Three Types of Noun Phrase Preposing in English

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Abstract: This paper argues that what previous accounts have treated as two types of noun phrase preposing in English, what have been called Topicalization and Focus Preposing, really involve three types of preposing. It is argued that previous accounts have grouped two pragmatically and intonationally distinct constructions under so-called Topicalization and that the majority of instances in the literature of so-called Topicalization actually involve what is called here Double Focus Preposing, in which the preposed element is one of the foci in a sentence with two foci.

1. Introduction

While the normal position for most verbal complements and adjuncts is postverbal in English, it has long been recognized that it is possible for such elements - or parts of such elements - to occur at the beginning of the sentence in English, as in (1).

(1) a. *Beans*, I like; *peas*, I can't stand.
b. *Macadamia nuts* I think they're called. (Prince 1981: 250)
c. I'll have to introduce two principles. *One* I'm going to introduce now and *one* I'm going to introduce later. (Ward & Prince 1991: 168)
d. *Brains* you're born with. *A great body* you have to work at. (Ward & Prince 1991: 170)

Ward (1988) demonstrates that this construction (or set of constructions) ultimately must be described in terms of preposing of elements in general, and not just noun phrases, but he also demonstrates that there are some differences associated with the preposing of different sorts of constituents, so I will restrict attention here to preposing of noun phrases and leave to further research the question of to what extent the claims of this paper apply to the preposing of constituents other than noun phrases. The preposed noun phrases may correspond to postverbal positions of a number of different sorts: they may correspond to direct objects of main clause verbs (as in 1a), to direct objects of subordinate verbs (as in 1b), or to objects of prepositions (as in 1d).

The general thesis of this paper is that while a number of people (e.g. Gundel 1988, Prince 1981, Ward 1988, Lambrecht 1994) have distinguished two basic subtypes of noun phrase preposing in English, these approaches are inadequate in failing to distinguish what are really *three* intonationally and pragmatically distinct types of preposing. The two basic subtypes that have been distinguished in the past are referred to as "Focus Topicalization" and "Topic Topicalization" by Gundel, as "Focus Movement" and "Topicalization" by Prince, and as "Focus Preposing" and "Topicalization" by Ward. In what follows I will initially use Ward's labels for the two types, though my arguments will suggest that these labels are actually misleading and I will propose alternative labels. The contrast is illustrated by Prince's examples cited in (2), at least in the most natural contexts in which these examples might occur.

(2) a. *Macadamia nuts* I think they're called. (Focus Preposing)
b. *Macadamia nuts*, I can't afford. (Topicalization)

As Prince (1981) describes them, these two constructions are distinguished intonationally in that Focus Preposing involves a single intonation group, and a single intonation peak on the preposed element, while Topicalization involves two intonation groups, with two intonation peaks, one on the preposed element, the other somewhere in the remainder of the sentence. The existence of two intonation groups in Topicalization sentences like (2b) corresponds to a short break or pause after the preposed element, one which corresponds to the natural use of a comma in written language. Such a break or pause is missing (or at least not required or even typical) in Focus Preposing, and it is natural (though by no means standard) to represent this by the absence of a comma in the written language.

One conventional way to represent the difference in number of intonation peaks is to capitalize the word on which such a peak falls. Using this representation, the sentences in (2) would be represented as in (3).

(3) a. MACADAMIA nuts I think they're called. (Focus Preposing)
b. MACADAMIA nuts, I can't AFFORD. (Topicalization)

The second intonation peak in (3b) typically occurs with heavier stress (though which has higher pitch varies). I assume that it is at least partly because of this that Gundel capitalizes only the second intonation peak in Topicalization sentences. Thus, on Gundel's system of capitalization, (3b) would be represented as in (4).

(4) Macadamia nuts I can't AFFORD.

However, this distinction in representations is crucial to the distinction I will be arguing for below, since I will be arguing that the various writers I have mentioned fail to distinguish two cases that fall under Topicalization, one in which there are obligatorily two intonation peaks, and one in which the first intonation peak is optional.

It should be noted from the start that both Prince and Ward distinguish types of noun phrase preposing other than the two just mentioned, but none of the further distinctions they make correspond to the one I will make here. Both distinguish Focus Preposing from what both call *Yiddish Movement,* illustrated in (5).

(5) Q: How's your son?
A: Don't ask. A sportscar he wants! (Prince 1981: 260)

This construction is highly restricted dialectally and I will have nothing to say about it here. Ward does treat Yiddish Movement as a subtype of Focus Preposing, employing the term *General Focus Preposing* for the usual type. In what follows I will assume that the term *Focus Preposing* refers specifically to the more usual type.[1]

In (6) are summarized the claims I will be defending in this paper.

(6) a. The sentences that have been classified as instances of Topicalization fall into two distinct subtypes.
b. The majority of examples cited in the literature as examples of Topicalization are actually double focus constructions, and the preposed element is one of

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[1] Ward (1988) distinguishes a number of other rather specialized sorts of preposing. Among these are what he calls Echoing, Indirect Question Preposing, 'That'-Tense Preposing, 'It is' Preposing, and Ironic Preposing. Since all of these appear to be distinct from all three constructions discussed in this paper, I will ignore them here.

these two foci. I will refer to this construction as Double Focus Preposing (and I will refer to what Ward (1988) calls Focus Preposing as Single Focus Preposing).

c. The other construction, which I will call Nonfocus Preposing, is the less frequent of the two, at least among examples cited in the literature, and, unlike Double Focus Preposing, appears to be largely restricted to spoken English and more informal written English.

d. The intonational properties attributed to Topicalization by Prince (1981) really apply only to Double Focus Preposing, although instances of Nonfocus Preposing sometimes exhibit similar though not identical intonational properties.

e. The complex requirements on Topicalization in terms of the semantic relationship between the preposed constituent and the preceding discourse that are proposed by Prince (1981) and Ward (1988) (in terms of partial orderings) apply both to Double Focus Preposing and to Nonfocus Preposing.

f. A proposal by Prince (1981) that an open sentence formed by replacing the tonic element in a Topicalization sentence by a free variable be in the hearer's consciousness at the time of the utterance is only sometimes true of sentences involving Double Focus Preposing (and hence is not a constraint on it) and is not true of Nonfocus Preposing.

2. Double Focus without Preposing

Before examining the reasons for analysing many instances of so-called "Topicalization" as double focus sentences, it is worth first discussing examples of double focus that do *not* involve preposing, since much of the literature on so-called "Topicalization" ignores such sentences altogether. Sentences involving a single focus are illustrated by answers to wh-questions, as in (7) to (9).

(7) A: What are you eating?
B: I'm eating LASAGNA.

(8) A: Who took the screwdriver?
B: MARY took it.

(9) A: What did you put on my hamburger?
B: I put MUSTARD on it.

Sentences involving double focus are illustrated by answers to wh-questions containing *two* wh-expressions, as in (10) and (11).

(10) A: Who was talking to who?
B: MARY was talking to PAT, and JOHN was talking to FRANCIS.

(11) A: What are you going to give to who?
B: I'm going to give a BOOK to MARY and a CD to JOHN.

Such double focus answers to questions are often contrastive, as in (10) and (11), but need not be, as in (12).

(12) A: When is it you're going where?
B: I'm going to NEBRASKA in APRIL.

Double focus sentences also occur in contexts other than as answers to wh-questions, as in (13) through (17), although again such sentences are often contrastive.

(13) A: I hear you're going to a movie tonight with Mary.
B: No. I'm going to a HOCKEY GAME with JOHN.

(14) I'm going to TORONTO on WEDNESDAY and to NEW YORK on SATURDAY.

(15) A: Is it true that John kissed Mary?
B: No, MARY kissed JOHN.

(16) John MET her in JANUARY and PROPOSED to her in MARCH.

(17) John LIKES MARY, but he DOESN'T like TOM.

Sentences involving double focus contain *two* intonation peaks, one on each focus. Correlating with that is the fact that they often contain at least two different intonation groups, with a short break or pause between them. In (13B), for example, there is an intonation group ending after the word *game*, with a short pause at that point, the final prepositional phrase *with John* being a separate intonational group.

