Topic in the argument structure

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In the presentation I explore the idea that topicality is not just a notion of information structure but also a specific type of thematic involvement in an event and as such topic should be considered (at least in part) a category of argument structure. This will allow to distinguish embedded topics such as in (1a) that are usually expressed with a PP or case marking in various languages and are parts of the argument structure of the respective verbs; and matrix topics such as in (1b).

(1) a. i. Kim talked <u>about Mia</u>.
     ii. Kim told me something <u>about Mia</u>.
     iii. Kim told me <u>about Mia</u>, that she is an excellent linguist.
  b. i. <u>Mia</u> is an excellent linguist.
     ii. (As for) <u>Mia</u>, I think she will pass the exam.

I will argue that as parts of the argument structure of the respective verbs, embedded topics have a semantic interpretation that is captured by the term intentionality, which is a weak enough effect to correctly predict the intuition that topic does not standardly have a truth conditional effect; but strong enough to correctly predict de re interpretations, binding constraints and restrictions on the distribution of embedded topics. Further, I argue that matrix topics are part of the event structure of speech acts and as thus play pragmatic roles in the syntactic structure. Finally, I explore how this analysis of topicality can extend to focus and the question under discussion.