The complementizer system in informal Welsh

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This study looks at the complementizer system in fronted-order clauses in contemporary informal Welsh, which is mainly, but not exclusively, spontaneous spoken Welsh. It discusses whether a split-CP analysis is necessary to account for the data or whether a single-CP analysis is adequate. The study first of all outlines the basic data. It then considers three analyses of the data: a split-CP analysis and two versions of a phrasal analysis. The study concludes with an assessment of the effectiveness of the three approaches.

1 Data

We are primarily concerned with words which occur before fronted phrases in fronted-order finite clauses, and which we shall refer to as focus particles. Example (1a) illustrates normal word order in Welsh finite clauses, namely, verb + subject + complement. Fronted word order is produced when a constituent from a canonical position occurs in a preverbal position, as in (1b) in which the subject is fronted. We also consider words which occur immediately before finite verbs in normal-order and fronted-order clauses, which we shall refer to as preverbal particles.

1.1 Focus particles

Examples (1c–g) illustrate the focus particles which occur before a fronted phrase in informal Welsh, namely, *efe*, *dim / nage*, and *ma / taw / na*. (The use of parentheses and strikethrough in these examples is explained in the course of the presentation below.) Focus particles are very different in formal Welsh: there are more of them and there are also different forms. But we shall not pursue the details here (but table 6 lists formal focus particles). We shall make five points about focus particles in the informal style at this introductory stage.

First, all focus particles occur before a fronted phrase in a fronted-order clause. A DP subject phrase is illustrated in the examples in (1c–g) but other phrases which have other grammatical functions are also possible in fronted position (examples can be found in Borsley, Tallerman, and Willis 2007: 123–129).

Second, focus phrases are variously sensitive to non-embedded and embedded contexts. *Efe* occurs in non-embedded clauses as in (1c), *ma / taw / na* occur in embedded clauses as in (1g), and *dim / nage* can occur in non-embedded clauses as in (1d–e) or embedded clauses as in (1f).

1 a. *fydd* *Siôn* *yna* *heno*.
be.FUT.3SG Siôn there tonight
'Siôn will be there tonight.'

b. *Siôn* ~~*a*~~ *fydd* *yna* *heno.*
Siôn PT be.FUT.3SG there tonight
'it's Siôn who will be there tonight.'

c. ~~*ai*~~ / (*efe*) *Siôn* ~~*a*~~ *fydd* *yna* *heno?*
Q Siôn PT be.FUT.3SG there tonight
'is it Siôn who will be there tonight?'

d. *dim / nage* *Siôn* ~~*a*~~ *fydd* *yna* *heno.*
NEG Siôn PT be.FUT.3SG there tonight
'it's not Siôn who will be there tonight.'

e. *dim / nage* *Siôn* ~~*a*~~ *fydd* *yna* *heno?*
NEG Siôn PT be.FUT.3SG there tonight
'isn't it Siôn who will be there tonight?'

f. *hwyrach* *dim / nage* *Siôn* ~~*a*~~ *fydd* *yna* *heno.*
perhaps NEG Siôn PT be.FUT.3SG there tonight
'perhaps it's not Siôn who will be there tonight.'

g. *hwyrach* (*ma / taw / na*) *Siôn* ~~*a*~~ *fydd* *yna* *heno.*
perhaps PT Siôn PT be.FUT.3SG there tonight
'perhaps it's Siôn who will be there tonight.'

Third, focus particles can be assigned semantic features, which are based on illocutionary force (declarative or interrogative) and polarity (positive or negative). On the basis of the examples in (1), we could claim that each focus particle can be assigned both a force and polarity feature. *Efe* is interrogative and positive. *Dim* / *nage* are negative and declarative or interrogative — they are declarative in embedded and non-embedded clauses as in (1d, f), but they are interrogative only in non-embedded clauses as in (1e). *Ma* / *taw* / *na* are declarative and positive, as in example (1g). But the examples in (2) show that, in informal Welsh, *mai* and *dim* can occur with each other. *Mai* precedes *dim* as in (2a), but *dim* does not precede *mai*, as (2b) shows.