Single focus sentences can generally be thought of as involving an open sentence containing one free variable with the focus providing the value for that variable. Thus in *I'm eating LASAGNA*, where *lasagna* is focus, the open sentence is *I'm eating X*. As argued in Dryer (1996), the open sentence in such sentences is normally already *activated* in the discourse context (and not necessarily presupposed, as is often thought). Similarly, double focus sentences can generally be thought of as open sentences containing *two* free variables (cf. Krifka 1992), with the two foci providing the values for the two variables. Thus in *I'm going to give a BOOK to MARY*, the open sentence is *I'm going to give X to Y*. The first sentence in (16) (*John MET her in JANUARY*) is similar, except that here, one of the two variables occurs in predicate position, so the open sentence is *John Xed her in Y*. In some cases, such as (17), one of the two variables can be thought of as ranging over the values *true* and *false* or over the values positive and negative. Thus the open sentence for both clauses in (17) can be paraphrased something like *That John likes X is Y*, with *Mary* and *Tom* filling the value of X in the two clauses respectively, and *true* and *false* filling the value of Y in the two clauses respectively. The first clause in (17) illustrates that if the focus is semantically something like *is true*, then the focal accent falls on the verb. Hence a focal accent on a verb sometimes corresponds to the meaning of that verb functioning as focus (as in 16) and at other times corresponds to an expression like *This sentence is true* (as in 17). This sort of focus, where the value is the polarity, the truth or falsity of a proposition, also arises with single focus. Thus, in (18A), (18A'), (18A") the nonfocus is the proposition raised by the question in (18Q), and semantically the focus is simply the polarity that it is true.

(18) Q: Did you see Pat?
A: Yes.
A': I DID.
A": Yes, I SAW her.

While the focal accent may fall on the auxiliary verb *did* in (18a') and on the verb *saw* in (18A"), it would be a mistake to view the meanings of these particular words as the focus. Informationally, the meanings of these words are just as backgrounded as other parts of these sentences. Rather, the rule in English for the placement of focal accent in a clause

where the polarity of the sentence is focus is on the (first) auxiliary verb if there is one, and otherwise on the verb (if there is one). The first clause in (17) is similar, except that here the polarity is one focus in a double focus sentence: the nonfocus is the open sentence *I like X* and one focus is *Mary*, but the other is the polarity.[2]

The fact that clauses like the first clause in (17) are double focus constructions is sometimes less obvious than are other instances because in clauses like the first clause in (17), the two foci occur immediately adjacent to each other. Such examples thus bear a superficial resemblance to clauses containing a single focus involving a constituent containing – or in the case of (17), identical to – the sum of the two constituents constituting the two foci. Thus, contrast the first clause in (17) with (19), in which the entire verb phrase *likes Mary* is a single focus.

(19) Guess what I found out about John. He LIKES MARY.

The instance of *LIKES MARY* in (19) differs intonationally from that in (17) in a number of ways. For one thing, this constituent involves *two* intonation peaks in (17), one on the verb *likes*, the other on *Mary*, while in (19), it involves (or can involve) a single intonation peak, on *Mary*. While the pitch on *likes* in (19) may be somewhat high, the intonation on the verb *likes* in the two examples differs in that it has a fall-rise in (17) followed by a short pause while in (19) it has level pitch and no pause.

3. Double Focus Preposing

The majority of examples cited in the literature as examples of Topicalization are instances of what I will call Double Focus Preposing, because I claim such clauses are double focus sentences with the preposed constituent one of the two foci. A tendency in the literature to call the preposed element in such sentences a "topic" is thus, I claim, quite misleading. The view that it really is a topic in some sense is explicitly defended by Myhill (1992: 24-26) and Lambrecht (1994: 161, 291, 328-332). Neither Prince nor Ward refer to it as a topic (though Ward refers to it as a "backward looking center"), but both deny that this element is focus. Birner and Ward (1998: 35) are explicit about it not being focus since they characterize Topicalization as involving preposing a constituent that is not "the" focus. Prince (1997: 129) also explicitly denies that the preposed constituent is a focus. Furthermore, since many people (e.g. Gundel, Prince, Ward, Lambrecht) employ the term "Focus" in characterizing instances of preposing which are not Topicalization, i.e. what Ward calls Focus Preposing, this usage implies that the preposed element in "Topicalization" sentences is *not* a focus, an implication that I claim is false. However, all of these claims seem to derive from the implicit or explicit assumption that these sentences have only one focus.

The strongest argument that many instances of so-called Topicalization are really instances of Double Focus is that the *nonpreposed* versions of many such sentences have the same semantic and intonational properties as canonical double focus sentences like those in (10) to (17) above. For example, the nonpreposed version of (1d), repeated in (20a) is given in (20b)

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[2] Note that one can also express the first clause in (17) by *John DOES like Mary* in which there is no focal accent on the main verb, reflecting again that while the verb may be the locus of the phonological focus, it is not semantically the focus.

(20) a. BRAINS you're BORN with. A great BODY you have to WORK at. (Ward & Prince 1991: 170)
b. You're BORN with BRAINS. You have to WORK at a GREAT BODY.

The two sentences in (20b) bear a strong resemblance to the double focus sentences discussed above: intonationally, they contain two intonation groups and two intonation peaks, and as with the examples above containing two double focus clauses, there is a contrast between the first focused elements in the two clauses and a contrast between the second focused elements.

Similarly, if we take (21), in which both the third and fourth sentences involve preposing, the nonpreposed version would be that given in (22).

(21) '[I graduated from high school as] an average student. My initiative didn't carry me any further than average. *History* I found to be dry. *Math courses* I was never good at. I enjoyed sciences ... Football was my bag.' (Prince 1981: 253, from Terkel, p. 590)

(22) [I graduated from high school as] an average student. My initiative didn't carry me any further than average. I found HISTORY to be DRY. I was NEVER good at MATH COURSES. I enjoyed sciences ... Football was my bag.

The revised version in (22) is as felicitous as (21) (though perhaps sounding a little more formal), and the meaning is the same. Again, the sentences in (22) in which the preposing in (21) is undone bear the properties associated with double focus sentences: there are separate intonation peaks on the two constituents I am claiming are separate foci, and we have a double contrast between academic subjects (history and math) and properties associated with them (*dry* and *I was never good at*). Furthermore, the fourth sentence in the original (*I enjoyed sciences*) is also an example of a double focus construction, but one without preposing. If we revise (21) so that all three of these sentences involve preposing, the result, in (23), is a bit odd, but this seems to be only because it seems to contrasting history, math and science on the one hand and football on the other, which doesn't fit the semantics (since the speaker's attitude towards science is different from their attitude towards history and math).

(23) [I graduated from high school as] an average student. My initiative didn't carry me any further than average. *History* I found to be dry. *Math courses* I was never good at. *Sciences* I enjoyed. ... Football was my bag.

We can make the text in (23) sound perfectly natural if we replace *enjoyed* in the fourth sentence with *hated.* Or alternatively, if these sentences occurred in a context in which the intended contrast was between history and math on the one hand and sciences on the other (rather than with football), it would sound fine, as in (24).

(24) *History* I found to be dry. *Math courses* I was never good at. But *sciences* I enjoyed.

The fact that the sentences with preposed constituents are largely equivalent to double focus sentences argues that these sentences themselves are double focus sentences.

Similar comments apply to many other examples discussed in the literature, including many of the attested examples cited by Prince and by Ward. For example, if we take the example in (25) and form a version without preposing, as in (26), the result is again a sentence that has the properties of a double focus sentence.

(25) A: Do you think you'd be more nervous in a job talk or a job interview?
B: A JOB TALK I think you'd have somewhat more CONTROL over.
(Ward & Prince 1991: 168)

(26) A: Do you think you'd be more nervous in a job talk or a job interview?
B: I think you'd have somewhat more CONTROL over A JOB TALK.

Similarly, if we take the hackneyed example in (27), and construct the nonpreposed version in (28), we again find that we have an instance of double focus.

(27) A: Does he like vegetables?
B: BEANS, he LIKES; PEAS, he CAN'T STAND.

(28) A: Does he like vegetables?
B: He LIKES BEANS; he CAN'T STAND PEAS.

In this example, it might be less immediately obvious that the nonpreposed versions involve double focus. They are like the example in (17) above in that the two foci are adjacent to each other. But unlike instances in which the entire verb phrase is focus, the clauses in (28B) are pronounced with two intonation peaks. This is clearest for the second clause in (28B). The first clause in fact can be pronounced either with two intonation peaks, one on *likes* and one on *beans*, or with a single intonation peak on *beans*. While the second possibility might be a bit of a puzzle, the crucial point is that the single intonation peak in this case still falls on the word *beans*, arguing that it is a focus, which is the main point I am claiming.

