Peripheral domains, informational structure and AGREE in Quechua
Liliana Sanchez
Rutgers University

In Southern Quechua, a language with null subjects and SOV canonical word order, constituents that convey new information (focus) or old information (topic) are marked with specific morphological endings. In left peripheral positions, topics are marked with the suffix –qa and focused constituents are marked with focus/evidential particles –mi ~ n (-si ~s, chá):

(1) [Qan-qa] allin warmi kanki (Cusihuamán 2001)
   [You-top] good woman are
   “(As for you), you are a good woman”
(2) [Tanta-ta-m] Luis mikuykan (Cerrón-Palomino 1989)
   [Bread-acc-foc/evid] Luis eats
   “It is bread that Luis is eating” (1st hand information)

Muysken (1995) points out that focused elements can be marked in situ:

(3) Pidru [wasi-ta-n] ruwan.
   Pidru [house-acc-foc] builds
   “It is the house that Pedro builds”

In addition to in situ and left-edge material, there are also right-edge material constituents (subjects and objects) that are not morphologically marked for focus or topic. Objects are marked for case:

(4) Pero, kiriq-mi ka-sqa [chay pajaru-cha]
   But, sick-foc/evid be-past [this bird-dim]
   “But this little bird was sick”
(5) Hinaspa-n tariru-spa ka-ra-n [huk pajaru-cha-ta] [qillu-cha-ta]
   Then-foc find-gerund be-past-3sg [a bird-dim-acc] [yellow-dim acc]
   “Then (she) found a yellow bird”

I propose that in Quechua morphological markings of topic and focus on constituents in the left periphery are the spell-out of AGREE between functional features in the CP-area and constituents in situ or merged in specifier positions in the C-domain. This proposal accounts for the restrictions on these morphemes: they are attached only to constituents, only one per clause is allowed, they are not allowed in nominalizations and cannot occur in imperatives (Muysken 1995). Discontinuous DPs in the right periphery have no contrastive interpretation in discourse and are adjoined to IP-internal positions. Other right peripheral constituents are external to the intonational contour. In example (6), the subject and the object are uttered with voiceless vowels and have been previously introduced in discourse:

(6) Hinaspa wasi-n-man apapu-sqa [chay bieha-cha] [chay pichingu-cha]
   Then, house-3-dat bring-past [that old woman-dim] [that little bird-dim]
   “Then the old woman took the little bird to her house”

While focused and topicalized constituents at the left edge are licensed by an AGREE relationship, constituents in the right edge are either stranded or subject to a linear rule at the PF/conceptual interface. This indicates that it is the left-periphery that is active at the interface with informational structure in Quechua, a language in which movement is only required in order to satisfy Agreement in discourse-related features.
Reading:
Muysken, Pieter. 1995. *Focus in Quechua*. Discourse Configurational Languages