2 a. *hwyrach mai dim Siôn sydd ar fai.*
perhaps DEC NEG Siôn be.PRES.3SG on fault
'perhaps it isn't Siôn who is at fault.'

b. * *hwyrach dim mai Siôn sydd ar fai.*
perhaps NEG DEC Siôn be.PRES.3SG on fault
'perhaps it isn't Siôn who is at fault.'

In the light of (2a), it makes no sense to say that *ma / taw / na* are positive and that *dim / nage* are negative. A more effective interpretation of the semantics of the focus particles is to say that *ma / taw / na* only have a force feature, declarative, and that *dim / nage* only have a polarity feature, negative. Overall, we can claim that *efe* and *ma / taw / na* convey only force features while *dim / nage* convey only polarity features. Separating force and polarity has two advantages. One is that it explains why *ma / taw / na* and *dim / nage* can occur together. The other is that it allows a simpler explanation of the occurrences of *dim / nage* in both declarative and interrogative clauses. We no longer have to say that they can be both declarative and interrogative. The clauses in which they occur can be either declarative or interrogative, but *dim / nage* are not assigned force features and are simply negative in such clauses. Given that declarative *mai* and *dim* co-occur, it follows that we should expect the interrogative particle *efe* to occur with *dim*. *Efe* only occurs in southern dialects, and southern speakers who were consulted mainly rejected *efe dim / nage* as ungrammatical or questionable while a small minority found this co-occurrence possible.

3 a. (?/* *efe*) *dim / nage Siôn sydd wedi cael y swydd?*
Q NEG Siôn be.PRES.3SG PERF get the post
'isn't it Siôn who has had the job?'

b. (?/* *efe*) *dim / nage Mari oedd ar fai?*
Q NEG Mari be.IMPF.3SG on fault
'isn't it Mari who was to blame?'

Acceptable equivalents of examples like (3) simply involve the negative particles with question intonation on the clause as in (1e). Further, some southern speakers can also use *nagefe* [1] in interrogatives.

4 a. *nagefe Siôn sydd wedi cael y swydd?*
Q+NEG Siôn be.PRES.3SG PERF get the post
'isn't it Siôn who has had the job?'

b. *nagefe* *Mari* ~~*a*~~ *oedd* *ar* *fai?*
Q+NEG Mari PT be.IMPF.3SG on fault
'isn't it Mari who was to blame?'

In northern dialects, no interrogative particle is available to occur with *dim*. In summary, *ma / taw / na* and *dim / nage* can co-occur but the co-occurrence of *efe* and *dim / nage* is much less certain.

Fourth, *efe* and *ma / taw / na* are optional while *dim / nage* are compulsory. Optional particles are indicated with round brackets, (particle). It can be seen that the polarity particles must be present but the force particles can be omitted.

Fifth, there are some dialectal differences. *Efe* (or a variant *ife*) as in (1c) optionally occurs in southern dialects. But no equivalent overt particle occurs in northern dialects — where no particle occurs in informal Welsh, the particle which occurs in formal Welsh is given with double strikethrough, ~~*particle*~~. *Ma* is widely used (especially in northern dialects), *taw* occurs in southern dialects, and *na* occurs in northern dialects. *Dim* widely occurs (especially in northern dialects) while *nage* occurs in southern dialects. Some speakers use *ddim* in place of *dim* — *ddim* also occurs as a negative adverb, as in (5c–d) and (6b–c).

All these details are summarized in table 1, except for the dialect differences.

Table 1. Focus particles in informal Welsh — force, polarity, position, and embedding

		Force		Polarity	
		Declarative	Interrogative	Positive	Negative
Pre-Fronted Phrase	Non-embedded	*ø*	~~*ai*~~ */ (efe)*	*ø*	*dim / nage*
	Embedded	*(taw / na / ma)*	see section 4	*ø*	*dim / nage*

The symbol *ø* indicates that the phonetic content is null, that is, the semantic feature is never overtly realized. It can be seen that positive is always null but declarative is only null in a non-embedded context. Only the declarative particles are sensitive to embedding. No particle occurs in any style of Welsh in clauses like (1b), in which the relevant semantic and syntactic features are declarative, positive, and non-embedded. Interrogatives in embedded clauses are too complex to discuss at this introductory stage and are described in section 4.

