'DOAR' AND SENTENCE POLARITY

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Abstract: In the present work we discuss the syntactic behaviour of the Romanian focus particle *doar*. Through out the paper we will argue for a unitary analysis of *doar* as a contrastive focus marker attempting to provide a syntactic account which will explain the effects that *doar* has on sentence interpretation and in particular its interaction with negation. We will claim that the traditional notion of contrastive focus encapsulates in fact two different features checked in two different positions of the functional domain.

1. Introduction

Linguists analysing the information structure and especially the focus structure in typologically diverse languages distinguish between two types of focus: presentational and contrastive.

Presentational focus[1] expresses non-presupposed or new material[2], which is present in every sentence. It is associated with neutral or normal intonation, and it is wide or sentential focus (1), though narrow focus answers to wh-questions (2) are also included in this category[3].

(1) We have a rosebush in the GARDEN[4].
(2) What din you buy from the market?
'I bought APPLES'

The domain of presentational focus is the category VP. Presentationally focused material is predicted to occur in situ, the feature [F] being assigned to word level categories at Numeration by application of the Nuclear Stress Rule, initially proposed by Chomsky and Halle (1968) and revised more recently by Cinque (1993) and Zubizarreta (1998). The rule specifies that the constituent which receives prosodic prominence is assigned the [F] feature and, for languages which mark focus intonationally, it is associated with pitch accent. For Romance languages at least the position of maximum prosodic prominence is the sentence-final position.

(3) Ieri am întârziat la MUNCĂ.
Yersterday I was late for work.

These languages resort to scrambling in order to give prominence to a constituent which does not occupy the sentence final position.

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[1] In this paper we will adopt the classification of focus proposed in Drubig (2000). Kiss (1998) establishes a similar distinction but adopts the labels of identificational and informational focus, while Lambrecht (1994) distinguishes three types of focus: argument focus (narrow focus), predicate focus (VP focus) and sentence focus (wide focus). Conversely, Rooth (1992) proposes a unitary account for focus in the frame of alternative semantics.

[2] Zubizarreta (1998) distinguishes between the presupposed/non-presupposed and old/new information arguing in favour of the former, which she integrates in the syntax of presentational focus.

[3] This view with respect to narrow-focus answers to wh-questions is adopted by Winkler (2000), among other linguists, but not generally accepted. Notice that it does not fall in with other focus structure models such as that proposed by Lambrecht (1994).

[4] In this paper focused constituents will be marked by capitalization.

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(4) Am plantat în grădină un TRANDAFIR.
We've planted in the garden a rosebush.

Contrastive focus is narrow or sub-sentential focus and it is assumed to operate on an asserted or presupposed set of entities, contrasting one member/group to the remaining ones. The contrast may be implicit or explicitly expressed as a negative tag (5). Sentences containing a contrastively focused phrase negate a previous assertion or presupposition that the predicate may hold for some other member of the contrast set. Thus, example (5) is interpreted as asserting that yesterday I met Maria and negating that I have met her sister, as previously asserted/presupposed.

(5) Yesterday I met MARIA, (not her sister).

Unlike presentational focus, contrastive focus is optional. In most languages it is associated with overt or covert movement to a specific position in the IP domain or the left-periphery of the clause hosting a focus operator, although it can also surface vP internally (referred to as the in-situ occurrence) or it may undergo movement within the vP domain. For languages like Romanian and English, preposing is optional. The same focus effect obtained by movement (5b) also occurs in situ (5a).

Preposing has been claimed to serve to disambiguate information structure without influencing interpretation in languages where movement is optional (Drubig 2000). For languages like Hungarian, where displacement is obligatory, it has been argued that movement induces an exhaustivity effect, which is otherwise not obtained in situ (Kiss 1998).

Most linguists analyzing focus structure and focus constructions have identified a series of adverbs or particles sensitive to the focus structure of a sentence. Examples of such focus-particles, as they have been labeled in the literature, are: *only*, *even*, *also* (English), *doar*, *numai*, *decât*, *chiar*, *şi* (Romanian), *solo*, *incluso*, *también* (Spanish), *csak* (Hungarian). It has been argued that these particles function as overt focus operators (Lopez and Winkler 2000) and always mark the constituent they associate with as contrastively focused. Association with focus particles does not automatically trigger displacement; similarly to contrastively focused constituents, phrases preceded by focus particles are allowed to occur in situ in languages which do not require obligatory displacement. Drubig (2000) analyses the focus particle *only* as a quantifier-like element operating over a set of alternatives (asserted or implied).

