ORGANIZATION OF INFORMATION STRUCTURE IN RELATION TO FOCUS SHIFT WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO SIMPLE AND COMPLEX STATEMENT-TYPE SENTENCES

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled "**Organization of Information Structure in Relation to Focus Shift With Particular Reference to Simple And Complex Statement-Type Sentences**" submitted by me for the award of the degree of **Master Of Philosophy**, is a bonafide work.the dissertation has not been previously submitted in any form for any degree to this or any other university.

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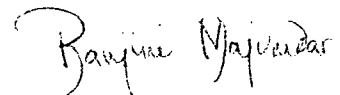
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DECLARATION BY THE CANDIDATE

This dissertation titled **"Organization Of Information Structure In Relation To Focus Shift With Particular Reference To Simple And Complex Statement-Type Sentences"** submitted by me for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy, is an original work and has not been previously submitted so far in part or in full, for any degree or diploma of any University or Institute.

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Table of Contents

Chapter 5

Acoustic Evidence of Focus in Bengali

5.1 Spectrograms of a Few Sentences from the Recorded Data

Chapter 6

Chapter 1

Introduction

The objective of my research is to explore the way in which information structure is linguistically constructed in accordance with the different levels of discourse. However, the primary focus of my topic would be on studying the organization of discourse in the light of a number of theories of grammar with special emphasis on Focus and how the shift of Focus in an utterance results in a semantic shift at the sentential level, consequently affecting discourse.

It is significant to note that the organization of discourse is multifaceted. In other words, discourse structure is dependent on a number of elements and thus cannot be analyzed taking into account a single perspective. In fact, coherence needs to be established through elements enhancing communicative functionality. Knowledge integration requires effective information management, the central strands of which are morphosyntactic coding, implicatures, planning and inference. Discourse is neither flat nor linear in terms of its organization. It is hierarchical, with clauses forming higher order structures which combine to form larger episodes or sections of discourse. Conceptualization of an idea in the speaker's mind leads to denotation of its meaning. This in turn leads to construction of a discourse.

The primary focus of my topic would be on studying the organization of information in the light of a few prominent theories of Grammar, which is inclusive of grammatical structural sequential organization with special emphasis on Focus and how the shift of focus results in change in meaning.

Information structure in recent studies has also been construed as broadly comprising structural and semantic properties relating to the discourse status of their content, the actual and attributed attentional states of the discourse participants, along with their prior and changing attitudes (knowledge, beliefs, intentions, expectations and so on). This broad view encompasses notions like focus, pre-supposition, given vs. new, theme vs. rheme and other various dichotomies such as topic vs. comment or focus, background vs. focus.

Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) is a model of grammar developed by M. Halliday. It derives from the Prague School ideas. SFG was previously known as Scale and Category Grammar, followed by Systemic Grammar. It is part of a broad semiotic approach where language is referred to as a network of systems or interrelated set of options for constructing meaning (systemic). It is concerned with meaning and focuses on word classes such as nouns, verbs, typically without reference beyond the clause (functional). This implies that the stress of one's language influences the manner in which he perceives reality and behaves with respect to it. It focuses on the social and cultural functions of communication and rejects autonomy of grammar in favor of functional explanation. However, the importance of communication is concerned with the way in which information is communicated which in turn is often governed by forms that are structured. Thus, it emphasizes that form is explicable in terms of function. The particular form adopted by the grammatical system of a language conforms to the social and personal needs that language is required to serve.

2

A systemic grammar is semantically motivated as it belongs to the category of FG. SFG fully recognizes the indeterminacy of language, which is bound to arise in language since the grammar is constantly interplaying with conflicting categorizations, accommodating them so as to construe a multidimensional meaning space, highly elastic and receptive to new meanings (Halliday, 1997, p. 9). Language patterns influence reactions in individuals. For Halliday, Functional Grammar is essentially a natural grammar which depends on two meta-functions: the ideational content function and the interpersonal function.

Information focus as defined in SFG is concerned only with the given/new distinction encoded in prosodic phonology. The informational unit is made up of an obligatory element with the function "New" and an "Optional" element with the function "given" (Halliday, 2004, p. 89). The element in the tone group bearing the main pitch movement (tonic prominence) is observed to bear the information focus. According to Halliday, information focus reflects the speaker's decision considering the main position of emphasis of the message. Information focus is the element on the basis of which the speaker selects the message block that he wishes to be interpreted as informative. "New" information is considered as focal in the sense that the speaker presents it as not being recoverable from preceding discourse (Halliday, 1967a, p. 204).

However, the notion of **Functional Discourse Grammar (FDG)** is a grammar which explains how linguistic utterances are shaped based on the goals and knowledge of natural language users. In doing so, it contrasts with Chomskyan Transformational Grammar. It explains phonology, morphosyntax, pragmatics and semantics in a single linguistic theory. FDG operates with respect to individual discourse acts which are constituted of sub-acts. FDG may be considered as a successor of Functional Grammar (FG) as evident through the models constructed by K. Hengeveld and J.L. Mackenzie.

It expands the scope of FG by taking the pragmatic and psychological adequacy of the theory, adopting as its starting point the communicator's intention to influence his/her interlocutor through the use of linguistic discourse.

Functional Grammar (FG) is concerned with language as a communicative means for social interaction. In the functional paradigm a language is in fact conceptualized as an instrument for social interaction among human beings, used within the intention of establishing communicative relationships. Within this paradigm one attempts to reveal the instrumentality of language with respect to what people do and achieve with it in social interaction (Dik, 1997a, p. 3). In other words, the ultimate aim of FG is to account for the communicative competence of the natural language users. Functional motivations often result in autonomy in particular areas of grammar. Dik says that linguistic expressions are structured entities that are governed by rules and principles which determine their build-up. According to him, semantics is considered as instrumental with respect to pragmatics and syntax as instrumental with respect to semantics. Dik's approach is also typically functionalist in prioritizing semantics and pragmatics over syntax. However, semantics and syntax according to him are intertwined. A conglomeration of syntax and semantics contributes to pragmatic adequacy, thus also conforming to psychological adequacy in the sense that a proximate relationship holds between the psychological models of linguistic competence and linguistic behavior. Typological adequacy is also necessary, i.e. it should be capable of providing grammars for languages of any type, while at the same time accounting for the similarities and differences between these languages (Dik, 1997a, p.14).

Thus, extralinguistic factors are also taken into account. It clarifies the relation between the instrumentality of the language system in creating and maintaining communicative relationships within the domain of cognitive constraints.

FDG occupies a position almost halfway between radically formal and functional approaches of grammar. However, since it is the communicative intention which is emphasized, one may associate FDG with a functional model rather than a formal one. FDG thus takes the Act rather than the clause as the basic unit of analysis in grammatical theory. This can be ascribed to the default correlation between Acts and clauses. It is to the sub-acts that the pragmatic functions of focus and topic are assigned. In the communicative content, the Focus status is reflected in the encoding of the sub-act at the morphosyntactic and phonological levels. FDG is concerned with how information conveyed by linguistic means fits into a context or discourse. Going by the current approach, in FDG the morphosyntactic level accounts for all the linear properties of a linguistic unit, both with respect to the structure of sentences, clauses and phrases, and with respect to the internal structure of complex words. The morphosyntax proposed is of an orthodox linear kind.

On the contrary, considering S.C Dik's idea, "a language is regarded in the first place as an instrument by means of which people can enter into communicative relations with one another." this in other words implies that it is a pragmatic phenomenon. Dik's theory of the grammatical component of communicative competence matches Chomsky's view of grammar. Dik views grammar as representative of meaning potential. This finds place within the framework of Generative Grammar, but differs from it since it does not allow the underlying constituent order to be different from surface constituent order. Dik's account of Functional Grammar (FG) consists minimally of slots for subject verb object, and pragmatically significant positions such as initial and final position in the clause. Further, T. Givon speaks of Functional Grammar emphasizing on the importance of continuity of topic in discourse. It is at the sentential level where the topic is introduced and thus forms the background for the rest of the discourse concerned.

Now, keeping the different theories of Grammar as the backdrop, I have my objective in making deductions about the way in which a shift of focus at the sentential level affects the discourse structure, thereby bringing about a semantic difference at the discourse level permeating through several Discourse Acts. The term "organization" refers to "the sum of relations which hold between the units of text...and between each unit and the whole." cohesion and coherence in discourse is strongly affected by the movement of the focus and topic. In other words, a detachment seems to take place between theme and focus, consequently disrupting the contextual cohesion and coherence of content. A semantic shift seems to occur even if it is to the slightest extent. Alternatively, there is a difference in the way the hearer/reader's intention is influenced by the shift of the focal element and topic of a sentence. Focus is the platform upon which the Topic is constructed. Hence, a shift of focus may result in a consequent change in topic, which in turn is dependent on pragmatic typology according to which the speaker and hearer are conditioned.

Thus, interweaving these strands, I would like to attempt establishing a connection between them at the sentential level, finally arriving at the level of discourse. In other words, broadly speaking, it would be establishing a concrete relation through a conglomeration of information structure and discourse structure with Focus as the area of emphasis, primarily keeping S.C. Dik's theory of Functional Grammar as the backdrop.

Chapter 2

Information Structure and Focus Shift in Major Theories of Grammar

Information structure is formally manifested in aspects of prosody, in special grammatical markers, in the form of syntactic constituents, in the position and ordering of such constituents in the sentence, in the form of complex grammatical constructions, and in certain choices between related lexical items. Information structure thus intervenes at all meaning bearing levels of the grammatical system. The organization of Information Structure determines and distinguishes between semantically equivalent but formally and pragmatically divergent sentence pairs.

The level of utterance makes it possible to understand how the semantic and grammatical structures function in the very act of communication, i.e. at the moment they are called upon to convey some extra-linguistic reality reflected by thought and are to appear in an adequate kind of perspective.

Extra-grammatical means of organizing utterance as the minimal communicative unit are contained at this level as well: such as, rhythm, intonation, the order of words and clauses, some lexical devices and so on (Dane, 1966). Theme is concerned with the information structure of the clause, with the status of the elements not as participants in extra-linguistic processes but as components of a message, with the relation of what is being said to what has gone before in the

discourse and its internal organization into an act of communication. Mood happens to be the grammar of speech function.

Now, let us delve into a domain consisting of the parallels drawn between different major theories of grammar, their functionality, and how they accommodate information, i.e. how information is organized and interpreted according to these theories respectively:

S.C. Dik (1978, 1980), postulated a threefold division of grammar:

FUNCTIONAL GRAMMAR

| SYNTACTIC | SEMANTIC | PRAGMATIC |
| FUNCTIONS | FUNCTIONS | FUNCTIONS |
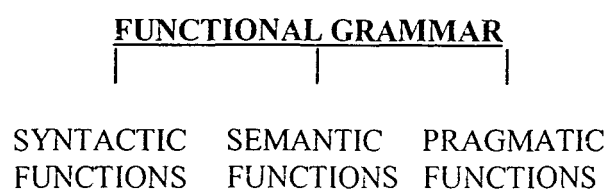
According to Dik, Halliday and Danes, as put forward in their respective theories of functional grammar, the formal domain of information structure is the sentence or the clause. Information structure is not concerned with the organization of discourse, but with the organization of the sentence within a discourse. According to Filimore, syntax deals with form; semantics is the interplay between form and function, and pragmatics conglomerates form, function and setting. It is in coalescence that these elements form a discourse. It is interesting to note that the sentence accent serves as the focus marker, i.e. the formal indicator of the focus structure of the sentence. Since the communicative aim is to bring about optimal exchange of information, information structural notions such as topic and focus are associated with specific positions in the syntactic architecture of the sentence. Focus contains the intonation centre.

The position of tonic prominence marks the culmination of the new element of

structure. The unmarked position for this new element is the final position in the information unit. As a result, focus falls on the last content item in the tone group.

E.g.:

(A) and he said there are just armature windings.

(B) yeah.

(A) and everybody else knew exactly what he was talking about and I didn't know what an armature was.

Below, A's second sentence is translated into Halliday's (1967) notation:

1	2	3	4

And / everybody / else // knew exactly // what he was / talking a/ bout and // I/

5

didn't know // what an / armature / was//

Referring to the above notation, the numbers denote tone groups. In the first tone group, the intonational prominence on the last syllable of the constituent *everybody else* has a status of the marked information focus, since *else* is not a (fully) lexical, content-bearing item. However, there seems to be no scope for unmarked focus in such a tone group. In the second tone group, the focus is unmarked, falling on the stressed syllable of the last content item. The third tone group also has unmarked focus, since the items after tonic (about and) are grammatical words. Contrarily, the fourth tone group has *I* as the focus.

SFG is one of the most text-oriented functional approaches as it concerns the relation between texts and contexts in which they are produced and received. It is

the only functional approach which has a model of context as an integral component and a set of specific hypotheses regarding the relationships between kinds of meaning and features of context. SFG adopts a thoroughly constructionist approach to language acquisition. In other words, cognition is interpreted in terms of language rather than vice versa.

According to M. Halliday, "the focus of the message is that which is represented by the speaker as being new, textually (and situationally) non-derivable information." (Halliday, 1967a, p. 205) He says that given information is recoverable 'anaphorically and situationally'. On the contrary, according to Chafe new information is "that knowledge which speaker assumes he is introducing into the addressee's consciousness by what he says". (Chafe, 1976, p. 30)

A distinction between the statuses of information content is made at the clause level in terms of foregrounding or backgrounding. In clause structure, main clauses are given more mental attention when the mind interprets them. But subordinate (dependent) clauses are backgrounded or provided with a secondary status or a secondary level of importance. This is the difference in information flow that is conveyed by conjoined main clauses, versus a subordinate plus a main clause with a subordinating conjunction. The focus is on the content of the main clause, with the content of the subordinate clause being part of the background, e.g. as supporting information for the main clause, or information leading towards the content of the main clause. On the contrary, two coordinate clauses (main clauses joined together) give equal importance to the content of both clauses.

It is through the integration of information structure that a discourse structure may be formed. In discourse, both explicit and implicit devices interplay to signify connectivity between sentences. This includes a coalescence of discourse

pragmatics as well as discourse semantics. It subsumes notions such as segmentation, relation between informational and intentional segments, anaphoric relations, discourse topic, thematic progression and so on.

The notion of communicative fragments plays a very significant role in the process of information packaging. For instance, a question acts as the exponent of some underspecified description pertaining to a context or information state. Thus, necessity arises with regard to enhancing the information status embedded within the information structure, by conjoining the communicative fragments with appropriateness of focus and logic, interweaving the syntactic, semantic, pragmatic, and phonological strands to form a composite whole. It is essential for the structure of utterance of the speaker to be congruent with his knowledge of the listener's mental world.

Information structure influences the interpretation of individual sentences. In English, information structure is most often determined by intonational pattern due to its rigid word order. However, in languages characterized by much flexible word order, information structure may be determined by different syntactic structure. If the information structure of one clause can affect the interpretation of another, then information structure must be incorporated into an account of discourse interpretation and discourse updating. Information structure serves as processing signals which assist the addressee on restricting possible interpretations.

Information is presented and interpreted in different ways in accordance with different grammatical frameworks. As a result, the focus of information varies respectively. Consequently, a shift of focus would result in change of interpretation of the sentence. For instance, going by the norms of SFG, the focus

lies on the element which is assigned tonic prominence. In other words, a change in the tonic prominence or a shift of the intonation to another lexical item in the sentence would influence a difference in its interpretation since the focus is different.

Thus, further in this chapter we shall move on to a discussion regarding information structure and focus within the framework of some prominent theories of Grammar, followed by an overview of the types of Focus and how the shift of focus in discourse affects its meaning:

2.1. Functional Grammar (FG), Role and Reference Grammar (RRG), Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG): A Comparison

Matters of focality and topicality are handled in FG through the assignment of pragmatic functions during the development of the underlying clause structure, as opposed to semantic functions such as Agent, Goal or the syntactic functions Subject and Object.

In Dik's view, by pragmatic functions (as relevant within the structure of the clause we understand functions which specify the informational status of the constituents in relation to broader communicative setting in which they are applied. The primary parameters along which pragmatic functions can be distinguished are topicality (characterizing the things we talk about) and focality (characterizing the most significant or salient parts of what we say about the topical elements or entities) (Dik, 1997a, p. 310). More specifically, Dik defines focal information as follows: "the focal information in a linguistic expression is that information which is relatively the most important of salient in the given

12

communicative setting, and considered by S (the speaker) to be most essential for A (the addressee) to integrate into his pragmatic information (Dik, 1997a, p. 326). According to Dik, Focus and Topic are mutually exclusive. They are functions which can be predicated of constituents only with respect to some wider setting in which they occur. In other words, Topic and Focus are relational notions which find expression in contextualized utterances.

Such focal information may add to the addressee's store of pragmatic information or replace part of it. Although focal information is being presented to the addressee as new, it may not necessarily be new. In other words, speakers may focalize already negotiated information for purposes of contrast.

The property of newness is also associated with one of Dik's categories of Topic. "New topic" is the label used by him. However, one may argue that new topic may overlap with Focus (Siewierska, 1991, p. 138; Mackenzie and Keizer, 1991, p. 194; Hannay, 1991, p. 138). However, the pragmatic function Focus is assigned when there is some formal reflex of informational salience, which may be grammatical or phonological.

Let us for instance consider the following sentences (Butler, 2005):

(a) *Who* **did you want to speak to?** – Here, *who* bears the function of focus since it represents the information being sought. It is the clause-initial interrogative pronoun.

(b) **It was *Serena* who discovered that she'd got married.** – Here, *Serena* is focused having been given prominence both through intonational emphasis and use of a cleft construction.

Now, in (b) the reasonability of the utterance is dependent on certain essential criteria—the addressee must be aware of Serena's identity (i.e. the referent must be identifiable) and must possess the knowledge of the proposition 'someone discovered that X had got married,' where the identity represented by X is known. Now, this chunk is labeled as pragmatic presupposition of the utterance. Thus, Serena happens to be the focus of the assertion.

Hence, we observe that the account of information structuring highlights the establishment of pragmatic relations which make information possible. It is significant to note that pragmatic functions are assigned after the representational and interpersonal structures have been assigned and therefore are not part of the functional dichotomy.

In recent work on FG, a modular account has been proposed in which a discourse pragmatic module interacts with a grammatical module through some kind of interface (Kroon, 1997; Bolkestein, 1998; Liedtke, 1998; van dan Berg, 1998). Other accounts model discourse by analogy with grammar (Dik, 1997b; Hengeveld, 1997; Moutaouakil, 2004). Other models are inclined towards increasing the psychological adequacy of the theory by attempting to model linguistic production. Outside FG, Jackendoff (2002, p. 408) characterizes information structure as concerned with the role of the sentence in the speaker–hearer interaction— the means by which the speaker intends to convey information to the hearer via the sentence, in the context of previous discourse.

The account of information structuring provided in RRG is based on the work of Lambrecht, which highlights that it is the establishment of pragmatic relations which ensure the possibility of information. Each language contains a Potential

Focal Domain (PFD), defined with respect to the syntactic structure of the clause, within which the Actual Focus Domain (AFD) forms a part. For English, PFD is the whole clause. Like FDG, RRG postulates separate levels of semantics and morphosyntax. In RRG, the Focus Projection indicates the potential focus domain (PFD), and the Actual Focus Domain (AFD) for a particular example. E.g.

Joe likes *ice-creams* very much but he cannot have any since he has a cold.

Here, the whole sentence signifies the PFD, while the AFD is constituted by the main clause of the sentence, i.e. Joe likes ice-creams very much. Now, the exact focal element may be different in terms of phonology and syntax. Considering ice-creams to be the logical focus, we observe tha it falls within the AFD. Thus, in other words, though the entire sentence is the PFD, the exact focus lies within the AFD domain of the sentence.

RRG is firmly committed to the study of language as communication as proposed by Foley and Van Valin. Language is thus viewed as a system of human communication, rather than an infinite set of structural description of sentences. Therefore, RRG attempts to characterize syntactic competence in relation communicative competence. It integrates the properties of communicative systems to human perceptual mechanisms and social interaction specifically. RRG goes against the claim of autonomy of syntax as made by formalists. Instead it favours the idea that the form is motivated by function; however the system of a language is constituted by syntax. One of the basic principles of functional linguistics is that clause-internal morphosyntax can be understood only with reference to the semantic and pragmatic functions of its constituents, consequently the major task being to describe the complex interaction of form and function in language. RRG is concerned not only with the relations of co-

occurrence and combination in strictly formal terms but also with relations of co-occurrence with respect to semantic and pragmatic relations. Hence, RRG may be accurately characterized as a structural-functionalist theory rather than purely formalist or purely functionalist. It also specifies that syntax is to a great extent motivated by semantic, pragmatic and cognitive concerns. Unlike FG, RRG has an explicitly syntactic component of clause structure.

RRG and FDG agree in claiming that not all languages require the postulation of syntactic functions. The justification of postulating such functions in a language is that there are some phenomena in that language in which different semantic roles are neutralized for the purpose of syntax. RRG does not assign the traditional categories of Subject and Object. According to FDG operators are required at all four levels of grammar. At the interpersonal (pragmatic) level there are operators which affect grammatically realized modification of discourse moves, their component acts and the smaller constituents of which these acts are composed. At the representational (semantic) level, operators modify propositional contents, state of affairs, properties and so on. At the morphosyntactic level secondary operators are involved in morphological means of expression. At the phonological level, the operators are involved when the phonological structure is sensitive to syntactic organization of a linguistic unit (Hengeveld, Mackenzie, 2006). RRG contrastively has a smaller range of operator types concentrated upon those which are concerned with the grammatical expression of categories such as illocutionary force, tense, aspect, directionality, modality and so on. These are all syntactic operators which require semantic interpretation. These are all syntactic operators which require semantic interpretation.

Both FDG and RRG are concerned with correlating form and function in languages and regard as (partially) motivated. Both emphasize on typological

adequacy, and principles of psychological and cognitive adequacy. Although the discourse pragmatic and semantic levels of patterning are in some ways more developed in FDG compared to RRG, FDG lacks a detailed account of lexical structure. More specifically, RRG is characterized by a structure containing LDP (Left Detached Position) and RDP (Right Detached Position), where the former signifies the domain of discourse and the latter functions as an afterthought. Now, FDG is characterized by propositions which do not follow any particular sequence. In order to find the equivalence relation between FDG and RRG, on e may say that the LDP of RRG corresponds to extra-clausal constituent of FDG or FG, whereas RDP of RRG corresponds to the afterthought to the predication information meant to clarify or modify it in FDG. In FG, a P1 position is postulated at the beginning of the clause, which is used for special purposes, including the placement of constituent with Topic or Focus function (Dik, 1978). For English, Q-word constituents, relative pronouns and subordinators fall into this category. In cases where P1 is not occupied by such a constituent, it may have elements with Topic or Focus function.

SFG differs strongly from RRG and FG in separating out those aspects of information patterning which correspond to grammatically realized thematic choices on one hand and phonologically realized information focus on the other hand. The functional layer to which such choices are assigned is also another domain of difference. For Halliday, Theme and information are independent choices, within the textual functional component of the grammar (metafunction) and is internal to language unlike the ideational and interpersonal metafunctions. In FG, conrastively it has already been mentioned that Hengeveld's FDG model assigns Focus choices to the interpersonal level within the grammatical component. This can be comprehended in terms of the interpretation of pragmatic function assignment.

The stances taken by FG and RRG are predicated on the assumption that there is a single overall meaning underlying the assignment of Focus. FG equates Focus with the salience or maximal importance for the addressee, and along a similar strand RRG equates it with part of the information which is not pragmatically presupposed. However, SFG highlights the importance of the theme and intonation placement with regard to the allocation of information focus. Unlike FG and RRG, grammatical and phonological systems are regarded as separate aspects to informational highlighting.

The latest version of Hengeveld's FDG model consists of a contextual, conceptual, grammatical and acoustic component. Of these, the grammatical component is featured by the interpersonal level, representational level, and structural level (Hengeveld, 2004b). At the interpersonal level, the speaker's contribution to the discourse is formulated as a move consisting of one central Act, which may be supplemented by subsidiary sub-acts. At the representational level, the utterance is provided with its basic semantic content. The interpersonal and representational levels are integrated to give rise to the structural level. Within this model ,it is the interpersonal level that the pragmatic functions including Focus. is considered to occur, while semantic functions such as Agent, Goal are assigned at the representational level, and the syntactic functions Subject and Object occur at the structural level. The phonological component of the structural level would convert the morphosyntactic representation into a phonological one, taking into account the focal nature of the predicate phrase, which would lead to intonational prominence on the Focus.

A variant of FDG is Mackenzie's (2000, 2004) IFG, which models individual utterances, as well as larger stretches of discourse. It supports Dik's idea that holophrastic utterances, often considered as incomplete versions of full clause

structures are of great importance in both child and adult language. Such utterances may be expanded into fuller versions. As in FDG, each move in discourse consists of one or more acts, each of which can be decomposed into referential and ascriptive sub-acts. Focalized information being the most salient, it is quite likely for each act to contain a sub-act featured by Focus function. The focused element corresponds to the cognitive element which is activated first in production.

Focus is dependent on the communicative intention or motivation. Thus, a shift of focus in an utterance would result in an alteration of semantic interpretation even if to the slightest extent. Consequently, the discourse structure would undergo a change influenced by a change of focus in the information structure. In other words, the communicative motivation of the speaker would not be appropriately expressed. A structural parallelism may also take place, since the alignment of Focus with the Subject and Object syntactic functions is reversed. In SFG, the classification of Focus is between marked and unmarked information focus.

However, unlike RRG, SFG does not distinguish between broad and narrow focus. SFG would classify the information focus in each tone group as unmarked information focus, while RRG considers it as marked. In Dik's view of FG and RRG, Focus is associated with an element of the clause unlike SFG in which it is allocated to an element in the information unit, realized as a tone group in the phonology.

The impact created through the phonological representation of the sentence is directly influenced by the Focus. Thus, a shift in Focus would act as a regulation of the impact and its intensity. One may argue about there being impact implicit at the structural level as well. However, it is only after there is an external

manifestation of the information on an articulatory basis that the impact gains prominence and feedback accordingly. The Focus amplifies the information associated with illocutionary primitives while the Topic fills in the information gap. Focus enhances the scope of the communicative setting. It reflects the most significant or salient information pertaining to a communicative or non-communicative setting.

2.2. Focus and Its Types and Function in Information Structure

In Lambrecht's view (1994), topic relation and focus relation manifest themselves in three types of focus structure: the predicate focus structure and argument structure or sentence focus structure. The three focus structure types correspond to three basic communicative functions—that of predicating a property of a given topic (Predicate-focus: topic-comment function); that of identifying an argument for a given proposition (argument-focus: indentificational function); that of introducing a new discourse referent or of reporting an event (sentence focus: presentational or event-reporting function).