1.2 Preverbal particles

The preverbal particles which occur in formal Welsh are mainly omitted in informal Welsh. Those which can occur in informal Welsh are *fe / mi* and *na* (*nad* before vowels). We shall make eight points about preverbal particles in informal Welsh, some of which follow the points which are made about focus particles. First, preverbal particles occur before a finite verb. Second, there are differences in terms of clausal word order. *Fe / mi* occur only in normal-order clauses as in (5a), while *na* can occur in both normal-order and fronted-order clauses as in (5b–c) and (6a–b) respectively. (*Na* can also occur in relative clauses, but we shall not consider them here.) Third, there are differences in terms of embedding. *Fe / mi* occur in non-embedded clauses as in (5a). The syntactic properties of *na* are more complex to explain. In the case of examples like (5b–c), we can say that *na* occurs in an embedded clause, whereas fronted-order clauses like (6a–b) are non-embedded clauses. But, for our convenience, we shall follow Tallerman (1996: 120–121) who argues that *na* in fronted-order clauses as in (6) is also in an embedded context of some sort. This simplifies the account of preverbal particles: *fe / mi* occurs in non-embedded contexts while *na* occurs in embedded contexts.

5 a. (*fe / mi*) *fydd* *Siôn* *yna* *heno.*
PT be.FUT.3SG Siôn there tonight
'Siôn will be there tonight.'

b. *hwyrach* *na* *fydd* *Siôn* *yna* *heno.*
perhaps PT be.FUT.3SG Siôn there tonight
'perhaps Siôn will not be there tonight.'

c. *hwyrach* *na* *fydd* *Siôn* *ddim* *yna* *heno.*
perhaps PT be.FUT.3SG Siôn NEG there tonight
'perhaps Siôn will not be there tonight?'

d. *hwyrach* ~~*na*~~ *fydd* *Siôn* *ddim* *yna* *heno.*
perhaps PT be.FUT.3SG Siôn NEG there tonight
'perhaps Siôn will not be there tonight?'

6 a. *Siôn* *na* *fydd* *yna* *heno.*
Siôn PT be.FUT.3SG there tonight
'it's Siôn who will be there tonight.'

b. *Siôn* *na* *fydd* *ddim* *yna* *heno.*
Siôn PT be.FUT.3SG NEG there tonight
'it's Siôn who will be there tonight.'

c. *Siôn* ~~*na*~~ *fydd ddim yna heno.*
Siôn PT be.FUT.3SG NEG there tonight
'it's Siôn who will be there tonight.'

Fourth, preverbal particles have force and polarity features. But unlike focus particles, there are no examples of co-occurrences of preverbal particles in informal Welsh, and they convey both force and polarity features. *Fe / mi* are declarative and positive. *Na* is declarative and negative.

Fifth, there are restrictions on the use of *fe* and *mi*, which are based on types of verbs. *Mi* can occur with all finite verbs except for the third person forms of the present tense of *bod* 'be'. Thus, we do not have:

7 a. **mi ma' Siôn yna rwan.*
PT be.PRES.3SG Siôn there now
'Siôn is there now.'
b. **mi ma'n nhw yna rwan.*
PT be.PRES.3PL they there now
'they are there now.'

Thomas (1996: 86) records that *fe* can occur before all verbs except for all present and imperfect tenses of *bod* 'be', unlike *mi* which can occur before these forms except for the restriction in (7). Thus, we have the following:

8 a. *mi / (*fe) wyt ti yna.*
PT be.PRES.2SG you. 2SG there
'Siôn is there now.'
b. *mi / (*fe) oeddet ti yna.*
PT be.IMPF.2SG you. 2SG there
'Siôn is there now.'

A fuller description of other forms which are equivalent to *fe / mi* and which occur in some dialects is available in Thomas and Thomas (1989: 74–77).