(6) a. She bought only CABBAGE.
b. She only bought CABBAGE.
c. Only CABBAGE did she buy.

As shown in example (6) taken from Drubig (2000), *only* may occupy three different positions in the structure of the sentence. The author argues that while the particle induces the same type of focus in all three examples, displacement to the left periphery (c) has certain pragmatic effects. Examples '(a) and (b) may occur in contexts where they are interpreted as a neutral report. In this case *only* operates on the rather unrestricted and not sharply delineated set of possible items supplied by the buying scenario and excludes everything except cabbage. Sentence (c) however, is more likely to occur in a situation where a closed set of alternatives is "under debate." *Only* then operates on a contextually salient set and the sentence in which it

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occurs could be followed by an enumeration of the excluded items. *Only* always induces a set of alternatives, but preposing has the effect of unambiguously narrowing its range down to a closed set of contextually specified choices[5]' (Drubig 2000: 30).

2.The syntactic structure of contrastive focus in Romanian. Previous analyses

Just like English and all the other Romance languages, Romanian marks focus intonationally. But unlike English and French (as claimed by Zubizarreta (1998)) and on a par with Italian, Spanish and Portuguese, presentational focus is marked on the last element of the prosodic unit, as established by the NSR[6]. Presentational focus is assigned in situ, no displacement of the focused constituent being necessary.

Similarly to the languages mentioned above and unlike Hungarian (Kiss 1998) Romanian allows, but does not obligatorily require displacement of contrastively focussed constituents. Assuming the clause structure proposed for Romanian in Alboiu (2002, 2004), Cornilescu (2000) with the finite verb raising to TP and subject in post-verbal position (case is assigned in VP-internal position so the subject need not raise to check case) and a syncretic IP as proposed by Alboiu (2002, 2004), Motapanyane (2000) hosting Aspect, clitics (adverbials such as *mai*, the sentence negation marker *nu*), Mood. We propose that contrastively focused constituents in Romanian target a position in the left-periphery higher than TP, but adjacent to it.

Contrastive focus is widely acknowledged to be an operator and therefore it requires movement to a scope position. Kiss (1998) proposes that this position is universally located in the IP domain dominating the verb. For Romanian, Alboiu (2002) takes contrastive Focus to be a feature hosted by SpecTP, similarly to the analysis proposed by Zubizarreta (1998) for Spanish. The author assumes a multiple-SpecTP structure hosting clitic elements (clitic adverbials, the negative marker) as well as Focus and Topic.

Cornilescu (2000) uses the weak crossover effect to distinguish between the Topic and the Focus position[7] in the left-periphery of the Romanian clauses. As shown in examples (8) and (20), only focused constituents give rise to WCO.

(7) Pe Ion_i îl răsfață mama lui_i. – TOPIC
(8) *[PE ION_i] îl răsfață mama lui_i. – FOCUS
PE Ion CL3SG spoils mother his
'It is Ion who is spoiled by his parents.'

As noticed by Zubizarreta (1998), Alboiu (2002, 2004) among others, the contrastive Focus position is unique. If two constituents are fronted, they cannot be both contrastively focused and occupy the pre-verbal Focus position as shown in example (9); the first of them must be interpreted as topic and target the left-periphery Topic position. As example (10) indicates, Topics cannot receive prosodic marking or be followed by a negative tag.

[5] Drubig (2000) identifies this effect as exhaustivity and associates it with displacement of the contrastively focused constituents in Hungarian, while other linguists (Balogh 2006) label as exhaustivity the effect of excluding any other member of the alternative set which focus particles like *only* have in most languages. In this paper we will use this second interpretation of exhaustivity.

[6] Winkler and Gobbel (2002) argue against Zubizarreta (1998) that NRS is only operative in wide focus constructions in Romanian. We do not wish to take a position in this respect as a detailed analysis of presentational focus in Romanian is beyond the aim of this paper and we believe that it does not influence the analysis we propose for contrastive focus construction in Romanian.

