (Fanselow & Skopeteas 2010):
    (20) A: Bebia [wh ra-s] alagebda?
      grandma.NOM what-DAT wash.PRF.3SG
      ‘What did grandma clean?’
A’: *[wh Ra-s] bebia alagebda?
    grandma.NOM kitchen-DAT wash.PRF.3SG
    ‘Grandma cleaned THE KITCHEN.’
B: Bebia [Focus samzareulo-s] alagebda.
    grandma.NOM kitchen-DAT wash.PRF.3SG
    ‘Grandma cleaned the KITCHEN.’
B’: ??[Focus Samzareulo-s] bebia alagebda.

Focus must be unique - two focus items cannot occur before the verb:

(22) a. *Masc’avlebeli išviatad [Focus sam-ze nak’leb st’udent’-s]
    teacher.NOM seldom three-on less student-DAT
    mouc’od-ehs.
call-PRS.3SG
gull.
    ‘The teacher seldom calls on LESS THAN THREE STUDENTS.’
    (Seldom > ∼3; ∼3 > Seldom)

If focus is associated with a relative clause (RC) or PP, the RC/PP has to extrapose:

(23) Aramzada maimun-s, svavs divan-ze
    scoundrel.NOM monkey-DAT put.PRS.3SG sofa-on
    [cv romel-s-ac Manana-m ak’oca],
    which-DAT-COMP Manana-ERG kiss.AOR.3SG
    ‘The scoundrel is putting THE MONKEY on the sofa THAT
    MANANA KISSED.’
(24) Me kali, vna xe gušin
    1SG woman.NOM 1SG-see.AOR.3SG yesterday
    [pp qvavil-eb-it xel-si].
    flower-PL-with hand-LOC
    ‘I saw a WOMAN yesterday WITH FLOWERS IN HER HAND.’

In non-focal contexts, RC or PP dislocation is impossible (section 5).
No difference in binding relations between focus and non-focus: no A-movement/A-scrambling involved

    class- LOC self.NOM Manana-DAT praise.PRS.3SG
    (‘In class, Manana praises herself.’)

    class- LOC Manana-DAT self.NOM praise.PRS.3SG
    (‘In class, Manana praises HERSELF.’)

Condition C: no A-movement/A-scrambling involved

(26) a. Gušin man, Manana-s bavš-s
    yesterday 3SG.ERG Manana-POSS child-DAT
    mdinare-ši dabana.
    river- LOC wash.AOR.3SG
    ‘Yesterday s/he’s child in the river.’
    (she ≠ Manana)

b. Gušin Manana-s bavš-s mdinare-ši
    yesterday Manana-POSS child-DAT river- LOC
    dabana.
    3SG.ERG wash.AOR.3SG
    ‘Yesterday s/he’s child in the river.’
    (she ≠ Manana)

3.2 There is no focus/wh-movement in Georgian

Evidence: absence of island effects, absence of WCO, no superiority effects, single-pair answers to multiple wh-questions.

No island effects (shown for relative clauses):

(27) Levani šexvda kal-s [romel-c
    Levan.NOM meet.AOR.3SG woman-DAT which-COMP
    ra-s at arebs]?
    what-DAT wear.PRS.3SG
    lit: “What did Levan meet a woman who wears?”

No weak crossover in questions (see also Amiridze 2006):

(28) a. Mis-ma kmar-ma vin aghue’era
    3SG.POSS-ERG husband-ERG who describe.AOR.3SG
    Giorgi-s?
    G-DAT
    ‘Whose husband described her to Giorgi?’
    (lit.: Whom did her husband describe to Giorgi?)

b. Tavis-ma kmar-ma romeli kali
    self.POSS-ERG husband-ERG which woman.NOM
    aghue’era Giorgi-s?
    describe.AOR.3SG Giorgi-DAT
    ‘Which woman’s husband described her to Giorgi?’
    (lit.: Which woman did self’s husband describe…)

No weak crossover in relative clauses:

(29) Arcerti gogo ar ikneba k’aqopili
    not.one.NOM girl.NOM not be.FUT satisfied
    [romel-c mis-ma/tavis-ma amxanag-eb-ma
    which-COMP 3SG.POSS-ERG/self.POSS-ERG friend-PL-ERG
    ar ake[a].]
    not praise.AOR.3SG
    ‘No girl whom her friends did not praise will be satisfied.’

