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Splitting up Force: evidence from discourse particles*

Outline of the paper:

- definition of discourse particles (based on German tradition of modal particles).
- syntactic and pragmatic properties of German, Italian and Romanian discourse particles: their clause type restriction and interaction with illocutionary force.
- evidence for splitting up Rizzi's (1997) Force in two distinct projections for illocutionary force (ILL) and clause type (CT).

1. Introduction

- The studies on discourse particles started from the research done for German and other Germanic languages (cf. Abraham 1995, Bayer 2001, 2008, Hentschel 1986, Meibauer 1994, Thurmair 1989, 1991, etc.). In the German tradition, they are usually called "modal particles".
- Gradually crosslinguistic evidence has proved them to be a more widespread phenomenon. We will start from the research done on German in order to analyze similar particles in Italian and Romanian and to establish their syntactic and pragmatic properties within the clause.
- Discourse particles are main clause phenomena (cf. Coniglio, to appear, also see section 2.2.), in the sense of Emonds (1970). They are used to express the speaker's attitude or opinion with respect to a proposition (see, for instance, Thurmair 1989).

(1) Er kann *ja* schon sprechen.

he can Prt already speak

'He can already speak (it is evident / as you know).'

- In (1), the speaker uses the particle *ja* to emphasize that the propositional content of the utterance is evident, clear and potentially known to the addressee (cf. Thurmair 1989:200). On the one hand, s/he utters a proposition, on the other s/he adds his/her attitude or opinion with respect to this proposition.
- Each discourse particle is compatible with specific clause types (Thurmair 1989:49). For instance, *denn* may only occur in questions (Thurmair 1989, Wegener 2002, Grosz 2005, Bayer 2008).

(2) Kann er *denn* schwimmen?

can he Prt swim

'Is it true that he can swim?'

(3) Er kann (**denn*) schwimmen.

he can Prt swim

'He can swim.'

- Based on Altmann (1984:137), Thurmair (1989:44ff) lists the following seven clause types for German:
 - i. declaratives
 - ii. *yes/no* questions
 - iii. *wh* questions
 - iv. imperatives
 - v. optatives
 - vi. exclamatives
 - vii. *wh* exclamatives
- Besides clause type, what is relevant for the licensing of discourse particles is illocutionary force (cf. Jacobs 1986, 1991, Thurmair 1989, Abraham 1991, Zimmermann 2004a, b, etc.). By illocutionary force, we mean the speaker's intention in uttering a sentence (cf. Austin 1962,

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Searle 1975a). For example, Searle (1975a) distinguishes five main categories of speech acts:

- i. assertives
- ii. directives
- iii. commissives
- iv. expressives
- v. declarations

- One can usually observe a one-to-one relation between clause type (CT) and illocutionary force (ILL). For example, a directive (requesting an action) typically corresponds to an imperative clause (4). However, it may occur that, for reasons of politeness, an order is indirectly expressed by means of a question (5) (see Searle 1975b).

- (4) Call the police! ILL = directive; CT = imperative
 (5) Could you call the police? ILL = directive; CT = interrogative

- If we take into account the function of discourse particles, we notice that these elements do not modify the type, but rather the illocutionary force of the clause (Jacobs 1986, 1991, Thurmair 1989, Zimmermann 2004a,b, etc.).
- This claim may be proven by taking into account some examples from German, where the great number of particles sometimes allows for a fine-grained nuancing of the illocutionary force. E.g.:

- (6) Ruf die Polizei!
 'Call the police!'
- a. Ruf *halt* die Polizei!
 - b. Ruf *mal* die Polizei!
 - c. Ruf *doch* die Polizei!
 - d. Ruf *JA* die Polizei!
- bloss, nur, etc.*

↓
 cogent order

- Thus, particles take the illocutionary force of a given clause (X) and turn it into a different, more precisely specified illocutionary force (X') (Jacobs 1986, 1991):

$$(7) \quad X + \text{Prt} = X' \quad (\text{where } X \text{ stands for illocutionary force})$$

WORKING HYPOTHESIS: discourse particles must be compatible with the clause type (declarative, interrogative, exclamative, etc.) but they modify illocutionary force.