The preposed elements in sentences that I am claiming involve Double Focus Preposing are often claimed in the literature to be contrastive topics. Such a position is taken, for example, by Gundel (1988), Myhill (1992), Lambrecht (1994), and Vallduví and Vilkuna (1998)[3]. None of these really give any argument that the preposed element is a topic, apparently considering the point too obvious to be worth arguing for. Vallduví and Vilkuna (1998: 87) claim that they are "by definition" thematic, but give no explanation of how this could possibly be true by definition.[4]

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[3] Gundel (1999: 297) describes them as contrastively focused topics. Although she uses the term "focus" here, she distinguishes what she calls contrastive focus from what she calls semantic focus. It is not clear that her position is substantively different from those who simply analyse the preposed elements under discussion as contrastive topics. Although I do not believe that distinctions between different types of focus are crucial to this paper, I do believe that they are ultimately important: I myself have argued (Dryer 1996) for distinguishing presuppositional focus (where the nonfocus is presupposed) from activation focus (where the nonfocus is simply activated. It is activation focus that is relevant to both foci in Double Focus Preposing. Kiss (1998) proposes a similar distinction between identificational focus and information focus.

[4] Vallduví and Vilkuna in fact use this construction in English to argue for the need to distinguish two phenomena that previous work fails to distinguish and lumps together as focus, what they call rheme and kontrast. While I think their ideas about this are intriguing and worth pursuing, I take the arguments of this section to be arguments that the preposed elements in these sentences are not only instances of focus but instances of rheme in their terms, and to that extent they have failed to make an adequate case for the distinction between rheme and kontrast.

Someone wishing to deny that the clauses with preposed noun phrases discussed above are simply double focus clauses might respond in a number of possible ways. Among the possibilities are those listed in (29).

(29) a. The nonpreposed sentences involve double focus, but the preposed versions do not.
b. The nonpreposed sentences do not involve double focus.
c. The preposed sentences involve double focus, but the initial element is also a topic.

While the third of these is a logically possible response, it goes against the general assumption that focus and topic are opposite notions or at least in complementary distribution. Furthermore, even if someone were to offer such a response, it concedes the central point I am making here, that the preposed element is focus. I will address the first and second of these possible responses in the next two sections.

4. Possible Response #1: Only the nonpreposed versions are double focus

Someone might admit that the nonpreposed versions of so-called Topicalization sentences discussed above involve double focus, but deny that this is true for the preposed versions. Lambrecht (1994: 160-161), in fact, offers what could be construed as an argument of this form.[5] He argues in effect that if both the preposed versions and the nonpreposed versions were analysed as involving focus, then we would be failing to distinguish the two constructions pragmatically. If, however, we say that the preposed noun phrase is a topic in the preposed version but that the corresponding noun phrase a focus in the nonpreposed version, we have distinguished the two constructions pragmatically. There are a number of points to be made in response to this argument.

First, while there may be a pragmatic difference between the two, simply assigning the labels "topic" and "focus" does not accomplish anything unless we can associate some pragmatic content with these notions *and* demonstrate that the two constructions differ in the relevant way. But the fact that undoing the preposing yields a clause that involves focus on the constituent in question provides evidence that the preposed element is a focus, unless some argument can be given that the defining characteristics of focus are missing from the preposed constituent in the preposed version. Furthermore, if we define an element as being focus if it provides the value for a variable in an open proposition that is activated or accessible in the discourse context, then the preposed noun phrases in question

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[5] Strictly speaking this is not Lambrecht's position, since, as discussed in section 5 below, he denies that it is possible for there to be two foci in a sentence. Nevertheless, he argues that in the attested example in (i) in which in all but the sixth clause the object is preposed, the preposed elements are topics and the one nonpreposed object in the sixth clause is focus and argues for this using an argument of the form discussed in this section.

(i) This one we traded, this one we traded, this one she let me have, this one she let me have, this one we traded; she let me have *this one;* this one we traded.

I would claim that all of the clauses in (i) involve double focus. Lambrecht also appears to be inconsistent in that, as discussed below, he argues elsewhere in his book that in examples apparently analogous to (i), the element is not focus in either the preposed or the nonpreposed versions.

appear to be focus. Consider again the preposed and nonpreposed examples in (25) and (26), repeated here as (30) and (31).

(30) A: Do you think you'd be more nervous in a job talk or a job interview?
B: A JOB TALK I think you'd have somewhat more CONTROL over.

(31) A: Do you think you'd be more nervous in a job talk or a job interview?
B: I think you'd have somewhat more CONTROL over A JOB TALK.

In both versions, we can say that the open sentence is something like *I think you'd be in state X at a Y*, where Y varies over the set consisting of *job talk* and *job interview*. This open sentence is clearly activated by the question in these examples, and *having somewhat more control* and *job talk* fill in for the free variables in this open sentence, both in the preposed version in (30) and in the nonpreposed version in (31).

A second problem with this response is that it is not clear that there is anything substantive that someone wishing to argue that *a job talk* is pragmatically a topic in (30B) can say. Those who claim that there is a pragmatic notion of topic rarely have anything to say about defining it beyond saying that it is what the sentence is *about*. Unfortunately, the notion of what a sentence is *about* is sufficiently obscure that without further explanation it is unhelpful. Furthermore, what is required is some argument that *a job talk* is pragmatically a topic in (30) but not in (31). It is quite unclear in what sense (30B) is "about" a job talk while in (31B) it is not. While many people seem to have the intuition that there is such a difference, the fact that nobody seems able to justify that intuition in pragmatic or cognitive terms suggests that it is simply a metalinguistic illusion based on the form itself. But any attempt to use the difference in the *position* of *a job talk* in the two sentences to justify the intuition that only in the former is the sentence "about" the job talk leads to circularity.

Third, someone wishing to maintain the view that *a job talk* is a topic in (30B) but a focus in (31B) must reconcile this with the fact that those appealing to a pragmatic notion of topic generally maintain that it is a pragmatic notion very different from, if not the opposite of, the notion of focus. But the apparent interchangeability of the preposed and nonpreposed versions in the same discourse context makes it difficult to see how *a job talk* could possibly have such radically different pragmatic functions in the two sentences. Note that it is otherwise the case that one cannot replace a putative topic with a focus or vice versa and obtain a well-formed text. For example, if we take the text in (32) and reverse what many would analyse as topic and focus, we get the ill-formed text in (33).

(32) Q: Is John your brother?
A: No, LUKE is my brother.

(33) Q: Is John your brother?
A: #No, Luke is my BROTHER.

Finally, note that someone arguing that the two versions must differ in some way pragmatically must address a similar issue with cases of Single Focus Preposing, as in (34).

(34) a. Macadamia nuts I think they're called.
b. I think they're called Macadamia nuts.

One might try to argue that since there must be *some* pragmatic difference between these two sentences, it cannot be the case that *macadamia nuts* is a focus in both sentences. But

here, there is a general consensus that *macadamia nuts* IS a focus in both sentences. If pairs of sentences like those in (34) can both involve *macadamia nuts* as focus, why can the same not be true for the sentences I am arguing involve double focus?

One pragmatic difference between sentences with preposed noun phrases and their corresponding nonpreposed versions is implied by the conclusions of Prince (1981) and Ward (1988). In the version of this summarized in Ward and Prince (1991), the preposed element must conform to the condition in (35):

(35) Discourse Condition on Preposing: The entity represented by a preposed constituent must be related, via a salient partially ordered set relation, to one or more entities already evoked in the discourse model. (Ward and Prince 1991: 173)

This condition is explained and justified in great detail in Ward (1988). The set of partially ordered set relations (or poset relations) include the relations in (36).

(36) a. is equal to
b. is part of
c. is a member of
d. is a subtype of
e. is a subset of

The entity denoted by a preposed constituent must bear one of these relations to something in the previous discourse, or something in the previous discourse must bear one of these relations to the entity denoted by the preposed constituent, or both must bear one of these relations to some third entity. Ward cites the examples in (37) and (38) to illustrate instances in which this requirement is violated by the preposed constituent.

(37) A: Do you want to see a movie?
B: #The dog I have to walk.

(38) A: Why is it so noisy on the second floor?
B: #The television they're listening to.

Now Ward's theory, in combination with my claim that the sentences in question are double focus constructions, predicts that one can prepose one of the foci in a double focus sentence only if the constituent satisfies the condition in (35). It therefore predicts that we might find examples of double focus sentences in which neither of the foci satisfies Ward's condition and thus in which the preposed version would be infelicitous. An apparent example confirming this prediction is illustrated by (39) and (40).