Superiority effects: weak, not categorical, only for some speakers

(Amiridze 2006; Erschler 2015):

(30) a. Vin ra č’ama gušin?
    who what eat.AOR.3SG yesterday?
    ‘Who ate what yesterday?’

b. ??Ra vin č’ama gušin?
    what who eat.AOR.3SG yesterday

Single-pair answers to multiple wh-questions are possible, in addition to pair-list answers (cf. Bošković 1999, 2002):

(31) a. Vistvis sad imghera Levan-ma simghera?
    who.for where sing.AOR.3SG Levan-ERG song.NOM
    ‘Where did Levan sing a song for whom?’
b. \textit{Levan-ma Lena-s-tvis pilarmonia-ši imghera}
\textit{Levan-ERG Lena-GEN-for philarmony-LOC sing.AOR.3SG simghera.}
\textit{song.NOM}
\textit{‘Levan sang a song for Lena in the philarmony.’}

b’. \textit{Levan-ma Lena-s-tvis pilarmonia-ši imghera}
\textit{Levan-ERG Lena-GEN-for philarmony-LOC sing.AOR.3SG simghera, da Maša-s-tvis sak’orc’ert’o darbaz-ši.}
\textit{song.NOM and M-GEN-for concert hall-LOC}
\textit{‘Levan sang a song for Lena in the philarmony, and for Masha in the concert hall.’}

\textbf{No cross-clausal A-bar movement} (Harris 1981, 1984); \textbf{wh-scope marking only} (cf. Dayal 1994, 1996 for Hindi):

(32) a. \textit{*Vi-s/’vin tkva masc’avlebel-ma}
\textit{who-DAT/who.NOM say.AOR.3SG teacher-ERG
\[\text{[cp ‘vi-s unda vuqarot]?}
\text{who-DAT must watch.SUBJUNCTIVE.1PL}
\text{‘(‘Whom did the teacher say that we must watch?’’)}
\[
\text{b. Ra tkva masc’avlebel-ma}
\textit{what.NOM say.AOR.3SG teacher-ERG
\[\text{[cp vi-s unda vuqarot]?}
\text{who-DAT must watch.SUBJUNCTIVE.1PL}
\text{‘Whom did the teacher say that we must watch?’}

\textbf{No cross-clausal focus movement:}

(33) a. \textit{*Manana-s/Manana tkva masc’avlebel-ma}
\textit{M-DAT/Manana-NOM say.AOR.3SG teacher-ERG
\[\text{[cp Manana-s unda vuqarot].}
\textit{M-DAT must watch. SUBJUNCTIVE.1PL}
\textit{‘It is Manana that the teacher said that we must watch.’}

b. \textit{Masc’avlebel-ma tkva [cp Manana-s unda teacher-ERG say.AOR.3SG M-DAT must vuqarot].
\textit{watch. SUBJUNCTIVE.1PL}
\textit{‘It is Manana that the teacher said that we must watch.’}

\[\text{No A-bar movement in wh-questions or focus constructions}

\[\text{Interim summary:}
1. \text{Foci in Georgian (wh-words, words corresponding to wh-words in replies to WHQs, and constituents modified by \textit{moxolod} ‘only’ and -\textit{ac’k’i} ‘even’) occupy the immediately preverbal position.}
2. \text{There is no evidence of wh/focus movement in Georgian.}

\[\text{\textbullet \ How is the focus-verb adjacency achieved?}
\[\text{Proposal:}
1. \text{Focus/wh-verb adjacency results from the requirement on the focused constituent to be prosodically prominent.}
2. \text{In the absence of word-level stress, prominence is expressed by prosodic grouping of the focused/wh-expression with verb.}
3. \text{Non-focal information occurs to the left or to the right of the focus + verb prosodic unit, thus instantiating p-displacement (Zubizarreta 1998).}
4. \text{P-displacement is a language-specific counterpart of p-movement (syntactic movement for the sake of prosodic well-formedness, Zubizarreta 1998 et seq.), which involves base-generation/displacement for the sake of prosodic well-formedness.}

\[\text{\textbf{4} Prosody of Georgian focus}
\[\text{4.1 Background}
\text{Focus is expressed with prosodic prominence: focus-bearing constituent has to be more prosodically prominent than other constituents in the same clause (cf. Zubizarreta 2014 for an overview of existing approaches).}