2. Italian and Romanian data

- Although German particles are confined to the IP (cf. (6), for instance),¹ they are linked to the illocutionary force and the CP layer (Coniglio 2007, 2009, to appear).
- As for Italian, the existence of German-like IP particles has already been claimed by Coniglio (2008, to appear), for instance *pure*:

- (8) Chiama *pure* la polizia!
call Prt the police
 'Call the police! (if you feel like it)'

- It may be the case that Italian also displays particles occurring in the CP, such as *almeno, magari, proprio*, etc., when used in certain contexts (also cf. Bazzanella 1995, Bonvino/Frascarelli/Pietrandrea 2008). However, no specific cartographic studies for these elements are available so far.
- A distinction between IP and CP particles can be drawn for Romanian as well. For example, although not all Romanian particles behave like this, the particle *doar* may actually occur either in the CP and in the IP. In (9),

¹ This was shown in Coniglio (2005), who argues that German modal particles occupy the highest projections in Cinque's (1999) functional structure of the IP.

the first occurrence of *doar* is in the CP, while the second one, following a habitual adverb (cf. Cinque 1999), is in the IP:

- (9) <Doar> Ion de obicei <doar> știe să -și rezolve problemele.
 Prt Ion usually Prt knows that refl solve_{SUBJ} problems-the
 ‘Usually Ion knows how to solve his own problems (, as we all know).’

- The existence of CP and IP particles sharing most properties has already been claimed by Del Gobbo/Poletto (2008), based on the results of interlinguistic investigation such as Law (2002) on Cantonese, Munaro/Poletto (2004) on Veneto dialects, Coniglio (2005) on German, etc.
- Cardinaletti (2009) claims that sentence-final particles in Veneto dialects (and in Italian), which are assumed to be merged in the CP by Munaro/Poletto (2004), are in the IP and not in the CP. In contrast, sentence-initial particles are to be posited in the CP (or higher) and have different semantics.
- Regardless of their syntactic distribution, all discourse particles depend on the clause type for their syntactic licensing and on illocutionary force for their pragmatic/discourse functions.

2.1 Italian discourse particles

- As shown in Coniglio (2008), Italian displays German-like IP particles (also cf. Cardinaletti 2007, 2009). Some examples are *mai*, *mica*, *poi*, *pure*, etc. (when used in their particle function).
- Italian particles, too, must be compatible with clause type (cf. Coniglio 2008). For instance, the particle *mai* may only occur in interrogative clauses (also see Obenauer/Poletto 2000):

- (10) Avrà *mai* letto quel libro?
 will.s/he.have Prt read that book
 ‘(I wonder:) Did he really read that book?’

- Although they are dependent on the clause type for their licensing, they interact and modify the illocutionary force:

- (11) Chiama la polizia!
 call the police
 ‘Call the police!’

- (12) Chiama *pure* la polizia!
 call Prt the police
 ‘Call the police (if you feel like it)!’

- Notice that, in (13), the particle *pure* occurs in a declarative clause. However, it modifies the directive force (requesting an action).²

- (13) Puoi *pure* chiamare la polizia.
 you.can call Prt the police
 ‘You can call the police (if you feel like it).’
 ILL = directive; CT = declarative

- The distribution of discourse particles shows that they are to be considered main clause phenomena (in the sense of Emonds 1970). More specifically, they can only be licensed in those clauses, which according to Haegeman (2002, 2004a,b, 2006) are endowed with illocutionary force, namely non-factive complement clauses, peripheral adverbials, and appositive relatives. The following examples are taken from Coniglio (2008:117f). Also see Coniglio (to appear).

- (14) Se Gianni ha (**pur*) detto che non verrà, allora non verrà.
 if Gianni has Prt said that not he’ll.come then not he’ll.come
 ‘If Gianni said that he won’t come, then he won’t come.’

- (15) Se Gianni – come dici – ha *pur* detto che non verrà,
 if Gianni as you.say has Prt said that not he.will.come
 perché allora ha prenotato l’hotel?
 why then has.he booked the-hotel
 ‘If Gianni – as you say – said that he won’t come, then why did he book the hotel?’

² Note that, in (13), the particle weakens the strength of the order, as is the case for *pure* in imperatives.

