

The PIV Function, p. 1

This handout outlines various aspects of the PIV function.

Pivot assignment in different types of languages

In nominative-accusative languages (English, Hebrew, Arabic, Russian, ...)

$$(\uparrow \text{PIV}) = (\uparrow \widehat{\text{GF}})$$

In “syntactically” ergative languages (Dyirbal, Inuit, Samoan, Chukchee, ...)

$$\text{If } \exists (\uparrow \text{OBJ}) \Rightarrow (\uparrow \text{PIV}) = (\uparrow \text{OBJ})$$

or, in standard LFG notation: $(\uparrow \text{OBJ}) \Rightarrow (\uparrow \text{PIV}) = (\uparrow \text{OBJ})$

In Philippine-type languages (Tagalog, Cebuano, Malagasy, ...)

with “Active voice” morphology:	$(\uparrow \text{PIV}) = (\uparrow \widehat{\text{GF}})$
with “Direct object voice” morphology:	$(\uparrow \text{PIV}) = (\uparrow \text{OBJ})$
with “Indirect object/locative voice”:	$(\uparrow \text{PIV}) = (\uparrow \text{OBJ}_{\text{Indirect}})$
with “Instrumental voice” morphology:	$(\uparrow \text{PIV}) = (\uparrow \text{OBL}_{\text{Instr}})$
etc.	

Example

Samoan (Austronesian > Malayo-Polynesian > Oceanic > Polynesian)—a mixed-subject (“syntactically ergative”) language

English—a uniform-subject language

Sā fasi le maile e le teine.
 PAST hit ART dog ERG ART girl
 ‘The girl hit the dog.’

Samoan

$$\left[\begin{array}{ll} \widehat{\text{GF}} & [\text{“girl”}] \\ \text{OBJ} \} & [\text{“dog”}] \\ \text{PIV} \} & \\ \text{TENSE} & \text{PAST} \\ \text{PRED} & \text{‘hit } \langle (\uparrow \widehat{\text{GF}})(\uparrow \text{OBJ}) \rangle’ \end{array} \right]$$

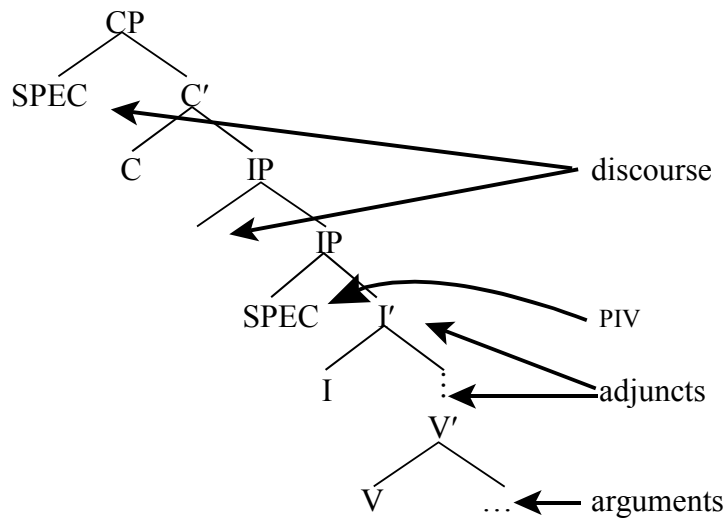
English

$$\left[\begin{array}{ll} \widehat{\text{GF}} \} & [\text{“girl”}] \\ \text{PIV} \} & \\ \text{OBJ} & [\text{“dog”}] \\ \text{TENSE} & \text{PAST} \\ \text{PRED} & \text{‘hit } \langle (\uparrow \widehat{\text{GF}})(\uparrow \text{OBJ}) \rangle’ \end{array} \right]$$

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Clause structure in configurational languages

Configurational languages encode grammatical functions iconically in constituent structure:



Non-configurational languages organize their constituent structures according to different principles.