Sixth, *fe / mi* are optional, and the main possibility is for these particles to be absent. The possibilities with *na* are more complex. It can occur by itself as in (5b) and (6a) as the only indication of clausal negation, and cannot be omitted. But it can co-occur with another negator such as adverbial *ddim* as in (5c) and (6b), and in this context, it can be omitted as in (5d) and

(6c). Examples (5c–d) and (6b–c) illustrate the use of the adverbial negator *ddim*, but other negative elements can occur in other clauses (see Borsley and Jones 2005 for details). Different speakers favour one or more of these three possibilities: some may use *na* while others omit *na* and use another negator.

Seventh, there are dialect differences. *Fe* occurs mainly in southern dialects, and *mi* occurs mainly in northern dialects. It may be the case that the use of *na* is more typical of some northern speakers, but its omission in the context of another negator is more widespread.[2]

Eighth, preverbal particles are mutational triggers. *Fe / mi* trigger the soft mutation — *fydd* occurs in (5a) and not the radical *bydd*. For some speakers, *na* triggers either the aspirate mutation or the soft mutation (depending on the initial consonant of the finite verb) but for other speakers it triggers only the soft mutation. In (5b–c) and (6a–b), *fydd* occurs and not the radical *bydd*. The mutational effects remain when the preverbal particles are absent: *fydd* and not the radical *bydd* occurs when *fe / mi* is absent as in (5a) and when *na* is absent as in (5d) and (6c).

The details about syntactic properties, semantic properties, embedding, and optionality are summarised in table 2.

Table 2. Preverbal particles in informal Welsh — force, polarity, position, and embedding

		Declarative		Interrogative	
		Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative
Preverbal Position	Non-embedded	(*mi / fe*)	ø	ø	ø
	Embedded	ø	(*na*)	ø	ø

As can be seen, preverbal particles are not common in informal Welsh. *Na* can only be omitted in the context of another negator. In formal Welsh, the zeros are replaced with overt particles.

As well as particles, the clitics *d* (or variant *t*) and *r* can occur in informal Welsh. They only occur with the present tense and past imperfect tense forms of the copula which begin with a vowel; and when informal Welsh is written, they are attached to the finite verb. Both clitics are optional and are mainly omitted. Examples are given in (9) and (10).

9 a. (*d*)*oedd* *Siôn* *ddim* *yna* *neithiwr*.
NEG.be.IMPF.3SG Siôn NEG there last-night
‘ Siôn was not there last night.’

b. (*d*)*oedd* *Siôn* *ddim* *yna* *neithiwr?*
NEG.be.IMPF.3SG Siôn NEG there last-night
'wasn't Siôn there last night?'

c. *hwyrach* (*d*)*oedd* *Siôn* *ddim* *yna* *heno.*
perhaps NEG.be.FUT.3SG Siôn NEG there last-night
'perhaps Siôn was not there last night.'

10 (*r*)*oedd* *Siôn* *yna* *neithiwr.*
PT.be.IMPF.3SG Siôn there last-night
' Siôn was there last night.'

R occurs in clauses which are positive, declarative, and non-embedded. It is equivalent to *fe / mi*. It is rare in informal spoken Welsh, but is encountered in written versions of the informal style. *D* is negative, but it must occur with another negator, such as adverbial *ddim* as in the examples in (9).[3] It can occur in non-embedded and embedded clauses as in (9a–b) and (9c) respectively. The non-embedded clauses can be declarative or interrogative but the embedded clauses can only be declarative. But there are stylistic data which suggest that there are two clitics *d*, one which occurs in non-embedded clauses and the other which occurs in embedded clauses. In formal Welsh, the preverbal particle *ni* (*nid* before vowels) occurs in non-embedded contexts and *na* (*nad* before vowels) occurs in embedded contexts: *nid yw Siôn yna* 'Siôn is not there' and *hwyrach nad yw Siôn yna* 'perhaps Siôn is not there'. In informal Welsh, we have *dyw Siôn ddim yna* 'Siôn is not there' and *hwyrach dyw Siôn ddim yna* 'perhaps Siôn is not there'. On the basis of these stylistic data, it is reasonable to conclude that reduction of *nid* to *d* and *nad* to *d* has resulted in a homonym which can occur in non-embedded and embedded contexts.

