

Iris Mulders

Transparent parsing

Head-driven processing of verb-final structures

The conceptual guideline underlying this study is that the goal of processing theory should be to construct a transparent parser, which refers only to properties and relations that are available in the grammar, without resorting to processing-specific notions. Under a Minimalist conception of grammar, the structure-building mechanism available to this parser is necessarily head-driven. This head-driven nature of the human parser is the main topic of this work. As a starting point for building such a parser, this study takes the processing model outlined by Pritchett (1992). Within this framework, the author examines the role of the position of the verb in garden path sentences cross-linguistically. It is argued that the virtual absence of garden path effects in Japanese derives from its verb-final nature. Furthermore, it is argued on the basis of Dutch and Japanese that the reanalysis process that is available to the human parser can reanalyze material from the edge of a phase to a position outside that phase. The resulting system comprises a step forward in the formulation of a universal, transparent parser.

Transparent Parsing is a study into the relation between language competence and performance. It is of interest to scholars concerned with the field of sentence processing, as well as to syntacticians working in the generative framework.

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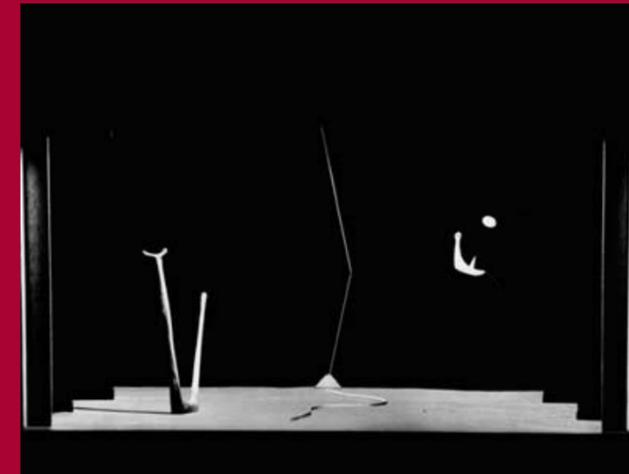
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