In any case, focus domains are not lexical items. This is since information structure is neither concerned with words and their meanings, nor with the relations between the meaning of words and those of phrases or sentences, but with the pragmatic construal of the relation between entities and states of affairs in given discourse situations. Focus may be considered as the semantic component of a pragmatically structured proposition whereby assertion differs from the presupposition. This bears the implication that a focus element is always accented. According to Chomsky and Jackendoff, there is a focus feature which is phonetically manifested in terms of stress on pitch accent on a lexical item in a sentence. Optionality of constituent order is restricted to 'stylistic' operations in

the Minimalist framework of Generative Grammar. For the subject or no-subject to be topic or identificational focus expression of an utterance is dependent on communicative intention pertaining to a given situation.

Focus can be subdivided into many types, of which the following are of considerable significance: **Presentational focus**, which is representative of an answer to a question (e.g. Yes, I have seen the *Niagara Falls*, where *Niagara Falls* serves as the focus which is an answer to the question, "Have you seen the Niagara Falls?"); **Corrective focus** or **Counter-assertive focus**, also taken to be **Contrastive focus** (e.g. It is *not* Jill *but* Sue that he likes, where but serves as the element of contrast thereby bringing about the relation of contrast between Jill and Sue, as a result highlighting contrastive focus. Moreover, *not* signifies the counter-assertiveness); **Counter-presupposition** focus bears an element of corrective focus (e.g. I was never *in* your car, which implies a falsification of a preceding statement within the context. In other words it implies a presupposition which has been countered.); **Definitional focus**, which implies a description featured by accents on both constituents (e.g. Your *eyes* are *blue*. Both focused constituents *eyes* and *blue*, have to bear accent); **Reactivity focus** (e.g. Does she know John? *John* she dislikes, where *John* serves as the element of focus and occurs sentence initially in order to signify the feature of reactivity focus); **Identificational focus**, which is highlighted through the process of clefting and pseudoclefting (e.g. It was *Jim* who won the race. Here, *Jim* is the element particularly "identified" and focused).

A broader division of focus is into **logical focus** and **intonational focus**. Logical focus refers to the last argument in the C-command domain of the verb phrase (VP). For instance, let us consider a sentence presented in two different ways:

21

(a) His wife mistreats *John*

(b) His wife *mistreats* John

In (a) John is the focus and cannot be co-indexed with *his*, going by the condition associated with Logical focus. However, in (b), co-indexation occurs between John and his since Mistreats is the element of focus. It serves as the intonational focus.

The focus framework has two dimensions in discourse—**explicit** and **implicit focus.**

The former tracks the currently relevant discourse entities, and on the contrary, the latter deals with where the currently relevant scenarios are represented. The contents of explicit focus is episodic in that it comes from the particular information that has recently been foregrounded in the text, whereas the content of implicit focus concerns semantic r pragmatic information reflecting the reader's or hearer's knowledge of the types of situations and entity being portrayed. E.g.

(a) **John$_i$ was late for school as usual.**

(b) **He$_i$ was worried about the maths lesson.**

(c) **He$_j$ always had trouble controlling the class.**

John is the referential token for the pronoun *he* in (b). However, his role as a school-boy constrains the connectivity between the pronoun *he* in (c) for the token John. John is the explicit focus, whereas *school* is the implicit focus since it describes a scenario.

By contents, explicit focus contains foreground information derived directly from

the interpretation of the text and is character individuating, unlike implicit focus which contains background information reflecting situation types and scenarios, and is role and type individuating. By referential processing, the explicit focus is implicated primarily in the interpretation of pronouns, demonstrative descriptions, proper nouns, quantifiers, whereas the implicit focus is implicated through the interpretation of definite description. By psychological properties, explicit focus is characterized by limited capacity unlike implicit focus which is not constrained by limited capacity apart from the logical compatibility of different scenarios.

Focus constituents express non-familiar information which has not been verbalized before in the communicative situation, and is not given by the context. A sentence may consist of one or more focus constituents or it may contain entirely focused information. Fully focused sentences are normally introductory sentences for which no common ground has been established between the communicative partners.

Information is undoubtedly pragmatically grounded. However, its connection with grammar cannot be completely ruled out. Chomsky (1995) excludes information-structurally driven syntactic movement from grammar. The semantic interpretation of a sentence may also be affected by focus. Sentences with different focus phrases sometimes have truth-conditional meanings.

E.g.:

(a) The largest demonstrations took place in PRAGUE in November 1989.
(b) The largest demonstrations took place in PRAGUE in November 1989.

Now, if *the largest demonstrations of November 1989* were in London rather than

Prague, (a) would be false because Prague is focused in it. Under the same circumstances (b) would not be false since Prague forms the background, not the focus in the sentence. Thus, interpretation depends on where the focus occurs on a particular clause. Apart from the syntactic aspect, there is a certain correlation between certain prosodic patterns and certain pragmatic and semantic effects.

Focus is a theoretical notion which is used to account for this correlation. The focus of the sentence is marked by a peak of prosodic prominence, and is involved in relevant pragmatic and semantic effects.

The notion of focus of attention relates the linguistic notion of focus to the cognitive management of attention, which plays a significant role in the process of conceptualization and is intended to deliver the cognitive basis for information-structural notions such as sentence-internal topic and focus. A shift of constituents leads to a consequent change in the focus and topic in the preverbal or post-verbal position resulting in a change in the interpretation of the utterance. A semantic difference occurs in terms of the distance between the speaker and the focus or topic. Focus requires ensuring that the order between the variable and the value for the variable is not distorted, since the sequential arrangement or linearity contributes to the coherence of the text.

In order to examine the different ways in which focus shift either through structural or intonational alteration brings about a resultant meaning change in the pragmatic aspect, thus affecting the entire discourse, we shall look at instances of a variety of statement-type simple and complex sentences, which would serve as primary data for the purpose. These include declarative sentences depicting a variety of moods such as simple declarative, imperative, prohibitive, negative, and structural forms such as clefts,

pseudo clefts, specificational copular sentences, predicational copular sentences, equative sentences, sentences featured by complex predicates. Also, extracts shall be discussed in order to delve into the depths of how exactly the sentence and discourse are coalesced as a unified structure both in terms of syntax and pragmatics.

It is significant to note that Focus may be sub-categorized as **Immediate Focus** and **Global Focus** (Grosz, 1977). Immediate Focus refers to how a speaker's centre of attention shifts or remains constant over consecutive sentences, while Global Focus describes the effect of a speaker's centre of attention throughout a sequence of discourse utterances on succeeding utterances. However, one may deduce that a shift of the immediate focus affects the global focus since the sentential levels integrate to form a discourse and thus a semantic shift at the discourse level would consequently result in a different interpretation of the discourse concerned. The shift of focus may occur as a result of processes such as clefting, topicalization, there-insertion, left dislocation, since they are featured by new information into discourse.

2.3. Focus and Functional Sentence Perspective (FSP) and Focus in Complex Sentences

The fact that FSP has its objective in CD (Communicative Dynamism), i.e. contributing to the connectivity and continuity of discourse segments where the shift of focus also has a significant role to play. It is the focus according to which the interpretation of sentences is determined. The communicative intention of the speaker seems to converge at the focal point in sentences. The relation between focus and interpretation is directly proportional to the change of focus or even

focus shift affects interpretation since focus is contextualized. The information structure is thus affected owing to de-link in the conceptualization cues which function with the purpose of sustaining discourse coherence.

The position of individual items in the hierarchy of FSP is determined by the means of the concept of context dependence. This position is specified, having in view the relationships between individual items, through the scale of CD, travelling from theme to rheme. CD is understood as "the relative extent to which a linguistic element contributes towards the further development of the communication." (Firbas, 1992, p. 8)

The most important signaling degrees in Communicative Dynamism are context, which is either the preceding verbal context or the immediate situational context, linearity semantic structure, and in speech it is prosodic features. However, problem lies in identifying the element of situation which are relevant for the given text and to determine the way in which they interact with the given text. It is depends on individual perception. In unmarked cases, the scope of focus is determined by the context. Contrastive notions cannot function as opening sentences.

Segmental structure is essentially a projection of intentional structure and is independent of discourse genre. Segments can be hierarchically related to one another, reflecting hierarchical relations in the intentional structure. Grosz and Sidner define attentional state as "an abstraction of the focus of attention of the discourse participants (that) summarizes information from previous utterances crucial for processing subsequent ones." Attentional state has a hierarchical structure paralleling the segmental structure of discourse. Each focus space in the

current attentional state corresponds to a discourse segment that is currently in focus. Each focus space consists of representations of the discourse entities mentioned within the corresponding discourse segment. The primary function of the representation of focused discourse entities is to provide referents for anaphoric expressions, including definite (but not demonstrative pronouns). E.g.

This is my dog Checkers. I love him. I will never give him up.

-here, each sentence is directly related to the previous sentence, and keep adding new information. An English sentence typically has stress on a new content word in the predicate. At the end of a spoken sentence, the intonation drops, and this part of the sentence is used for minor sentence items since they are less prominent acoustically.

A discourse is composed of a combination and interweaving of simple as well as complex sentences. However, the meaning or semantic value of discourse is to a considerable extent determined by the focus of attention in the sentences constituting it. For instance, if a speaker wants to convey a single idea or message over a sequence of utterances, he may be required to present information about a second concept. In such cases, despite the introduction of a second concept, the speaker has to continue to focus on the initial concept. The speaker has to continue to focus on the initial concept. In order to sustain such focus, the speaker can use subordinate sentence structure in describing the second concept. However, if there is a third proposition which continues to focus on the second concept in the earlier statement, then it is preferable to dissect the proposition as two separate sentences. The textual coherence is thus established through appropriate allocation of focus. Propositions can also be coalesced through the

process of coordination. Functional information is highly dependent on the interaction between the grammar and an underlying planning component, in which focus plays a significant role.

2.4. Focus Shift in Discourse

When we read an expository text, our intuition relies on some basic assumptions about its coherence. Concepts are expected to flow sequentially from one sentence to the other. In case of a conceptual discontinuity within the text, a syntactic clue is usually provided for the mind to be tuned in accordance with such discontinuity. However, in cases where such clues are not given, it is the shift of focus which highlights the discontinuity. This supports the fact that the focus is essential for interpretation of discourse from semantic as well as pragmatic perspectives.

In expository text, the exposition is controlled by the author. Speech act information has an important role to play in this setting. The identification of focus shift is enabled by both the underlying knowledge base and the discourse-related phenomena which forms part of the text itself. A focus shift between adjacent sentences or clauses indicates the author's intention to transmute the reader's attention from given information to new information which eventually forms a subset of the text. The syntactic context pertaining to such a shift is arbitrary. In fact, the nature of shift that occurs between two adjacent foci in a text is variable. For instance, focus shift may be type concerned with the expansion and generalization.

Considering the syntactic point of view, focus shift can take place on a regular

basis between adjacent clauses, adjacent sentences, and also larger units of text that are adjacent. Hence, the network of focus shift within a text may be complex.

Assuming C1 and C2 to denote a pair of items positioned adjacent to each other in a text, focus shift based on discourse cohesion relations between C1 and C2 can be identified through the application of certain principles. For instance, if C1 is followed byC2 and the discourse relation concerned is "expansion," i.e., expanding the scope of the sentence structurally, then a focus shift from C1 to C2 occurs. In other words, C1 is an embellishment of C1 is due to the relationship of "expansion" and the supporting concept C2. Connectivity between the adjacent concepts in a text is sometimes explicitly revealed by the presence of "clue words" and other markers.

In other words, the Focus and Topic are pragmatic statuses dependent on the conceptualizer. They must pertain to a particular semantic or pragmatic domain. The shift from one intonational context to another is signaled by a number of diverse linguistic and behavioral phenomena. These are called conceptualization cues. Thus, the shift in focus in subsequent utterances would break the conceptualization cues. Consequently, repetition of Focus and Topic is necessary when there is a shift in Focus position.

Information status of a sentence may be different such that either there is a focus-connectivity relation or focus–anticonnectivity relation. For instance, specificational sentences are characterized by two parts—a variable part and a value part, and their semantic function is to identify the referent of the variable part. Specificational copular sentences have a fixed information structure, wherein the pre-copular constituent (the variable part) is interpreted as the topic, the ground, the discourse-old or presupposed part of the sentence, and the post-

copular constituent is discourse-new, the focus of the sentence. As for canonical sentences, it is commonly assumed that in their neutral unmarked reading, the subject is interpreted as the topic/theme, while the elements in the Verb Phrase are the Focus. The semantic difference between specificational and predicational copular sentences is reflected in the presence or absence of a connectivity effect. In all connectivity cases, the constituents involved in the connectivity effect have the same informational status in the specificational copular sentence as in the corresponding simple sentence (with the neutral unmarked stress pattern). However, in anti-connectivity cases, by contrast, the information status of the two relevant constituents in the specificational copular sentence and in the canonical sentence is not the same.

2.5. Focus Shift Constraint

The movement of focus is constrained by factors pertaining to the context. The connection within an utterance is the linguistic material representing information which stands in a contextually licensed (i.e. contextually salient or inferable) poset relation with information evoked in or inferable from the prior context, and serves as the link between the information present in the current utterance and the prior context (Birner & Ward, 1998).

The Focus Shift constraint identified and formalized by Derr and Mckeown, constrains simple and complex sentence generation. It has been noted that when a speaker intends to focus on a single concept over a sequence of sentences, additional information may be required to be presented with regard to some other concept. In such situations, the speaker makes a temporary digression to the other concept but will immediately continue to focus on the first. In order to indicate

30

that focus remains constant, subordinate sentence structure may be used while referring to additional or ancillary information. The Focus constraint finds expression as follows:

Assumption: there are three propositions P1, P2, P3 with arguments indicating Focus F1, F2, and F3 respectively.

Constraint: if F1=F3, F1 does not equal F2 and F2 is a constraint of P1.

As a result, the generator should produce a complex sentence consisting of P1 as the main sentence with P2 as the subordinate clause through F2 as the Focus. P3 follows as the second sentence.

However, in the Definite Clause Grammar (DCG) formalism, the constraint is marked on the basis of a rule which dictates Focus to remain constant from P1 to P3, and P2's Focus must not equal P1's Focus. This is attributed to the characteristic of DCG being a context-free formalism. Focus of attention can determine whether the passive or active voice should be used in a sentence. The constraint dictates that information must occur as surface subject in a sentence. Thus, in Functional Unification Grammar (FUG), focus should occur first or initially in the sentence structure.

This shall be done taking into consideration data in English and data in Bengali respectively, thus drawing a parallel through a contrastive analysis between the two languages considering the similarities and variations observed. Also, the different types of focus find place in the analysis. Hence, in a nutshell, it is the relation between the information structure and the information status that shall be highlighted through the analysis.

Chapter 3

English Data Analysis with Respect to Focus Shift

This chapter is concerned with the elucidation of information structure and information status in relation to focus shift, in the light of English data. The focal information in a linguistic expression is that information which is relatively the most important or salient in the given communicative setting, and considered by S (the speaker) to be the most essential for A (the addressee) to integrate into his pragmatic information (Dik, 1997a, p. 326).

Reordering of constituents in a statement results in consequent change in the focus and topic in the pre-verbal or post-verbal position. This leads to change in interpretation of the utterance. Besides the pragmatic difference, a semantic difference occurs in terms of the distance between the speaker and focus/topic. Moreover, the focus operator requires movement to a verb-related focus position. Movement to the verb-adjacent focus position which according to proposals made within the generative framework is located in the left periphery of the sentence, i.e. in the focus projection of the CP (Complement Phrase) domain. This is overt in case of focus languages but can also be covert and delayed until LF (Logical Form), as in English for instance. It is also important to note that in semantic accounts, the interpretation of focus sensitive particles is structurally connected to intonationally marked focus. In pragmatic accounts, pragmatic factors alone link focus sensitive particle interpretation to focus. In order to prove this through analysis, a variety of statement-type simple and complex sentences will be referred to, isolated from context and even within a particular context.

The following are examples of **Declarative sentences** (*Simple* and *Complex*):

(1a) He walked into the room slowly

(1b) Slowly he walked into the room

(29)

In the above example, (1a) emphasizes on *walked*, whereas (1b) focuses on *slowly*. Now, the latter is more descriptive about the manner in which the action was executed. *Room* serves as the topic or may be considered as secondary focus. Quite obviously, we observe a semantic and pragmatic alteration owing to a structural shift of focus. Also, psychologically it seems that "the room" into which "he walked" is not unknown or new to the agent in the former sentence. However, in the second sentence, the impression one gets is that he walked into the room which he is not too familiar with. It arouses suspense in the reader's mind as well and evokes a sense of expectation of what happens next. There is a craving for additional information, owing to an implicit unpredictability in the sentence. Also, there is an assumed sense of preceding information. The second sentence, in other words, seems to be a continuation of given information, whereas the first sentence may or may not be backed by preceding information, which is why the idea of **new information** is associated with the verb in the sentence.

(1b) seems to be part of a larger context thus encompassing a broader domain and adding effect to Global focus. In other words, it operates at the discourse level rather than simply at the sentence level.

(2a) The police ran after him

(2b) After him the police ran

The structural change of the sentence (2a) brings about complete change in the meaning of the resultant sentence (2b). Not only does the focus shift from *ran* to the PP (Prepositional Phrase) *after him*, but the entire meaning is changed. It brings about structural ambiguity as well, since (2b) can be interpreted in two ways;

33

firstly, *after him* may denote temporality on one hand, i.e. it was *after* he ran that the police ran; second, after him may signify the notion of *behind*, i.e. the police ran *behind him*. Hence, we observe that structural shift of focus through the topicalization of the PP, brings about pronounced change in the pragmatics of the sentence, to the extent that it may even lead to structural ambiguity.

Shift of focus further determines or influences to a certain extent the emotion contained in the utterance. Intonation also plays a significant role in helping to locate the focus of an utterance and thus distinguish between focus and topic. For instance, let us examine the following pair of declarative complex sentences:

(3a) I would be much obliged if the work is done as early as possible

(3b) If the work is done as early as possible I would be much obliged

In (2a) *the work* is the topic and *done as early as possible* the AFD (Actual Focus Domain). In (2b), restructuring the sentence, the intensity of the utterance is seen to change such that (2a) intuitively seems to be more of a request and (2b) a command. As a result, the extent of formality also differs in the two respective utterances. The notion of Contrastive focus gets highlighted through conditionality. It is significant to note that topic defines the spatio-temporal or individual framework within which the main predication holds (Chafe, 1976, p. 51). It also ascertains the 'givenness' condition of information. Thus, a shift of focus distorts the entire domain of the framework established by the topic, which in this case is signified by *the work*.

The following are instances of focus shift with respect to **Locative** constructions:

(1a) I went to the school

34

(1b) To the school I went

(1c) *The school I went to

Now, all these sentences exhibit focus shift with pronounced change in their respective pragmatic meanings. For instance, considering example (1) which has three structures, focus position shifts due to reshuffling the order of lexical items, as a result of which the sentences are characterized by variation in terms of interpretation. (1a) seems to project an assumed familiarity between the speaker and the object, i.e. *school* due to the presence of a definite article. The focus lies on *school* primarily. There is an overlap between the focus and topic here since *school* satisfies the conditions of "aboutness" and representing new information. However, in (1b) (which is an example from Indian English) there seems to be a distance between the speaker and the object in semantic terms and the note of familiarity is almost absent. The notion of familiarity is triggered by the definite article *the*. The focus shifts to the verb *went* as it signifies new information. Further, (1c) is more likely to be an incomplete structure which serves more as the initial part of a sentence and thus requires more information to be valid as a grammatical sentence. Hence, it is observed that restructuring the information leads to a change in not only the position but also the element of focus.

(2a) Alice kept the fruits in the basket

(2b) In the basket Alice kept the fruits

Moving on to example (2), there is a very prominent alteration in interpretation associated with focus shift through the process of locative inversion. In (2a), syntactically, focus seems to fall on the PP (Prepositional Phrase) *in the basket,* though not ruling out the possibility of varied intonational focus. However, focus shifts as result of locative inversion in (2b), the primary focus being *the fruits*, which seems to be more of a reply to the question, "what did Alice keep in the basket?" ; in other words, it operates as the Presentational focus. It is to be noted

35

that possibility remains that the logical focus and intonational focus of a statement may not coincide. For instance, the intonational focus may lie on *Alice*.

In English it is often the intonational perspective which reflects the communicative intention of the speaker. However, the syntactic presentation of information is equally significant since communication it may not necessarily be verbal. Thus, in case of non-verbal communication, the way information is structured makes a marked difference in its pragmatic significance since information is contextually dependent. In other words, the importance of information status lies in its structural presentation.

(3a) Alice kept the fruits in the basket on the table

(3b) In the basket on the table Alice kept the fruits

(3c) On the table Alice kept the fruits in the basket

Considering example (3), focus shifts from one PP to the other, thus giving rise to three different intuitional approaches for the interpretation of the respective sentences. In (3a), logically, the immediate or primary focus lies on the first PP, i.e. *in the basket* and secondary focus is on the second PP, i.e. *on the table*. There may be a difference in the intonational focus but which seems quite unlikely in this context. (3b) exhibits an expansion in the AFD (Actual Focus Domain), which is extended as *in the basket on the table* and serves as the primary focus, as a whole, thus functioning as a single unit of focus, namely Broad focus. *Fruits* acts as the topic. However, (3c) stands to be absurd in terms of its structure as a consequence of the shift of focus positions through an inversion of the PPs. There is disarray in the logical sequence of the constituent phrases. It would rather imply that the fruits were kept on the table located in the basket, thus denoting an impossible situation going by the concept of space and magnitude. Though it is not ungrammatical, it is characterized by semantic absurdity.

This highlights the importance of the logical sequence of information. The notion of linear precedence finds importance in complex structures consisting of a number of embedded clauses. The structural arrangement requires being such that the communicative intent is focused through appropriate hierarchy of the components constituting the sentence.

(4a) I went to the market to buy a shirt for my brother

(4b) To the market I went to buy a shirt for my brother

(4c) To buy a shirt for my brother I went to the market

In the fourth set of sentences, i.e. (4), the explanation is similar with respect to (1), the difference being that (4) is a set of complex sentences. In (4a) the AFD is constituted by the subordinate clause, *to buy a shirt for my brother*. As a result of locative inversion, (4b) changes in terms of its interpretation. Unlike (1c) it is not ungrammatical since it is backed by an embedded clause. However, focus seems to be determined intonationally in this case since it is difficult to determine the logical focus in case of the locative phrase being at the sentence-initial position. However, such a structure is usually avoided as the status of the information remains vague owing to no definite focus from the syntactic point of view. Finally, in (4c), the role and reference of the information undergoes reversal in terms of focus and topic, such that the AFD concerning primary focus seems to change to *I went to the market* from *to buy a shirt*. In fact *market* serves as the new information in this case and the event of buying a shirt seems given. Thus, in accordance with the given/new distinction in SFG (Systemic Functional Grammar), *market* seems to bear the tonic prominence intuitionally, going by the structure of the statement thereby being the element of focus.

Shift of constituents thus interchanges the focus and topic in the pre-verbal or post-verbal position resulting in a change in interpretation of the utterance. A semantic difference occurs in terms of the distance between the agent and the focus/topic. Thus, question of

adopting an appropriate hierarchy of locative constituents arises, in order to ensure effective communication of information. There needs to be linearity in the arrangement of clausal constituents for focus to be sustained.

However, it is interesting to note that information structure can be assigned to units smaller than the sentence. Establishing a link between the theme and main clause of the new sentence and information available in an utterance determines the attachment point. The focused elements in both the theme[1] and rheme[2] introduce new discourse referents or new information about the theme.

In the theme which links up with preceding information, focused elements are often derived from an antecedent, whereas in the rheme, the focused elements are either truly new to the discourse or require re-introduction because earlier mentions have been rendered inaccessible.

Let us further consider instances of **Imperative statements** in order to analyze the phenomenon of focus shift in relation to their information structure:

(1a) You have to complete the assignment today

(1b) Today you have to complete the assignment

Now, in the first case, i.e. (1a), the emphasis seems to be on *today*, whereas, in (1b), the shift of focus to the subject position through topicalisation, changes the perspective of interpreting the sentence. It seems to imply that there has already been a series of tasks which have been performed by the addressee and "today's" task is to *complete the assignment*, where *assignment* serves as the topic.

This structure suggests the precedence of a background to the sentence as a result. Thus there seems to be a change in the level or extent of urgency and intensity

implied through both the expressions, with regard to completion of the assignment.

1 A sentence may be divided into theme and rheme, where theme refers to the concept of what the sentence is about, while 2 rheme is the portion of the sentence excluding the theme, i.e. the remaining part of the sentence.

It is mportant to note that in case of the presence quantitative adverbs (*today*) which serve as adjuncts, topicalization brings about semantic and pragmatic change in meaning owing to the expansion of the context in which the sentence operates. The object in question becomes the focus in such cases. In other words, it is the topic itself which functions as the focus, the topic being *the assignment* in this instance.

(2a) Go and get me those books from the library

(2b) From the library go and get me those books

In the first case, i.e. (2a), *from the library* stands to be the AFD (Actual Focus Domain) and in the second sentence *those books* constitute the AFD. The first sentence implies that the speaker guides the addressee with regard to "where" the books are available, thus focusing on *library* but in the second case, *those books* are specifically focused upon since it is obvious that the library is a place where books are stored. So, the shift of focus through topicalization again, brings out a marked distinction between them with respect to implication. It is in the second sentence where *those books* may be considered as the 'new element' which is introduced, thereby assuming the role of focus. Thus, the role of focus as new information is reflected in both the sentences.

39

However, there may be a distinctive intonational focus on the demonstrative pronoun those since it acts as the Specifier of the object, i.e. *books*.

(3a) Do not interrupt while I'm talking to him

(3b) While I'm talking to him do not interrupt

In (3a), *interrupt* acts as the primary focus, while in (3b) the phrase *while I'm talking to him* behaves as the AFD. This implies that there has been a change in the AFD in case of restructuring the information. In the first case, focus is given on the action of "interrupting," while in the second case the duration seems to be under emphasis, i.e. *while I'm talking to him*.

Thus, a pragmatic change is observed with respect to the change in information structure owing to topicalization of the Adverbial Phrase. In other words, the shift of focus yields a different perspective to the perception and corresponding interpretation of the sentence.

(3c) Maintain silence while I'm teaching or else you shall be punished

(3d) While I'm teaching maintain silence or else you shall be punished

With reference to (3c) and (3d) one observes a similar trend in the interpretational change associated with rephrasing the statement through clausal shift. In other words, in the first case, it is more of the command of maintaining silence which is emphasized. In fact, the conditional aspect represented by the subordinate clause *or else you shall be punished* is the consequence for "not maintaining silence." However, in (3d), it is the duration of teaching which is in immediate focus and the relation between this duration and the conditional aspect is stronger than the relation between simply maintaining silence and the conditional aspect following it. To be specific, it implies that the condition of being punished applies in case

silence is not maintained "while" the speaker is 'teaching.' There are no other criteria for silence to be maintained in this context. The duration of maintaining silence gets focused in this regard. As a result, the notion of contrastiveness as highlighted through the focus, gets reversed in terms of the relation between the clauses. Hence, there is a stark difference in the ways the information is conveyed in the respective statements using separate syntactic structures.