We are only concerned with preverbal particles to the extent that they inform the analysis of the focus particles. No attempt will be made to analyse their syntax. The clitics are not considered any further.

2 Split-CP analysis

Fronted clauses like the one in (1b) do not contain a focus particle and can be analysed with a standard CP configuration as in (11), in which the fronted phrase is located in the Specifier of the CP. It is contentious whether a preverbal particle is a complementizer or whether it forms a constituent with the finite verb. We shall not discuss this issue in this study, mainly leaving the syntax of preverbal particles and the remainder of the clause undefined.[4]

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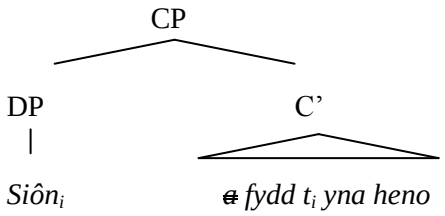

Concentrating mainly on examples like (1g), Tallerman (1996) argues that the focus particle is another complementizer and that a multiple complementizer phrase is necessary to account for Welsh clausal syntax (work on multiple complementizer phrases is to be found in Rizzi and Roberts 1989 and Rizzi 1997). The analysis in (12), which concentrates on the embedded clause in (1g), shows this approach (in Tallerman's analysis preverbal particles are lower complementizers in C2, but, as mentioned, we ignore the categorial status of preverbal particles).

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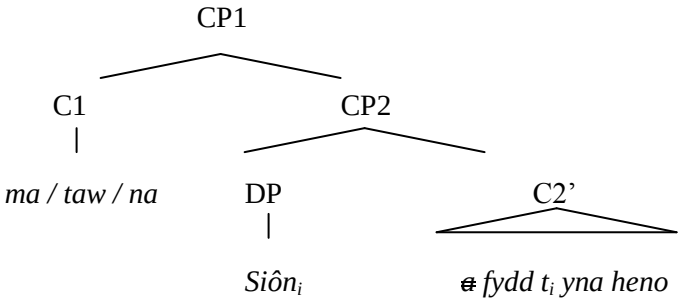

Roberts (2005) also has a split-CP analysis, but his analysis is more complex, using Force Phrase (ForceP), Focus Phrase (FocP), and Finite Phrase (FinP), as in (13). Roberts' approach also allows for a possible Topic Phrase (TopP), but we shall not consider this phrase here.

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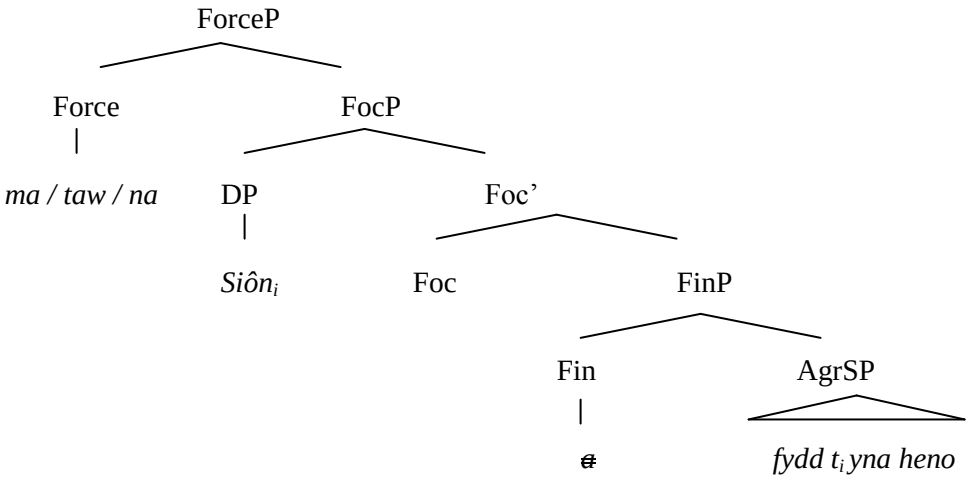

As can be seen, the focus particles are in Force and the preverbal particles ar in Fin, and the fronted phrase is in the Specifier of FocP. For our purposes, we shall concentrate upon

Tallerman's two-way split. Non-embedded fronted-clauses like (1b) have no overt complementizer. But, following Tallerman (1996: 117–118), we can hold that such clauses have a CP1 but the complementizer has no phonetic content, which leads to a re-assessment of the analysis in (11), which we shall not pursue.