2.2 Romanian discourse particles

- On the basis of syntactic, semantic and morpho-phonological evidence, the following potential discourse particles have been identified (cf. Thun 1984):

CP: *oare, măcar, tocmai, or, păi, apoi/apăi*

IP/CP: *doar, numai, măcar, barem*

IP: *chiar, cam, prea, ?și*

- It is often difficult to distinguish between their uses as discourse particles and their adverbial / filler word functions. This property is not typical only of Romanian (cf. Cardinaletti 2007, 2009 and others before, who note that, in Italian and German, particles and adverbs are (almost) always interrelated).
- As in Italian and German, Romanian discourse particles occur in main clauses and in peripheral subordinates; each is compatible with specific clause types (cf. (16a) and (16b) below).
- *Oare* occurs in main (16a) and embedded interrogative clauses (17):
- (16) a) *Oare* a telefonat Maria aseară (așa cum a promis)?
Prt has called Maria last night (as how has promised)
 Has called Maria yesterday morning, as she promised (, I wonder)?
- b) (**Oare*) ce târziu a telefonat Maria aseară!
PRT what late has called Maria last night
 'Maria called so late last night!'

- (17) Cu Ioana am vorbit la telefon mai devreme,
with Ioana (I) have talked at phone more early
 în timp ce Maria oare a telefonat azi?
while Maria Prt has called today?
 'I talked to Ioana earlier on the phone, (while) has Mary called today (, I wonder)?'

- *Doar* can appear in interrogatives, declaratives, and exclamatives (18).

- (18) *Doar* cât de naiv trebuie să fie Ion (, dacă încă
Prt how of naïve must that be_{SUBJ} Ion if still
nu și-a dat seama că a fost luat peste picior)!
not refl has realized that (he) has been taken over foot
 '(Isn't it obvious) How naïve must Ion be (, if he still hasn't realized that he had been fooled at)!'

- Of the subordinate clauses, *doar* occurs in peripheral contexts, i.e. in non-factive complement clauses, peripheral adverbials, and appositive relatives (19).

- (19) Nu l -am mai vazut de-atunci pe Ion, căruia
not him_{CL} have more seen since Ion_{ACC}, who_{DAT}
doar i -am spus să treacă pe-aici când vrea.
Prt he_{CL.Dat} (I) have told that pass by_{SUBJ} here when (he) wants
 'I haven't seen John since then, to whom I DID tell to pass by whenever he wanted.'
- (20) Nu l -am mai vazut de-atunci pe băiatul căruia
not him_{CL} have more seen since boy-the_{ACC} who_{DAT}
 <*doar> i -am spus să treacă pe-aici când vrea.
Prt he_{CL.Dat} (I) have told that pass by_{SUBJ} here when (he) wants
 'Since then, I haven't seen the boy to whom I DID tell to pass by whenever he wanted.'

2.2.1. Particles in the IP or CP layer

- The question of the position of particles has been raised in recent literature (Cardinaletti 2009, Coniglio 2007, 2009, to appear, Del Gobbo/Poletto 2008).

- We suggest that there is evidence to assume that Romanian *oare* is located in the CP layer.³ For instance, *oare* can precede a left dislocated element (21) or a *wh* element (22). See also Hill (2002) for *oare* as a complementizer merged in the lowest CP head, namely Fin⁰.

(23) *Oare* și mașina și-a vândut-o Ion până la urmă?
Prt also car-the refl has sold it Ion until at end
 'Has Ion sold his car, too, in the end (, I wonder)?'

(24) *Oare* unde va pleca Ion mâine?
Prt where will leave Ion tomorrow
 'Where will Ion leave tomorrow (, I wonder)?'

- *Doar* is located either in the CP or in the IP⁴. In (25) *doar* precedes a *wh* phrase in the CP layer, while in (26) it follows a habitual adverb (cf. Cinque 1999) in the IP field (see also (9)).

(25) *Doar* tu cui crezi că-i place să fie sărac?
Prt you who think that he_{DAT} likes that be_{SUBJ} poor
 'Who do you think that likes being poor?'

(26) Ion de obicei *doar* citește seara vreo 20 de pagini!
Ion usually Prt reads evening about 20 of pages
 'Ion usually reads about 20 pages in the evening (as far as I know)!'