(4a) Come and help me

(4b) Help me and come

Here, we find that the entire meaning changes due to the shift of focus position of *help*. In other words, there is no connection at all between the meanings of the subsequent sentences.

Not only does the information structure change but the entire information is altered since the sequence of events gets reversed. Unlike the previous instances where the second sentence was a derivation of the first leading to perspective shift of interpretation, this instance exhibits total change of meaning and not simply perspective. Hence, a total alteration in the pragmatic aspect takes place. In other words, the contexts of interpretation of the two statements are entirely different.

(5a) Open the door

(5b) *The door open

Now, it is interesting to note that example (5) is an anomaly in the regular occurrence of focus shift, such that restructuring the information leads to

ungrammaticality. This instance highlights that if there are more than two constituents in the sentence, then focus shift or change in the focus position would *not* result in ungrammaticality, but certainly brings about a change in interpretation of the sentence.

However, such interpretation is also dependent on the perception of the utterance. Contrarily, in case of sentences consisting of less than three constituents, the result of focus shift would be ungrammaticality, in case of *Simple sentences*. Movement of constituents is constrained in such cases. They are absolute in their interpretation.

(6a) Put the pen down

(6b) Put down the pen

In (6a), the emphasis is on the "position" of the pen, i.e. *down*, whereas in (6b) emphasis lies on the *pen*, i.e. the object.

The reshuffle of the statement exhibits a clear distinction with respect to the implication and corresponding interpretation of the statements. In the first case, it is the position or the spatial aspect which is primarily in focus. In other words, the aspect of space and direction are conceived in the mind of the addressee according to the structural arrangement of the sentence.

However, in the second case, it is the object *pen* which holds primary focus. Since *put down* conglomerate to constitute a phrasal verb, the question of what follows becomes intensified and object concerned, serves as the new information. As discussed earlier, new information inclusive of tonic prominence denotes focus according to the theory of SFG.

(7a) Close your books and keep them away

(7b) Keep them away and close your books

Complete detachment occurs between *books* and *them* in the second case of (7) as the relation collapses due to a shift of focus or rather inverting the information structure. In the first case, *books* and *them* are co-referential, unlike the second case where they are not co-referential.

Thus, the connectivity between *books* and *them* is affected such that it yields a consequent change in the binding structure of the sentence. In other words, the notion of anti-connectivity gains prominence in the second alternative, opposing the connectivity observed in the first case. More specifically, the NP (Noun Phrase) in the subordinate clause of the second sentence does not co-refer with the pronoun in the main clause. Thus, they cannot be co-indexed, consequently resulting in anti-connectivity.

Also, in case of specificity related leftward movement, it is to be noted that an inverted NP cannot be accommodated in the DP (Demonstrative Phrase) structure. The possessive cannot be lower than the demonstrative in the information structure.

(8a) Keep these files in the cupboard adjacent to the library

(8b) In the cupboard adjacent to the library keep these files

(8a) has the locative phrase, i.e. the subordinate clause as the primary focus, while in (8b) it is again the subordinate clause *keep these files* finds prominence. Thus, we find that irrespective of locative inversion taking place, the focus position remains fixed, i.e. it acts on the subordinate clause. The focus shifts but the position of the focal element remains unaltered.

However, it is also the intonational aspect which influences the interpretation in accordance with the stress associated with the constituents making up the sentences. In fact, there may be more than one focus in a sentence. The

43

intonational patterns are the indicators with regard to denoting primary and secondary focus.

It is significant to note that a change in the primary or immediate focus might bring about an alteration in the global focus, i.e. affecting the entire discourse.

(9a) Close the windows in my room so that the rain does not splash

(9b) The windows in my room close so that the rain does not splash

(9c) So that the rain does not splash close the windows in my room

Here, (9a) and (9c) do not differ in meaning despite inverting the sentence structure shifting the focus. In other words, the causal relation between the clauses remains unaffected. However, in SBE (Standard British English), (9c) would not be an acceptable structural representation of the information concerned in spite of its being grammatical. It is interesting to note that the focus position remains unchanged as well, despite the inversion of the constituent clauses. In other words, it remains within the subordinate clause. The pragmatic and semantic aspects would be affected though. To be specific, in (9b) the relation between the clauses is a direct conditional one such that if the windows are *not* closed then *the rain would splash* as the consequence. It highlights the implicit element of "otherwise." Contrarily, the subordinate clause in (9c) acts as one of the options related to why the windows should be closed or one how the rain can be prevented from splashing. Hence, the respective subordinate clauses act as the AFD in (9a) and (9c), their roles being different, i.e. the subordinate clause in the former acts as the consequence, thus denoting the conditional aspect, while that of

44

the latter signifies the notion of optionality. Thus, the semantic difference between the two sentences brings about difference in the pragmatic interpretation as the contexts stand to be different.

However, considering (9b), the meaning of the sentence undergoes complete change owing to shift of focus *close*, however keeping it within the same clause. The role of the agent completely disappears, thus affecting the semantic interpretation at the representational level as per the framework of FDG (Functional Discourse Grammar). Also, the sentence mood changes from imperative to a simple declarative one; though absurd in its implication it is not ungrammatical.

(10a) Serve me tea in the cup which you had gifted

(10b) In the cup which you had gifted serve me tea

Likewise, going by the trend of meaning change due to focus shift, this example exhibits a complete change of emphasis and consequent change of interpretation. In other words, there is a complete alternation in the AFD. Specifically, in (10a) it is the *cup* which is primarily and immediately in focus, unlike the alternative in (10b) where *tea* happens to gain the status of focus. There is no explicit secondary focus in this instance.

From the observation of the trends of focus shift and information status change through subsequent instances of imperative and prohibitive statements, it is favorable to infer that the linear order of lexical items in a statement simple or complex, contribute to a great extent to the possibility and range of focus shift. In cases featured by locative inversion, it is significant to note that the position of the focus does not move. It is the element in the subordinate clause which gets primarily focused. In other words the subordinate clause acts as the AFD.

45

English is a language which stands out to be comparatively rigid in terms of focus shift owing to its SVO structure. It is often the phonological aspect more than the syntactic aspect which determines the focus in case of English from the conversational point of view.

However, the strands of interpersonal, representational and structural aspects need to be interwoven by the sender of information in order to project focus as the communicative motive, consequently facilitating and enhancing the ease with which the information is received and interpreted by the addressee.

However, in the case of written text, it is more of the syntactic aspect which requires attention with regard to determining focus and effects of focus shift with respect to change in pragmatic meaning. Conversationally, it is much more convenient to locate the focal domain and pinpoint the actual focus since it can be done just by following the intonation pattern. However, it is very essential to keep the logical focus and intonational focus separate. In other words, logical focus is the syntactic understanding of focus while intonational focus corresponds to the phonological understanding of focus. Logical focus refers to the last argument in the c-command domain of the VP (Verb Phrase).

E.g. His wife mistreats <u>JOHN</u>:

    His wife <u>MISTREATS</u> John

Referring to the first statement of the set of statements, there cannot be co-reference between John and the pronominal subject, unlike the second instance where "mistreats" serves as the intonational focus, thus allowing co-reference, where John could be considered as the secondary focus. Hence, it is evident that a complete shift of perspective occurs with regard to the interpretation of the two sentences, which are structurally identical. In these instances it is the context which is of great importance since it implies the responses are in accordance with the context of which it is a part.

There seems to be special emphasis on certain elements respectively, which draws the addressee's attention in that particular direction. Had the statements been devoid of any marked intonational stress, then the recipient of the information possesses the freedom to interpret them following his personal intuition.

Further, we shall examine the phenomenon of focus shift in case of **cleft structures:**

(1a) She likes John

(1b) It is John she likes

In the sentences above, the notion of focus takes two different dimensions. (1a) is more of a generalized statement in the sense that *John* happens to be one of the people she likes, implying that there are others as well whom she likes. However, in (1b) the information is much more in special focus owing to the cleft form of the statement. In other words, *John* happens to be the special element on which emphasis is given. It implies that *John* is the *only one* she likes. The former example signifies the idea of an infinite open set of which John is a part. On the contrary, the later is representative of a closed set with limited options from which John is selected. Thus, again we find an intricate connection between the semantic and pragmatic aspects pertaining to the sentences.

Let us consider other examples of similar class, taking into account *complex sentences:*

(2a) It was Alan who saved the boy from drowning

(2b) It was Alan who saved the boy from drowning *yesterday*

In (2a) and (2b), the information structure is in the form of a cleft. However, difference lies in the fact that (2a) is fixed and is not endowed with the flexibility of being restructured unlike (2b) which may be restructured through the process of topicalization as:

(2c) Yesterday it was Alan who saved the boy from drowning

Now, in (2a) the focus naturally and by default lies on *Alan*, i.e. the agent of the action of "saving" the boy. In (2b) the focus is also *Alan* since it occurs immediately after the *it was* cleft form. However, if the topicalized form of (2b) is examined (i.e. 2c) it will be observed that the primary or immediate focus shifts to *yesterday* and *Alan* bears the secondary focus, according to which the interpretation of the sentence completely changes, suggesting the possibility of the presence of other individuals, who could have saved the boy from drowning. It also bears the provision of an openness implying that the boy had been in a similar situation earlier, where he might have been saved by someone else and not by *Alan*. However, it was *yesterday* that *Alan* saved him from drowning. Now, it is to be noted that the possibility and plausibility of such alternative interpretation is considered only if the sentence consists of an adjunct which may be an adverbial phrase or prepositional phrase. Thus, pragmatically the two sentences are different.

(3a) It was *Sam* who broke the glass yesterday

(3b) *Yesterday* it was *Sam* who broke the glass

The focused elements have been italicized in the above set of sentences. We observe a change in the interpretation of the sentences as the point of emphasis is shifted. The explanation of such modification of information status corresponds to the previous example. In this case again, considerable difference in the pragmatic

48

and semantic meaning is observed. This is where the importance of context gets highlighted along with the role of the agent of the action, thus affecting the interpersonal and representational aspects through structural modification of the sentence. Focus shift denotes a distortion in the context as a result, in case of clefted statement-type sentences.

Also, there seems to be a subtle intuitional difference in "feeling" with respect to the example, such that (3a) seems to be more of a spontaneous comment, while (3b) seems to function as a continuation of preceding discourse, i.e. it is contextualized. In other words, elaborating on the discourse, it seems as though (3b) is part of a context where the "glass-breaking" event has already been mentioned such that the agent of the action was not *Sam*. Consequently, *yesterday* serves as the point of focus and also ensures continuity with regard to the information structure, unlike (3a), where *yesterday* simply operates as additional information behaving like an adjunct.

(4) It was Jim$_i$ who broke his$_i$ leg

Here, the absence of any adjunct phrase prevents the focus from being shifted from *Jim*, unless there is an intonational shift of focus, which seems quite unlikely in this instance.

(5a) It was Jim who broke his leg because of an accident

(5b) Because of an accident it was Jim who broke his leg

Now, in this example we see that on topicalization of the clause embedded within the subordinate clause the area of attention of the addressee gets shifted. A pronounced difference in the communicative intention of the speaker is brought about. Thus, information structure and information status are proved to be correlated via contextualization. In (5a), the primary emphasis lies on *Jim* while

the final embedded clause acts as the domain for secondary focus. However, in (5b), primary importance remains associated with *Jim* and the event retains its secondary focus which stands to be the cause of *Jim* breaking his *leg*, i.e. the *accident*. Thus, the salient information of the sentence appears to occur in the cleft phrase irrespective of constituent shift. This shows that the specified element represented through the it is/ it was phrase bears primary focus in the sentence.

This is also an example of Contrastive focus since a causal relation is established through Jim and the accident, where *because* acts as the connector establishing the causal relation.

Thus, one may deduce that if the cleft sentence is characterized by an adjunct constituted of an Adverbial Phrase, or two or more subordinate clauses, then topicalization of that adjunct would yield considerable difference in pragmatic meaning owing to the statement being part of a context in discourse, whether written or verbal. However, the final subordinate clause needs to be a PP (Prepositional phrase) or AdvP (Adverbial phrase) where the adverb has to be an adverb of time or place, in case of the presence of a wh-pronomial being used as *who* as supported via example (5).

It is significant to note that English is more rigid with regard to focus and shift of focus, unlike Bengali (as we shall see through subsequent analysis in the following Chapter) whose SOV (Subject-Verb-Object) structure facilitates focus shift much easily. Contrarily, in English, *it is/what is* occur at a fixed position and are implicative of focus as they occur sentence initially, immediately preceding the focus. They act as focalizers or focus operators. Thus, cleft structures with respect to simple as well complex sentences exhibit the prominence of focus and may be restructured only under certain conditions such that the grammaticality of the statement remains intact.

Since SFG supports the inexplicability of form in terms of function, we may deduce that in case of clefted information structure there is a semantic aspect interwoven with the pragmatic meaning of the sentence. The linguistic modules of

50

semantics and pragmatics are complementary to each other. The emphasis via *it is/it was* is implicative of the focal domain or rather the AFD, which follows *it is* and happens to be the main clause constituting the sentence. However, this does not imply that there cannot be another focus in the subordinate clause. It bears the secondary focus instead. In other words, it seems to qualify the focus in the main clause, i.e. the primary focus.

Cleft constructions are well placed in the theory of FG (Functional Grammar) owing to the importance of the concept of context. However, with respect to RRG, according to which form is motivated by function, change or shift of focus would necessitate a simultaneous modification in form. Since the function of focus is to create emphasis on a particular segment, a shift of focus would lead to a corresponding alteration in form with the purpose of sustaining its functionality.

Thus, in case of cleft structures, the information emphasized is placed sentence initially following *it is/ it was* so that the addressee's focus of attention is channelized according to the speaker's intention. Such channelization of attention seems to be guided by principles of hierarchy in the syntactic form. In other words, psychologically the addressee's notion of focus is tuned to a particular structural form which consequently gets redirected as a result of rearrangement of the information structure thus altering the information status in the addressee's mind.

Taking the semantic aspect into consideration, clefts signify the notion of *only* with the focus sensitive particle, i.e. *it is/ it was,* as a result of which the element represented by it bears primary and the logical focus, as a result of which the pragmatic aspect gets highlighted. It includes the notion of presupposition, and as a result denotes selection from a given set of information; thus in turn establishing contrastiveness through the focus field. In other words, the element *it* signifies an intended referent to be in focus.

Therefore, within the PFD (Potential Focus Domain, which in case of English stands to be the entire clause) the change in AFD (Actual Focus Domain) re-

channelizes the addressee's thought-process accordingly, keeping in view the contextual aspect or background of utterance. It is important to note that what we think of as a natural order is often based on the way our brain linguistically construes thematic roles, with the agent as the dominant argument, the patient and goal as secondary arguments. Consequently, any deviation from the natural word-order is often a cause and also results of focus shift, as we apply more weight on one argument compared to the others.

Information structuring through the use of cleft sentences increases the processing efficiency of references to elements within the scope of focus. Furthermore, putting certain types of emphasis on individual words not only enhances their subsequent processing but also protects these words from becoming suppressed in the wake of subsequent information, suggesting mechanisms of enhancements and suppression. For example, cleft constructions facilitate the integration of subsequent sentences that make reference to elements within the scope of focus, and that they decrease the efficiency with reference to elements outside the scope of focus.

Moving on to the domain of **pseudo clefts** we observe interesting aspects of focus shift and pragmatic meaning alteration:

(1a) What I ate was a strawberry

(1b) A strawberry was what I ate

In the examples provided through (1a) and (1b), the focus lies on *ate* in the pseudo cleft and in the topicalized structure the focus seems to be on *strawberry*. We may say that there is a secondary focus on *strawberry* in (1a). Now, in such cases where there may be more than a single focus, the intonational pattern becomes very significant. The focus may therefore alternate between *strawberry* and *ate*.

However, going by the definition of focus as representing new information in a sentence, the more probable option of focus would be *ate*. Also, we find a greater distance between the focus and wh-word in case of the pseudo cleft structure.

(2a) What I ate was delicious

(2b) *Delicious was what I ate

(2a) and (2b) are statements which highlight that the possibility of topicalizing (2a) as (2b) is ruled out. In other words, in case of pseudo cleft structures *not* characterized by a post-copular NP (Noun Phrase), information cannot be restructured. In other words, the linear sequence of such sentences remains fixed in order to sustain their grammaticality.

Higgins (1973) observes that English pseudo-clefts exhibit connectivity effects. Anaphors in the clefted phrase can take antecedent within the wh-phrase, despite an apparent lack of c-command. Let us see this phenomenon through the analysis of the following sentences:

(3a) What Mary₁ bought was a picture for herself₁ (binding connectivity)

(3b) A picture for herself₁ was what Mary₁ bought

The inversion of the pseudo-cleft structure exhibits a perspective shift in the interpretation of the sentence, such that through a structural shift of focus it yields a different angle of interpreting the sentence. In other words, in (3a) the object *picture* was the focus of attention which shifts to *bought*, i.e. the verb in the embedded clause in (3b). The binding connectivity gets affected consequently. Moreover, from the pragmatic and semantic aspect (3a) is representative of an open set. This implies that amongst other options of given objects, *Mary* selected

to buy a *picture*, where *picture* serves as the new information. On the contrary, *bought* serves as the new information or more appropriately salient information within the sentence.

3.1 Focus and Its Shift in Specificational Copular Sentences and Predicational Copular Sentences

Having laid the grounds of the argument of focus shift and its impact on interpretation of information, let us delve into other arenas of statement-type sentences.

In the following section we shall take a look at focus shift in relation to Specificational copular sentences and Predicational copular sentences simultaneously:

(1a) What I ate was a cake

(1b) A cake was what I ate

(2a) John is the winner

(2b) The winner is John

The connectivity of the sentences is affected not in terms of structure but in terms of relation between the variable and value. In other words, if the value and variable (according to RRG) are interchanged in terms of their structural position, thereby altering the entire the sentence structure, the meanings of the sentences

consequently change. It is the shift of focus which as a result shifts the area of emphasis from one element to the other thus altering the perspective of interpretation of the statement. In (1a), which is an example of a pseudo cleft structure, the emphasis is logically on the object, *cake*, whereas in (1b), the emphasis falls on *ate* primarily and cake is relegated to the status of secondary focus going by intuitional patterns. However, this is as far as the syntactic aspect is concerned. From the intonational point of view, the interpretation is featured by variability. In cases where there is more than a single focus, the intonational pattern becomes very significant as already mentioned.

Thus, the focus may alternate between *ate* and *cake*. However, going by the concept of focus as representative of new information in a sentence the more probable option of focus would be *ate*. Restructuring (2a) as (2b), there is a deviation from the original information status in the sense that (2b) seems to be featured by an element of suspense since the main information bearing focus (*John*), is revealed at the end of the sentence, i.e. at the object position.

(1a) What John$_i$ did was wash himself$_i$/*him/*herself

(1b) John$_i$ washed himself$_i$/*him/*herself

Here, elements from both the pre-copular and post-copular parts of the Specificational Copular sentence (1a) are involved in specific clause-internal relations in the same way as the elements from the corresponding simple sentence (1b).

it is important to note that connectivity effects hold only in case of Specificational Copular sentences. Predicational pseudo clefts, for instance do not display the same effects, as evident in the following example:

(1c) *What John$_i$ likes is important to him$_i$/himself

(1d) What he$_i$ likes is important to John$_i$

Hence, the semantic difference between Specificational copular sentences and Predicational copular sentences is reflected in the presence or absence of a connectivity effect.

In all connectivity cases, the constituents involved in the connectivity effect have the same information status in the specificational copular sentence as in the corresponding simple sentence (with the neutral unmarked stress pattern).

Further, let us examine a number of Predicational Copular sentences:

(1a) What I saw was disgusting

(1b) *Disgusting was what I saw

(2a) John$_i$ likes what is important to him$_i$

(2b) *What is important to him$_i$ John$_i$ likes

Here, we find that shifting the focus position to the subject position results in ungrammaticality of the sentence. Thus, the notions of connectivity as well as anti-connectivity collapse.

However, in anti-connectivity cases by contrast, the information status of the two relevant constituents in the Specificational copular sentence and in the canonical sentence is not the same. In case of anti-connectivity NP in the post copular position cannot co-refer to the pronoun in the pre-copular part in Specificational copular sentences. Unlike anti-connectivity, connectivity follows binding principles.

For instance:

(1a) Joe is his friend

(1b) His friend is Joe

The example above is an instance which violates **Principle C** of the Binding Principles, which says that an R-expression must be free.

However, in this case the R-expression, i.e. *Joe* is not free, since it is backed by a c-commanding antecedent, *his*. Now, in this example, anti-connectivity occurs as a result of change in the information structure of the original sentence. Since the NP in post-copular position and the pronoun in the pre-copular position are not co-referential, it leads to anti-connectivity. Thus, we find a transgression from connectivity of the original sentence to anti-connectivity of the latter sentence owing to the shift of focus in the information structure. However, both are Specificational Copular sentences.

3.2 Focus Shift in Equative and Identificational Sentences

(1a) Cicero is Tully

(1b) Tully is Cicero

The above example implies a bidirectional relationship between Cicero and Tully, i.e. the subject and object respectively. In other words, there is no question of logical disruption or incoherence since the variable and the value for that variable are considered as equal. It satisfies the criteria as put forward in RRG. To be more specific, if Cicero is the variable, Tully is the value for that variable and vice versa, since the relation between the value and variable is equative.

Thus, inverting the sentence structure does not affect such cases where the equative relation holds between two NPs. In other words, since one NP stands for the other, the relation between them remains unaffected semantically as well as pragmatically. There is only the possibility of intonational shift of focus which again is motivated by the speaker's communicative intention.

(2a) She is beautiful

(2b) *Beautiful is she

Here, though the sentences are Equative, (2b) stands to be ungrammatical. In (2a) the primary focus is on *beautiful*. Now, topicalization leads to ungrammaticality in (2b). Movement of the post copular Adjective Phrase to the position of the pre-copular DP is constrained as a result.

Thus, we find that focus shift in terms of position is not possible. (2a) can be featured by intonational focus shift and not a syntactic one in case the post-copular phrase is either a VP (Verb Phrase) or an AP (Adjective Phrase).

(3a) That woman is Sylvia

(3b) Sylvia is that woman

Besides being an Equative sentence, (3) may also be classified as an Identificational sentence, owing to the presence of a demonstrative pronoun *that,* on which the focus falls in (3b). (3a) has its logical focus on *Sylvia*. However, the intonational focus is subject to variation. In (3b) it is the post-copular phrase which is focused. It is interesting to note that the focus of attention in copular sentences is always directed towards the post-copular phrase. It is the post-copular phrase which serves as new information and thus fulfils the role of being the focus. The pre-copular phrase signifies the given information. Hence, the notion of linear

precedence holds true since given information precedes new information. This is an instance which fits the criteria of Presentational focus, which acts as the answer to questions. In (3a), the question preceding the statement seems to be: "*who is that woman?*" and in (3b) the question seems to be "*which woman is Sylvia?*"

It is also interesting to note that (3b) leaves scope for additional information whereas (3a) is featured by a note of finality in its declarative aspect. Also, (3b) signifies the presupposition of a given set of women, from which *Sylvia* is selected by the use of the demonstrative pronoun *that*. As a result, the focus is retained in *that* since it is used to specify or identify a particular entity, *Sylvia*. The structure of (3a) is more dependent on the intonational aspect of determining focus. By default however, intuitively the logical focus lies on *Sylvia*.

It must be noted that an identificational focus represents the subset of a set of contextually or situationally given elements for which the predicate phrase can potentially hold (E. Kiss, 1998b, p. 245). If a sentence part conveys new, non-presupposed information marked by one or more pitch accents—without expressing exhaustive identification performed on a set of contextually or situationally given entities, it serves as Identificational focus. An information focus is present in every sentence, but not every sentence contains an Idenficational focus (E. Kiss, 1998b, p. 246).

(4a) John is the winner

(4b) The winner is John

Now, in case of Equative and identificational sentences represented by Specicational or Predicational copular sentences, we observe for instance, in English the focus shifts on inverting the sentence structure' and consequently influences the addressee to invert the interpretation or perspective of analyzing the pragmatic meaning of the sentence. In the first case, the focus is on *winner* and in the second case the focus happens to be on *John* now; this is a subset of Specificational copular sentence where the post-copular domain becomes the point

or area of focus, whether it is a single lexical item or an entire phrase. It is interesting to note that going by intuition, (4b) has an implicit suspense in the declaration of *the winner*, unlike (4a) which is straightforward.

Let us take for instance the following pair of sentences:

(5a) The (*children*)$_{FOC}$ went to school

(5b) The children went to (*school*)$_{FOC}$

Here, the subject NP asserts the presupposition that *someone* went to school. It presupposes the idea of *who*, thus highlighting the identificational feature of the phrase. It serves to identify a referent as the missing argument in an open proposition. *Children* represents the argument focus, i.e. its referent is not in the domain of the presupposition. However, a change in the intonational pattern brings about a shift of focus and thus simultaneously affects the meaning in context. For instance, if the intonational emphasis falls on school, the sentence would no longer remain an idenficational one. It would be more of an answer to the question "*where did the children go?*". Now, (5a) is representative of an identificational focus structure while (5b) is featured by a categorical focus structure. Though the two sentences are equivalent to each other in terms of truth conditionality, the difference between them is pragmatic in the sense that (5a) generates an infelicitous conversational implicature. A categorical focus structure focuses on the predicate, while the identificational focus structure focuses on the referent of the predicate and this accounts for their difference on semantic and pragmatic bases. Intonation reflects focus structure in the sense that it disambiguates between categorical and identificational focus structure.

Truth is constrained or determined by context. In other words, the truth conditions of an utterance may change if any context-constituting assumption changes. Utterances are context-dependent forms of sentences (Lyons, 1995, p. 36).

Hence, in equative and identificational sentences, the notion of focus shift exhibits a clear deviation from the actual implication of the statement in terms of semantics as well as pragmatics. There is a reversal of roles between the variable and the value for that variable. This consequently distorts the contextual aspect of the sentence.

Interestingly, fronted focus XP does not necessarily identify the exhaustive set for which the predicate actually holds, unlike a cleft construction.

According to Lambrecht, the difference between identificational and informational focus is not necessarily captured by the exhaustiveness criterion, but by the specific type of pragmatically presupposed proposition associated with identificational sentences. However, exhaustiveness is a semantic characteristic which may or may not be part of identificational focus expressions cross-linguistically.

3.3 Focus in Relation to 'Negation'

Having dealt with affirmative sentences so far, let us concentrate on the negative aspect of statements and analyze the role of focus in relation to them:

(1a) Jim is *not* a good student

(1b) *A good student Jim is *not*

The negative element *not* is the instrument which negates the focus phrase in a sentence. It also behaves like Corrective or even Counter-assertive focus if emphasized intonationally. In a situation for instance where someone says that Jim is a good student, the element *not* would assume the role of Corrective focus due to intonational emphasis, thus counteracting upon or refuting the affirmative statement. However, the intonational focus may alternate between the constituents

of the statement, depending on context. For instance, if *Jim* is emphasized, it would play the role of Reactivity focus or Counterassertive/Corrective focus depending on the interpersonal aspect placed within the context of utterance. Likewise, in case of presentational focus assignment, which represents affirmation an answer to question, *Jim* would be the primary focus.