The configuration in (12) can be developed to account for the data in section 1.1. First, the positioning of focus particles in the clause can be accounted for by their complement selections. But to account for the co-occurrences of particles in examples like (2a), another split is required in the CP system, as in (14).

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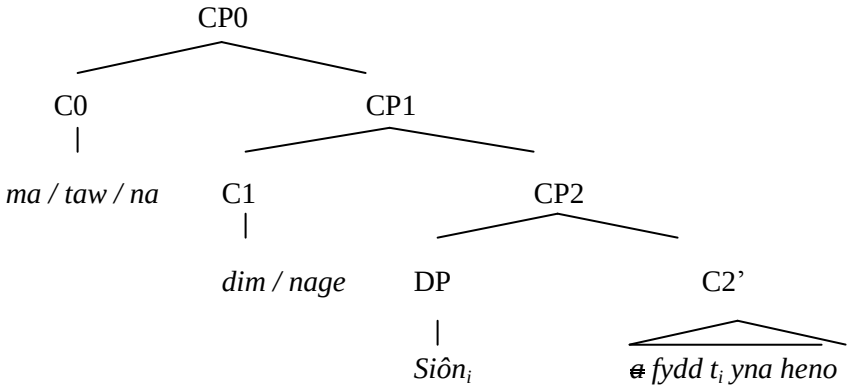

The force particles are in the head of CP0, the polarity particles are in the head of CP1, and the preverbal particles are somewhere in CP2, possibly in C2 or elsewhere. The force particles in CP0, *ma / taw / na*, can select CP1, which accounts for their occurrence with the polarity particles as in (2a); but the polarity particles cannot select CP0. However, defining the complement selections in terms of type of phrase alone does not achieve proper positioning of the single occurrences of the focus particles. They only select CP2 when its Specifier is filled. Their selectional properties must therefore be given as [Spec C2'] and not simply CP2. In brief, the force particles select CP1 and [Spec C2'], but the polarity particles select only [Spec C2'], and these selections produce the proper positioning of the particles in the left periphery of the clause.

Second, the constraints which relate to embedding, which apply only to the force particles, can be defined in terms of whether CP0 itself can be selected as a complement by other higher heads. *Ma / taw / na* only occur in a CP0 which is in the configuration XP[X CP0], in which X is the head of a higher phrase and CP0 is selected as its complement. *Efe* only occurs in an unselected CP0. We shall represent the configurational contexts with the feature specification [±SELECTED]: *ma / taw / na* are specified as [+SELECTED] and *efe* as [–SELECTED]. The polarity particles *dim / nage* in CP1 are unaffected by embedding and need no feature specification to constrain their occurrences or,

alternatively, they can be specified as [±SELECTED] to indicate that they can occur in a non-embedded context or an embedded context.

Third, the semantic features of the focus particles can be accounted for with feature specifications. The force features of *efe* and *ma / taw / na* are [–DECLARATIVE] and [+DECLARATIVE] respectively, and the polarity feature of *dim / nage* is [–POSITIVE]. It can be seen from (14) that the force particles are in the higher complementizer and that the polarity particles are in the lower complementizer. These phrases could reasonably be re-labelled as Force Phrase (ForceP) and Polarity Phrase (PolP). Given that these phrases, however labelled, c-command all of the clause, their semantics also scope all of the clause, thus indicating whether the clause is declarative or interrogative and positive or negative.

The details about complement selection, selection by other heads, and semantics are summarised in table 3.