[7] This property of preposed focused constituents is first noted in Chomsky (1976).

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(9) * [MARIA] [doar PE ION] îl iubeşte, (nu Ioana).
(10) Maria [doar PE ION] îl iubeşte, *(nu Ioana).
Maria only PE ION CL3SG love3SG, not Ioana
'It is only Ion that Maria loves, *(not Ioana).'

There is also a condition of adjacency between the verbal complex (Alboiu, 2002) and the Focus. Any intervening constituent yields ungrammaticality.

(11) *[PE ION] Maria îl iubeste, (nu pe George).
PE ION Maria CL3SG love3SG

The author assumes this condition shared by wh-elements and bare quantifiers as well to prevent their co-occurrence with contrastively focused constituents in the preverbal field.

(12) *Cine [MÂINE] soseşte, nu duminică?
who tomorrow arrives, not Sunday
'Who arrives tomorrow, not on Sunday?'
(13) *[PE MARIA] nimeni n-o cunoaşte, nu pe Ioana.
PE Maria nobody not CL3SG knows, not PE Ioana.
'It is Maria that nobody knows, not Ioana.'
(14) *Cine nimic nu a citit?
who nothing not has read
'Who hasn't read anything?'

These constituents can co-occur as long as only one of them appears pre-verbally. While wh-elements must obligatorily surface in the left-periphery, bare quantifiers and contrastively focused constituents may appear in situ.

(15) Cine nu a citit nimic/ [SENSE AND SENSIBILITY], ci Pride and Prejudice ?
who not has read nothing/ Sense and Sensibility, but Pride and Prejudice
'Who hasn't read anything/ Sense and Sensibility, but Pride and Prejudice?'

3. The syntax of *doar* constructions

Doar is one of the members of the class of focus particles which induce exhaustive focus in Romanian including also *numai* and *decât*, being equivalents of *only* in English. These particles induce a contrast set which is restricted to a particular individual or subset to which the predicate applies.

(16) Am văzut-o [doar PE IOANA].
have-1SG seen-CL3SG only pe Ioana.
'I have only seen Ioana.'

(16) is interpreted as *I have seen Ioana and it is not true that I have seen anyone else*, thus restricting the contextually-given set of the persons that I may have seen to Ioana. This sentence is appropriate in a context where it has been previously asserted or assumed that I have seen some other persons except Ioana. Based on this property which it shares with contrastively focused constituents, as mentioned in the previous sections, we claim that *doar*

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marks contrastive focus irrespective of its position in the sentence, against Gobbel (1996) as quoted in Alboiu (2002: 190) who claims that focus particles mark contrastive focus only when the contrast set with which they are associated denotes a closed set whose members are known to the participants of the discourse. We will come back to Gobbel's analysis in the following section.

As pointed out in Bayer and Grosu (2000), *doar* lacks an inherent syntactic categorical feature, which explains its wide combinatorial possibilities.

(17) A plecat [doar MARIA/ O STUDENTĂ/ MAMA]. – DP
has left only Maria/ a student/ mother.
'Only Maria/ a student/ mother left'

(18) A sunat [doar IERI]. – AdvP
has called only yesterday
'He/She only called yesterday.'

(19) Au cântat [doar PENTRU TINE] – PP
have sung only for you
'They sang only for you.'

(20) A venit [doar pentru a ne da vestea/ ca să te vadă pe tine] – CP
has come only to A CL-1PL give the news/ COMP SA CL see you.
'He/She only came to give us the news/ to see you'

For space reasons we will restrict the analysis to *doar* DP constructions. The same analysis can be assumed for the other types of phrases, with certain restrictions and observations in the case of focused CPs.

Just like contrastively focused constituents discussed in the previous section *doar* DPs may appear either in pre-verbal position or in situ (with a preference for sentence-final), both with Subject and Object DPs.