However, it is important to note that in case of negation, the mood predominant is that of negative response or defiance. Thus the logical focus would be carried within the element denoting negation, i.e. *not*. In fact, if considered more analytically, the entire information seems to be located within the *not* element. It acts as a connector to all the other possible constituents which may bear focus. In other words, referring to the example, it embodies the fact of Jim *not* being a good student. The position of the negative element remains fixed and thus there cannot be restructured information with the same constituents. If the logical and primary focus is associated with *not* then secondary focus would be on *a good student*, going by the notion of presentational focus. However, again there may be intonational shift of focus leading to a perspective change in interpretation of the statement. For instance, if the focus is placed on *Jim* then the interpretation would be more on "who is *not* a good student"; focus on *good* would be an elaboration of *Jim's* merit as a student.

According to R. Jackendoff, in case of negative sentences the focus is the information not to be shared between the speaker and addressee. However, it is the actual element establishing the information. In his opinion, stress and focus coincide. However, this may not necessarily be true since stress alone cannot determine the scope of focus.

The scope of negation in utterances is not the preceding context, but the context which follows. However, this has been subject to criticism. Only when we hear certain utterances can we identify the constituents with which negation is associated. In other words, it is the opening or initial sentence in discourse which constitutes a basis for negation. The primary objective of communication is the

exchange of positive information. This implies that the negating speaker considers the elements of the utterance of the former speaker to be the starting point. It is on the basis of this statement that a constituent of the utterance may be negated, thus adding to the scope of information exchange thereby expanding the range of communication.

The information structure of negative sentences differs from the information organization of affirmative sentences in that there are no new segmental elements in the former, so that the segmental elements constitute the given part of the information structure and the new information serves as the association between the negative particle and element or elements of the segmental structure.

(2a) John did *not* find an apartment

(2b) *The apartment has a balcony

The above pair of sentences does not constitute a text, since the reference of apartment has not been established in (2a). So, the use of the definite article in (2b) stands to be null and void since it is totally unjustified and unacceptable, considering the fact that it signals given information. There needs to be a reference-establishing sequence in connection with the aspect of negation as a result. Thus, focus on the negative aspect triggers the presupposition.

Negation thus highlights the aspect of contrastive focus through the element not, which functions as a focus operator. This necessitates the presence of a background in relation to the contrastive focus unlike presentational focus. In other words, it is against a given background that negation of a proposition takes place, thus drawing a contrast between the affirmative and the negative corresponding to a single concept.

Therefore, the focus of negation is inherently contrastive in nature. It is in this light we may deduce the contrastive focus is characterized by a featured exclusion of certain possibilities (Dretske, 1972, p. 412).

3.4 Focus Shift in Conjunctival Forms

In this section we shall test the validity of focus and its shift in relation to conjunctive forms which are inclusive of examples of causal relations, conditional relations, and coordinated structures respectively:

To begin with, let us take a look at the notion of focus shift in the light of the following examples of causal relations:

(1a) He refused to go because it was getting late

(1b) Because it was getting late he refused to go

In (1a) the causal relation is such that the emphasis is on 'why' he refused to go as signified by the connector *because*. However, on moving the subordinate clause to the position of the main clause transforms the relation as there happens to be a perspective shift of focus in the sense that the refusal to go was a consequence of getting late. It is the subordinate clause which is in focus again. In (1a) the causal relation is based more on reason unlike (1b) where the relation is based on consequence. In other words, the cause or reason stands to be focus in the former, whereas in the latter it is the effect or consequence which finds primary importance and hence the primary focus shifts as a result of reordering the constituent clauses. In this case, it is more of the semantic aspect which is affected.

(2a) I worked very hard *but* my marks were poor

(2b) My marks were very poor *but* I worked very hard

(3a) I invited them to the party *but* they did not come

(3b) They did not come *but* I invited them to the party

Inverting the structure of the statement, we observe an absence of logical connection in (2b), since in this case the effort of working hard does not have any coherent relation with the results not being poor.

Similarly, in (3b) no logical connection exists between the two clauses, as a result of which the notion of contrastive focus collapses. In (3a) the status of contrastive focus is sustained since it introduces and presents the statement in a proper logical sequence with respect to the structure of the information. Thus, the information status holds its prominence unlike (3b) where the information status loses its pragmatic relevance owing to its incoherent information structure. In (3a) there is a rational linearity of the occurrence of events, i.e. the invitation being given to them, followed by their not coming to the party. However, in (3b), *their* not attending the party is mentioned prior to the issue of the invitation. This raises the question as to whether *they* and *them* can be co-indexed at all since they seems to occur in completely isolated respective potential focus domains, thus leading to the absurdity of their being subsequent clauses, supposedly pertaining to the same context. "Them" in this case seems to possibly refer to some other group of individuals, thus resulting in the meaning that even if "they" did not come to the party, another group of people ("them") were sent the invitation for the same. However, this does not bear concrete logic. It is more of an absurd alternative devoid of any intuitive or cognitive appeal.

(4a) The man$_i$ was accused of murder but he$_i$ was actually innocent

(4b) He$_i$ was actually innocent but the man$_i$ was accused of murder

Sentence (4a) brings out the notion of Contrastive focus. However, shifting the constituents of the sentence in (4b), the contrastive focus aspect collapses owing to the logical disconnection between the two clauses constituting the statement. Rationally, there is no relation between *he* and *the man* and thus question arises with regard to their co-indexation. Possibility exists for their co-indexation as principle B of the Binding Principles is satisfied. However, no clear co-referential aspect between *he* and *the man* is possible due to the existence of a semantic and pragmatic gap. In other words, they may or may not be co-referential. As a result, the notion of connectivity hangs on loose strands in this instance. Every event has a sequence of its occurrence or process (4b) is not ungrammatical but complicates the information status in terms of theta roles due to the inversion in the sequence of its events.

Moving on to the domain of **coordinated structures** let us consider the following instances:

(1a) Jason went to the concert and he met a lot of renowned personalities

(1b) He$_{*i/j}$ met a lot of renowned personalities and Jason$_j$ went to the concert

The statement (1b) brings about complete change in the meaning of the statement. *He* and *Jason* cannot be co-referential here. The statement dissolves the connection between the *renowned personalities* and *the concert*. It implies as though they are independent of each other. Even if Jason were to be co-referred to *he* it would distort the pragmatic aspect of the sentence as it would suggest that before going to the concert Jason met a lot of renowned personalities (who might have nothing to do with the concert). However, such an alternative is ruled out

since it becomes a case of ungrammaticality if the anaphor and R-expression is co-indexed. The entire sequence of events gets altered thus resulting in change of interpretation.

(2) We went to London and then Rome.

Owing to the coordinated clause being an AdvP, structural shift is constrained, thus leaving the possibility of intonational focus shift. Thus, in case of the coordinated clause being a VP, AP, or AdvP, syntactic restructuring of information is restricted. The clause requires being an NP. Despite this condition there is considerable peculiarity with regard to the change of meaning of the information. In other words, the information rather loses its status and logical connectivity with the discourse collapses.

The following are sentences representing **conditional relations** between the constituent clauses:

(1a) If you work hard you will do well

(1b) You will do well if you work hard

Sentence (1a) implies that the consequence or result of working hard is 'doing well' in other words, the conditional aspect acts as the area of emphasis, i.e. *if you work hard* serves as the AFD. It behaves as the domain on which the result is dependent, the result being the secondary focus in this example. Hence, the secondary focus is dependent on the primary focus which is the AFD in (1a). However, reversing the order of the clausal constituents in (1b) a deviation from the preceding explanation is observed, such that the AFD changes to *you will do well*.

There seems to be an implicit implication of the element of 'only' in the sentence, i.e. it implies that the only way to do well is to work hard or there is no other way to do well apart from working hard. It may be clefted as *it is only if you work hard that you will do well*. There is a shift in the AFD and a reversal in the roles of the primary and secondary focus.

(2a) If he asks me to go, I will

(2b) I will, if he asks me to go

Sentence (2a) projects a firm connection between the condition and its outcome. In other words, it suggests that "Unless he asks me to go, I will not go", thus establishing a direct conditional relationship between the constituent clauses. The addressee's 'going' is confirmed if he/she is 'asked to go.' Again, an implicit notion of "only" exists and thus it is possible to cleft the sentence as *it is only if he asks me to go that I will*. The intonational focus may vary between the VP in the main clause and the pronoun within the cleft phrase.

However in (2b) shift of focus from the conditional clause takes place and the landing site for the new focus is *I will*. However, it is significant to note that unlike (2a) in (2b) *I will* does not bear the status of being the resultant of the condition. Instead, it has an open denotation which could signify some other action apart from 'going' which does not have any direct relation with the conditional clause. The significance of *will* is not explicitly explained. It is open to interpretation, and suggests the necessity for a background.

3.5 Focus in Relation to Complex Predicates in English Information Structure

(1a) I <u>made a claim</u> for the fellowship during my M.Phil programme.

(1b) I *claimed* the fellowship during my M.Phil programme.

Now, this is a slightly different phenomenon where the focus in relation to complex predicated comes through. Sentences (1a) and (1b) are both concerned with "claiming the fellowship." However, the ways in which the information is structured provides the issue with different respective status, in the two statements. In the first case, where the information is structured using a complex predicate, focus seems to be assigned on the complex predicate itself, i.e. *made a claim*. On the contrary, the second statement bears focus on *fellowship* and *M.Phil programme* from the logical perspective. It is significant to note that intuitively, the moods of statements differ such that sentence (1a) seems to be featured by a formal element while (1b) appears comparatively less formal, which is why it is the complex predicate which is focused in (1a) and the answer to what was claimed and when it was claimed gains more prominence than the verb *claimed*. Nevertheless, the semantic interpretation is different in case of *made a claim* and *claimed*, since in the case of the former there seems to be an expansion of the act of "claiming." In other words, it highlights the process of "making" a *claim*, thus denoting a separate distinct emphasis on the action. However, the simple verb used in (1b), *claimed* does not carry such deep connotation. Hence, the focal element stands to be different with regard to the two statements despite their themes being the same. As a result, this also accounts for pragmatic difference. Sentence (1b) appears more flexible considering the phenomenon of focus shift unlike sentence (1a) which necessarily directs the focus of attention towards the complex verb. In other words, primary focus would be on the complex verb.

Let us consider another example of similar kind:

(2a) Jill *decided* to go to the hospital.

(2b) Jill took the <u>decision of going</u> to the hospital.

Referring to the two statements, we observe considerable demarcation with regard to focus position.

In the first case, i.e. sentence (2a), *hospital* bears the primary focus since it represents the aspect of new information. Again, *Jill* could also be focused. The assignment of focus is entirely dependent on the speaker's intention in this regard and is context-dependent as well. In the second case (2b), *took the decision*, i.e. the complex predicate bears the focus of attention since there seems to be considerable effort in the process of "taking" the *decision*. In fact, it increases or rather enhances the scope for expansion of the statement. Thus, there is a thin line of difference between "deciding "and "taking a decision" such that the former is characterized by certain sudden spontaneity whereas the latter denotes more of undergoing or enduring the process of actually "taking a decision" ; hence, it involves a certain stretch of "time." Also, like the previous example, a formal element lies implicit in the expression represented by the complex predicate. Thus, from both semantic and pragmatic aspects, the complex predicate bears stronger focus compared to the simple verb substituting it.

3.6 The Aspect of Cohesion, Coherence, and Consistency in Discourse with Reference to Focus Shift

So far we have looked at the influence of focus shift, taking individual statement-type simple and complex sentences. However, it is also essential to explore the arena of discourse as a composite whole, i.e. placing a sentence within a particular context and thereafter shifting the logical focus so as to examine and analyze the nature and extent of change in interpretation of not only the concerned sentence

but also the corresponding discourse. As mentioned earlier, the issue of consistency is of significance owing to the fact that it is a logical linear sequence of lexical items which culminate to form a sentence and the connection of a number of such sentences leads to the build-up of a discourse which is obviously contextualized. Thus, a disruption in the logical arrangement would certainly influence a change in the rational perspective of interpreting the concerned discourse.

Incoming or new information when attached to a sentence requires being a continuation of the focus in order to sustain continuity pertaining to the context concerned. Hence, movement of the focus would directly create an impact on the information structure, consequently resulting in a pragmatic change in the discourse. The issue of coherence also comes into the picture as a result. In other words, there might be reduction in the coherence of the sentences or Discourse Acts, thus leading to ambiguity and difficulty in comprehensibility.

The term "organization" refers to the "sum of relations which hold between units of text...and between each unit and the whole." Cohesion is one of the properties contributing to the organization of discourse. Relational cohesion (connectives and ellipsis) is affected by movement of the focus and topic. In other words, a gap or detachment seems to take place between the theme and focus, in turn disrupting the contextual cohesion and coherence of context. A semantic shift seems to occur even if to a slight extent. Alternatively, there is a difference in the way the hearer's/reader's intuition is influenced by the shift of focal element and topic of a sentence.

Let us consider a few extracts for analyzing the discussed phenomena:

Jack went for a movie with his friends. It was a delightful experience as they went for dinner afterwards. However, on their way back the car broke down.

71

Referring to the example above, the focus is intuitionally attached to "movie," which denotes the purpose for which the entire event takes place. The focus here serves as the pivot for the rest of the information. In other words, the subsequent sentences are connected to each other based on the focal event already highlighted through the first sentence (S1). Now, the second sentence (S2), "afterwards" signifies 'after the movie was watched.'

In the third sentence (S3) *on their way back* signifies the initial event too, in the sense that they were returning from the hotel/restaurant having watched a movie. Now, if the focus is shifted from *movie* to *Jack*, either intonationally or by rephrasing the sentence, then the consistency within the discourse loses its strength. In other words, the focus is more on the individual compared to the primary event. Consequently, the interpretation would alter in terms of perspective. More specifically, it would imply that the *delightful* experience was more because of Jack's presence. However, in that case, S3 loses its connectivity with S1 since no direct relation exists between *Jack* and the event of the breakdown of the car. Instead, it appears as though Jack is responsible for the event of the car breakdown. Similarly, shifting focus to *friends* would result in a corresponding change in the perspective of the analysis. Although the meaning does not alter so to speak, a deviation occurs in the interpretation owing to focus shift. In other words, the focus shift, whether syntactic or phonological, influences the addressee's intuition such that his/her cognition is toned in accordance with the speaker's intention. However, focus shift as we saw, disrupts the consistency of the discourse irrespective of coherence being sustained. In other words, it is the thematic aspect which gets affected.

Now, let us consider a number of other instances taking brief extracts from different discourses:

"Inspector Raglan was in the housekeeper's room asking a few supplementary questions. A few minutes later the inspector joined the party in the hall, bringing

the key with him. He unlocked the door and we passed into the lobby and up the small staircase. At the top of the stairs, the door into Acroyd's bedroom stood open. Inside the room it was dark, the curtains were drawn, and the bed was turned down just as it had been last night. "

(AGATHA CHRISTIE)

The setting as is evident signifies a situation which seems to be a case of 'investigation,' considering the mood contained in the extract. In fact, the initial sentence bears focus on *Inspector Raglan* as is implied through the text, where his actions are described in detail. Subsequently, the pronominal form representative of the inspector sustains the focus on the inspector. The description of *Acroyd's room* suggests a focus shift from the inspector to the *room* and establishes a link with the context which highlights a mysterious incident. The *room* seems to bear the explicit focus whereas the implicit focus of a mysterious set up seems to be embedded within the *room*, thus conjoining the foci.

Now, in this context, going by the notion of SFG, focus on "room" would be more appropriate since it concerns the phonological emphasis and becomes functional in creating the mood of eerie suspense. Also, the given/new distinction may be applied since the notion of "Acroyd's room" is new information and happens to be the centre of investigation. It is considered as new information and as focal in the sense that the author presents it as not being recoverable or retrievable from the preceding discourse. Hence, the given information and the new information are fused to enhance, intensify and carry forward the theme.

According to RRG, the entire stretch of discourse represents the PFD (Potential Focus Domain), and the AFD (Actual Focus Domain) lies in the sentence introducing *Inspector Raglan* and that containing the reference to *Acroyd's room.*

Referring to the extract in relation to FDG, we find that each move in discourse consists of more than one Act, which can be divided into referential and ascriptive sub-acts. Each sub-act is featured by a focus function, where the focused element

73

corresponds to the cognitive element which is activated first in production. Since FDG explains the way in which utterances are shaped based on the goals and knowledge of natural language users, it is essential to assign focal elements accordingly with appropriateness. Thus, referring to the given context, each Discourse Act is characterized by a declarative illocutionary force, a communicated content which in turn consists of a referential sub-act corresponding to *Inspector Raglan* and the subsequent pronominal form representing his identity. The ascriptive sub-acts consist of all his subsequent actions which may be considered as focus, since according to the functional approach, focus is used to refer to words or expressions that establish coherence in the text or conversation. Now, in the given context, the inspector's actions amplify the theme of the text and mood of the situation. The *room* may also overlap with the notion of 'topic' since it is the object or space 'about' which the description is provided. However, it is more of a focal point going by the ideas contained within the various grammatical frameworks. Moreover, it corresponds to the idea of new information within the contextual framework. However, if we were to alter or shift the focus from their original positions, let us analyze the nature of interpretation as a result of such change. Supposing *housekeeper* as the focus one notices that focus shift on "housekeeper" would arouse suspicion towards her and the subsequent sentences would seem to be a detachment from the context since there is no further mention of the housekeeper in the entire stretch of the discourse extract. More specifically, the inspector's joining the party a few minutes later seems to change the scenario as though it is a change of scene, if visually conceived of.

The following discourse extract is another instance of such focal perspective and its effect on the information status embedded within the discourse:

"'Animal Farm', which appeared first in 1945, gained popularity for its blatant allusion to what Orwell derided as the flawed communism of the Soviet Union. He

intended the book as a scathing satire on the Russian leaders who sold out
Socialist ideals to fit hand-in glove with the Capitalist powers in the West. "

(ANIMAL FARM by George Orwell)

Going by the notion of logic and intuition, the focus is contained in *Animal Farm.* The second sentence (S2) performs the function of expansion and elaboration of the book. Thus, shifting the focus to *1945* for instance would bleach the importance of the book. It is significant to note that the second sentence is an embellishment of the focus *Animal Farm.* Focus shift to *1945* would influence the reader's attention towards an era-based analysis rather than concentrating on the book. Since S2 has no direct connection with the year *1945,* it would be an obstacle to the sustenance of consistency along with relational reference. The information status would be difficult to derive as a result. In fact, it is not only the pragmatic aspect which is affected, semantic interpretation is also affected. In other words, if MACBETH was written in 1945, the notion described through the text would stand falsified. Under the same circumstances, the truth value of the text would remain sustained only if ANIMAL FARM is focused. Thus, S2 describing the storyline, would not be false since ANIMAL FARM remains the background. Hence, a very sensitive semantic aspect enters into the discourse and highlights the pragmatic aspect accordingly.

The following extract is an example of focus shift with respect sustenance of mood and illocutionary force:

"If assassination does not work. they sow the seeds of dissension in enemy ranks by inciting the king's brother or some member of the nobility to scheme for the crown. If internal discord dies down they try to rouse up the neighboring people against the enemy, by reviving forgotten claims to dominion, of which kings always have ample supply. "

(UTOPIA by Thomas Moore)

This extract reflects the idea of Contrastive focus. However, if we were to structurally shuffle the sentences, the coherence as well as consistency in the extract would be affected. Now, here it is more of a question regarding the network of focus operators.

In other words, the presence of separate focus leads to a complex network and so if focus were to be shifted, the logical flow of information would undergo distortion, since the immediate focus in subsequent sentences contribute to the global focus. The presence of *they* itself suggests that there is preceding background to the extract. Hence, in order to sustain the conditional mood through declarative illocutionary force, focus shift needs to be avoided.

The shift of focus and its consequent impact on the information status of the sentence is also to a great extent influenced by intuition, as already discussed. In other words, the addressee combines all the linguistic modules such that each of them contributes to the meaning of the sentence and a slight change in the interplay of these modules result in different interpretation of the same. The change could be syntactic or intonational. In other words, an alteration in the syntactic structure and intonational aspect of the sentence leads the hearer/addressee to understand the speaker's point of view or conceptualization of an idea instead of interpreting it according to his own perspective. In other words, it is the element, on which the speaker focuses, that the addressee's interpretation of the utterance or statement is tuned. Thus, change in the information structure through a focus shift would result in a consequent change or modification in the information status. Now, the change at the sentential level automatically affects the entire discourse. The relation between sentences determines the meaning of discourse. Therefore, a change in the relation between sentences yields a different meaning or rather a different perspective to the interpretation of discourse.

For instance, let us consider the following extract:

After the forming of the sun and the solar system, our star began its long existence as a so-called dwarf star. In the dwarf phase of its life, the energy that the sun gives off is generated in its core through the fusion of hydrogen into helium.

The coherence structure of a text may be analyzed by taking a look at the relations between text parts. Coherence relations are classified into subject matter (semantic or ideational) and presentational (pragmatic or interpersonal) relations depending on the source of the relation.

In the above example, the initial part of the text introduces the topic "sun as a dwarf star," whereas the second part of the text presents details of what it means foe the sun to be a dwarf star. The coherence relation is termed as ELABORATION. Other semantic relations are Cause, Circumstance, and Interpretation.

Lexical cohesion is concerned primarily with the ideational organization of discourse. The chaining approach always takes the last preceding item of the chain as the antecedent of the element which follows, to make a cohesive relation. Repetition of focus and topic is necessary when there is a shift in focus position.

Now, there is a lexical cohesive relation among the lexical items sun, solar-system, star, dwarf star and dwarf phase. However, changing the focus of the individual level would result in a change in the perspective of interpreting the discourse. Subject matter and stylistic choices coalesce to attach meaning to discourse. It the emphasis is changed to *after, energy* and *hydrogen* and *helium*, then it speaks more about the technical conditions of the star and its formation, more than the stages it goes through. Thus, the perspective or approach of analyzing the text becomes different.

The notion of focus can hence be placed within the concept of coherence of a text as well.

It is interesting to note that if either the focus position or the focalizer itself is made to change, then the effect is same, i.e. the information status undergoes consequent

change. Again, the element of coherence is also affected, since the relations between the discourse units are defined in terms of the speaker/ writer's purpose of (based on the analyst's plausibility judgments and semantic criteria in the relation definitions). Cohesion, which accounts for the overt semantic relations in the txt influences coherence which refers to the semantic and pragmatic relations between text parts which are interpretable against the background of specific world knowledge. In other words, the background in relation with the focus of the utterance has to be sustained with effectiveness so as to contribute to the coherence of the text, since focus and background are intertwined.

Presentation of information in an ambiguous manner often disrupts the linear order of the text, since it is difficult to determine the interpretation of the discourse as one cannot aptly associate the additional information with the Discourse Act conforming to the speaker's communicative intention, i.e. whether to correlate it with the primary or secondary focus. As mentioned earlier, it is usually the preceding sentence which acts as the antecedent to the new or additional information going by the concept linear precedence in connection with the organization of information structure. The problem of discourse semantics involves interplay of linguistic and non-linguistic processes.

Chapter 4

Bengali Data Analysis with Respect to Focus Shift

4.1 The Notion of Focus and Its Shift in the Bangla Context

Focus constituents are claimed to display a variety of prosodic properties cross-linguistically. This includes appearance of special tonal morphemes, appearance of a default pitch accent, demarcation by a prosodic phrase edge, presence of main stress of a prosodic phrase, appearance of a higher pitch range, vowel length under main phrasal stress. R. Jackendoff (1972) put forward the hypothesis that focus phonology interface consists of "only" interface constraints on the relation between syntactic focus and prominence. All the other predictable, non-morphological phonological properties focus are claimed to be derived as a consequence of phonological markedness constraints on the relation between prosodic prominence and other aspects of phonological representation. This may be called the Focus-Prominence theory of the focus–phonology interface. The Focus Prominence Hypothesis hold that there is a prevalent commonality to the phonological expression of focus, in languages of different types, and that it lies in the level stress of stress prominence assigned within a focus constituent. This implies that stress prominence has a direct effect on phonological reflexes of focus.

Bangla however presents an apparent counterexample to the claim made by the Focus Prominence Theory, that the phrase edge alignment that appears with focus can be derived through the markedness-driven alignment of a prosodic phrase edge with the stress prominence of that phrase. The Prominence theory of focus phrasing predicts a phonological phrase edge at only one edge of a focus constituent, the edge where the focus prominence is located. However, according to Hayes and Lahiri (1991), a focus constituent in Bangla is "flanked" by phonological phrase edges at both the right and left edges of the focus. The stress prominence of a phonological phrase in Bengali is claimed by Hayes and Lahiri to be located at the

79

left of the phrase. However, controversy occurs with regard to the right phrase edge with focus since there is no evidence elsewhere in the language for the alignment of a phonological phrase with right edge of a constituent. So, Hayes and Lahiri propose a focus interface alignment constraint—denoted as *Align R* to account for the right phrase edge.

According to previous studies there are two tonally marked prosodic phrases in Bengali, roughly corresponding to the sentence and the content word, where focused elements bear a rising pitch contour. The final syllable of an Intonational phrase is longer than that of an Intermediate phrase, which is longer than that of an Accentual phrase. Considering the pitch height, the pitch of an intonational phrase tone is more extreme than that of the accentual phrase tone.

Bengali is not a lexical tone language. According to the Focus-Prominence theory, the prosodic boundaries of focus must align with prominence. Bengali stress is usually expressed in terms of neutral focus. Neutral focus is used to describe sentences which consist entirely of focused material. It is significant to note that predicate-argument structure does not seem to play a role in Bengali stress. For instance, in the following sentence—"ram rohini-ke dak-lo," stress is assigned to the rightmost p-phrase (phonological phrase) "dak-lo," obeying a purely phonological generalization. Stress in Bengali is quite weak phonologically to the extent of being almost inaudible. The stress rules are supported by two types of evidence—first, in emphatic speech the stresses are stronger and more audible. Secondly, the stress rules are supported by internal coherence that they provide to the intonational system. This is a common aspect in Bengali as well as English, where stress serves as the basic organizing principle for tune-text association.

The focus nucleus is used for statements in which a particular constituent is emphasized. The high tone always appears on or near the right edge of a focused constituent. In other words, the high tone of the focus nucleus serves as a focus marker.

It is in fact the L*Hp sequence in Bengali which outlines focused constituents, where L* is low tone with pitch accent and Hp refers to high tone and is treated like a phonological phrase boundary tone.

Although final p-phrases in Bengali attract the default nuclear stress, they can also receive nuclear stress by virtue of being focused.