\text{Focus placement is determined by the position of the Nuclear Stress (NS) in a clause (Chomsky & Halle 1968:91): cf. accounts of preverbal focus in Italian and Spanish (Zubizarreta 1998), Basque (Arregi 2002) and Hungarian (Szendrői 2003).}

(34) \textbf{Georgian stress:}
• acoustically weak (Chikobava 1942, Zhghenti 1960, Aronson 1990, Hewitt 1995, a.o);
• stress placement/existence of word-level stress are disputed (see Skopeteas et al. 2009, Butskhrikidze 2016 for an overview).

☞ In Georgian, NS cannot be expressed as anchored to word stress in the most acoustically prominent word in a sentence.

☞ Prosodic prominence at phrasal level is established through boundary tones and prosodic phrasing, not by pitch accents (cf. Skopeteas & Féry, to appear, for a similar conclusion).

(35) **Georgian prosody above the word: levels of prosodic phrasing** (Jun et al. 2007; Vicenik & Jun 2014):

a. **Accentual Phrase (AP):** lexical word, bears pitch accent on the initial syllable (X*), and a final boundary tone (Xa)

b. **Intermediate Phrase (ip):** intermediate unit that optionally combines APs; bears a final boundary tone (X-) that overrides an AP-boundary tone

c. **Intonational Phrase (IP):** clause, bears a final boundary tone that overrides other boundary tones (X%)

4.2 **Prosodic baseline: all-new declaratives**

a. each lexical word = Accentual Phrase (AP);

b. each AP has a raising contour: L* Ha;

c. each successive Ha lower than previous one (downstep).

(36) **Giorgi-s mosc'ons dzalian lamazi gogo**

Giorgi-DAT like.PRS.3SG very beautiful girl.NOM

Tbilisi-dan.

Tbilisi-from

‘Giorgi likes a very beautiful girl from Tbilisi.’

Sequential prosodic phrases with no differentiation in contour or grouping; sequencing is indicated by downstep.
4.3 Prosody of focus

Internal argument

a. preverbal focus constituent combines into an ip together with the verb;
   b. the focus+verb ip has a falling contour over both constituents: H* L\% (H* L\- if there is other material following);
   c. pre-focal material has a typical falling contour: L+H* L\- (H* pitch accent if peak not delayed, La if a single lexical word).

(37) (‘What did grandma clean yesterday morning?’)

\textit{Gušin dila-s bebia samzareulo-s yesterday morning-DAT grandma.NOM kitchen-DAT alagebda.}
wash.PRF.3SG

‘Yesterday morning, grandma cleaned THE KITCHEN.’

Fig. 2. Prosodic realization of S[O][F]V

External argument

a. preverbal focus constituent combines into an ip together with the verb;
   b. the focus+verb ip has a falling contour: H* L\-;
   c. pre-focal given information has a neutral raising contour: L* H\-.

(38) (‘Who bought bananas last week?’)

\textit{Gasul k\ vira-s Manana-m iq\'ida banan-eb-i.}
last week-DAT M-ERG buy.AOR.3SG banana-PL-NOM

‘Last week, MANANA bought bananas.’

Fig. 3. Prosodic realization of S\[F\]VO

Wh-question

a. preverbal wh-word combines into an ip together with the verb;
   b. the focus+verb ip has a falling contour: H* L\-;
   c. the IP ends in an HL\% boundary tone typical of wh-question.