(21) Au cantat [doar FETELE], (nu şi băieţii).
have sung only the girls

(22) [Doar FETELE] au cantat, (nu şi băieţii).
only the girls have sung, not too the boys
'Only the girls sang, not the boys too'

(23) Mănâncă [doar LEGUME].
eats only vegetables

(24) [Doar LEGUME] mănâncă.
only vegetables eats
'He/She only eats vegetables'

As shown, *doar* patterns like *only*, surfacing both pre- and post- verbal position, but unlike the English focus particle, *doar* cannot strand the focused constituent.

(25) a. We only invited [JANE], not Maria too.
b. We invited [only JANE], not Maria too.
a'. *Am doar invitat-o [PE JANE], nu şi pe Maria.
b'. Am invitat-o [doar PE JANE], nu şi pe Maria.

The weak crossover test can be applied to show that *doar* DPs target the same position as contrastive focus both when surfacing in situ and when fronted.

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(26) a. Părintii lui$_i$ îl răsfață pe Ion$_i$.
b. * Părinții lui$_i$ îl răsfață [(doar) pe ION$_i$], (nu, pe George)
parents his CL3SG spoil (only) PE Ion, (not PE George)
'His parents (only) spoil Ion, (not George).'

Bayer and Grosu (2000) claim that *doar* DPs do not represent a Focus construction all by themselves, they need to achieve scope. Therefore, they must undergo movement to an operator position. We take this to mean that *doar* must raise to some IP domain position to check its [Focus] feature against a head bearing this feature. Bayer (1996), as quoted in the work above, proposes that the DP marking contrast focus is covertly reordered to a scope position, if not already in such a position. We claim that fronted *doar* DPs surface in the same position as contrastively focused constituents as shown by the WCO test. Further evidence in support of this analysis is provided by the incompatibility of fronted contrastively focused constituents and *doar* DPs.

(27) *[MARIA] [doar Sense and Sensibility] a citit.
Maria only Sense and Sensibility has read.

We propose that *doar* DPs and contrastively focused constituents target the same position which is higher than TP immediately dominating it (as proposed by Cornilescu 1997 and 2000). We claim that this is a syncretic position hosting at least [wh], [Q], polarity and [Focus] features. We also propose that the same linguistic item can check more than one of these features. We label this position PolP[8] (as proposed initially by Laka (1990), an analysis also assumed by Drubig (2000), Winkler (2000) among others).

As we have already shown, contrastively focused doar DPs may surface in two positions: in situ (post-verbal position) or in pre-verbal position. This movement is triggered by a formal/morphosyntactic feature [Foc] present in the derivation and responsible for creating an operator-variable chain. We adopt the analysis put forward by Alboiu (2002) and assume that restrictive particles carry an u[Foc] feature. The need for valuation will trigger feature movement. Given that both features are uninterpretable, the derivation should crash. The author proposes in the spirit of Zubizarreta (1998) that prosodic stress provides the value for the [Foc] feature at Spell-Out, thus ensuring convergence.

Given the option to check features via Agree assumed for the in-situ position of *doar* DPs, displacement to pre-verbal focus position must be motivated by an independent reason.

4. *Doar* DPs and negation

We assume the following facts about Romanian negation: the negative marker is a clitic element, requiring adjacency to the negated constituent. If this constituent is a verb, it will trigger sentence negation.

(28) Nu a venit Maria.
not has come Maria
'Maria didn't come.'

[8] For arguments in favour of linking polarity and focus, see Lopez and Winkler (2000) who use focus to account for VP ellipsis constructions in Spanish, English and German.

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Otherwise, it will trigger constituent negation.

(29) [Nu pe Ion] l-am văzut.
not PE Ion CL3SG have seen.
'It's not Ion that I've seen'

Haegeman (1996), among others, distinguishes sentence negation from constituent negation by the property of the former to license n-words in Romance languages (NOTE, distinction between Romanian and other Romance languages with respect to the properties of n-words in pre-verbal position). But in Romanian this is not always a reliable test, given the ambiguity of sentences like (30).

(30) Nimeni nu iubeşte pe nimeni.
nobody not love3SG PE nobody
'Nobody loves nobody'

interpreted either as a negative sentence: For no x is it true that there exists a y such that x loves y (the concord reading), or as a positive one: For no x is it true that there doesn't exist a y such that x loves y, equivalent to 'Everybody loves somebody' (the double negation reading). Given that n-words licensing is not always a reliable test, we take licensing of strong NPIs such as *deloc* or *încă* to indicate sentence negation.