E.g.: (oi lok-ta (b^{h}alo))$_I$; *b^{h}alo* is the focused predicate.

| | | |

L*HpL$_I$

I= Intonational Phrase, P= Phonological Phrase, L*= low tone with pitch accent, H$_p$= high tone.

Declarative intonation with regard to Bengali is used when there is no intent of placing focus on any constituent. Phonologically, it adopts the form H*L$_I$, i.e. a pitch break occurs on the main stressed syllable, and pitch falls fairly gradually to a low at the end of the Intonational phrase.

E.g.: ((ria-ke ami)$_P$ (fon korbo)$_P$)$_I$

| | |

H*   **L$_I$**

Declarative intonation can be used only under neutral placement; with main prominence attached to the right-most P-phrase in the I-phrase. For Bengali declaratives, any use of narrow focus is obligatorily marked by the focus nucleus L*HpL$_I$. In case of a non-focus nucleus, only the phonologically assigned stress operates. The Bengali evidence thus suggests that the traditional stress and phonologically assigned stress is a valid one.

However, in English the declarative intonation may occur on a focused non-final word. The pitch fall levels off near the end of the main stressed word.

4.2 The Rising Declarative Nucleus and Focus Nucleus

The declarative nucleus is used to make statements with the implication that something else is to follow; e.g. "when I gave Shyam the book," thus reflecting an element of continuity.

Like the declarative contour, the focus contour is featured by a continuation rise variant.

E.g.: jodio ram (harlo), o kʰub bʰalo kʰeletʃʰilo

$|$

Focus

Here, there is a moderate rise on the final syllable.

In statements, the Bengali intonational system marks a distinction between narrow and neutral focus, where the neutral focus nuclei may occur only on the last P-phrase of the sentence, while the narrow focus nuclei may occur anywhere. Focus in Bengali is controlled or rather influenced by prosodic hierarchy.

The constituency relevant to boundary tone placement is contained in the Theory of Prosodic Hierarchy.

Let us study the following **Declarative sentences** in relation to focus and its shift according to change in the structure or intonational pattern:

82

(1a) Je   aste aste gʰOr -e   dʰuk -lo

He   slowly   room -*(loc)* enter -*(3 p., pst. perf)*

(1b) aste aste   Je   gʰOr -e   dʰuk -lo

Slowly   he   room -*(loc)* enter -*(3 p., pst. perf)*

Like English, this sentence exhibits focus shift irrespective of being structurally different from its English counterpart. However, the assignment of focus is different in the two languages. In other words, the Adverb (*aste aste*) on being shifted to the sentence-initial position creates an impact on the focus of the sentence which is *aste aste* in (1a) and gets shifted to *gʰOr-e* in (1b). In other words, a structural shift in focus takes place along with the basis of interpretation of the sentence. In the first case, it is more of the manner which serves as primary focus, whereas in the second case the destination finds primary emphasis. Hence, one may deduce that movement of the adverbial phrase within the main clause results in focus shift between the adverb itself and the noun alternately. If the main clause is an NP, the focus is on the adverb. On the contrary, if the main clause is an AdvP (Adverbial Phrase), focus shifts to the noun. Interestingly, the verb here does not find focus unlike English. In fact the framework of the given/new distinction does not find applicability in Bangla. Similarity only lies in the atmosphere or mood created in the English and Bangla declarative counterparts.

(2a) puliJ   tJor -tar   petʃʰon   -e   doura -lo

(The) police   thief -*(spec.)* after/behind -*(loc)* run *(3 p., pst. perf)*

(2b) tʃor -tar petʃʰon -e puliʃ doura -lo

    Thief -*(spec)* after/behind -*(loc)* (the) police run -*(3 p., pst perf)*

Unlike English, here we find that the shift in focus is only with regard to intonational emphasis which is reflected automatically through the structure of the sentence. To be specific, the primary focus is on the object, i.e. *tʃor* in (2a), and shifts to *puliʃ* in (2b). In other words, we see that the position of the focus remains unchanged, i.e. it operates in the object position. It is thus the lexical item which is different in the object position and receives the status of focus.

(3a) tenis   amar   prio   kʰaela

    Tennis *(aux)*   my -*(gen.)*   favourite   sport

(3b) amar   prio   kʰaela   tenis

    My -*(gen)*   favourite   sport *(aux)*   tennis

In the above example, the focus is determined intonationally. It in fact alternates between the two nouns *tenis* and *kʰaela* in both the cases. However, there is also the presence of a secondary focus which qualifies the noun, i.e. on the adjective *prio*, which remains unaltered.

Thus, topicalization in Bangla does not bring about a meaning change or necessarily affect the pragmatic aspect, but alters the focus of attention.

Let us take a look at a few specific instances of **Locative inversion**:

(3a) rupa   p^{h}Ol -gulo   tebil -e   rak^h lo

Rupa   fruit -*(pl. spec)*   table *(loc)*   keep -*(3 p., pst perf)*

(3b) tebil -e   rupa   p^{h}Ol -gulo   rak^h lo

table -*(loc)*   Rupa   fruit -*(pl. spec)*   keep –*(3 p., pst perf)*

The phenomenon of focus shift is similar in case of English and Bangla, i.e. the interpretative aspects remain intact. However, the elements of focus are different in the two languages. In Bangla, sentence (2a) above, has its focus on the second object as well as the verb *rak^{h}lo,* while in (2b) the focus shifts to *p^{h}ol-gulo* and the focus on the verb is sustained. The subject *rupa* which is moved receives the status of secondary focus when locative inversion takes place. So, the difference between the English instance of locative in version and that of Bangla lies in the placement of focus. In other words, In Bangla, when the structure is SOV with double object, focus falls on the second object as well as the verb. Thus, the second object preceding the verb, along with the verb together constitutes the focal domain. No matter where the focus shifts, the focus on the verb remains sustained in case of locative inversion. However, the SVO structure of English exhibits a difference. There is no explicit focus on the verb. Focus on the verb may only be intonational in nature, i.e. in locative constructions, unlike Bangla, in English the verb does not have the status of 'focus by default.' In Bangla simple sentences with locative elements, focus falls on the second object and the verb following it and in case of locative inversion, the focus shifts to the other object preceding the verb (after restructuring takes place), and the status of the verb as focus remains unaltered.

(4a) rupa p^hOl -gulo j^huri -te   tebil -e   rak^h -lo

   Rupa   fruit -*(pl. spec)*   basket -*(loc)*   table -*(loc)* keep -*(3p., pst. perf)*

(4b) j^huri -te   tebil -e   rupa p^hOl -gulo   rak^h -lo

   Basket -*(loc)*   table -*(loc)*   Rupa fruit   -*(pl. spec)*   keep   -*(3 p. pst. perf)*

(4c) tebil -e p^hOl -gulo   rupa j^huri -te   rak^h -lo

   Table -*(loc)*   fruit   -*(pl. spec)*   Rupa   basket -*(loc)* keep   -*(3 p., pst. Perf)*

Now, examining the set of sentences in (3), we find anomaly with respect to focus shift such that with the occurrence of locative inversion, the logicality of the sentence is disturbed. (3a) has its primary focus on the second and third object— *j^huri-te* and *tebil-e* respectively, along with the verb *rak^{h}lo*. However, (3b) the subject being moved to the central position of the sentence, receives focus along with the object and verb following it. However, primary focus falls on the object *p^hOl-gulo* and the verb *rak^{h}lo*. The subject *rupa* receives the status of secondary focus. (3c) is anomalous since the concept of space is completely distorted such that it seems that the basket occupies a larger space compared to the table, according to the construction of (3c). The structure of the sentence leads to semantic absurdity even if not ruled out as ungrammatical. As a result, appropriate assignment of focus is constrained in this case.

(5a) ami dokan -e   giet$\int^h$i -lam   amar   bhai -er   jonno $\int$art kinte

   (1p.) shop -*(loc)* go   -(1p, *pst*) my *(gen)* brother-*(gen)* for   shirt to buy

(5b) amar   bhai -er   jonno $\int$art kinte ami   dokan -e   giet$\int^h$i -lam

   My -*(gen)* brother-*(gen)* for   shirt to buy   *(1p.)*   shop -*(loc)* go -*(1p., pst)*

(5c) dokan -e   ami gietʃʰi -lam   amar   bhai   -er   jonno ʃart kinte

Shop -(*loc*) (1p) go   -(*1p., pst*) my-(*gen*) brother-(*gen*)   for   shirt to buy

In (4a) and (4b) the focus lies on the locative phrase. However, if the locative element is moved to the initial position of the sentence then focus shifts from the locative element to the subordinate clause and more specifically on the verb in that clause. In this case, the subordinate clause is *amar bʰai-er ʃart kinte* and the verb in concern would be *kinte*. However, English does not permit such construction as (4c). This occurs owing to the flexibility of the SOV structure.

Let us now concentrate on the phenomenon of focus shift concerning the following **Imperative sentences:**

(1a) pen -ta   nitʃ   -e   rakʰo

Pen -(*spec*) down -(*loc*)   keep

(1b) nitʃ   -e   rakʰo   pen -ta

Down -(*loc*)   keep   pen -(*spec*)

(1c) nitʃ   -e   pen-ta   rakʰo

Down -(*loc*) pen -(*spec*) keep

It is significant to note that in Bengali, there are three ways in which the statement (1) may be presented on an imperative basis. In the first case, it seems to be the subject which is in focus. In the second case it is the position which is focused. The

third case also has the object in focus. Having discussed the equivalent sets of sentences in English, it is interesting to note that the phenomenon of focus shift with respect to imperative sentences in Bengali is just the opposite of that in English. In English, there happens to be a cross between the focus shift in English and Bengali considering the first two sentences. In other words, in the English statement where the "position" is in focus, in the corresponding Bengali translated statement it is the subject which is in focus. Similarly, in the second rearranged statement, the focus lies on the object, while in Bengali the position gets focused. The flexibility of the SOV structure of Bengali facilitates a third construction possibility (as already mentioned), unlike English.

(2a) eʃo   ar   amake   ʃahajjo   kOro

   Come and me   help   do

(2b) amake   ʃahajjo   kOro   ar   eʃo

   Me   help   do   and come

Example (2a) has the focus on ʃahajjo. However, restructuring the sentence shifts the focus position which result in incoherence and distorts the logical sequence of the lexical items in the statement thus leading to a complete loss of its meaning. The meaning entirely changes signifying a different implication, i.e. "go after you help me." In other words, eʃo would mean "go" instead of "come in this case. Thus the entire perspective of the sentence's interpretation is completely changed to the opposite of that of (2a) through focus shift. This implies that the connotation of individual lexical items also has the possibility of changing in terms of literal meaning. This is a non-existent phenomenon in case of English.

(3a) dOrja -ta   kʰolo

Door -(*spec*) open

(3b) kʰolo   dOrja -ta

Open   door -(*spec*)

Unlike English, where the counterpart of the second statement is ungrammatical due to focus shift, Bengali (3b) is perfectly grammatical. It is only the focus which shifts due to rephrasing the statement. In (3a) as well as (3b), primary focus is on kʰolo on the basis of intonation. Thus, in Bengali we find that imperative simple sentences, consisting of any number of constituents, facilitate and allow the focus to shift. The question of ungrammaticality is uncommon in this regard. unlike English as already discussed.

(4a) tomake   kal   ei   kaj -ta   korte   hobe

You   tomorrow   this   work (*spec*)   do   have to

(4b) kal   tomake   ei   kaj -ta   korte   hobe

Tomorrow you   this   work (*spec*)   do   have to

In the above example, (4a) bears primary focus on kadz-ta whereas (4b) has its primary focuses on ei kadz-ta, i.e. the specifier in combination with the noun. The focus here is determined intonationally. If analyzed closely, (4b) seems to be more formal and intense in its mood compared to (4a). The flexibility of the statement facilitates intonational change. However, considering the regular communicative aspect, focus by default is assigned as shown via the example. It is susceptible to change conforming to change in communicative intention or motivation.

(5a) jao,　laibreri　theke　amar　jonno　oi　boi　-gulo　(nie eʃo)

Go　library　from　me　for　(*dem*)　book -(*pl. spec*)　bring

(5b) laibreri　theke　jao　amar　jonno　oi　boi　-gulo　(nie eʃo)

Library　from　go　me　for　(*dem*)　book -*(pl. spec)*　bring

In these statements, the element corresponding to "go," i.e. *jao* does not function the way "go" does in the English counterpart. In English example, it seems to have no special significance in relation to the rest of the statement, unlike (5) in Bengali where *jao* has a separate significance and role to play. It signifies the literal action of "going and getting" the books from the library. This does not happen in case of English. As a result, *jao* also bears a mild focus, which acts as an initiator to the statement in (5a). However, though (5b) is more of a colloquial expression owing to the placement of *jao* in between the sentence, there is no pronounced alteration of meaning or shift in perspective of interpretation of the statement. Focus remains unaltered. It is the entire clause which stands to be the AFD. This reveals not only a pragmatic difference between English and Bengali but also a marked semantic difference.

(6a) tomar　　boi　-gulo　　bOndʰo　kore　(rekʰe dao)

You (*poss*)　book -(*pl. spec*)　shut　(*do*)　　keep

(6b) (rekʰe dao)　tomar　　boi　-gulo　bOndʰo　kore

Keep　　you (*poss*)　book -(*pl. spec*)　shut　do

90

Here, there is marked shift in focus. Now, with respect to the corresponding data in English, difference lies in the fact that the second counterpart is characterized by illogicality in English owing to the reversal in sequence of the events. However, in Bengali, it is not so. In the first case (6a), focus lies on the first VP. It strongly emphasizes the "closing" of the books. There is a change in the interpretative aspect of the second statement, which emphasizes on the initial VP rek^{h}e dao. It also has the second VP as the secondary focus. Thus, we find that not only is there focus shift but also additional focus assignment in (6b). No disruption occurs in relation to logical sequence unlike in English.

(7a) ei   fail -gulo   laibreri -r   paʃ -er   almari   -te   rak^{h}o

(*dem*) file -(*pl. spec*) library -(*gen*) beside -(*gen*) cupboard -(*loc*)   keep

(7b) laibreri -r   paʃ -er   almari -te   ei   fail -gulo   rak^{h}o

Library -(*gen*) beside -(*gen*)   cupboard -(*loc*) (*dem*) file -(*pl. spec*) keep

(7c) rak^{h}o ei   fail   -gulo   laibrei -r   paʃ   -er   almari -te

Keep (*dem*) file   -(*pl. spec*) library -(*gen*) beside -(*gen*) cupboard -(*loc*)

Unlike English, the example above is not featured by shift of perspective of interpretation so pronounced despite reordering of the constituents. The entire clause acts as the PFD as well as AFD. Logical focus does not find any change as a result. However, an additional possibility represented by (7c) highlights the Verb as the focus. There seems to be a strengthening in the imperative mood in this sentence. It is to be noted that in Bengali, if the verb occurs sentence initially (in simple as well as complex sentences) the primary focus lies on the verb. The rest of the phrase becomes the AFD for secondary focus.

91

(8a) ami tomake je kap-ta dietʃʰi, ʃeta-e amake tʃa dao

I you *(acc)* *(comp)* cup *-(spec)* give *(pst. perf)* *(spec-loc)* me tea serve

(8b) je kap-ta tomake ami dietʃi, ʃeta-e amake tʃa dao

(comp) cup *-(spec)* you*(acc)* I give *(pst. perf)* *(spec-loc)* me*(acc)* tea serve

Example (8a) has tʃa as the primary focus and kap-ta as secondary focus whereas (8b) is featured by a reversal in roles of primary and secondary focus, i.e. kap-ta serves as the primary focus while tʃa is secondary focus. Considering the English counterpart (10), there is no explicit implication of a secondary focus. It is rather optional in its manifestation. Thus, the extra element of secondary focus brings about the slight difference between English and Bengali, in this example.

(9a) (tumi) (kOtʰa bolbe)-na jOkʰon ami or ʃatʰe (kOtʰa bolbo)

You talk -*(neg)* when I he*(acc)* with talk *(1 p., future)*

(9b) jOkʰon ami or ʃatʰe (kOtʰa bolbo),(tumi) (kOtʰa bolbe) na

When I him*(acc)* with talk you talk *(3 p., future)* *(neg)*

This pair of sentences has the same explanation as its English counterpart in (3a) and (3b). In other words, there is no contrast or variation in case of conditional situations.

4.3 Focus in Cleft and Pseudo-Cleft Structures in Bangla

The following sentences are instances of **cleft** structures:

(1a) rima -ke   -i   ʃe   bʰalobaʃ -e

Rima -(*acc*) (*it is*) he (*nom*)   love   -(*3p., simpl.Present*)

(1b) ʃe   rima-ke   -i   bʰa lobaʃ -e

He (*nom*) Rima(*acc*) -(*it is*)   love   -(*3p., simpl.present*)

(2a) ram -i   oke   dube jaoa -r   tʰeke   batʃietʃʰ -e

Ram(*nom*) (*it is*) him(*acc*) drown -*ing* from   save -(*3p., simpl.pst*)

(2b) oke   dube jaoa -r   theke   ram -i   batʃietʃʰ -e

Him(*acc*)   drown -*ing* from   Ram(*nom*) -(it is) save   -(*3p., simpl.pst*)

(3a) kal   ram   -i   oke   dube jaoa-r tʰeke batʃietʃʰ -e

Yesterday Ram(*nom*) (*it is*) him(*acc*) drown -*ing* from save (*3p., simpl. pst*)

(3b) ram   -i   oke   kal   dube jaoa-r tʰeke betʃietʃʰ -e

Ram(*nom*) (*it is*) him(*acc*) yesterday drown   -*ing* from save (*3p., simpl pst*)

In all the above sentences, it is observed that reshuffling the order of constituents does not shift the focus at all. The focus remains on the element carrying the emphatic particle /i/. In Bangla, this bound morpheme functions as the focalizer. In other words, the element to which it is attached, receives the status of being the primary focus. It also confirms the information status embodied in the information structure. However, in English we observed that in case of the topicalization of an adverbial adjunct, focus shifts to the topicalized element.

The Bangla phenomenon of focus in cleft structures finds appropriate place within the framework of SFG (Systemic Functional Grammar) as proposed by M.Halliday. In other words, the intonational prominence of the emphatic particle /i/ accounts for the assignment of focus on the element to which it is attached. As a result, the entire element finds intonational prominence, thus being primarily focused.

Having dealt with the notion of focus in cleft structures, we shall further delve into the arena of pseudo-cleft structures. The following sentences are instances of pseudo-cleft structures in Bangla:

(1a) ja   ami   kʰe -lam   ta   aek -ta   keːk

    What I   ate -(1p., simpl pst) that (dem)   one -(spec) cake

(1b) *ta   aek -ta   keːk   ja   ami   kʰe -lam

    That(dem) one -(spec) cake   what   I   ate -(1p., simpl.pst)

The phenomenon of pseudo-clefts in Bangla is structurally different from that in English. Unlike English, in Bangla there is a supporting element *ta* for *dza* (what). In other words, it acts as a Specifier for the object. Referring to the given example, it is observed that (1b) is ungrammatical. Ungrammaticality occurs with respect to shift of constituents in pseudo-cleft structures in Bangla owing to the co-occurrence of *dza* and *ta*. Their order on being reversed, leads the structure to collapse in terms of grammaticality. Hence, focus shift is not possible in such cases. Thus, focus remains sustained on the object its quantifier if any. In this example therefore, the AFD stands to be *ta aekta keːk,* the object being the primary focus.

(2a) ja   ami   khe -lam   ta   bitʃtʃʰiri

    What   I   ate (1p., simpl.pst) that(dem)   horrible

94

(2b) *ta   bitʃtʃʰiri   ja   ami   kʰelam

Thai(*dem*)   horrible   what   I   ate (*1p., simpl.pst*)

Irrespective of being an example of a predicational copular sentence, it follows the same explanation as the previous example. Thus, the notion of focus shift does not apply in pseudo-cleft structures in Bangla.

4.4 Focus in 'Equative' Sentences

The idea of Equative sentences is interpreted differently in Bangla, hence implying a different notion of focus as well, in comparison with English. Let us take a look at the following instances:

(1a) mumbai holo bOmbe

Mumbai (*aux*) Bombay

(1b) bOmbe holo Mumbai

Bombay (*aux*) Mumbai

It is interesting to note that the example cited, represents fact, which is distorted sentence being inverted consequently shifting the focus. In (1a), the focus lies with bOmbe, while restructuring the sentence as (1b) shifts the focus to mumbai. However, although grammaticality is unaffected, the pragmatics of the statement is directly affected since the entire fact gets distorted. This is due to the element *holo*

which stands for *is* and also *to become.* Structural ambiguity takes place consequently.

(2a) ram   holo   dzoi

    Ram   (*aux*)   the winner

(2b) dzoi   holo   ram

    The winner (*aux*)   Ram

Now in Bangla, the interpretation of focus and its shift is not quite the same as that of English. In (2a), ram seems to bear the focal accent, whereas in (2b) as well, ram remains the focus irrespective of a structural inversion. However, the statements seem to be backed by different context though the focus does not change. It is only the perception of the addressee which is affected since the impact created is different with respect to the two sentences. Phonologically, as mentioned earlier via examples of other categories of statements, focus could be placed either on ram or *dzoi*, depending on both the context as well as the speaker's attention in terms of directing the addressee's motivation to interpret meaning and implication of the statement.

The idea of equative sentences in Bangla is characterized by the sensitive aspect of the element of *holo*, which implies the equative relation on one hand as well as a sense of transformation on the contrary. As a result, the movement of elements in case of Bangla equative sentences is restricted. In fact, the use of such sentences is rear in Bangla.

4.5 Focus in Conjunctive Forms of Complex Sentences

The equivalent of the English conjunction *because* in Bangla is *karon*, which cannot be used at the beginning of a sentence. It can only be used to answer a question, if it is to be used at the beginning of a sentence at all.

(1a) ʃe   gaelo   na   jehetu   briʃti   portʃʰilo

    He   go   *(neg)*   since   rain   fall *(pst.cont)*

(1b) jehetu   briʃti   portʃhilo   ʃe   gaelo   na

    Since   rain   fall *(pst.cont)*   he   go   *(neg)*

The above pair of sentences does not reveal a change of meaning in relation to the shift of the constituents within the given structure. The causal relation remains unaffected. Both in the first case and second case respectively, the implication would remain the same; that he did not go because it was raining or the rain was his cause for not going. Thus, the focus of attention does not shift.

Let us now concentrate on the contrastive aspect of the *but* construction and the nature of projection of focus in relation to it:

(1a) lok -ta   kʰub   kipte   kintu   tar   mon -ta   bʰalo

    Man -*(spec)* very   miserly   *but*   his   heart -*(spec)*   good

(1b) tar   mon -ta   bʰalo   kintu   lok -ta   kʰub   kipte

    His   heart -*(spec)*   good   *but*   man -*(spec)*   very   miserly

(2a) ami   bʰat   kʰai   na   kintu   ruti   kʰai

| I | rice | eat | (*neg*) | *but* | roti | eat (*1p., simpl.present*) |

(2b) ruti   **kʰai**   **kintu**   **ami**   **bʰat**   **kʰai**   **na**

Roti   eat (*1p., simpl.present*) but   I   rice   eat (*neg*)

In (1b) the pronoun *tar* implies the presence of preceding referential information. Emphasis is on the subordinate clause. Thus, the two sentences irrespective of being constructed along the same context are viewed from different perspectives when restructured. It is the content in the subordinate clause which gains more emphasis since the element *kintu* highlights the contrastive focus, the contrast being prominent only on bringing the subordinate clause into focus. Thus, we find that the focus position is on the latter NP (i.e. following the conjunction) irrespective of reordering the clauses. A change in the focus would once again affect the pragmatic aspect of the sentence.

Similarly, referring to (2a) and (2b) respectively, the focus position remains fixed even if the clauses are inverted. *Kintu* produces a very strong effect in highlighting the opposition between the clauses between which it is situated. Both clauses are focused as result but the subordinate clause gains the status of primary focus since it opposes the notion in the preceding clause. In fact, the intonational pattern is very interesting in such cases, where the subordinate clause though being the primary focus, has a falling intonation pattern.

Proceeding to test the effect of focus and its shift in coordinated structures, let us consider the following examples:

(1a) amad -er   raʃtropoti   aekdzon   lekʰOk   ebOŋ   boiggaenik

Our -(*gen*) president   a (*3p*)   writer   and   scientist

(1b) aekdzon lek^{h}Ok ebOŋ boiggaenik amad -er raʃtropoti

A (*3p*) writer and scientist our -(*gen*) president

In this instance, (1a) has its focus on the coordinated phrase lek^{h}Ok ebOŋ boiggaenik, whereas we find that through movement of the coordinated phrase to by topicalizing it, the focus does not shift. This shows that in case of two conjoined NPs being topicalized, the focus does not shift from the coordinated phrase. The agent or rather variable for the value receives the staus of secondary focus. However, the primary focus does not shift from the value to the variable, going by the idea of RRG.

(2a) ram k^{h}ub b^{h}alo tʃ^{h}atro ebOŋ k^{h}ub b^{h}alo ga -e

Ram very good student and very well sing (*3p., simpl. present*)

(2b) *k^{h}ub b^{h}alo ga -e ebOŋ ram k^{h}ub b^{h}alo tʃ^{h}atro

Very well sing (*3p., simpl.present*) and Ram very good student

(3a) uni aek-jon ukil ebOŋ b^{h}alo lek^h -en

He a (*3p*) lawyer and well write -(*3p., simpl. present*)

(3b) *b^{h}alo lek^h -en ebOŋ uni aek-jon b^{h}alo ukil

Well write -(*3p., simpl.present*) and he a -(*3p*) good lawyer

(4a) ami k^{h}a -bo ar tarpOr g^{h}umo -bo

I eat -(*1p.,simpl.fut*) and then sleep -(*1p., simpl.fut*)

99

(4b) *tarpOr gʰumo -bo   ar   ami   kʰa -bo

Then   sleep -(*1p.,simpl.fut*)   and   I   eat -(*1p.,simpl.fut*)

In all the above sentences restructuring is not possible since shifting the focus from the subordinate clause leads to ungrammaticality of the sentence. It is to be noted that the subordinate clause is an AdvP. Thus, if the subordinate clause is an AdvP, then shift of focus would yield ungrammaticality. Focus shift is therefore subject to constraint in such cases.

(5a) ram   bari   tʃole gae -lo   ar   ʃubʰo   porte   boʃ -lo

Ram   home   went (*3p., simpl.pst*) and Shubho to study sat (*3p., simpl.pst*)

(5b) ʃubʰo   porte   boʃ -lo   ar   ram bari tʃole gaelo

Shubho to study sat -(3p., simpl.pst) and Ram home went -(3p.,simpl.pst)

There is a prominent shift of focus via inversion of the coordinated clauses constituting the original statement. The pragmatic value of the statement changes as a result/it alters or rather reverses the sequence of events or activities taking place. More specifically, initially the statement logically implies that *ram* went home and ʃubʰo began to study, thereby establishing a relation in the sense that ʃubʰo began to study after *ram* went home. Thus, there is a denotation of time sequence, conforming to the notion of linear precedence. On the contrary, altering the order the clausal constituents, the implication formed as a result of focus shift is that the event of ʃubʰo's study occurs as a precedent to ram's going home. Consequently there is a complete change in the temporal framework. It seems as though ram went home after ʃubʰo began to study. So, there is also an implicit alternation in the causal relation. ʃubʰo's action of studying seems to be the cause of ram's going home in (5b). in (5a) there does not seem to be any explicit causal relation. ʃubʰo has other options for activities after ram left, of which he probably chose to study.