(39) \textit{Vi-s uvlis Nino?}
who-DAT look.after.PRS.3SG Nino.NOM

‘Who does Nino look after?'
Summary of the prosodic facts:
1. Foci exhibit the same prosodic pattern regardless of their structural position or the nature of the focus element (wh-word, focus expression).
2. Foci are obligatorily prosodically grouped with the verb (cf. Borise 2016).
3. Backgrounded information is variably realized with a falling contour, H*/L+H* La (Fig.2), or with the neutral declarative rising intonation, L* Ha (Fig.3).

5 Displaced units: Non-focal material

Constituents that do not bear focus and would otherwise interrupt the focus+verb unit, undergo prosodically motivated p-displacement, which does not involve syntactic movement.

Pre-focal material either receives special ‘given’ prosody, or retains neutral prosody (in contrast with, e.g., Romance languages, where displaced non-focal material receives special prosody, and focal material receives neutral prosody - cf. Vallduví 1991 on Catalan).

Post-verbal material following focus receives low and flat tone (so-called ‘superlow’ tone, Skopeteas & Féry 2010): the Georgian equivalent of post-focal de-accenting.

(40) Types of constituents:
  a. prefocal base-generated scene-setting expressions
  b. prefocal base-generated topics
  c. postverbal adjoined material

No condition C effects with the left-peripheral material:
(41) Isi/k Manana-s bavšv-s mdinare-ši bans. M-poss child-DAT river-LOC wash.PRS.3SG
    ‘She/i/k is washing Manana’s child in the river.’

No condition C effects with the right-peripheral material:
(43) Isi/k bans mdinare-ši Manana-s bavšv-s. M-poss child-DAT river-LOC M-poss child-DAT
    ‘She/i/k is washing Manana’s child in the river.’

Wide scope strongly preferred for both prefocal and postverbal (postfocal) material (cf. Gundel 1988, Molnár 1993, Erteschik-Shir 2007 on topics and scope):
(44) Or ena-s q’oveli st’udent’i am two language-DAT all student.NOM this k’las-ši sc’avlobs,
class-LOC learn.PRS.3SG
    ‘Two languages, every student in this class is studying.’
    (TWO > EVERY; ??EVERY > TWO)

(45) Am k’las-ši q’oveli st’udent’i sc’avlobs this class-LOC all student-NOM learn.PRS.3SG
  or ena-s. two language-DAT
    ‘In this class, every student is studying two languages.’
    (TWO > EVERY; ??EVERY > TWO)
Dislocated RC: impossible for scene-setting expressions, base-generated left-hand topics, and postverbal material.

(46) *Bagh-ši st’umr-eb-i saghamo-s čai-s
garden- LOC guests-PL-NOM afternoon-DAT tea-DAT
svamdenen [cp romeli-c Manana-s babua-m
drink.PRS.3PL which.NOM-COMP M-POSS grandfather-ERG
gaxsna]i
create.AOR.3SG

(‘The guests are having afternoon tea in the garden that Manana’s grandfather had set up.’)

(47) *St’umr-eb-i č’am en sač’mli-s bagh-ši
guests- PL-NOM eat.PRS.3PL food-DAT garden- LOC
[cp romel-i-c Manana-m iq’ida]i
which-NOM-COMP M-ERG buy.AOR.3SG

(‘The guests are eating the food, in the garden, that Manana bought.’)

6 Conclusions and outstanding questions

Conclusions:
1. Foci in Georgian occupy the immediately preverbal position.
2. There is no evidence of wh/focus movement in Georgian.
3. Focus-verb adjacency results from the requirement on the focused constituent to be prosodically prominent.
4. Prominence is expressed by prosodic grouping of the focused/wh-expression with verb.
5. Non-focal information occurs to the left or to the right of the focus + verb prosodic unit, thus instantiating p-displacement. (Zubizarreta 1998; Horvath 2010).
6. P-displacement is a language-specific counterpart of p-movement (syntactic movement for the sake of prosodic well-formedness, Zubizarreta 1998 et seq.), which involves base-generation for the sake of prosodic well-formedness.

Outstanding questions:

1. From Georgian to English and back: what motivates the general absence of operator A-bar movement?
2. Georgian ≠ Basque ≠ Hungarian: a number of languages have focus associated with the immediately preverbal overt constituent; our data suggest that they are not the same syntactically. What makes them similar?

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