As noticed by Partee (2000), among others, the presence of a (contrastively) focussed constituent in the scope of a negator seems to interfere with the interpretation of a clause containing sentence negation. Thus, under one interpretation, a sentence like (31) intuitively seems to negate *Maria*, not the verb, thus being semantically equivalent to constituent negation: It is not Maria that I love:

(31) I don't love MARIA.

The same holds for Romanian *doar* DPs in post-verbal position.

(32) N-am văzut-o [doar PE MARIA].
not-have seen-CL3SG only PE Maria
'I haven't seen only Maria.'

Under its unmarked interpretation sentence (32) asserts that *I saw Maria* and that *it is not true that I haven't seen anyone else*.

Testing n-word licensing on sentence (32) indicates that this is a case of sentence negation.

(33) NIMENI n-a văzut-o niciodată [doar pe Maria].
nobody notCL-has seen-CL3SG never [only PE Maria]
'Nobody has ever seen just Maria.'

Sentence (33) presupposes the same thing as sentence (32), namely that *Maria is seen by someone*. But, applying the NPI licensing test will yield ungrammaticality for the unmarked positive reading.

(34) *N-am văzut-o deloc [doar pe Maria].
not-have seen-CL3SG at all only PE Maria (Neg>doar)
'It's only Maria that I haven't seen at all.'

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How then can we account for the affirmative interpretation?

The problem is even more puzzling. As hinted above, sentence (32) has two interpretations: an unmarked one under which I have seen Maria and some other people, and another marked one under which Maria is the only person that I haven't seen (sentence negation reading) also obtained by fronting *doar pe Maria*.

(35) [Doar PE MARIA] n-am văzut-o niciodată/deloc. (doar >Neg)

By fronting the focus phrase, this is no longer in the scope of negation and therefore it no longer interferes with the interpretation of negation.

Another problem is that sentence (33) doesn't allow the sentence negation reading possible with sentence (34).

We take Focus to be responsible for allowing or blocking the two different readings, as shown in sentences *a*, *b* and *c* below.

(36) a. NU am văzut-o [doar pe Maria].
b. Nu am văzut-o [doar pe MARIA], (nu pe George).
not have seen-CL3SG [only PE Maria] (not PE George)
c. [Doar pe MARIA] nu am văzut-o, (nu pe George).
[only PE Maria] not have seen-CL3SG (not PE George)

Sentence a, with the negative marker focused induces the affirmative reading, while sentence b and c with contrastive stress on the DP (in post-verbal and pre-verbal positions) exhibit sentence negation (reading two). (NOTE: Sentence b is marked in Romanian.)

Prosodic marking of the negative marker indicates that this occupies the SpecPolP position checking the [Foc] feature, which thus becomes unavailable for the *doar* DP.

In cases where the negative marker marker moves to SpecPolP it takes the entire TP as its complement and therefore TP becomes the contrastively focused constituent, and not only MARIA, as shown by the tag.

(37) NU am văzut-o doar pe Maria, ci l-am văzut şi pe George/ *nu pe George.

In sentence (33) we assume that blocking of the negative reading is due to the presence of *nimeni* in Spec PolP, just as in the case of the negative marker. The indefinite *nimeni* receives prosodical marking, which, according to Isac (2004) amounts to association with focus. Given the stipulation that no more than one contrastive focus phrase can move to pre-verbal position to check its [Foc] feature, it follows that *doar pe Maria* cannot be fronted, remaining within the scope of negation and inducing a denial negation reading.

But this would lead to a crash in the derivation, since if *nu* or *nimeni* checks the [Foc] feature against PolP, then the [Foc] feature of *doar* would remain unchecked.

Tentative analysis:

We come back to the analysis proposed by Gobbel (1996) as quoted in Drubig (2000) and Alboiu (2002), who claims that in certain contexts, focus particles only induce a presentational focus interpretation:

(38) a. Am auzit că ai invitat mulți musafiri.
have heard that have invited many guests
'I heard that you invited many guests'

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b. # [PolP NUMAI PE ION l-am [VP invitat]]
only PE Ion CL3SG-have invited
'It is only Ion I invited'
c. L-am [VP invitat numai pe Ion].
CL3SG-have invited only PE Ion
'I only invited Ion' (in Alboiu 2002: 191)

The author claims that a contrastive reading is obtained only when the domain of contrast is a closed set of individuals known to the participants of the discourse (in (39), Ion and Ioana).