100

Hence, we find a lot many possibilities of analyzing the implication of the statement which undergoes focus shift.

(6a) ob^{h}i b^{h}alo ak -e   ar rob b^{h}alo ga -e

Abhi well   draw-(*3p.,simpl.present*) and ravi well sing-(*3p., simpl.present)*

(6b) robi b^{h}alo ga -e   ar ob^{h}i b^{h}alo ak -e

Ravi well   sing-*(3p.,simpl.prsent)* and abhi   well   draw (*3p., simpl.present*)

This example is not reflective of any pragmatic meaning change since they represent permanent qualities which hare independent of each other. There is no connection between their prevalence in the two individuals respectively. One does not influence the other and so the order of their presentation does not affect the information status contained within the information structure. This is an instance of Definitional focus, where descriptive issues are presented. If, the descriptive clauses in a complex sentence are adjoined via the conjunction denoting *and*, then inverting the information structure does not affect the pragmatic meaning of the statement.

(7) tota kOlej-e   pOraʃuno kOr-e   ebOŋ rajniti kOr -e

Tota college-(*loc*)study   do (*3p.,simpl.present)*and   politics do (*3p.smpl.prsnt)*

The elements connected by the conjunction cannot be separated from each other. Other movements across the structure may occur but without affecting the point of coordination. For example, pOraʃuno kOre Ornob implies an answer to 'what does

Omob do?'. However, it is interesting to note that the primary focus remains on pOraʃuno and kʰaeladʰulo. In other words, irrespective of different forms of presenting the information, its status remains unaltered in terms of its salience. Such structural change is not possible in case of English since it would yield ungrammaticality. *Arnab studies and plays* could imply that *he studies and then plays* OR *studies and also plays*. This reflects structural ambiguity in the original statement.

Thus, in case of coordinated structures there requires to be a logical sequence of occurrence of events, barring those which are descriptive symbolizing Definitional focus. Structural change might not only lead to focus shift but also affect the logical sequence and coherence, thus resulting in a distortion in the global focus, i.e. affecting the level of discourse.

4.6 Focus and Negation in Bangla

Having analyzed the phenomenon of focus shift in English in Chapter III, let us discuss the same with respect to Bangla, taking into account the following sentences:

(1a) ram bʰalo tʃʰatro na

    Ram good   student *(neg)*

(1b) bʰalo tʃʰatro ram   na

    Good student Ram *(neg)*

Unlike English, there may be a shift of the negative element *na* in Bangla. However, as a result a shift in focus occurs such that the element which was being negated in (1a) for instance, i.e. *ram b^{h}alo tʃ^{h}atro* gets reduced in terms of focus in relation to the negative element in (1b). The focus becomes b^{h}alo tʃ^{h}atro and the statement is characterized by a more intense tone. In fact one may be confused regarding whether to consider the negative element as the primary focus in this case, since intuitionally it carries an aggressive tone.

4.7 Focus in Relation to Complex Predicates in Bengali Information Structure

(1a) mou boi -ta   <u>kine ni-lo</u>

Mou book -(*spec*) bought (*3p.,simpl.pst*)

(1b) mou boit -ta   *kin-lo*

Mou book -(spec) bought(3p., simpl.pst)

The sentences in (1) exhibit a variety of possible ways in which the constituents may be reordered resulting in evident focus shift. It is significant to note that English does not allow so many combinations of the same sentence due to its rigid SVO structure. In the above example (1a) is featured by a complex predicate (underlined) in the information structure, whereas (1b) contains a simple verb (italicized). Now, if examined closely, difference is observed with respect to the information status in case of both statements, irrespective of the topic being the same. In the first case, the emphasis is more on the complex predicate which signifies "completion" of the task of purchasing the book. However, in (1b) the logical focus is also on the verb, since it acts as new information. Now, the

103

intonational focus may be placed on any of the lexical items depending on the context. The former example (1a), is suggestive of a background since it seems that the object has been referred to earlier. Thus, there is an intuitional connection between the background, say X, and the complex predicate (it seems as though the "book" had been referred to earlier in preceding discourse). Unlike English, Bengali is characterized by the flexibility of changing and restructuring the sentence containing the complex predicate. The grammaticality of the sentence remains unaffected unlike English. However, referring to the Bengali instance, despite reshuffling the order of the lexical items the focus does not seems to shift from the complex predicate since the focus of attention is directed towards that portion of the sentence. However, supposing the attachment of the emphatic particle /i/ both logical an intonational focus would coincide with the object. If the emphatic particle /i/ is attached to the object in (1a), it would yield a different perspective to the interpretation of the statement. It would imply a range of options from which it was only the book which was bought. As a result, a complex predicate would be 'bleached' of its focus.

Thus, in Bengali the presence of the emphatic particle /i/ acts as the strongest focalizer since it lards to amplification of the element to which it is attached, which consequently gains the status of being the focus of attention or primary focus. In case of the instances consisting of the simple verb, the focus is subject to shift intonationally.

According to RRG the element highlighted through the attachment of the emphatic particle can also be labeled as the "broad focus." On the contrary, in English the concept of the emphatic particle does not apply and therefore the nature of the focus shift is slightly different and also comparatively much rigid. Presentation of information is certainly dependent on the communicative intention and context as already explained. Focus falls on the element which is "most salient," going by the framework of Functional Grammar as proposed by S.C. Dik.

Now, let us consider other examples of sentence containing complex predicates in order to analyze the aspect of focus and its shift:

(2a) *ob^{h}i skul -e jab -e* **bole taratari** <u>khe: ni -lo</u>

Abhi school -*(loc)* go -*(3p.,simpl.fut)* since quickly ate *(3p.,simpl.pst)*

(2b) *ob^{h}i skul -e jab -e* **bole taratari** <u>khelo</u>

Abhi school -*(loc)* go -*(3p.,simpl.fut)* since quickly ate *(3p.,simpl.pst)*

In the first case we find two possibilities of focus assignment. However, the complex predicate bears a focal element even if it may not be primary focus, unlike the second instance where the verb does not receive as much emphasis as the other constituents. So, on realigning the information structure in the sentence consisting of the complex predicate, the focus may shift but the complex predicate retains its focus even if to a reduced extent.

This happens to be common feature between English and Bengali. Thus, one may deduce that irrespective of any order of the constituents in a sentence featured by complex predicates, it is the complex predicates which are carriers of focus in some form or the other in both English and Bengali, since they have considerable influence in the interpretation of information by associating the information status with importance. They certainly are assigned with narrow focus even if not broad focus. In those cases where the complex predicate is the primary focus, a shift of focus through structural change would perhaps bring about a relegation of the complex predicate from being the primary focus to secondary or narrow focus, instead of removing the entire focus feature from it.

4.8 Impact of Focus Shift at the Level of Discourse

Protib^{h}a ʃOrbokal-e ʃOrbodeʃ-e birOI.

tObe bideʃ-e ʃilpoʃikk^{h}ar ʃudzog atʃ^{h}e.

ob^{h}inoe, poritʃa lona, kaemcra-r kadz-- eʃOb-i ʃek^{h}a-r baebost^{h}a atʃ^{h}e.

durb^{h}aggokrom-c baŋdeʃ-e eʃOb kono ʃudzog -i nei, ʃikk^{h}a-r kono baebost^{h}a -i nei.

(SATYAJIT RAY)

Referring to the context which contains three sentences, we see that it can be divided into separate distinct focal domains. According to the logical sequence of the text, *protib^{h}a* is the immediate focus. In other words, it serves as the explicit focus. The first two sentences and second and third sentences are related on the basis of Contrastive focus.the context describes the scope and privilege for learning the art of film-making. Hence, *protib^{h}a* (i.e. talent) is introduced in the first statement and serves as the focus. However, the focus shifts to ʃilpoʃikk^{h}a (i.e. training in arts and aesthetics) from the second sentence onwards. Now, here the initial focus of P1, i.e. the introductory sentence becomes implicit since it acts as a subset of the explicit immediate focus in the second sentence, as a result of which the connectivity is sustained. However, shifting the immediate focus would lead to a change in global focus. For instance, if the focus is shifted to ʃOrbo-kal-e, i.e. "over the ages," then the emphasis would appear to be on the temporal aspect, which has no direct relevance with respect to the subsequent sentence. In order to sustain such focus, additional information is required, i.e. information which conforms to the aspect of time. Thus, global focus is affected in this case, if the immediate focus is shifted from *protib^{h}a* to ʃOrbokal-e.

The notion of topic continuity also comes into play in the sense that change in the immediate focus acts as an obstacle to the continuity of the topic in discourse. A

deviation occurs from the context. According to the norm of focus shift as discussed earlier, even if additional information is presented betwixt two propositions by way of an intervening statement, it is essential to re-introduce the focal element in the subsequent sentence, i.e. the one following the intervening statement. This ensures the sustainability of the topic under discussion in that particular discourse.

tʃitroʃilpi ʃoɲitguni protʃarbid baŋla ebOŋ iŋredzi dui bʰaʃa-e ʃoman dokkʰo lekʰOk ʃottodzit ra-er aekʰon prodʰan poritʃOe, bʰarotio tʃOlotʃtʃitr-er muktidata tini. ʃei tʃOlotʃtʃitro nirman-e tʃitronatto-ʃOŋlap-rupʃOdzdza tʰeke ʃuru kore ʃOmpadona-biggapon protʃar-e ʃsotoodzit rae ʃOeoŋ ʃOmpurno.

Now, the context referred to concerns 'Satyajit Ray' and his talent. However, an analysis of this extract keeping in view the focus perspective, with respect to focus shift, the essentiality of presentation of information within an appropriate structure is highlighted. The opening statement introduces the talents possessed by the stalwart himself and also the role of his identity in the Indian scenario. The second statement is an Elaboration of the preceding information, where primary focus is on Satyajit Ray and secondary foci happen to be on *tʃitrʃilpi* and *bʰarotio*. Shifting the focus from *bʰarotio* (Indian) *tʃOlotʃitro* (cinema) to *ʃoɲitguni* (musician) for instance would not alter the literal meaning of the text but would certainly yield a different angle to the perception of the text. However, we observe that there is no reference or elaboration on the 'musician' aspect in the text. So, instead of *tʃitroʃilpi* if the sentence began with *ʃoɲitguni,* the connectivity and coherence of the two consecutive statements constituting the extract would collapse and stand as loosely related. It is the aspect of film-making which connects the two sentences. Thus, shifting focus by way of change of information structure would disrupt the flow of information and affect the information status along with it. Hence, the notion of elaboration of the preceding information would be incompatible if focus is shifted from the film-making aspect to the musical aspect. The question of value

and variable also gets highlighted in this example. In other word, Satyajit Ray the film-maker represents the variable for which value is assigned through elaboration. If the other listed talents are to be categorically focused at all, they may be given the status of narrow focus. The broad focus remains on the film-making perspective.

4.9 Contrastive Analysis of Focus Shift in English and Bengali

In case of Bengali, which has an SOV structure, focus seems to be determined more in syntactic terms and also morphologically. However, referring to English which is featured by an SVO structure, it is observed that focus is determined in terms of phonologically realized intonational patterns over the syntactic structure. In other words, while speaking or during conversation is the variation in pitch which usually marks the focus in English. From the syntactic perspective focus may be shifted either structurally, i.e. through processes such as clefting, pseudo-clefting, topicalization, inversion. However, irrespective of whether the shift is phonological or syntactic in nature, the pragmatic aspect of the sentence alters consequently, culminating at the level of discourse. It is the informative status which is directly influenced by the information structure.

On the contrary, Bengali being featured by an SOV structure is observed to have more flexibility with respect to change or shift of focus in sentences. As a result, the chance of a sentence becoming ungrammatical due to change or shift of focus is almost nil, unlike English which is characterized by a number of constraints with regard to manipulating the sentential structure. In Bengali, the morpheme /i/ operates as an emphatic particle; the word to which it is attached automatically becomes the focus of attention. Thus, it creates a phonological, morphological as well as syntactic emphasis within the sentence as part of discourse. The leftward NP movement in a Bangla sentence denotes specificity. An inverted NP cannot be accommodated in the DP structure. In case of possessives, the element representing the possessive cannot be lower than the demonstrative in the information structure

108

(Bhattacharya, 1998). However, though the pragmatic meaning undergoes change through a focus change or focus shift in Bengali as well, it does not occur to the extent of that observed with regard to English.

There may be instances of absurdity due to focus shift in Bengali, but the question of ungrammaticality is uncommon in this regard. It is in fact interesting to note that it is often the syntactic structure which influences the intonational or prosodic patterns in a language.

It is interesting to note that the different types of focus are operative in English as well as Bengali. Considering focus shift, difference between the two languages is highlighted only at the level of the sentence. However, at the level of discourse they converge with the notion of global focus. In other words, irrespective of the manner and effects of focus shift being different to a considerable extent in the two languages, eventually when analyzed at the level of discourse, there is a common point which both languages conform to—Global Focus and discourse coherence. The difference lies with respect to the focal operators and extent to which focus shift is permissible. English being comparatively rigid is characterized by greater focus shift constraints.

Chapter 5

Acoustic Evidence of Focus in Bengali

This chapter elucidates the phenomenon of Focus and variation in Focus with respect to Bengali sentences uttered by six different speakers (three males and three females). Now, in the previous chapters, the notion of Focus and its shift have been primarily examined from logical perspectives, however keeping in mind the possible variations which have been tested via phonological means which shall be presented in the current chapter. (*Note*: The sentences have been arranged in the same order as that of the previous chapter.)

Sentence (S) 1 is backed by phonological evidence, such that the emphasis or focus shifts along with a corresponding shift of the Adverbial Phrase within the main clause. All six speakers exhibited the same feature as they uttered the sentence. Hence, it implies that the logical focus shifts in this case, going by the notion of 'new information' as mentioned earlier.

In S2, it has been experimentally observed that the intonational prominence determining Focus in this instance, either falls on the object or the verb in the main clause. Interestingly, there may be a secondary focus as found through the utterance of certain speakers.

In S3, intonationally the Focus alternates or rather varies between the Noun Phrase (NP) and Adjective Phrase (AP) with respect to each speaker. In most cases however, as experimentally observed, the primary focus lies on the NP (when the NP forms the initial part of the sentence, i.e. *tennis*) and on rephrasing or re-structuring the sentence as (3b),

the focus shifts and even produces a secondary focus. The primary focus and secondary focus may alternate, depending on each speaker's intonational pattern as observed.

Now, we delve into the aspect of those sentences characterized by Locative inversion.

In S4, apart from speaker 1, the rest of the speakers associate primary focus with either the location, i.e. *tebil-e* or the Verb Phrase (VP) *rak^hlo*. Interestingly, the male speakers are found to apply emphasis on the verb, whereas the female speakers emphasize on location. Also, there has been evidence of focus being associated with the subject and object. However, there are exceptions which reflect the probability of a contextualized interpretation or conceptualization of Focus.

In S5, phonologically it has been observed that the primary emphasis is placed on the locative element. Now, if an additional locative element is introduced preceding the previous one, the focus is found to shift to that newly incorporated element, which stands to be j^huri-te in this case. Also, as exhibited by the speakers' response, the verb is often featured by an element of Focus, which may be either primary or secondary, depending on the intonational emphasis and prominence. In fact, it is often observed that the focus occurs over a wide range, i.e. a particular phrase instead of a single lexical item. In other words, it falls within the range of the Potential Focus Domain (PFD), thus conforming to the feature of Role and Reference Grammar (RRG).

Further, we move on to the category of Imperative sentences.

Here, in S7 it has been observed that majority of the speakers focus on the lexical item which occurs sentence-initially. However, primary focus lies on the verb denoting the imperative element n the sentence. In case the primary focus shifts to one of the other lexical items or phrase, the verb still retains an element of focus, which may be interpreted as secondary focus. Such cases are usually contextually determined.

Interestingly, in S8, the sense conveyed by the word *eʃo* undergoes an entire change of meaning, such that in the first instance it is the main verb ʃahadzdzo which is focused by all the speakers as evident through the recorded utterances. On the contrary, the second

instance exhibits an association of Focus with *eʃo* which implies the command 'go'. It conveys a sense of completion of the task.

Now, S9 is a noteworthy instance where majority speakers exhibit the same trend of assigning Focus. In the first instance, it is the verb which bears the secondary focus, whereas in the second case the verb is associated with primary focus. The difference in intonational patterns with regard to the two respective instances reflects a corresponding difference in their intensities, i.e. the second instance reflects a stronger intensity of the imperative feature, as far as the observation from the experiment is concerned.

S10 and S11 are subject to intonational variation as exhibited by the speakers. In other words, they are once again determined contextually.

In S12, phonologically the speakers are found to produce the utterances differently, such that there is an alternation between the primary and secondary foci. In the first case, primary focus lies on *bOnd^{h}o kore,* denoting the 'state' in which the book must be kept, followed by a secondary focus on the VP *rek^{h}e dao.* However, in the second instance, the VP is associated with primary focus and *bOnd^{h}o kore* bears secondary focus.

S13 shows that the intonational prominence falls on the 'domain' which is the Actual Focus Domain (AFD). The logical focus shifts according to context. Primary focus is again determined contextually, as inferred from the recorded data of six speakers.

S14 reflects that Focus mostly lies on the verb in the main clause. An element of secondary focus is also present, especially on the demonstrative pronoun in the subordinate clause, i.e. *ʃei.*

S15 confirms that in most cases, the emphasis lies on the subordinate clause, i.e. it constitutes the AFD, where there may be a specific primary focus along with a secondary focus. However, it observed that the verb always bears an element of Focus, whether primary or secondary.

Now, moving on to the category of sentences containing lexical items featured by the emphatic particle / *i* /, it has been inferred that the lexical item containing the emphatic

particle is the primary focus. This a universal phenomenon since it is a consistent feature as evident through the collected data. S16, S17, and S18 are instances of this phenomenon.

In S19 and S20, primary focus is usually associated with the object in case the object lies in the final position of the sentence. However, focus shifts to the verb on re-structuring the sentence with the verb in the final position as occupied by the object earlier.

S21 and S22 are instances where the primary focus lies on the final lexical item, since it acts as a sentence where a 'result' it produced, thus featured as 'new information,' hence conforming to the assumption put forward in Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG).

In S23, the subordinate clause is in primary focus. On re-structuring the sentence by inverting the clauses, the primary focus is associated with the subordinate clause, thus highlighting the importance of context. In other words, it is suggestive of a preceding context, according to which the subordinate clause is emphasized in the instances, respectively. Once again, we observe the importance of AFD instead of focus on a single lexical item.

In S24 and S25, the element contrasting the information provided in the main clause is in primary focus intonationally, thus bringing out the sense of contrastive focus. Also, the element of contrastive focus reflects the idea of 'new information' as a result.

S26, S27, S28, S29, S30, S31, S32 exhibit the occurrence of primary focus sentence-finally from the phonological evidence collected through the recorded data.

Now, the feature of 'negation' has a wide range of application and interpretation as a result. However, in this analysis the concept of negation has been limited to is simplest form only to explain the notion of focus, which is the primary objective. With regard to the sentences taken for the purpose, it has been experimentally observed that the primary focus either falls on the negative element *na* or object immediately preceding it. S33 is one such instance.

Finally, S34 and S35 when uttered, show that the emphasis or primary focus always lies on the VP, irrespective of whether it is a complex predicate or not.

It is significant and interesting to note that all the acoustic evidence collected for Bengali data show that unlike English which has Focus determined through the variable of Pitch, the variable used to identify the element of Focus in Bengali is Intensity. In other words, the higher the intensity, stronger is the Focus and vice versa, thus reflecting a directly proportional relation. However, in English, the Focus is determined through a rise or fall in pitch, and there may be a combination of tones for the purpose. Also, in Bengali the shift of focus is more frequent compared to English, perhaps owing to the greater flexibility of the structure (SOV) of Bengali. In other words, it can be re-structured with different word order whereas, this advantage is subject to limitation in English.