- Other particles are confined to the IP layer. This has been shown for Italian and German in Coniglio (2005, 2008). Such particles can also be found in Romanian, i.e. *chiar* (cf. Manoliu-Manea 1985), which can intervene between the auxiliary and the past participle⁵, as in (27), and which can occur lower than the habitual adverb *de obicei* 'usually' in the IP (cf. Cinque 1999), as in (28).

³ Also cf. Cardinaletti (2009) for sentence-initial particles in Veneto dialects located in the CP or higher (see above).

⁴ Anna Cardinaletti (p.c.) suggests that the two occurrences might be (instances of) different (homophonous) particles.

⁵ Romanian displays a strict adjacency requirement between the auxiliary and the full verb. Only a very restricted number of clitic elements (clitic pronouns, negation and just a few aspectual 'clitic adverbs' with which some IP particles are homophonous) can appear in this position.

(27) N-aș *chiar* zice că a atins un nou nivel ridicolul în serial
not-aux Prt I.say that has touched a new level ridicule-the in series,
ci doar s-a schimbat direcția în care se îndreaptă.
but only refl-has changed direction-the in which refl it.heads
 'I wouldn't really say that the series' ridicule has reached a new level, but only that it changed the direction towards which it used to head.'

(<http://forum.computergames.ro/64-filme-si-seriale/111537-lost-naufregiatii/page-136.html>, 20/05/2010)

(28) Ion de obicei *chiar* citește mult.
Ion usually Prt reads a lot
 'Ion usually really reads a lot, (unlike what you might think).'

3. Illocutionary force (ILL) and clause type (CT) as distinct projections

- We suggest that Rizzi's (1997) Force⁶ can be split into ILL, where the Speaker (with his/her intentions) is encoded, and CT, where features ensuring the realization of syntactic operations proper of each clause type are present.

- One piece of evidence that CT must be distinguished from ILL comes from feature mismatch (also cf. (4) and (5)).

(29) Could you close the window, please? (*Yes, I can/could.)
 ILL = directive (requesting an action); CT = interrogative

- We further suggest that CT must be lower than ILL (but higher than the positions where CP particles are merged),⁷ because:

⁶ Rizzi (1997) proposed the existence of a CP layer split into several projections:

(i) Force (Top*) (Foc) (Top*) Fin

⁷ For the time being, we have nothing to say on the exact position of CT, nor on the precise merging position of CP particles. Judgements are subtle, but it seems to us that Italian and Romanian CP particles appear to precede FamiliarTopic (and probably also ContrastiveTopic), but they do not occur higher than GroundTopic (in the sense of Frascarelli/Hinterhölzl 2007).

- a. CT closely interacts with FinP and with the IP (particularly with Mood).
- b. ILL is the syntactic projection which encodes the speaker and her/his attitude/intentions in relation to the discourse (cf. Giorgi 2008, 2010 for arguments in favour of the syntactic representation of the Speaker's temporal – and spatial – coordinates).

4. Analysis

- Summing up, based on examples from German, Italian and Romanian, it was argued that it is the clause type that restricts the possible discourse particles which can occur in a given clause. However, the particles modify the illocutionary force.
 - Clausal typing, too, depends on the presence of illocutionary force (see the discussion around (4)).
 - However, if we consider central subordinates, which do not allow the presence of particles, it has been claimed that they lack illocutionary force (Haegeman 2002 and further work). Nonetheless, they do have a clause type, namely a “default” one (which generally surfaces just like the declarative CT of root contexts). This may be taken as a further piece of evidence that CT must be encoded in a projection which is distinct from ILL.
- (30) Se piove(*?/*!), mi bagno.
 if rains, refl wet
 ‘If it rains, I’ll get wet.’
- We assume that, even though central subordinates do not have *independent* illocutionary force, they do nonetheless have the projection ILL (which encodes the speaker's coordinates, allegedly by inheriting them anaphorically from the superordinate clause). Therefore, ILL will be present both in central and peripheral clauses.