(39) A: When is it you're going where?
B: I'm going to Nebraska in April.

(40) A: When is it you're going where?
B: #Nebraska I'm going to in April.

(40B) is apparently infelicitous if A has no idea where B might be going and there is no contrast implicit in the discourse context. This exchange would presumably be possible, however, if A already knows from the preceding discourse that B is going to Nebraska sometime and to South Carolina some other time.

Ward's condition thus allows one to characterize a pragmatic difference between a preposed constituent and a corresponding nonpreposed constituent: the preposed

constituent must bear a semantic relation of the sort discussed to something in the previous discourse, while in the corresponding nonpreposed version, this is not necessary. However, in terms of the position defended here, this difference does not bear on the issue of whether the preposed constituent is a focus. All it says is that when one of the foci is preposed, it must also bear a relation of the sort discussed to something in the previous discourse.[6]

5. Possible Response #2: Neither the preposed nor the nonpreposed versions involve double focus

One can accept the arguments in the preceding section that the preposed and nonpreposed versions have similar pragmatic properties, but reject the conclusion that the preposed versions involve double focus if one rejects the premise that the nonpreposed versions involve double focus. In fact, arguments of this form are made by Myhill (1992: 24-26) and by Lambrecht (1994: 291, 329).

Both Myhill and Lambrecht argue against the very notion of double focus, arguing that there can only be one focus per clause since only one thing can be asserted per clause. However, since it is not clear exactly how we should count the number of things asserted by a clause, nor on what basis Myhill and Lambrecht claim that only one thing can be asserted per sentence, it is not clear how to evaluate this argument. Nor is it clear how Myhill would describe what others take as uncontentious examples of double focus, like (10) above, repeated in (41).

(41) A: Who was talking to who?
B: MARY was talking to PAT, and JOHN was talking to FRANCIS.

Mary and *Pat* seem to have similar pragmatic functions in this sentence and it is not clear how one could argue that one of these but not the other is a focus.[7] Furthermore, even if one wanted to maintain the view that there can be only one focus per clause, one could always say (following Jackendoff 1972 and Krifka 1992) that the pragmatic structure of this sentence is something like that given in (42), where there *is* a single focus or assertion

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6 Ward (1988) interprets this requirement as defining a notion something akin to a notion of topic. Following work of Joshi and Weinstein (1981), he refers to the preposed constituent as a "Backward Looking Center", and notes that Joshi and Weinstein claim that this corresponds to the linguistic notion of *sentence topic*. However, the preposed element is clearly not a backward-looking center as that notion is used in more recent work in Centering Theory. For example, Walker, Joshi and Prince (1998: 4) claim that one of the rules governing a Backward-Looking Center is that it must be a pronoun if there is any other pronoun in that sentence. This is clearly not true in general of preposed elements. The notion proposed by Ward involving a poset relation to something in the previous discourse is thus a much weaker notion than backward looking center and (apparently) a much weaker notion than what most people understand by 'topic'. Ward seems to have revised his view of this in more recent work: Birner and Ward (1998: 38, footnote 9) note that "topicalization bears little relation to the notion of 'topic' (as currently understood in the literature)". On a similar note, Prince (1997: 141) says, in relation to Topicalization: "No relation to the notion 'topic' is here intended or, in fact believed to exist'.

7 Lambrecht (1994) would apparently analyse each of the clauses in (41) as involving one contrastive topic and one contrastive focus. I discuss this possibility below.

in the sense that the ordered pair <*Mary, Pat*> is the focus and the lambda expression over ordered pairs is the nonfocus.

(42) ((λ<x,y>)(x is talking to y))(<Mary, Pat.)

Jackendoff (1972: 260) analyses the example in (43a) similarly, as in (43b).

(43) a. FRED ate the BEANS.
b. (Fred, the beans) ∈ λ(x,y) [x ate y]

A further argument that Lambrecht (1994: 329) offers against even the possibility of double focus is that it is not possible to cleft two elements in English, citing (44b) as the ungrammatical double cleft of (44a).

(44) a. HE treads on YOUR foot.
b. *It is YOUR foot that it is HE that treads on.

However, it seems more likely that the unacceptability of (44b) is syntactic. Note that one cannot topicalize out of a cleft sentence either, as illustrated in (45).

(45) *YOUR foot, it is HE that treads on.

But (45) is ungrammatical regardless of whether it involves Focus Preposing or Topicalization on Lambrecht's view, and since in the latter case it is a topic and not focus according to Lambrecht, one cannot explain its unacceptability in terms of the impossibility of double focus. Similarly, one cannot relativize out of a cleft sentence either, as illustrated in (46).

(46) *The foot that it is HE that treads on is YOURS.

Again, according to Lambrecht, the element relativized is a topic of the relative clause, so one cannot explain its unacceptability in terms of the impossibility of double focus.[8]

Note that although it is not possible to cleft two elements, it is possible to have a double focus in a cleft sentence, where one element is syntactically clefted and the other remains in the subordinate clause, but with focal accent, as in (47).

(47) A: Did John kiss Mary?
B: No, it was MARY that kissed JOHN.

A plausible explanation for this is simply that the syntax of clefting precludes the possibility of clefting two elements, and given a sentence with two foci, we are forced to use a construction that clefts only one of the two foci and signals the other solely by means of focal accent. The idea that there is general ban on double focus thus seems untenable.

Lambrecht (1994: 291, 329) discusses sentences of the form that I have described as involving double focus, and explicitly denies that they involve double focus. This includes both sentences with preposing and ones without. One sentence of the latter sort that he discusses is given in (48).

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[8] See Polinksy (1999: 575) for further discussion of problems with this argument of Lambrecht's.

(48) She sent a BOOK to MARY. (Lambrecht 1994: 331)

Lambrecht's analysis of (48) is that it is an instance of verb phrase focus. As argued above, however, while examples of double focus may resemble single verb phrase focus, they are distinct, both pragmatically and intonationally. Compare (49) and (50).

(49) A: Who did she send what to?
B: She sent a BOOK to MARY.

(50) A: What did she do?
B: She sent a book to MARY.

The two responses in (49B) and (50B) are distinct intonationally. (49B) must be pronounced with two focal accents and with two intonation groups, *a book* and *to Mary*. In contrast, it is possible to pronounce (50B) in either of two ways. One is similar to (49B). The other is with a single focal accent on *Mary* and no intonational juncture between *a book* and *to Mary*. In addition, while (49B) has a natural pronunciation in which *Mary* receives heavier stress but lower pitch than *book*, this is not possible for (50B). Furthermore, the two also differ in terms of the pitch on the verb *sent:* in (49B), this verb has low pitch, while in (50B), this verb has somewhat higher pitch. The two also differ pragmatically: in (49B), the nonfocus is the open sentence *She sent X to Y* and the focus consists of the pair of elements *a book* and *Mary;* in (50B), the nonfocus is the open sentence *She did X* and the focus is the predicate *sent a book to Mary*. In short, Lambrecht's account of (48) fails to capture the contrast between double focus within a verb phrase and focus on the verb phrase itself.

Elsewhere in his book, Lambrecht proposes a different analysis for a sentence I claim involves double focus, namely that given in (51).

(51) Q: What are you going to do with the DOG and the CAT while you're away?
A: I'll leave the DOG with my PARENTS and the CAT can stay OUTSIDE.
(Lambrecht 1994: 332)

According to Lambrecht, *the dog* and *the cat* are instances of *contrastive topics*, while *my parents* and *outside* are foci (or parts of foci). According to the analysis defended here, all of these are foci. In this example, Lambrecht's claim that *the dog* is a topic and *my parents* a focus has initial plausibility since the dog is mentioned in the preceding sentence while the parents are not.

However, it is easy to construct similar examples which vary in whether the different constituents denote things referred to in the previous sentence. Consider (52).

(52) Q: What are you going to give to MARK and TOM?
A: I'll give a BOOK to MARK and a WATCH to TOM.

Would Lambrecht claim that *Mark* and *Tom* here are contrastive topics and that *a book* and *a watch* are foci, because of the preceding sentence? But what would he say about examples in which none of these elements occur in the preceding discourse, as in (53), or in which they all do, as in (54) or (55).

(53) A: What are your plans?
B: I'm going to TORONTO on WEDNESDAY, and to NEW YORK on SATURDAY.

(54) A: Did you give the book to Mark and the watch to Tom?
B: No, I gave the BOOK to TOM and the WATCH to MARK.