(39) Am auzit că i-ai invitat pe Ion şi pe Ioana.
have heard COMP CL3PL-have invited PE Ion and PE Ioana.
L-am invitat [doar PE ION].
CL3SG-have invited only PE ION
'I've heard that you have invited Ion and Ioana. I have only invited Ion'

Another context where Gobbel claims that only the wide presentational focus interpretation is in answers to wh- questions.

(40) Cine a venit pana acum?
a. (A venit) [doar Maria]
b. *(A venit) [doar MARIA], (nu Ioana).
'Who has come so far? Only Maria has come, (*not Ioana).

To explain the negation puzzle and the interpretative differences noted by Gobbel we propose that in fact two different features are checked by *doar* DPs: [-Exhaustivity], which we take to be sufficient to assure the contrast focus interpretation[9] and [-contrast] or [-emphasis] as suggested for Zubizarreta (1998)[10] for focused n-words, which we believe is responsible for the pragmatic differences noticed by Drubig (2000) for fronted contrastive topics and the interpretation differences invoked by Gobbel (1996) for *doar* DPs in situ. We propose that *doar* DPs and contrastively focused constituents have an obligatory [-Exhaustivity] feature which they check in a functional position low in the IP/TP domain, as suggested by Bayer and Grosu (2000) targeted by focus particles in languages like Hungarian (Kiss 1998) and involved in VP ellipses in Spanish (Winkler and Lopez 2000). Under a cyclic derivation theory as we propose for focus movement in Romanian, this position may also be a vP periphery position, which is necessary anyway to allow checking of the [-Contrast] feature (optional for *doar* DPs and obligatory for 'contrastively focused constituents', as the term has been used in this paper, though we are aware that this label would need to be revised to accommodate the analysis proposed, in a later phase. We assume that *doar* DPs which apparently surface in-situ must in fact move to the left-edge of the vP, which allows the [-Foc]

[9] A relaxation of the definition of contrastive focus is necessary to accommodate this view. But we believe that this is necessary anyway if focus particles at least in English are interpreted to mark contrastive view, especially in cases where *only* acquires a scalar interpretation (Riester 2006).
[10] Zubizarreta actually argues for a difference between constituents marked [+emphasis] and contrastively focused phrases, but we believe that [+emphasis] as used by the author could also be interpreted to mark a type of polarity contrast in the vein of Winkler (2000).

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(or the [-Contrast] feature as we propose) to be checked and spelled-out in a later phase. Otherwise, the *doar* DP will be spelled out within the vP phase and it will not be available for checking against the [-Contrast] feature in PolP and the derivation will crash at the interface, given that all uninterpretable features must be checked.

In the line of Horvath (2007) we suggest the replacement of the label [Focus] with two different features [Exhaustivity] and [Contrast], checked in two different positions and responsible for different interpretative effects. This may also prove beneficial as the label [Focus] is sometimes used ambiguously for both presentational and contrastive focus, though, as it is generally acknowledged, the features associated with the two types of focus are of a different nature.

5. Conclusion

We have argued that *doar* as a focus particle marks contrastive focus, in a more relaxed interpretation of the term, its behaviour being up to a point identical to that of contrastively focused constituents. We have shown that, contrary to what has been assumed in analyses proposed for focus particles in Romanian (Drubig 2000) *doar* DPs target two positions in the functional domain: one lower than Negation (vP periphery) and the other one higher than Negation (PolP). This step in the derivation is necessary to account for the Focus-Negation interaction patterns. We have also argued against Gobbel (1996) for a unitary treatment of the focus particle *doar*, accounting for pragmatic differences in terms of different feature checking. Further study is necessary to accommodate all the facts and also to account for the apparent optionality in the checking of the higher feature as well the different interpretation effects which we expect to appear from the interaction of *doar* with different types of DPs, but which we have overlooked in the present paper.

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