Table 3. Feature specifications of the focus particles in informal Welsh

	semantic	selection of complement	selected by head
efe	–DECLARATIVE	[Spec C2']	–SELECTED
ma / taw / na	+DECLARATIVE	CP1 or [Spec C2']	+SELECTED
dim / nage	–POSITIVE	[Spec C2']	(±SELECTED)

The selection of complements accounts for their initial position in fronted-order clauses. Their selection by higher heads accounts for the embedding constraints.

The complementizer analysis of focus particles can be supported by the extent to which they conform with general characteristics of complementizers over a number of languages. Firstly, complementizers are clause-initial. The English complementizers *that*, *whether,* and *for* occur before complement clauses, but examples in Radford (1988: 295–303) from other languages show that complementizers can also occur before non-embedded clauses. The Welsh focus particles occur in clause-initial position in both non-embedded and embedded clauses, albeit fronted-clauses. Secondly, complementizers can reflect the syntactic properties of the clauses which they precede. Thus, the English complementizer *that* occurs before finite clauses (*I know that John is there*), while *for* occurs before non-finite clauses (*it's preferable for John to be there*), and *whether* occurs before both finite (*I don't know whether John is there*) and non-finite (*I don't know whether to apply for the job*). As we have seen, the occurrences of Welsh focus particles are

also determined by the syntax of the clauses which they precede, namely, whether the clauses are non-embedded or embedded. Thirdly, and finally, complementizers also reflect the semantic properties of clauses. Radford (1988: 292–303) provides data which shows that complementizers in other languages can variously be interrogative, exclamative, imperative, or declarative. The Welsh focus particles similarly can be said to be interrogative or declarative, and although Radford does not illustrate negative complementizers, the Welsh focus particles can also be assigned polarity features. There are then grounds for analysing the focus particles as complementizers, and following Borsley, Tallerman, and Willis (2007: 128–129), as they occur before fronted phrases, they can be referred to as focus complementizers. (Roberts 2005: 31–32 refers to focus particles as a 'special class of complementizers', and uses 'focus particle' to refer to the preverbal particles *a* and *y* which occur in fronted-order clauses.)

We shall see, however, that there are other grounds which question the complementizer analysis of focus particles in (12) or (14).

3 Phrasal analyses and a single CP

There are grounds for claiming that focus particles do not form a constituent with the clause but form a constituent with the fronted phrase. That is, instead of the analyses in (12) or (14), we can maintain the analysis in (11) by locating the focus particles in the constituency of the fronted phrase in Spec CP, as in (15).

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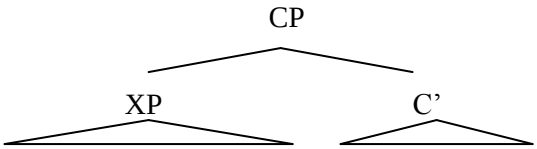


ma / taw / na ~ efe Siôn$_i$ *fydd* t_i *yna heno*

dim / nage Siôn$_i$ *fydd* t_i *yna heno*

Before considering the details of this approach, we shall outline the grounds for a phrasal analysis.

3.1 Grounds for a phrasal analysis

The distinction between clausal constituent and phrasal constituent[5] is readily apparent with the negative focus particles *dim / nage*, and both Tallerman (1996: 100, 119) and Willis (1998: 6)

distinguish between phrasal negation and clausal negation. We shall consider three reasons why the negative particles are phrasal constituents. First, when a negative focus particle occurs, the body of the clause itself can be positive or negative:

16 a. *dim / nage Siôn ~~a~~ fydd yna.*
NEG Siôn PT be.FUT.3SG there
'perhaps it isn't Siôn who will be there.'

b. *dim / nage Siôn na fydd yna.*
NEG Siôn NEG be.FUT.3SG there
'it isn't Siôn who won't be there.'

Recalling the discussion in section 1.2, other patterns of negation are possible in the body of the clause, but for economy of presentation we shall concentrate on the one in (16b). It is clear from (16b) in particular that the polarity of the clause is independent of the polarity of the fronted phrase. We cannot claim that we have single negation or that the higher negator scopes the lower negator to give double negation, as we find in other contexts:

17 *dw i ddim yn gneud dim byd.*
be.PRES.1SG I NEG PROG do NEG world
'I'm not doing anything / I'm not doing nothing.'