(55) A: Did John kiss Mary?
B: No, MARY kissed JOHN.

There does not seem to be any motivated way that Lambrecht could extend his analysis of (51) in terms of contrastive topic and single focus to these examples. Rather, it seems that the appropriate analysis for all of them is that they involve double focus. The fact that in (51) some of the foci have a reference in the previous sentence while others do not is no different from the fact that this true of focus in general. As Lambrecht himself points out (p. 260), the focus in a single focus sentence can be something referred to in the previous sentence, as in (56).

(56) Q: Who did Felix praise?
A: He praised HIMSELF.

Similarly, in (57), I take it to be uncontroversial that *her* and *him* are focus.

(57) Q: Did John talk to Mary and Mike?
A: He talked to HER but not to HIM.

The general conclusion is that we must recognize the possibility of double focus and since the unpreposed versions of sentences that I claim involve Double Focus Preposing have both the pragmatic and the intonational properties of double focus sentences, it does not appear to be tenable to claim that neither the preposed sentences nor their unpreposed versions involve double focus.[9]

6. A accents and B accents

The discussion in the preceding section ignores a distinction argued for in some of the literature, between two kinds of focal accents, what Jackendoff (1972) calls A accents and B accents (following Bolinger 1965, but apparently applying the labels in a way not consistent with Bolinger's usage) and which Büring (1997) and Gundel (1999) treat as focus and topic accents respectively. Someone maintaining this view could respond to my arguments in the preceding section in the following way. They could argue that while there are instances of double focus sentences, many of the sentences that I have so analysed are really sentences with one topic and one focus, that many sentences with focal accents on two constituents have three intonationally distinct versions, one with two focus accents, one with focus accent on one constituent but topic accent on the other, and a third one like the second one but with the focus accent and topic accent reversed. They could further

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[9] Although I use the expression Double Focus Preposing, these sentences more generally involve multiple focus, since it is logically possible for the preposed element to be one of three (or even more) foci in a sentence, although the examples quickly become unwieldy and are probably rarely used. A constructed example is given in (i).

(i) Q: Did John give the book to Pat?
A: No, the BOOK, MIKE gave to MARY. John gave the PHOTOS to Pat.

It is unclear how someone denying the possibility of double focus would analyse cases like these.

argue that in the unpreposed versions of preposing sentences, the constituent corresponding to the preposed element in the preposing version always receives topic accent, never focus accent, thereby showing that what I am calling Double Focus Preposing is not in fact double focus.

Responding to this argument is made difficult by the fact that the empirical facts surrounding different possible intonation contours and their association with different pragmatic contexts is not well-understood, and while the literature often attempts to equate the intonation contours found in examples with particular contours proposed by Pierrehumbert (1980), these claims are not always consistent with each other and it is often not clear what range of possible intonation contours are possible for a given example in a given context. Furthermore, the arguments are generally based entirely on intuitions about constructed examples (though see Liberman and Pierrehumbert 1984), and it is far from clear how well the claims based on such examples correspond to intonation in actual usage. In fact Hedberg and Sosa (2001) specifically examine the phonetics of alleged topic and focus accents in spontaneous usage and conclude that there is no evidence for the alleged phonetic differences between focus and topic accents.

Despite these empirical problems with the notions of topic and focus accents, I will proceed in this section to assume for the sake of argument that the basic empirical claims of the sort made regarding these accents is correct, if only because I do not want the claims of this paper to depend on the assumption that these claims are not correct.

Adapting examples from Jackendoff (1972), we can distinguish in (58) through (60), three sorts of environments in which we can get the sentence *FRED ate the BEANS* with focal accents on *Fred* and *beans*, though differing as to whether the accent would be an A accent or a B accent.[10]

(58) A: Who ate what?
B: FRED ate the BEANS
A A

(59) A: Well, what about FRED? What did HE eat?
B: FRED ate the BEANS.
B A

(60) A: Well, what about the BEANS? Who ate THEM?
B: FRED ate the BEANS.
A B

The A accent in these examples is a falling accent while the B accent is a fall-rise accent. In the sentences containing an A accent and a B accent, the stress is apparently heavier for the A accent. In these examples, the B accents correspond to elements that occur in the preceding sentence, while the A accents to not. According to the approaches of Büring (1997) and Gundel (1999) (and perhaps Jackendoff 1972 as well), the A accents mark

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[10] I use the expressions *focal accent* and *focus accent* in very different senses. *Focal accent* is defined phonetically, and might be associated with elements that are not pragmatically focus. *Focus accent* refers to a focal accent that specifically signals an element that is pragmatically focus.

something that is pragmatically focus, while the B accents mark something that is pragmatically topic.

Consider now one of the attested examples of preposing discussed above and its corresponding variant without preposing, repeated in (61) and (62), and indicating what those assuming a difference between A accents and B accents would apparently want to claim was their distribution in (62).

(61) '[I graduated from high school as] an average student. My initiative didn't carry me any further than average. *History* I found to be dry. *Math courses* I was never good at. I enjoyed sciences ... Football was my bag.' (Prince 1981: 253, from Terkel, p. 590)

(62) [I graduated from high school as] an average student. My initiative didn't carry me any further than average.
I found HISTORY to be DRY. I was NEVER good at MATH COURSES. I
B A A B
enjoyed sciences ... Football was my bag.

It is not clear to me that these accents would necessarily be distributed as indicated in (62), but the assignment strikes me as a plausible one, and I think it would be unnatural to pronounce *I found history to be dry* with A accent on *history* and B accent on *dry*. Furthermore, in the preposed version in (61), the distribution of A and B accents would apparently be the same, with B accent on the preposed constituents and an A accent later in the clause. Thus someone claiming that B accents are topic accents could claim with some apparent justification, that contrary to what I have claimed above, (62) (and thus (61) as well) does not involve double focus, and that the constituent *history* is a topic, not a focus, in both variants. Alternatively, they might not claim that *history* is a topic in these examples, but might still claim that it is not a focus, and that the B accent is not signalling a focus.

There seem to be two positions one could take at this point. One could take the position indicated in the preceding discussion and claim that the B accent in these examples is marking something that is not focus, whether or not one calls that element topic. Or one could take the position that it is marking something as focus, but that it is a different subtype of focus from that associated with A accents. Both positions claim that there is a difference between the pragmatic status of elements receiving A accents and those receiving B accent. The latter position make the additional claim that there is some pragmatic status shared by both elements and that that pragmatic status is naturally designated as focus. The former position denies that there is any pragmatic status shared by both elements or at least one that is naturally designated as focus.

Significantly, both Büring (1997) and Gundel (1999) claim or imply that there is something shared by elements receiving A and B accents. Although Büring calls the elements receiving B accents topics (more precisely 'S-Topics'), it is worth emphasizing that his notion of topic is much narrower than many people's notions of topic in that he only applies it to elements receiving B-accents. For example, he says that the sentence in (63) can be pronounced in either of the ways indicated and that only in the second case is *Jones* a topic.

(63) a. After Smith left the pub, Jones [went to the central STATION]$_F$
b. After Smith left the pub, [JONES]$_T$ [went to the central STATION]$_F$

While discussion of the details of Büring's analysis of topics is beyond the scope of this paper, it is worth noting that Büring himself notes the parallels between focus and what he analyses as topics. Both induce sets of alternatives on his theory. His theory of focus is essentially that of Rooth (1985, 1992): the focus value of a sentence is a set of sentences, each sharing the same nonfocus, but varying for different alternatives to the element that is focus in the sentence in question. His theory of topic extends this up one level: the topic value of a sentence is a set of the focus sets, the sentences in each set of focus sets differing from each other in terms of different alternatives to the element that is topic in the sentence in question. The effect of this is that the sets of sets that constitute the topic value for a sentence with a topic and a focus ultimately contain the same sentences as the sets of sets that constitute the topic value of the same sentence but with topic and focus reversed and the same sentences as the sets of sets that constitute the topic value of the same sentence but with double focus, the only difference being in the way in which these sentences are organized into sets of sets. Although these differences ultimately account for the fact that these different assignments of topic and focus in his theory are associated with answers to different questions, as in (58) through (60), the crucial point is that his theory treats topics and focus as partly the same and partly different.

