This book explores the role of focus structure in grammar. It examines the interface between focus structure and syntax, the semantics of focus structure and the intonation associated with it. The author defines a grammatical level of f-structure (focus structure) which is an annotated s-structure in which topic and focus constituents are marked. F-structure feeds both PF (Phonological Form) and semantics and is sensitive to lexical information. Dr. Shir argues that f-structure and not LF (Logical Form) is the input to a semantic rule of Predication. She provides an account of intonation, the interpretation of indefinites, coreference, donkey anaphora, negation, association with focus, quantifier scope, interpretations of wh-in-situ, anaphora, subject–object asymmetries, etc. One of the major results of Dr. Shir’s analysis is that wh-movement turns out to be subject to the same constraint which accounts for anaphora and other subject–object asymmetries.
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THE DYNAMICS OF FOCUS STRUCTURE

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Acknowledgments

This book developed out of my ongoing enterprise to show that certain syntactic constraints do not belong in the realm of syntax and in particular that focus structure constrains \textit{wh}-movement. During my sabbatical at Brandeis University in 1990–91 I presented a paper at a variety of colloquia entitled “What’s what?” which addressed this issue. I originally envisioned a book based on the ideas in that paper. However, once I started developing a theory of focus structure it soon became clear that its repercussions are theoretically much more extensive and required a much broader investigation of a large variety of grammatical questions. I was therefore torn between a wish to concentrate on a limited number of questions and to investigate them in depth or to give a more superficial analysis of a larger chunk of topics. I chose the latter tack because of my wish to convince both syntacticians and semanticists of the need to view the full array of these topics from a focus-structure-theoretical perspective. I hope that the informal semantics of focus-structure theory outlined here will stimulate enough interest so that a more adequate formal version will be developed.

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