- If ILL is full-fledged, as in root contexts, all possible clause types are available (interrogative, declarative, imperative, etc.). In contrast, ILL is assumed to be impoverished in central subordinate clauses (since they have no independent illocutionary force). Thus, it can only be associated with the “default” declarative CT.
- In §3 we suggested that a distinction can be made between a projection CT and a higher projection ILL. Theoretically, this distinction raises the question as to how discourse particles interact with these two projections.
- In our proposal, particles (*Prt*) are assumed to have two interpretable features, a feature which refers to the speaker encoded in ILL and a feature which ensures syntactic compatibility with CT.
- Accordingly, *Prt* has a feature [*iintent*(ionality)] related to the illocutionary force, and a feature [*itype*] related to clause type.⁸ Cf. Bayer (2008) for a similar proposal involving feature checking.

(31) *Prt* [*itype*; *iintent*]

- Given that all clause types are associated with a specific syntax (i.e., word order), the type feature of CT will be interpretable.⁹

(32) CT [*itype*]

- ILL has an uninterpretable feature related to the clause type [*utype*] and an uninterpretable feature related to intentionality [*uintent*], which will probe for its interpretable counterpart on *Prt*.

(33) ILL [*utype*; *uintent*]

⁸ Similarly to *wh* elements, which are assumed to have a feature [*iwh*] (Adger 2003).

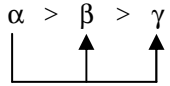
⁹ For Adger (2003), an interpretable [clause-type] feature is present on C, which “determines whether a CP is interpreted as a question or as a declarative statement” (Adger 2003:333). In our system of ‘Split-Force’, this feature is found on CT.

- Both features [*itype*] (on CT and on *Prt*) will be probed by [*utype*] in ILL. The feature [*uintent*] in ILL will also look for [*iintent*] on *Prt*.¹⁰

(34) ILL [*#type*; *#intent*] > CT [*itype*] > *Prt* [*itype*; *iintent*]

- CT and *Prt* are both goals for the probe ILL. Our account relies on the Multiple AGREE mechanism as a single simultaneous operation (based on Covert Multiple Feature-Checking without MOVE):¹¹

(35) Multiple AGREE (Hiraiwa 2000:70)



(AGREE (α , β , γ), where α is a probe and both β and γ are matching goals for α)

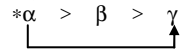
- The probe ILL looks for all matching goals in its domain (i.e., it does not stop probing, once it has found the closest matching goal, namely CT). Multiple AGREE will apply to both matched goals (CT and *Prt*) simultaneously.

¹⁰ In central subordinates, ILL has an uninterpretable feature for what we call “default” type (see page 11), which will find its perfect match on CT. For Multiple AGREE (see (35)), ILL will continue probing in its domain. If a *Prt* is present, ILL will find a non-matching type feature on the particle, thus AGREE cannot apply to both goals, causing the derivation to crash. Consequently, particles cannot appear in central subordinates. Given Multiple AGREE, if two (or more) particles co-occur, their features [*iintent*] will be both licensed by ILL in one single operation.

As for particles which are merged above the CP layer (cf. Cardinaletti 2009), this mechanism would also explain their different semantics with respect to particles merged in the CP/IP layer.

¹¹ Multiple AGREE avoids the Defective Intervention Constraint, which prohibits the establishment of an AGREE relation when a closer but inactive goal (due to prior AGREE with a probe) is present. The latter would intervene between a probe and another goal (Chomsky 2000:123). Thus, the DIC would block a further AGREE relation at a distance (cf. Hiraiwa 2000).

(i) Defective Intervention Constraint (Chomsky 2000:123)



5. Conclusions

- On the basis of the functions and distribution of discourse particles, we argued for the necessity of splitting up Force (Rizzi 1997 and subsequent work) into two projections: ILL(ocutionary Force) and C(lause) T(ype);
- Discourse particles can only appear in root contexts (main clauses and peripheral subordinates), which are speech acts and thus have independent illocutionary force;
- However, all clauses (including central subordinates) have a clause type, whether they have a full-fledged or an impoverished ILL. Specifically, central embedded clauses surface as declaratives (“default” type);
- Discourse particles modify the illocutionary force of a clause, without CT to intervene. However, at the same time, they have to be compatible with CT;
- We proposed a Multiple AGREE mechanism of feature checking (cf. Hiraiwa 2000) in order to account for the relations between ILL and CT, ILL and *Prt*, and CT and *Prt*, respectively;
- Specifically, *Prt* enters the derivation with two interpretable features (one for clause type and one for illocutionary force), which are both probed for by their uninterpretable counterparts in ILL.

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