But Büring's approach is fully consistent with an approach which calls them both focus, and distinguishes the two sorts of focus in some way. Suppose we now temporarily choose as labels for these two sorts of focus the labels *topic focus* and *focus focus*, where the former is what Büring calls topic and the latter is what he calls focus. How then do topic foci and focus foci differ in Büring's theory? At the risk of oversimplifying a complex theory, topic foci are subject to additional constraints that focus foci are not subject to. Those additional constraints manifest themselves in the sorts of questions that sentences differing only in topic and focus are appropriate answers to. His theory accounts for the fact that (59B) above, with *Fred* as topic focus and *beans* as focus focus, is appropriate as an answer to (59A) while (60B), with *Fred* as focus focus and *beans* as topic focus, is not. In this particular example, the topic focus occurs in the question, but his theory works for other examples where this is not the case, such as (64), with B accent on *I* and A accent on *The Hotel Hampshire*.

(64) A: Which book would Fritz buy?
B: Well, $[\text{I}]_{\text{T}}$ would buy $[\text{The Hotel New HAMPshire}]_{\text{F}}$.

His theory in effect requires that the topic focus belong to some set of alternatives that something in the preceding discourse must also belong to, while the focus focus is not so constrained.

But this constraint is reminiscent of Ward's condition on preposing, given in (35) above, that the element preposed in a Topicalization sentence denote something that bears a salient partially ordered set (poset) relation to something in the preceding discourse. Suppose that all elements that count as topics in Büring's theory are also subject to the poset condition, even when they are not preposed, and that this is in fact the additional constraint that distinguishes topic foci from focus foci.[11] This coincides with the intuition that (64B), while not literally involving Topicalization, seems to be the analog of applying this rule to a subject, except that because it is already clause-initial, there is no reason to say it is preposed. Whether this is indeed true requires further research, but I will assume that

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[11] Following Ward and Hirschberg (1985), one might suggest that the occurrence of B accent with such constituents is related, not to their being topics in any sense, but to the uncertainty of whether there is a relevant poset relation to something in the previous discourse.

it does. This allows us to improve on our labels *topic foci* and *focus foci* : we can instead call the former *poset foci* and the latter *ordinary foci*. Poset foci are foci which have syntactic or intonational properties requiring that they denote something related by a poset relation to something in the previous discourse, while ordinary foci are foci that are not so constrained.

Büring (1997: 83-86) argues against the "unification" of topic and focus on the grounds that they have distinct intonational properties and on the grounds that they cannot be used in the same contexts. But these are only arguments that they must be distinguished; they are not arguments against treating them as distinct types of focus. His theory is thus apparently completely compatible with a theory that treats them both as focus, but distinguishes them, either in the way he does, or in terms of the notion of poset relations.

We see then that the distinction between A accents and B accents does not provide any argument against treating what I analyse as Double Focus Preposing or their nonpreposed variants as instances of double focus. I will provide some additional arguments in this section to further support this view.

First, it is worth noting that there are apparent instances of B accents that are clearly not topic accents in any sense. For example, (65A) can be pronounced with either an A accent or a B accent, but it seems indisputibly to be focus under either interpretation.

(65) Q: Did you see Mary?
A: I saw JOHN.

An A accent in (65A) is appropriate if it is presupposed in the context that the speaker saw one person, and (65A) denies that that person was Mary and asserts that it was John. A B accent in (65A) would be appropriate if the speaker is not certain whether this is relevant information. Similarly (66A) can also be pronounced with either an A accent or a B accent.

(66) Q: Who did you see?
A: I saw JOHN.

An A accent in (66A) implicates that the focus is exhaustive while a B accent implicates that the speaker may have seen others (or perhaps cancels the implicature that would otherwise arise from the Gricean Maxim of Quantity that the focus is exhaustive). These examples show that B accents can be natural accents of uncontroversial instances of focus, and thus make it more plausible that the instances of B accent described earlier in this section might be instances of focus as well.

Second, a common feature of theories of focus is that they claim that the open sentence corresponding to the nonfocus be in the common ground in some sense. While this is often taken to be presupposition, I argue in Dryer (1996) that what is crucial is that the open sentence be activated in the mind of the hearer, and need not actually be presupposed. In this light, consider again Büring's example in (64), repeated as (67).

(67) A: Which book would Fritz buy?
B: Well, $[I]_T$ would buy $[\text{The Hotel New HAMPshire}]_F$.

If we took the view that only *The Hotel Hampshire* were focus in (67B), then the open sentence corresponding to the nonfocus would be *I would buy X*. But there is no reason to expect this to be activated in the mind of the hearer. On the other hand, if we take the view

that both *I* and *The Hotel New Hampshire* in (67B) are foci, then the open sentence is *X would buy Y*, which clearly is activated in this discourse context.

The extent to which 'topic' on Büring's theory really has more in common with what is focus on other people's theories is also driven home by the fact that for him both topic and focus contrast with background, which is itself linked to the commond ground. But this contrasts with view in which a notion of topic is linked to background. The similarity of topic and focus on his theory and their contrast with background means that one can easily reinterpret his theory terminologically and treat what he calls topic and focus as two subtypes of focus.

Third, it is worth emphasizing that the elements that can occur with B accents in double focus sentences can be elements whose meaning is easy to construe as focus but which are difficult to construe as topics, at least in terms of how that notion is generally understood.

(68) Q: Did you see anyone?
A: I SAW PAT, but I don't recall seeing anyone else.

A natural way to pronounce (68A) is with a B accent on *saw* and an A accent on *Pat*.[12] Under the approach to such sentences I defended in section 3 above, (68A) is a double focus sentence, with one focus associated with the word *saw*, the other with *Pat.* I argue above that while the first focus is realized phonologically on the verb in (68A), semantically the focus is the polarity of the clause. This is reflected by the fact that if one adds an auxiliary, the focal accent falls on the auxiliary, as in (69), and by the fact that the sentence can be more fully spelled out as in (70).

(69) I DID see PAT.

(70) It is TRUE that I saw PAT.

I assume that (68A) and (69) are most naturally pronounced with the first focal accent a B accent and with an A accent on *Pat.* But if we try to apply Büring's theory to (68A) and (69), then we must say that the polarity of the sentence is the topic. But this seems very odd on most notions of topic. Under the view here, it is simply an instance of poset focus, the polarity of sentences presumably being something that is always evoked in a discourse.

7. Alternations between Single and Double Focus Preposing

A number of attested examples of preposing in the literature have the property that they can be pronounced in either of two ways, even in the same discourse context: either they have a single intonation peak on the preposed element or they have two intonation peaks, one on the preposed element, the other on the second part of the sentence. For example, the response in (71) can be pronounced either as shown in (71B), without a focal accent on the verb *know*, or as shown in (71B'), with focal accents on both the preposed element and the verb *know.*

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[12] I believe that it is also natural to pronounce (68A) with both of the focal accents pronounced as B accents, further undermining the notion that B accents are topic accents.

(71) A: You know this album? (overheard in conversation, U of Pennsylvania)
B: THIS SONG i know.
B': THIS SONG, i KNOW. (Ward & Prince 1991: 172)

Associated with the intonational difference is a difference in nuance: (71B') involves a stronger implicature of contrast with other songs on the album than (71B). On the approaches of Gundel, Prince, Ward, and Lambrecht, the intonation difference means that the response in (71B) is Focus Preposing while that in (71B') is Topicalization. Under all these approaches, *this song* is a focus in (71B) but not in (71B'). But again, it seems puzzling that one should have a choice as to whether *this song* is focus in (71). Whatever the pragmatic difference between the two, it seems to involve a difference in the pragmatic status of *know* rather than of *this song.* But this is exactly what the approach of this paper claims: (71B) involves Single Focus Preposing, while (71B') involves Double Focus Preposing, so that in both cases, *this song* is a focus; the difference is whether there is a second focus or not. In (71B'), the second focus is the polarity of the sentence, the fact that I know this song as opposed to not knowing this song.

Why might there be a choice as to whether the polarity of the sentence is focus in the response in (71)? On the Single Focus Preposing interpretation, the open proposition which must be activated corresponding to the nonfocus is *I know x.* On the Double Focus Preposing interpretation, the open proposition is something equivalent to *That I know x is y* where the variable *y* ranges over the values *true* and *false.* But note that at one level these are equivalent: if we fill the free variable *x* in *know x* with *this song,* we get *I know this song,* while if we replace the two variables in *That I know x is y* with *this song* and *true* respectively, we get *That I know this song is true.* The only difference is that in the latter case, it is more explicit that the proposition *That I know this song is false* is being denied.

A similar case is given in (72), from the script of the television show, the Munsters.

