

The prosody of discontinuous nominal phrases in Indian languages: a comparative study  
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In Fanselow & Féry (in prep) we make a principled and universal distinction in syntax between hierarchy-inverting and hierarchy-preserving discontinuous nominal phrases (DNP), illustrated respectively in (1) with Bengali and in (2) with Hindi.

- (1) **ba:dha:** ram topkiyeche **tinti**  
huddle Ram cross three
- (2) **kitn-ii** xariidii thiin raam-ne **kurs-iyã**  
how.many-F buy be.PST.3PL.F Ram-ERG chair(F)-PL

In intonation languages that admit both types of DNPs, such as Slavic languages—but also German up to a certain grade—this division largely corresponds to prosodic non-cohesiveness (each part of the DNP is contained in a different prosodic phrase) and prosodic cohesiveness (both parts of the DNP are contained in the same prosodic phrase). In the talk, the following questions will be investigated:

- Do Indian languages have both hierarchy-inverting and hierarchy-preserving DNPs?
- Do the two types correspond to prosodic non-cohesiveness and cohesiveness?

It will be shown that Indo-Aryan languages are more permissive than Dravidian languages as far as the syntax is concerned, but that prosodic properties are similar in both families. As for the Sino-Tibetan languages, the data testify a more complicated pattern, partly dependent on the presence of lexical tones. Meithei/Manipuri for instance, a language without lexical tone, resembles Indo-Aryan languages in its intonation, but not in its syntax. Both Bodo (Bodo-Garo, Brahmaputran) and Meithei allow both kinds of DNP, hierarchy-inverting DNPs are only grammatical when the right part is placed into a postverbal position. This is true for both kinds of DNPs in Meithei.

In all cases, information structure plays a role for the formation of DNPs. If time allows, this will be addressed in the talk.