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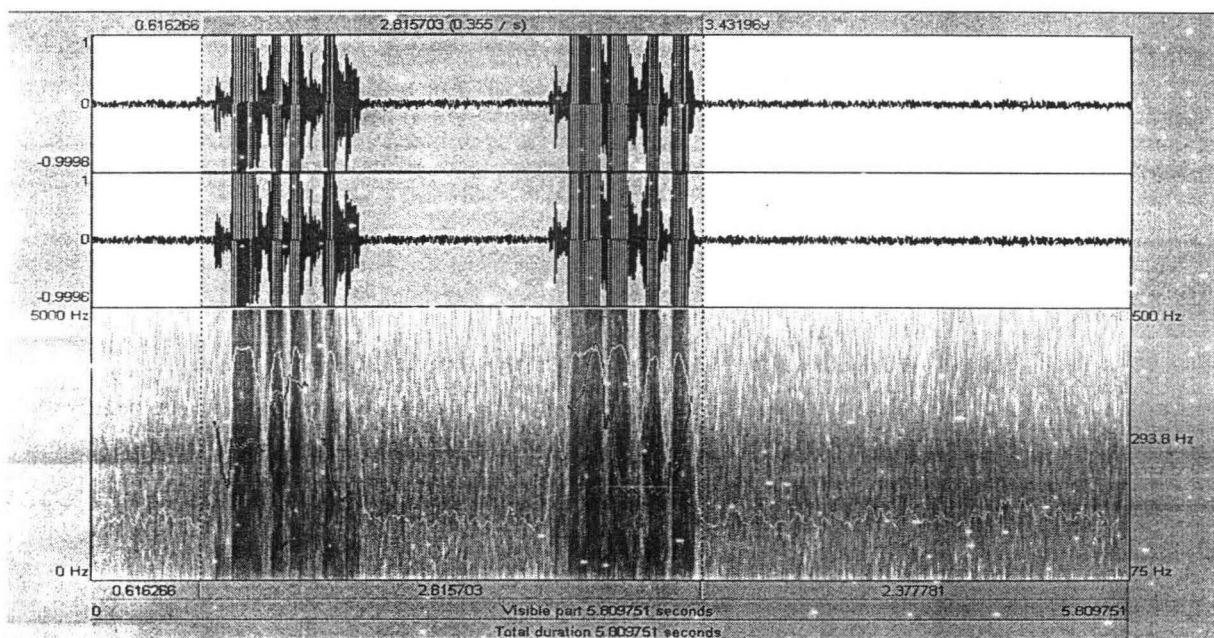
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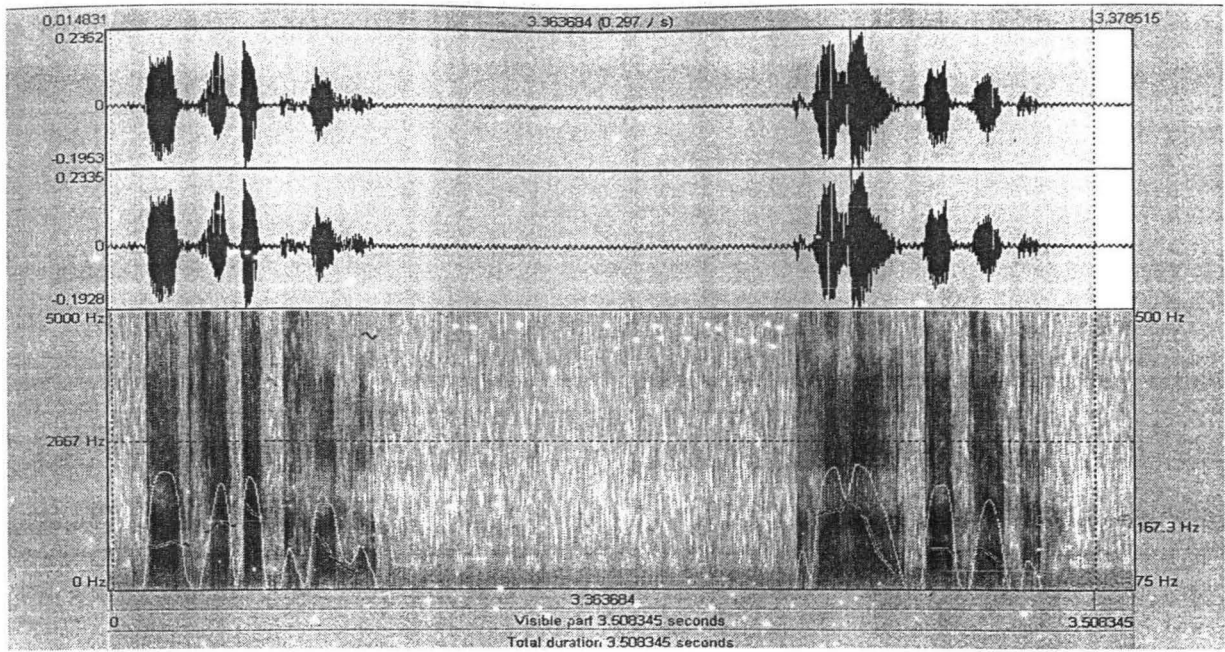
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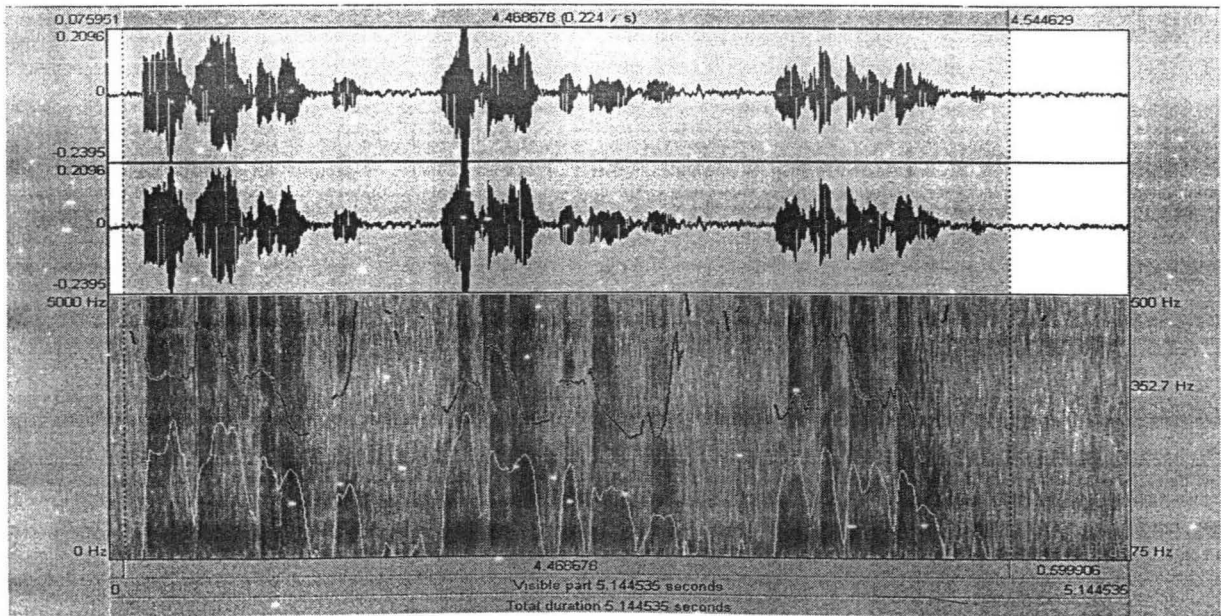
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116
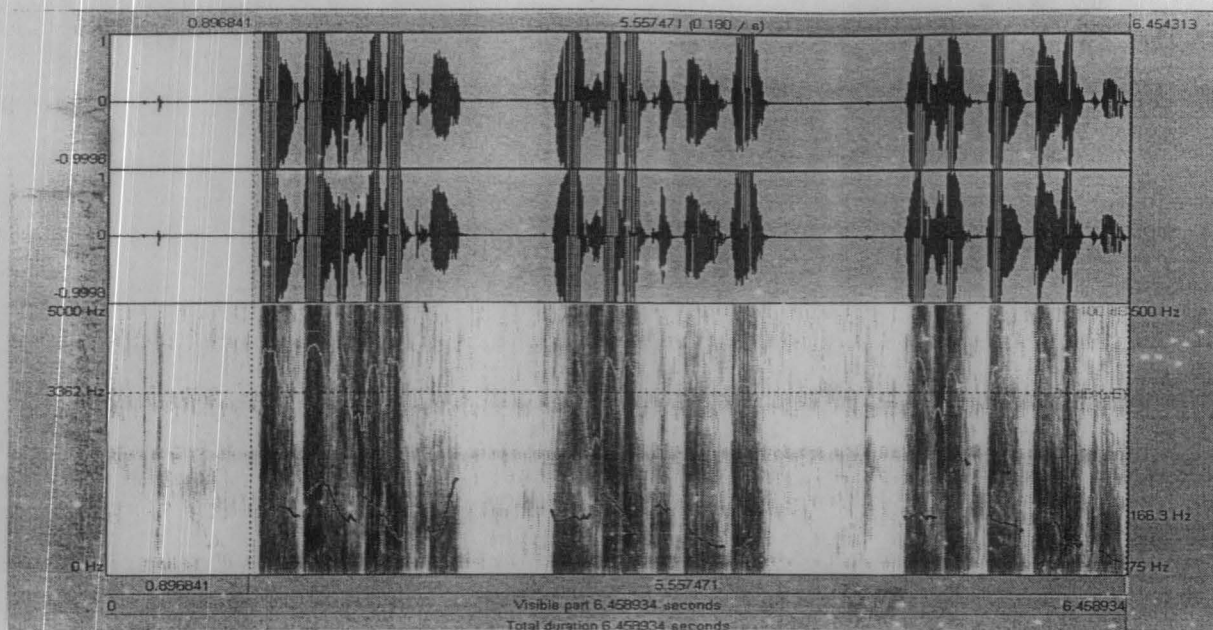
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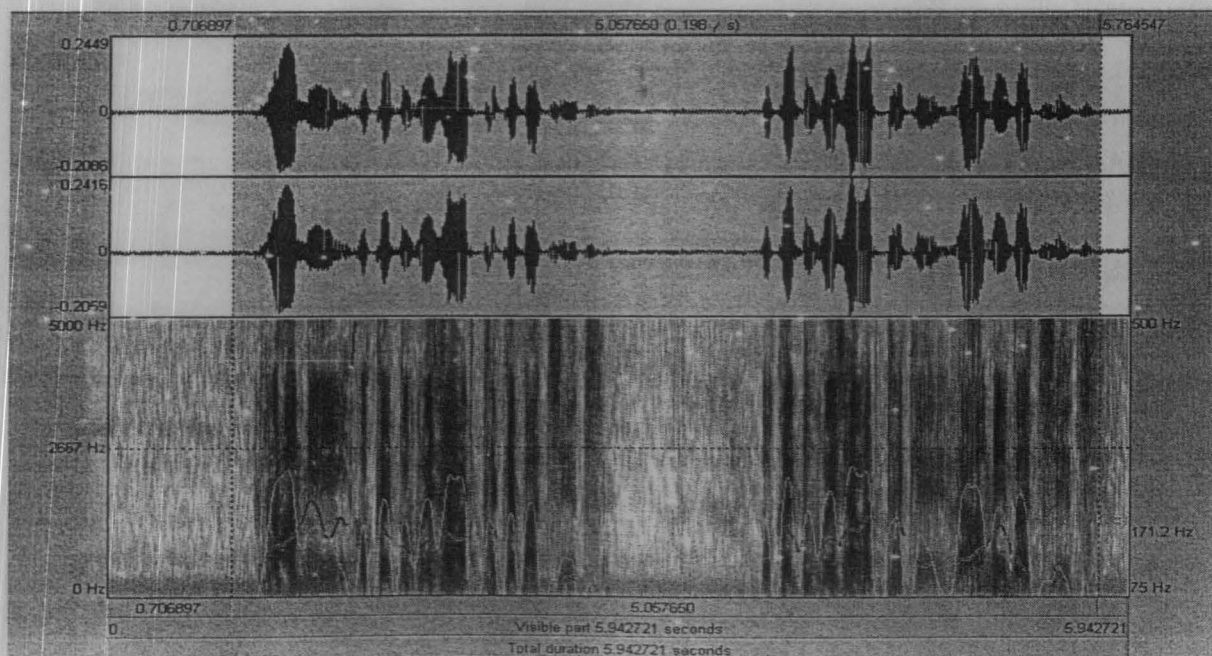
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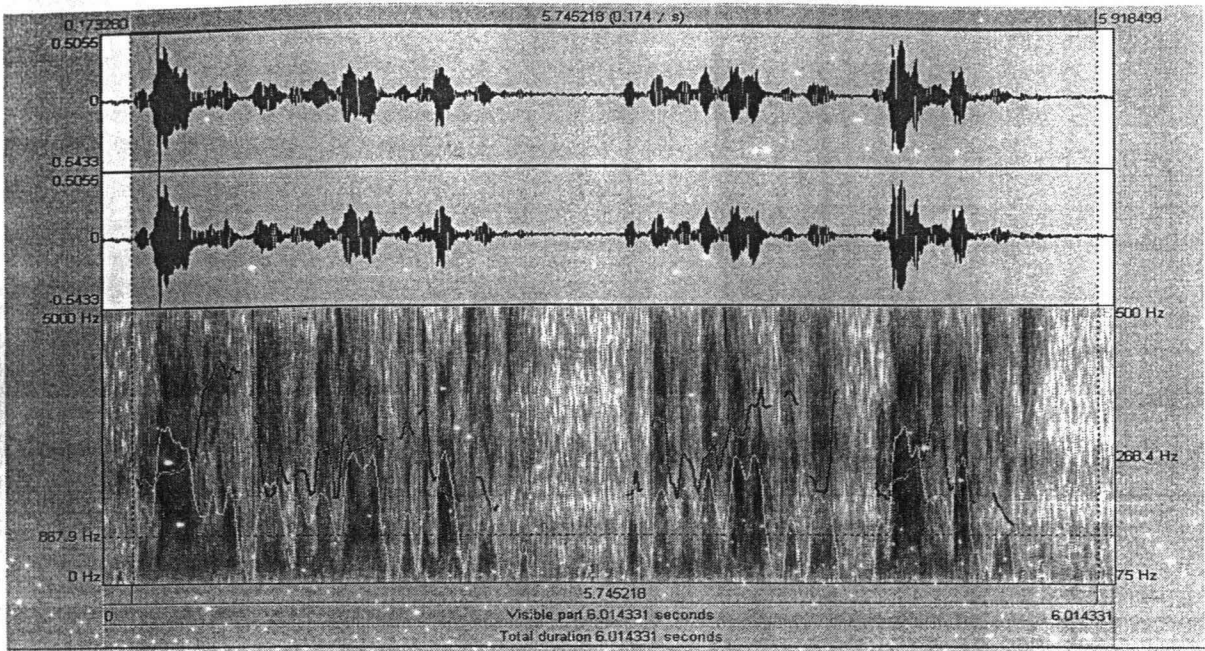
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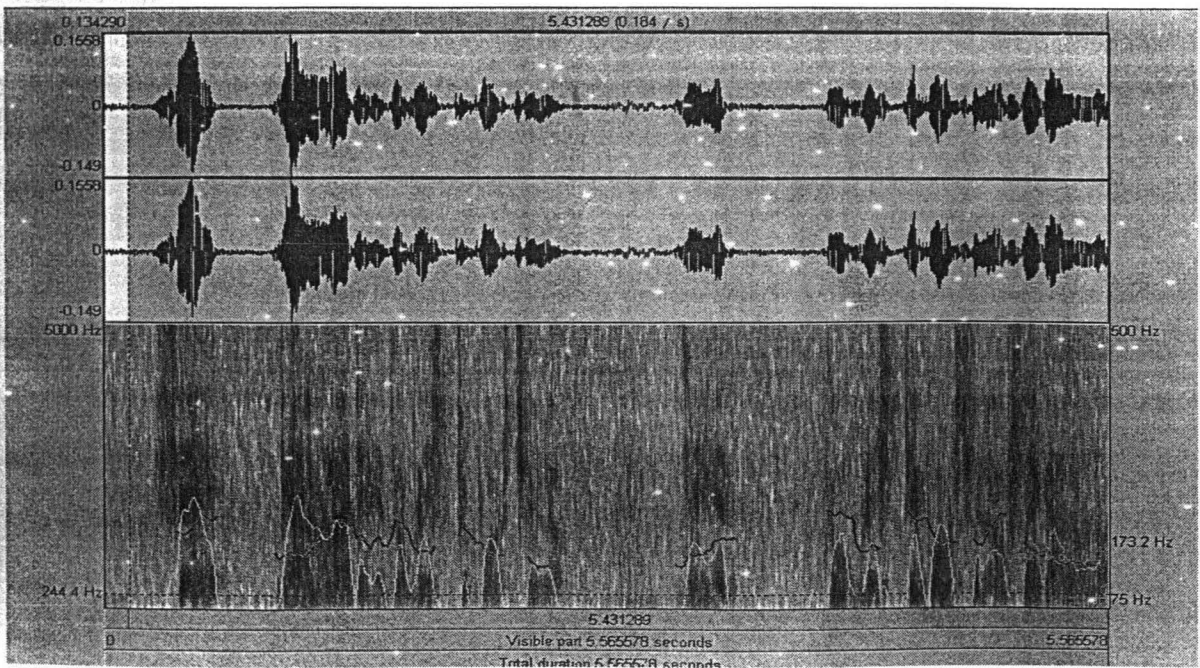
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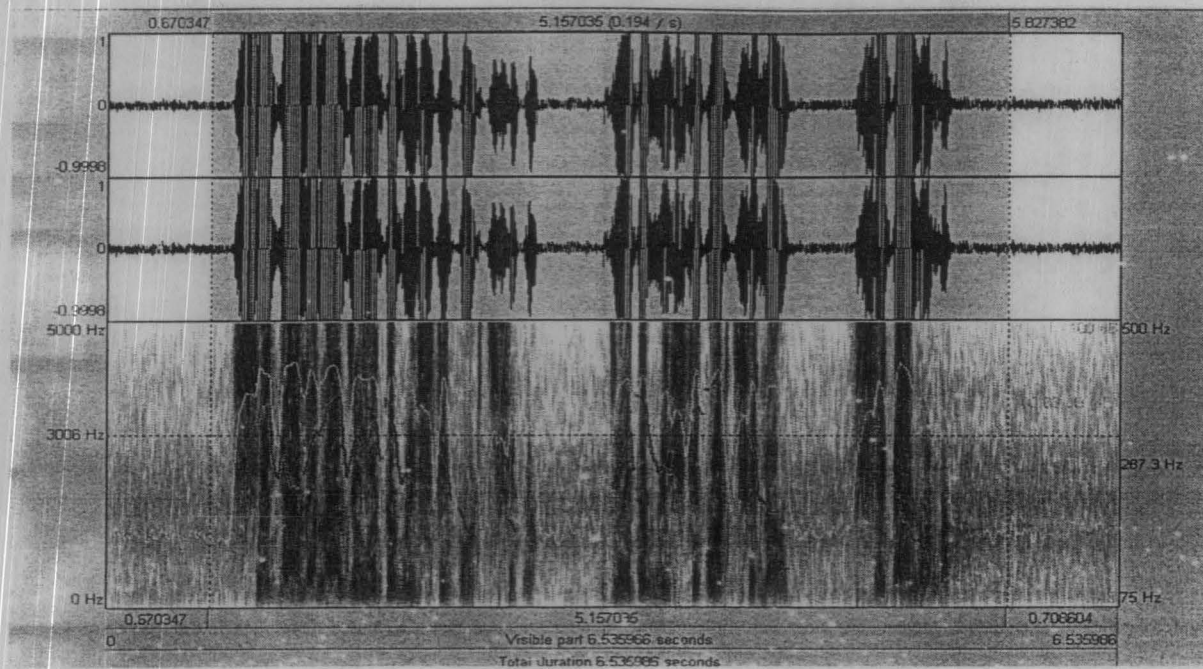
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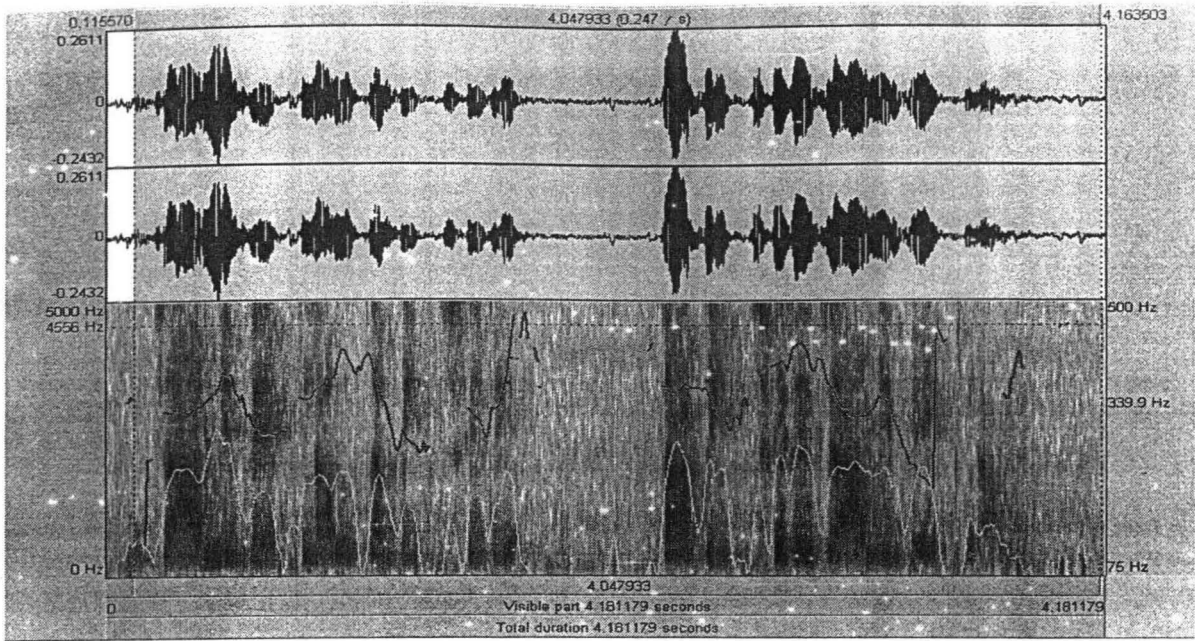
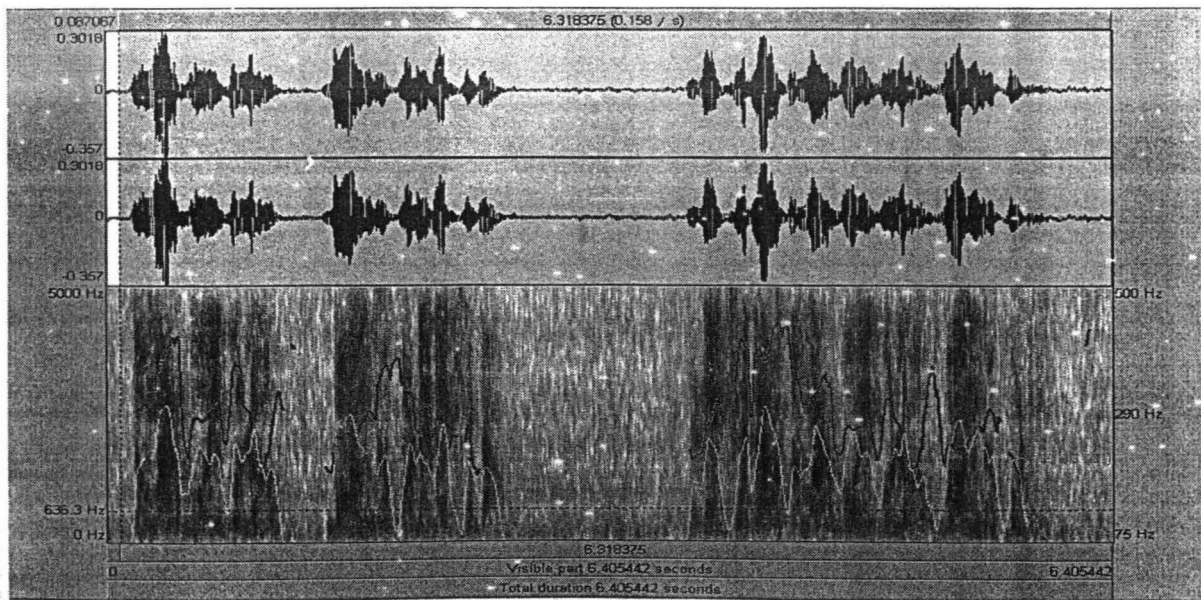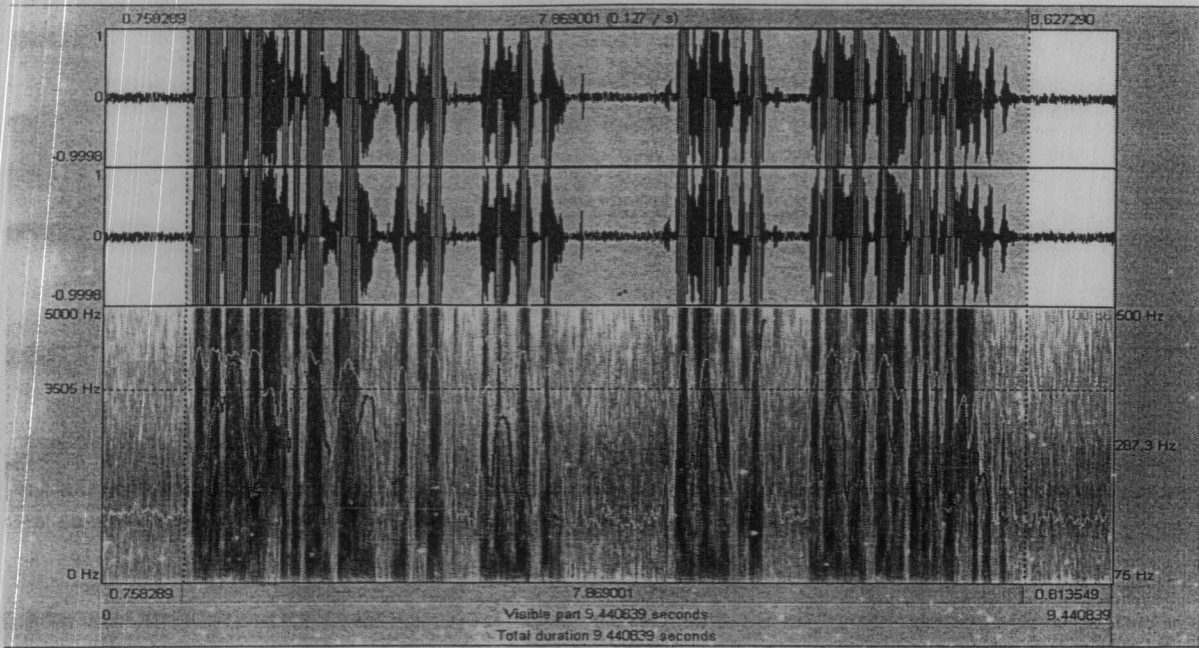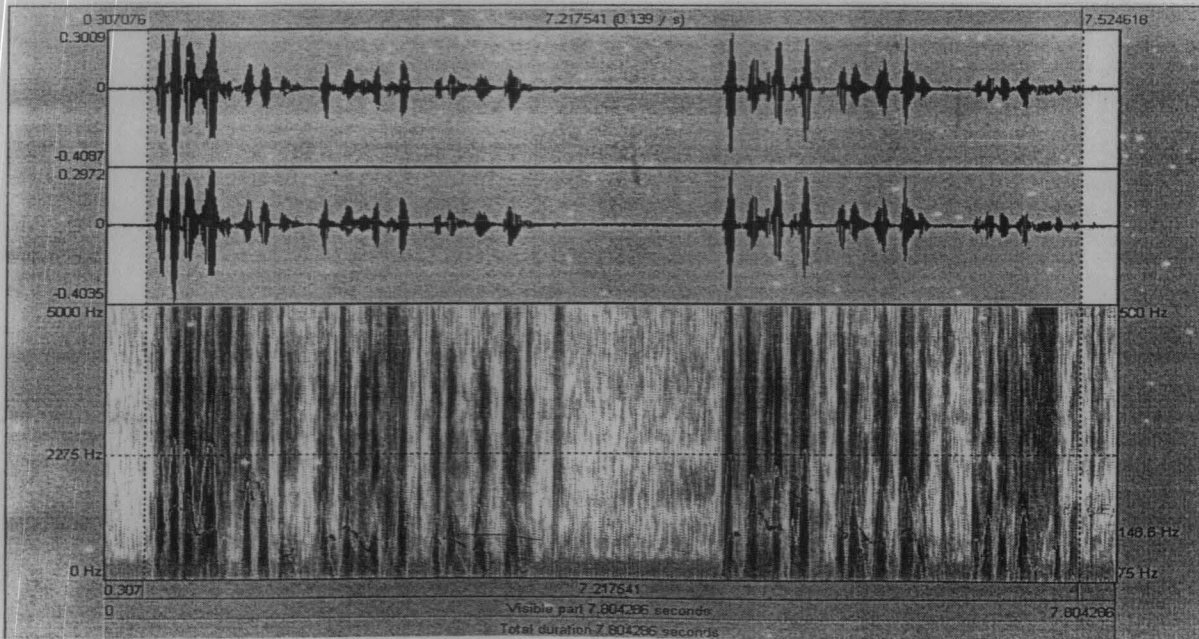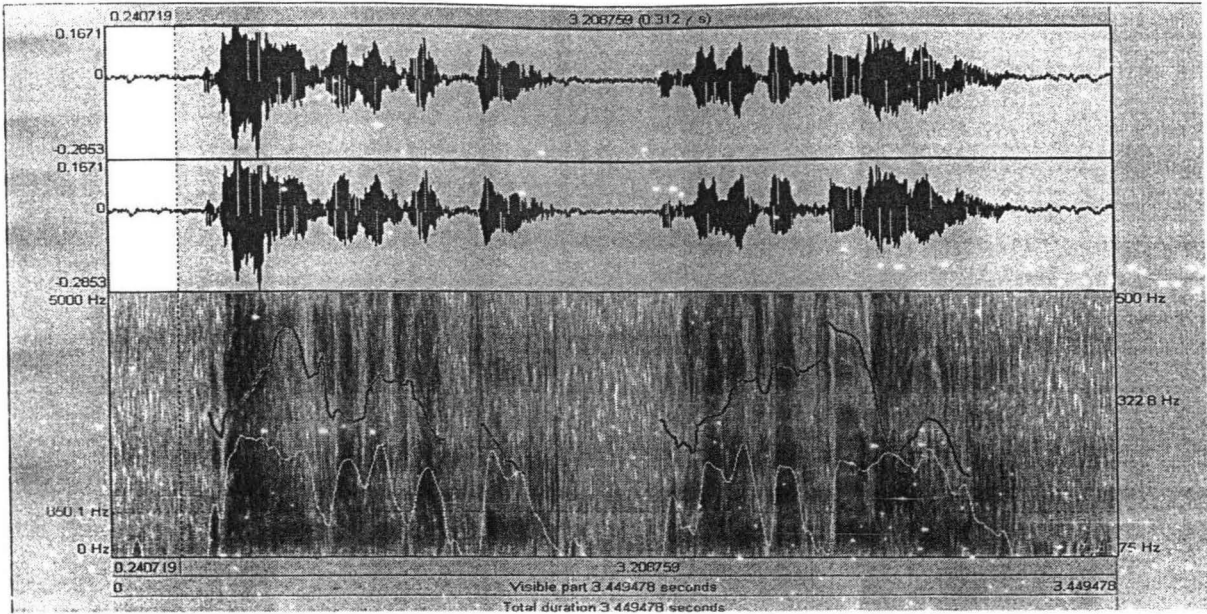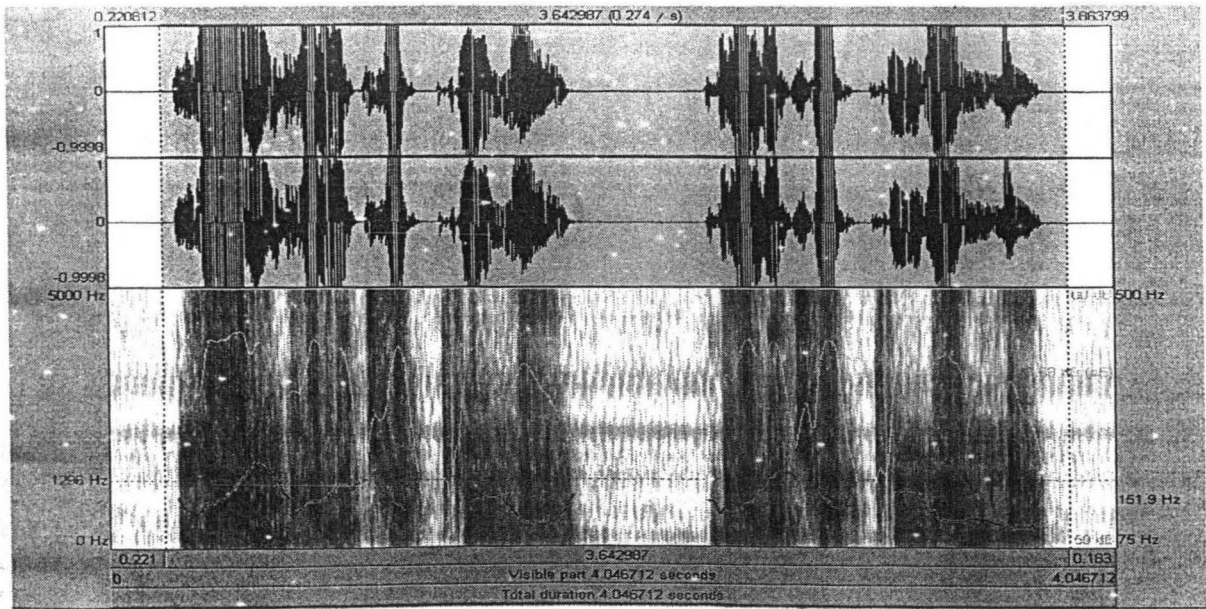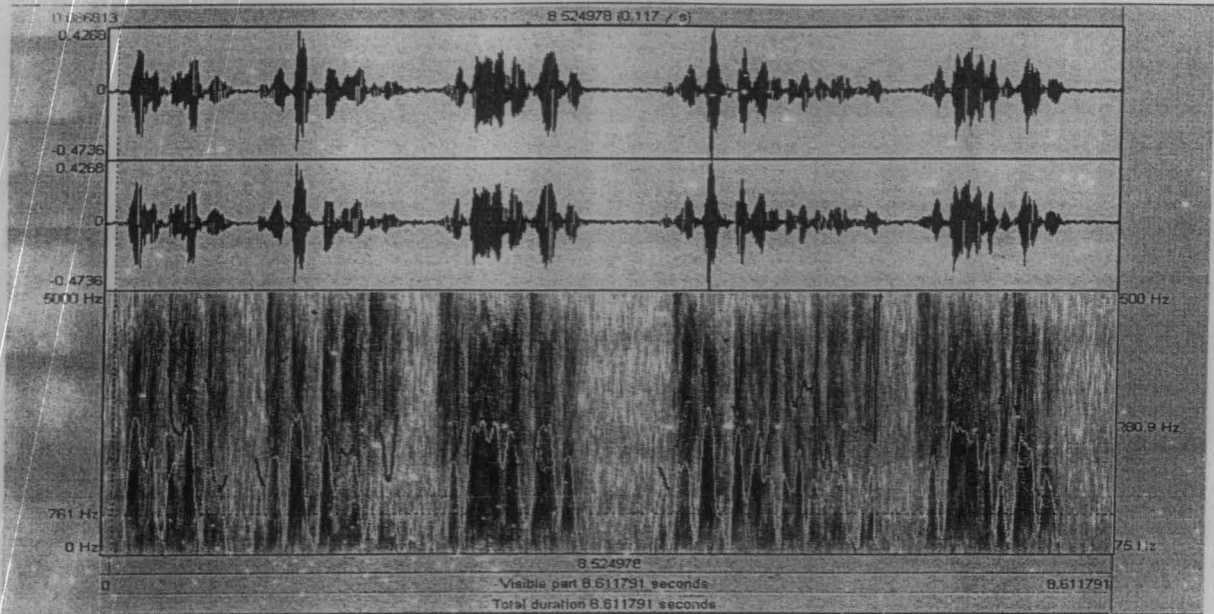SENTENCE NO. 20: SPEAKER—PRITHA
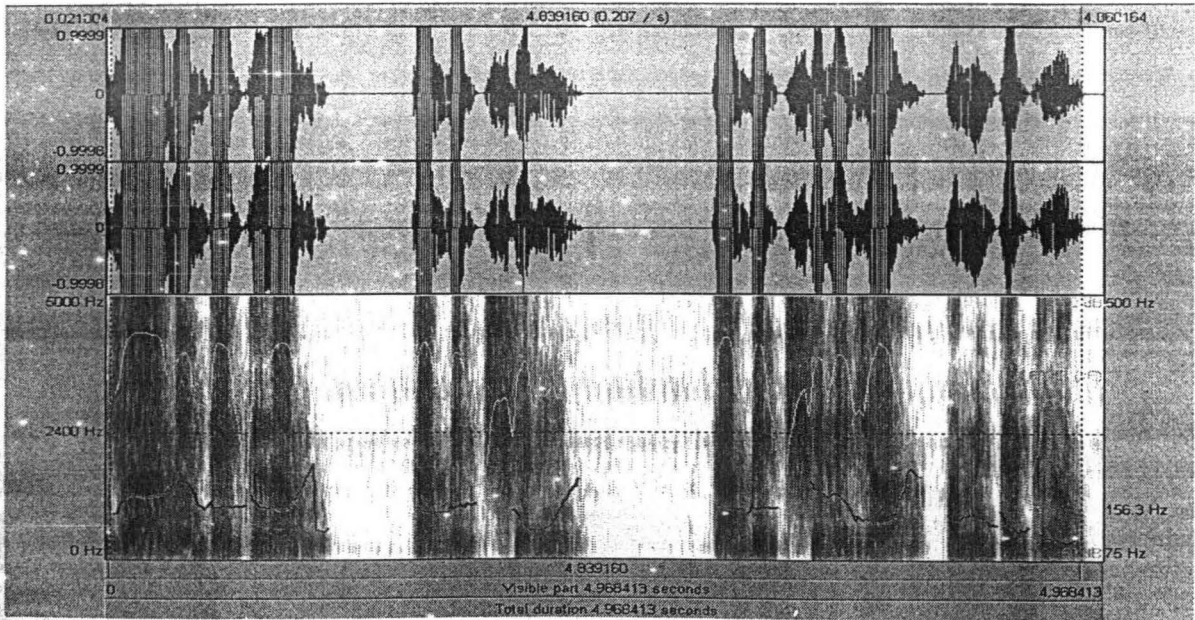
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120
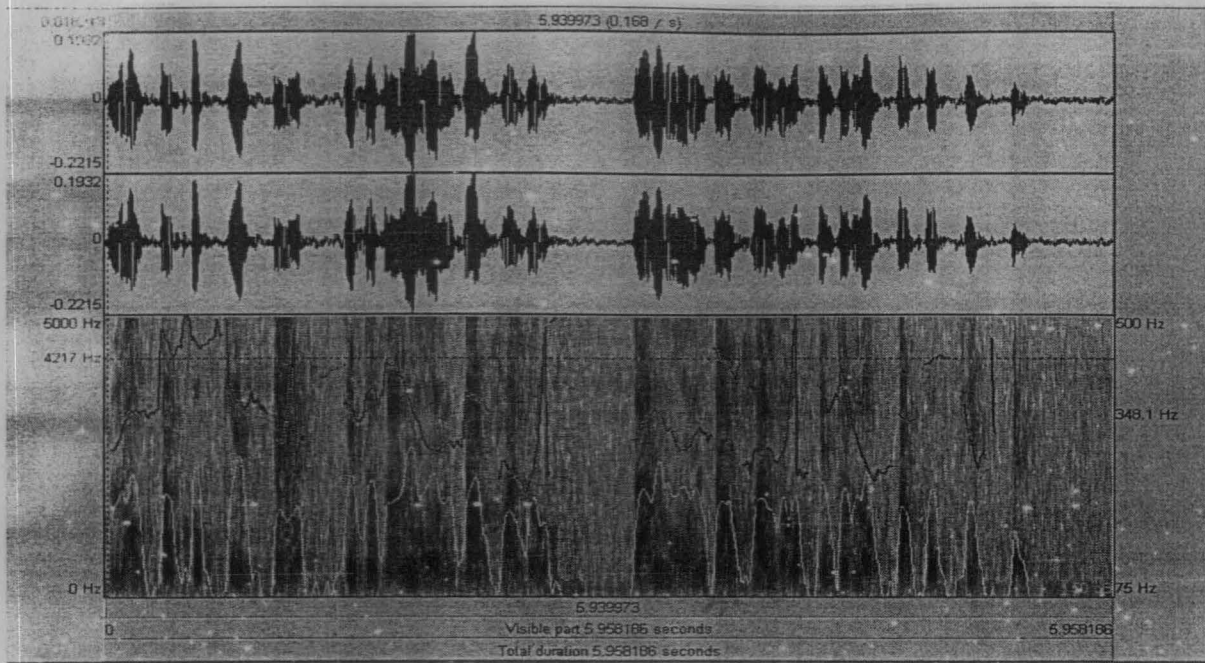
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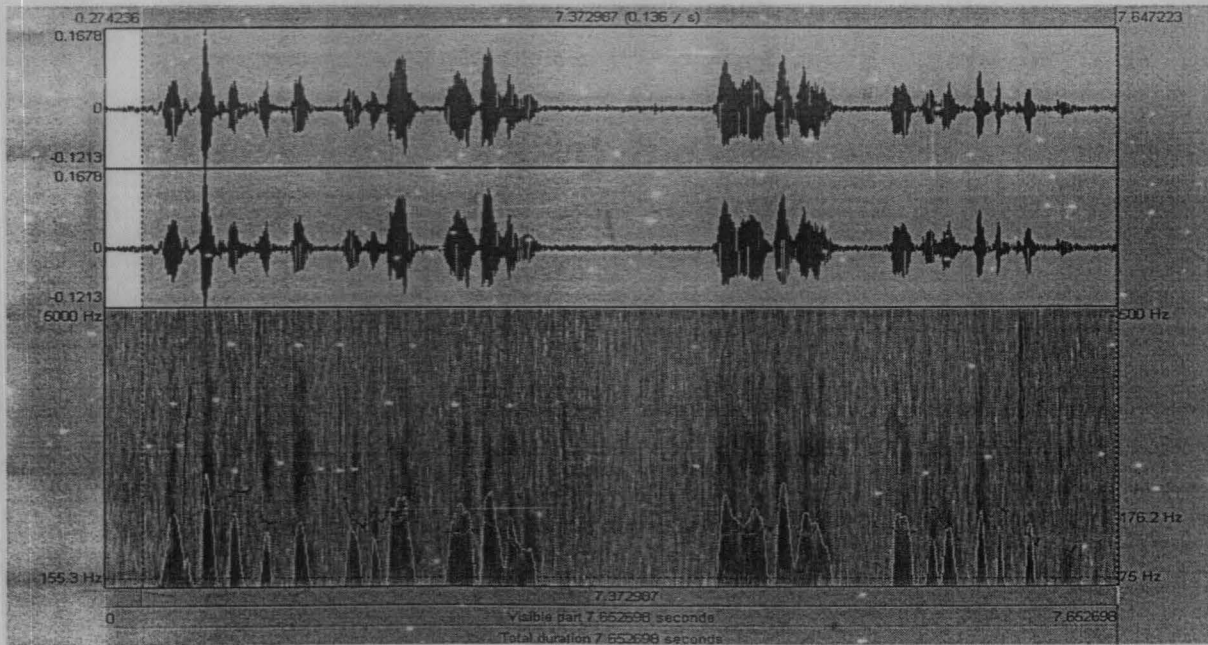
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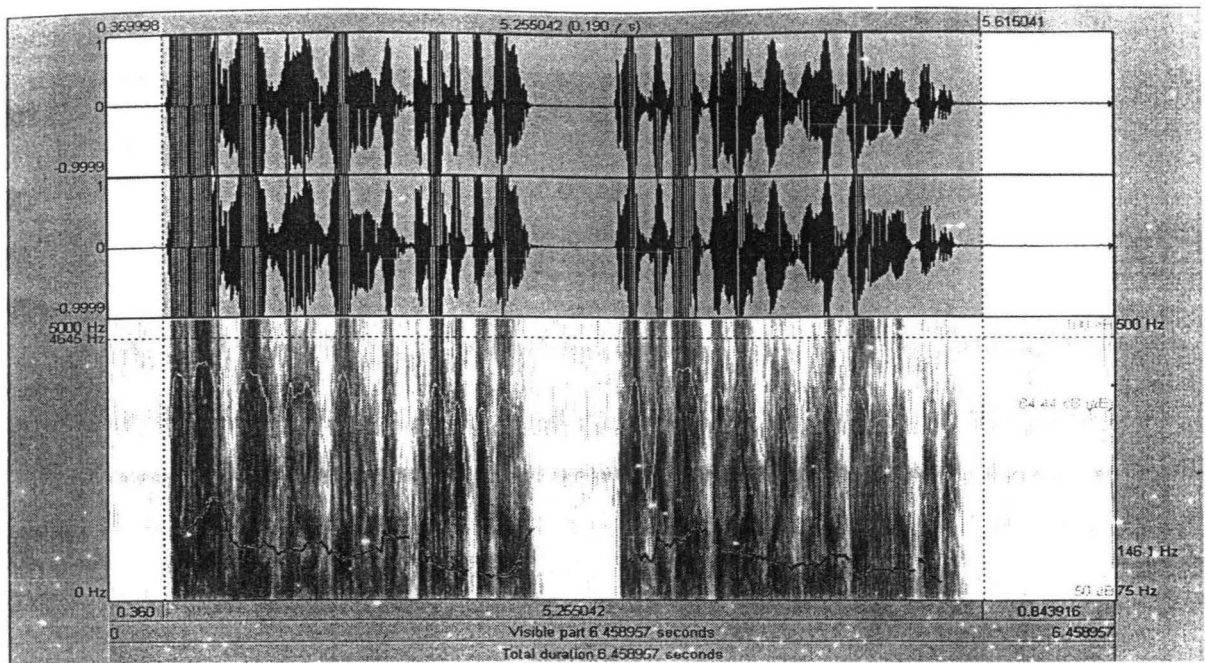
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122