(72) [Grandpa and Herman are trying to find a buried treasure in their backyard by means of a map. The map refers to an oak tree.]
Persimmon trees we got. Cypress trees we got. Oak trees we haven't got. (The Munsters, Grandpa) (Ward and Prince 1991: 169)

The first sentence in (72) can be pronounced either with or without focal accent on *got.* Again, the difference can be explained in terms of whether the polarity of the sentence is a focus or not. But this approach requires that one analyse the versions with a second focal accent as instances of double focus.

8. Nonfocus preposing

Not all sentences that Prince and Ward analyse as Topicalization can be analysed as Double Focus Preposing. There are other instances of preposing in English which have properties distinct from both Single Focus Preposing and Double Focus Preposing. The following example in (73) from Prince (1981: 252) is an example.

(73) 'I have a recurring dream in which ... I can't remember what I say. I usually wake up crying. *This dream* I've had maybe three, four times.' (Prince 1981: 252, from Terkel 1974: 118 *Working*)

Previous analyses, including those of Prince and Ward, treat examples like (73) as instances of Topicalization. This treatment is apparently based on the fact that (73), like instances of Double Focus Preposing and unlike instances of Single Focus Preposing, involve a focal accent later in the sentence, on the part that is not preposed. However, examples like those in (73) differ from what I am calling Double Focus in a number of ways. First, the preposed element in (73) lacks the pragmatic properties of a focus expression in a double focus sentence. The sentence does not involve an activated open sentence with two free variables and two expressions corresponding to those two variables. Second, if we examine the corresponding version without preposing, given in (74), we see that the expression that is preposed in (73) lacks a focal accent, in contrast to both Single Focus Preposing and Double Focus Preposing.

(74) 'I have a recurring dream in which ... I can't remember what I say. I usually wake up crying. I've had *this dream* maybe three, four times.'

There is a single focal accent in (74), falling on *three, four times*. Third, unlike Double Focus Preposing (though like Single Focus Preposing), there does not have to be an intonational break after the preposed element in (73). While such a break is possible in (73), it is not required. And fourth, focal accent is not required on the preposed element in (73); it is possible to pronounce (73) with only one focal accent, on *three, four times.*

I will refer to the construction in (73) as Nonfocus Preposing. One might refer to it as Topicalization; however, I am not convinced that there is any useful pragmatic notion of topic that characterizes the preposed element in (73), so I choose instead to characterize it negatively, as a preposed element that is not focus. The example in (75) from Birner and Ward (1998) is similar.

(75) 'The only time the guy isn't considered a failure is when he resigns and announces his new job. That's the tipoff, "John Smith resigned, future plans unknown" means he was fired. "John Smith resigned to accept the position of president of X company" – then you know he resigned. *This little nuance* you recognize immediately when you're in corporate life.' (Birner and Ward 1998: 41)

As with (73), it does not seem possible to analyse (75) pragmatically in terms of double focus: there is no good candidate of an open sentence with two free variables. Similarly, if we construct a text that "undoes" the preposing in (75), as in (76), we get a sentence in which there is no focal accent on *this little nuance*, the element that is preposed in (75).

(76) 'The only time the guy isn't considered a failure is when he resigns and announces his new job. That's the tipoff, "John Smith resigned, future plans unknown" means he was fired. "John Smith resigned to accept the position of president of X company" – then you know he resigned. You recognize *this little nuance* immediately when you're in corporate life.' (Birner and Ward 1998: 41)

There is only one focal accent on the last sentence in (76), on *immediately*. Other examples from Prince (1981) that appear to involve Nonfocus Preposing are given in (77) to (79).

(77) Q: 'Do all the long-haired guys bug you?'
A: 'I don't want my son to have it. Now *the sideburns* I wear because I do TV commercials and stuff. I'm in the modeling field.' (Prince 1981: 252, from Terkel, p. 191)

(78) 'Then I make a schedule of what's to be done during the day. I try to assign as many tasks as possible to my staff, so I can reduce my work. I need two or three additional people. *A couple who are not pulling their weight* I'm in the process of replacing. This is very painful.' (Prince 1981: 252 - 253, from Terkel, p. 587)

(79) '... these guys knew they were being followed and they still continued the same shit. *People like that* you have no sympathy for.' (Prince 1981: 253, from Terkel, p. 212)

At first sight, it may be less than obvious that these examples have the properties given above that distinguish Nonfocus Preposing from Double Focus Preposing or Single Focus Preposing. In particular, if one looks at the corresponding nonpreposed versions, given in (80) to (82), we find that these are pronounced (or can be pronounced) with a focal accent on the element that is preposed in (77) to (79).

(80) Q: 'Do all the long-haired guys bug you?'
A: 'I don't want my son to have it. Now I wear *the sideburns* because I do TV commercials and stuff. I'm in the modeling field.' (Prince 1981: 252, from Terkel, p. 191)

(81) 'Then I make a schedule of what's to be done during the day. I try to assign as many tasks as possible to my staff, so I can reduce my work. I need two or three additional people. I'm in the process of replacing *a couple who are not pulling their weight*. This is very painful.' (Prince 1981: 252 - 253, from Terkel, p. 587)

(82) '... these guys knew they were being followed and they still continued the same shit. You have no sympathy for *people like that*.' (Prince 1981: 253, from Terkel, p. 212)

However, in all three examples, the possibility of focal accent can be accounted for in terms of the position of the constituent at the end of the verb phrase. In other words, if they are pronounced with focal accent, it is because the entire verb phrase of which they are a final constituent is receiving focal accent. In addition, (82) can be pronounced without focal accent on *people like that*, with the sole focal accent on *no sympathy*. Furthermore, the examples in (80) through (82) contrast with nonpreposed versions of double focus constructions in that they lack (or can lack) two focal accents. And as with (73), (77) through (79) can be pronounced without an intonational break following the preposed element.

9. Pragmatic properties of the different constructions

If we need to distinguish Double Focus Preposing from Nonfocus Preposing, a question arises as to whether the pragmatic properties that Prince (1981), Ward (1988), and Ward and Prince (1991) attribute to Topicalization apply equally to what I am analysing as two distinct constructions covered by what they treat as Topicalization. The principle in (35) above, repeated in (83), applies to both.

(83) The entity represented by a preposed constituent must be related, via a salient partially ordered set relation, to one or more entities already evoked in the discourse model.

That it applies to both should not be surprising, since Prince and Ward treat both as instances of a single rule and their examples include instances of both.

However, the fact that one of the two constructions involves focus while the other does not entails further pragmatic differences between the two. As argued by Dryer (1996), the open sentence corresponding to the nonfocus must be activated (though it need not be presupposed) in a sentence involving focus. We would therefore expect that such a constraint applies to Double Focus Preposing but not to Nonfocus Preposing. This prediction is apparently borne out. Consider first the example in (20) repeated in (84) involving Double Focus Preposing.

(84) '[I graduated from high school as] an average student. My initiative didn't carry me any further than average. *History* I found to be dry. *Math courses* I was never good at. I enjoyed sciences ... Football was my bag.' (Prince 1981: 253, from Terkel, p. 590)

Both of the sentences involving preposing can be viewed as involving an open proposition with two free variables *My relationship to subject x was y*. This open proposition can be viewed as activated in the discourse context: the preceding context refers to the speaker's performance in high school, which can be viewed as activating (or at least making highly accessible) the question of his relationship to various subjects.

On the other hand, no such property seems to be associated with the examples involving Nonfocus Preposing. In (73), for example, repeated in (85), there is arguably an activated open proposition *I've had this dream x times* but here the free variable does not correspond to the preposed element *this dream*, reflecting the fact that the preposed element here is not a focus element.

(85) 'I have a recurring dream in which ... I can't remember what I say. I usually wake up crying. *This dream* I've had maybe three, four times.' (Prince 1981: 252, from Terkel 1974: 118 *Working*)

Similarly, in (75), repeated in (86), there is no obvious instance of an open proposition with two free variables which is activated in the context.

(86) 'The only time the guy isn't considered a failure is when he resigns and announces his new job. That's the tipoff, "John Smith resigned, future plans unknown" means he was fired. "John Smith resigned to accept the position of president of X company" – then you know he resigned. *This little nuance* you recognize immediately when you're in corporate life.' (Birner and Ward 1998: 41)

One candidate would be something like *You recognize x at time y when you're in corporate life* but this does not seem to be activated in the discourse context.

Prince (1981, 1997) claims that there is a further condition associated with Topicalization, that an open proposition be in the hearer's consciousness at the time of the utterance, where that open proposition is derived by substituting the tonically stressed constituent in the nonpreposed part of the sentence with a variable. For example, applying this to the last sentence in the attested example in (87), we get the open proposition *She'll feed the third x,* where the variable *x* corresponds to *junk food* in the original sentence.

(87) She had an idea for a project. She's going to use three groups of mice. One, she'll feed them mouse chow, just the regular stuff they make for mice. Another, she'll feed them veggies. And the third, she'll feed junk food.

In the remainder of this section, I will argue that in so far as this claim is true, it is true only of Double Focus Preposing and not Nonfocus Preposing, and that in so far as it is true, it follows from the poset relation required of the preposed element in Double Focus Preposing plus general properties of focus. But I will also argue that it imposes too strong a condition even on Double Focus Preposing and that some examples attested in the literature fail to conform to it.

As noted above, Prince's theory predicts that the final sentence in (87) requires that the open proposition *She'll feed the third x* be activated (be in the hearer's consciousness) at the time of the utterance. On the analysis of this paper, this sentence involves Double Focus Preposing, one focus being the preposed element *the third*, the other *junk food*. Following general principles of focus, the open proposition corresponding to the nonfocus, with free variables corresponding to the foci, namely *She'll feed x y* must be activated in the discourse. Prince's condition here is stronger than mine: if *She'll feed the third x* is activated in the discourse, then any open proposition formed by replacing an element by a variable will necessarily also be activated as well. More informally, if the idea of a specific individual feeding something to a specific mouse is activated in the discourse, then so will the idea of that individual feeding something to something or someone and even the idea of someone feeding something to something or someone.

So the question is: is this stronger condition of Prince's correct? Is it necessary that not only must *She'll feed x y* be activated but the more specific proposition *She'll feed the third [group of mice] x* ? Note that it is indeed the case in (87) that the more specific proposition is activated: the preceding discourse refers to three groups of mice and describes what she will feed to the other two groups, so the question of what she will feed the third group of mice is clearly activated. Because the preposed constituent in Double Focus Preposing is subject to the constraint that the preposed constituent denote something in a poset relation to something in the preceding discourse, it will often be the case that the referent of the preposed constituent is sufficiently accessible that it will count as activated, as in (87), and that the more specific open proposition will also be activated. However, it is possible for the referent of the preposed constituent to be in a poset relation to something in the preceding discourse and for the less specific open proposition to be activated, without the more specific open proposition being activated. The example in (72) above, repeated in (88), is an example of this.

(88) [Grandpa and Herman are trying to find a buried treasure in their backyard by means of a map. The map refers to an oak tree.]
Persimmon trees we got. Cypress trees we got. Oak trees we haven't got. (The Munsters, Grandpa) (Ward & Prince 1991: 169)

As discussed above, the first sentence in (88) can be pronounced in either of two ways, depending on whether a focal accent falls on *got.* On the interpretation without focal accent on *got*, the sentence is an instance of Single Focus Preposing; on the interpretation with focal accent on *got*, it is an instance of Double Focus Preposing, or Topicalization in terms of Prince's categories. The constraint under discussion is relevant to the second of these two possibilities. Prince's theory claims that the open proposition with a free variable corresponding to the element with focal accent later in the sentence be activated in the mind of the hearer. In this case the open proposition is something like *We are in relation x with respect to persimmon trees* or perhaps *We x got persimmon trees*, where *x* ranges over the values *have* and *haven't.* However, there is no reason to believe that these open propositions are or need be activated in the mind of the hearer, since there is no reason to believe persimmon trees to be activated in the mind of the hearer. This example illustrates the possibility that something can be in a poset relation to something evoked in the

discourse but still be quite unactivated and hence any proposition involving it would not be activated in the mind of the hearer. Persimmon trees are in a poset relation to oak trees, which are clearly activated in the discourse context, since both are subsets of trees. But (88) would be appropriate even if the hearer had never heard of persimmon trees or if the hearer was familiar with persimmons but didn't know they grew on trees. Even under these conditions, the poset condition would be satisfied, without persimmon trees (or any propositions about persimmon trees) being remotely activated. This example shows that Prince's condition is too strong. All that is needed is the condition that the preposed element be in a poset relation to something evoked in the discourse, plus the general condition on focus structures, that the open proposition with the foci replaced by free variables be activated. In this case, that open proposition is *We are in relation x with respect to y trees* or perhaps *We x got y trees*, where *x* ranges over the values *have* and *haven't*, either of which is clearly activated in this discourse context.

Let us turn now to Nonfocus Preposing. I will assume that the evidence from Ward (1988) provides sufficient evidence that the preposed element be in a poset relation to something evoked in the discourse. However, the additional condition proposed by Prince (1981), that the open proposition derived by replacing the focus with a variable, does not seem to apply to this type of preposing. Consider again example (78) repeated in (89).

(89) 'Then I make a schedule of what's to be done during the day. I try to assign as many tasks as possible to my staff, so I can reduce my work. I need two or three additional people. *A couple who are not pulling their weight* I'm in the process of replacing. This is very painful.' (Prince 1981: 252 - 253, from Terkel, p. 587)

The preposed phrase in (89) is actually ambiguous: the expression *a couple* might simply mean two people or it might mean two people who form a couple, two people who are partners of each other. While I suspect that the original text intended the former of these, it was only recently that this reading occurred to me; until recently, I assumed the latter reading. But whatever the original text intended, the text is perfectly felicitous on both readings. But the latter reading presents a problem for Prince's theory. Prince's theory would predict that on the latter reading, some open proposition like *I'm in relation x to a couple who are not pulling their weight* be activated in the mind of the hearer at the time of the utterance. But this is surely false in this case: the hearer might not know that two of the speaker's staff form a couple, so this proposition could hardly be activated in the hearer's mind.

Similarly, in the case of (79), repeated here as (90), there is little reason to believe that there is an open proposition of the sort claimed by Prince to be activated in the mind of the hearer.

(90) '... these guys knew they were being followed and they still continued the same shit. *People like that* you have no sympathy for.' (Prince 1981: 253, from Terkel, p. 212)

Here the open proposition would have to be something like *You have x attitude towards people like that,* which surely need not be activated. Prince's condition is apparently too strong.

10. Conclusion

I have argued in this paper that what previous linguists have treated as a single type of preposing, what many call Topicalization, really involves two distinct subtypes. Apart from sharing the property that the referent of the preposed element must bear a poset relation to something evoked in the discourse and the fact that there can be a focal accent in the nonpreposed part, they differ both intonationally and pragmatically. Legitimate questions arise as to the theoretical status of different subtypes of the same syntactic construction, but these questions apply equally well to the distinction recognized since Gundel (1988) (which was completed in 1974) between what Ward calls Focus Preposing and Topicalization. This paper provides arguments that if we are going to distinguish these two types of preposing, we ought really to distinguish three types. Double Focus Preposing differs as much from Nonfocus Preposing as it does from Single Focus Preposing, and shares with Single Focus Preposing the fact that both are focus constructions.

The increasing awareness of different pragmatic subtypes of what is syntactically a single construction (cf. analogous arguments in Prince 1997 for different subtypes of Left Dislocation) also underscores the fact that the relationship between grammatical constructions and pragmatic functions is not a one-to-one relationship. This paper also raises questions about the relevance of a notion of sentence topic to this construction. Many, such as Lambrecht (1994), readily exclude instances of Focus Preposing, and refer to other uses of the grammatical construction as Topicalization. But if many – perhaps most – instances of so-called Topicalization really involve focus, then the notion of topic is at most relevant to an apparent minority of instances of the entire syntactic construction (including Single Focus Preposing), what I have called Nonfocus Preposing in this paper. And it is quite unclear how a notion of topic might be relevant even to these.

Finally, the arguments of this paper make crucial appeal to intuitions about the naturalness and the intonational properties of examples that are constructed, but ones that are constructed, not out of the blue, but by altering an attested example in some relatively minor way. In particular, I have argued that the properties of examples constructed by 'undoing' a preposing provide crucial evidence for the distinction between Double Focus Preposing and Nonfocus Preposing. One of the hallmarks of much work in this area over the past twenty years (especially in the work of Prince, Ward, and Birner) has been the use of attested examples to demonstrate the serious inadequacies of previous proposals and to provide support for new proposals. That work reflects the inadequacy of dependence on completely constructed examples. However, I hope to have shown in this paper that reliance entirely on attested examples may obscure some distinctions. Intuitions regarding altered versions of attested examples can provide additional insight into the constructions being investigated.

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