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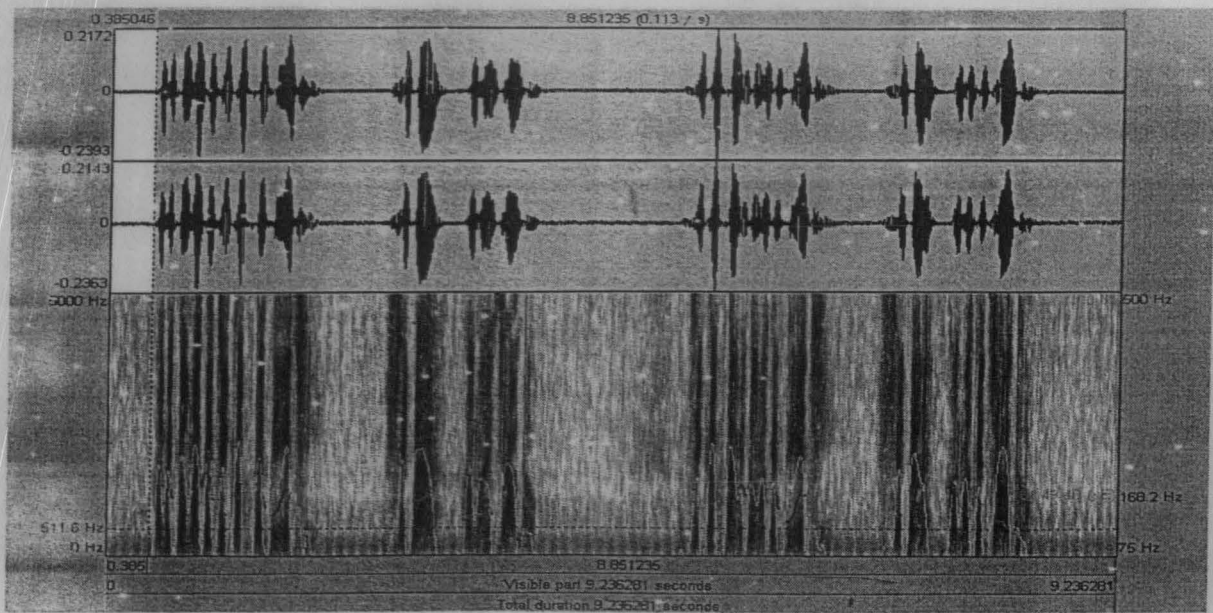

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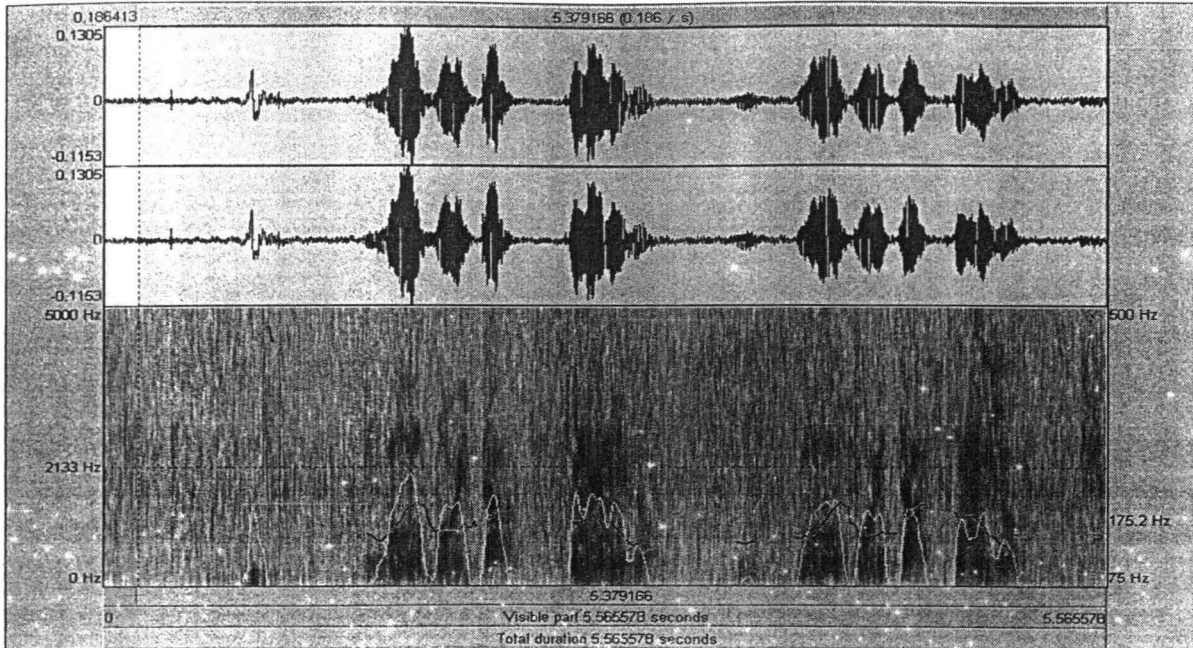
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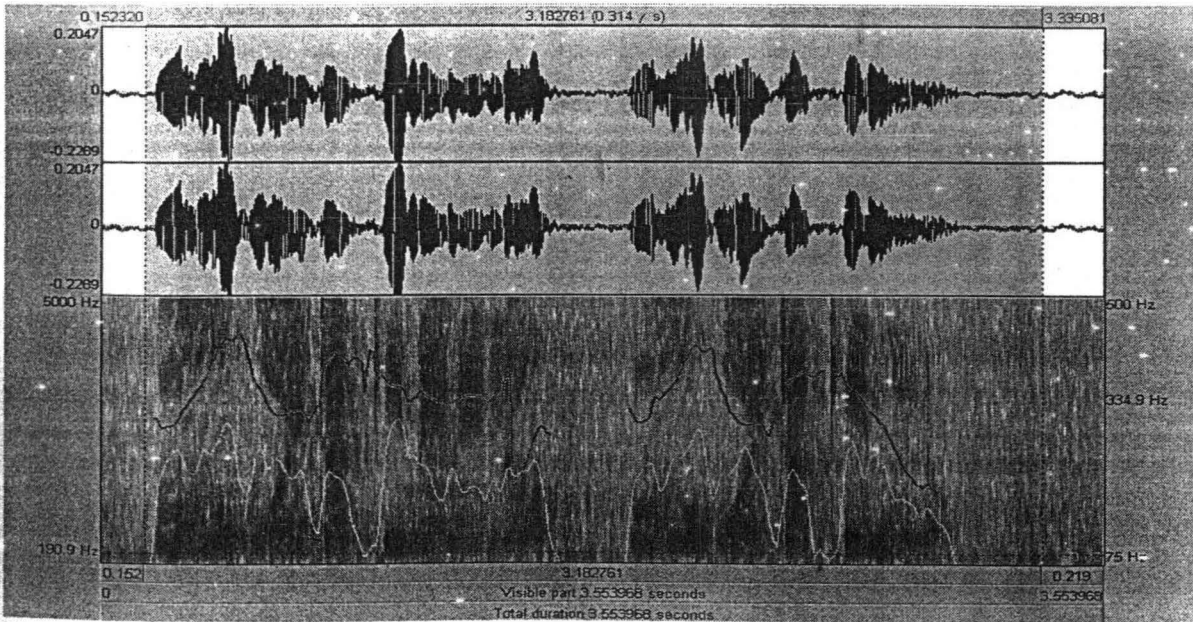

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124

SENTENCE NO. 14: SPEAKER—PRIYANKA

SENTENCE NO. 14: SPEAKER—ATANU

SENTENCE NO. 34: SPEAKER—ARIJIT

SENTENCE NO. 34: SPEAKER—PRITHA

Chapter 6

Conclusion

Going by the respective analyses in subsequent chapters, it is deduced that meaning
is an attention marker which summons the hearer's attention through its imperative
form to a repetition of or elaboration on information already presented in discourse.
The speaker intends to ascertain that the hearer understands the entire import of the
highlighted information. Pragmatic markers often abruptly shift the focus of the
discourse away from the ideational content of the discourse onto the process of
discourse construction itself, making overt the speaker's own meaning making
process and his/her shifting attention to previous arguments. In this way, the
weakening of derivability of information from previous discourse is prevented.

Connection between systematically related surface structures with equivalent
cognitive content is essential in terms of factors such as theme, focus and
dominance. For instance, the rightward movement of the object is not only
significant of an afterthought but also a universal pragmatic principle of focusing.

The different features of focus thus may be listed as follows: it is (a) an expression
which is highlighted or foregrounded, carrying the "main burden of the message"
or presents new information (Halliday, 1967, 1968), (b) an expression which
establishes a relation or contrast to alternative expressions (Jackendoff, 1972;
Jacobs, 1988; Rooth, 1985, 1992, 1996). Hence, the notion of focus can be
analyzed at the sentential level and be connected at the level of discourse
simultaneously. In other words, focus acts as a cohesive device which establishes a
link with the information structure of discourse. Shifting of focus would cause a
resultant shift in the pattern of discourse which would as a result affect its
coherence. More specifically, a distortion in the focal element in discourse hampers

127

the sequence and continuity of that discourse since it is contextualized. There would be deviation in the context of utterance or information. The relation between discourse segments get affected, since it moves away from the plausible interpretative framework. Connectedness is the condition on the linear concatenation of sentences in a text/discourse, which requires referential links by a semantic sentence connector and the focus often acts as the appropriate operator for the purpose. Consistency is a semantic condition which requires each sentence to be logically consistent with the previous sentence, whereas relevance is a pragmatic condition that restricts the relation between sentences.

Forces or cohesive links which keep the sentence together in a certain, build up the information structure. Thus, the cohesive links may be shifted along the same structure however maintaining the possible combination of syntactic roles. In this context, shift of focus in a simple or complex sentence would bring about a difference in semantic and pragmatic interpretation in spite of the syntactic roles being sustained. The contextual function however, has to be maintained.

It is important to note that it is the interplay of the formal and functional elements which accounts for the information structure and information status within the information structure as well as beyond the information structure, i.e. at the level of discourse. Syntactic, semantic, pragmatic and phonological functions conglomerate to give rise to a composite whole thus coalescing the information structure and perception or interpretation of that information structure. The importance of each of these modules contributes to the decoding and understanding of information.

Now, having contrastively analyzed the notion of focus shift within the information structure at both the sentential and discourse levels in English and Bangla, it may be deduced that the information status is more affected in English compared to Bangla. This is a feature which may be attributed to the structural differences between the two languages, i.e. English is characterized by a much more rigid SOV structure compared to Bangla which has a flexible SOV structure. In other words, the impact of focus shift within the information structure at the level of the

sentence is higher in case of English, where considerable semantic change is observed, consequently bringing about a pragmatic change. In English although intonation plays a significant role in marking focus, the marking of focus is often done morphologically and syntactically by fronting the focalized element or constituent, where prosodic marking may be absent (cf. Bickerton, 1993).

In case of Bangla however, shift of focus through structural or intonational pattern change does bring about light change in interpretation, but it is observed that it is more of the structural change which has greater impact than the intonational aspect of change. On the contrary, in English traditionally has been put forward that it is the intonational pattern which primarily accounts for the interpretational aspect of statements. However, on having analyzed data extensively, structural shift of focus has an equally important role to play in determining the new focus of the sentence and the resultant interpretation. In fact it may also be deduced that the intonational focus is often determined by the structural change of the information, thus altering the information status reflecting a variation in the perspective of the speaker's communicative intention. As mentioned earlier, if considered at the level of discourse, the CD (Communicative Dynamism) gets affected and distorts the flow or pattern of thought concerning the discourse. The exchange structure, informative structure, propositional structure, supplemental structure and sequential structure of sentences or statements must converge to construct coherent discourse, thus enhancing communicative functionality.

Knowledge integration essentially requires information management, the four central threads of which are: rhetorical management (participants in a conversation must have a clear idea about the goals and intentions of the discourse interaction. This determines the propositional content of production and comprehension), referential management (common referents and propositions are to be marked), thematic management (concerns the central element on the basis of which the development of discourse takes place), and focus management (maintaining the same referent).

As mentioned earlier, discourse is not flat or linear in terms of its organization. It is hierarchical, with clauses forming higher order structures which in turn conjoin to expand episodes or sections of discourse. It is in this context that the importance of global coherence, episodic coherence, and local coherence finds prominence. Global coherence implies the development of an overall sense of what the discourse deals with; episodic coherence refers to a subset of global coherence, featured by an integral gist of their own; local coherence reflects the sense conveyed through individual sentences or utterances. Thus, the granularity of discourse interaction is determined by these factors. Interestingly, the interrelatedness of these three aspects of coherence is guided by focus principles as presented through the analyzed data in previous chapters. In a way, focus of a sentence serves as the selected information which leads to overall conceptualization of discourse. Having laid the foundation of major theories of grammar, it appears that none of them can be demarcated from each other in terms of functionality. In other words, they are featured by different approaches to determine the various aspects of the functionality of information structure. They may be integrated into a single framework of grammar that explains how linguistic utterances are shaped, based on the goals and knowledge of the natural language users. Therefore, the modules of phonology, morphosyntax, pragmatics, and semantics coalesce to form a composite whole, blending information effectively within an appropriate structure keeping in view the focus of information, regulating information diffusion in the process of communication conforming to different communication space.

Thus, the concept of information structure may be explained as *the structured arrangement of linguistic information with the purpose of optimizing transfer of information within discourse.* It refers to the way in which information conveyed by discourse is packaged into informational units at the level of the sentence or clause in order to facilitate the flow of conceptual cues with regard to the relative saliency of the units. Pragmatic approaches to information structure connect its functionality primarily to communicative intention.

130

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131

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