In (17) we have two negative expressions, *ddim* 'not' and *dim byd* 'nothing'. This example allows a reading of single negation, which amounts to 'I'm not doing anything'. But we can also have double negation by which the speaker denies that he or she was doing nothing and implies that they were doing something. A reading of single negation or a reading of double negation is not possible in the case of (16b). The focus particle negates the fronted phrase and the preverbal particle *na* negates the clause. Second, Borsley and Jones (2005: 145–151) note the negative focus particles can occur in contexts which are not associated with complementizers:

18 a. *ma' Siân yn licio Gwyn, dim Iwan.*
be.PRES.3SG Siân PROG like Gwyn not Iwan
'Siân likes Gwyn, not Iwan.'

b. *be wyt ti 'n 'i fyta? dim caws.*
what be.PRES.2SG you.SG PROG 3SG eat not cheese
'what are you eating? not cheese.'

c. *ma'* *Siân* *yn* *licio* *dim* *Iwan* *ond* *Gwyn.*
be.PRES.3SG Siân PROG like not Iwan but Gwyn
'Siân likes not Iwan but Gwyn.'

In (18a–b), *dim* occurs in a sentence fragment —*dim Iwan* is a negative alternative to the finite clause in (18a) and *dim caws* is an answer to the question in (18b). Example (18c) is semantically similar to (18a) but *dim* occurs in a sentence-internal phrase which is followed by a contrasting *ond* 'but' phrase — (18c) would need to be delivered with appropriate prosodics, and some speakers prefer (18a) for (18c). Borsley and Jones (2005: 145–151) refer to this *dim* as focus-negating *dim*, which can occur in focus phrases in a variety of contexts, including fronted phrases in a finite clause. They do not regard it as a complementizer, which is also the approach adopted here. Third, we can consider evidence from supposition. In the case of (16a), it can be claimed that the body of the clause allows a supposition that somebody will be there, and that the negative fronted phrase indicates that it will not be Siôn. In the case of (16b), it can be claimed that there is a supposition that somebody will not be there but that this somebody will not be Siôn. Here again we see that the focus particles relate to the fronted phrase and not the body of the clause.

It is more difficult to demonstrate the contrast of phrasal constituent and clausal constituent in the case of *ma / taw / na* and interrogative *efe*, as they do not behave like the negative focus particles. Consider the following data, which are based on examples (1c) and (1f):

19 a. ~~*ai*~~ / *efe* *Siôn* ~~*a*~~ *fydd* *yna?*
PT Siôn PT be.FUT.3SG there
'is it Siôn who will be there.'
b. *hwyrach* *ma / taw / na* *Siôn* ~~*a*~~ *fydd* *yna.*
perhaps PT Siôn PT be.FUT.3SG there
'is it Siôn who will be there?'

First, whereas we can show with examples like (16) that the negative focus particles can occur in a clause which itself is either positive or negative, we cannot show that declarative *ma / taw / na* and interrogative ~~*ai*~~ */ efe* can occur in a clause which is itself either declarative or interrogative. But we can claim that this is a result of the fact that the body of the clause in a fronted-order clause can only be declarative (as in relative clauses). The fronted phrase can be either declarative or interrogative, and in the case of the latter we can thus get a difference between the force of the fronted phrase and the force of the body of the clause. Second, *ma / taw / na* and ~~*ai*~~ */ efe*, unlike

the negative focus particles, do not easily occur in other contexts. Consider equivalent examples to those in (18), given in (20).

20 a. *'dy* *Siân* *ddim* *yn* *licio* *Gwyn,* *ond* *(*ma ~ *efe)* *Iwan.*
be.PRES.3SG Siân NEG PROG like Gwyn but PT Iwan
'Siân does not like Gwyn, but Iwan.'

b. *be* *wyt* *ti* *'n* *'i* *fyta?* *(*ma) ~ efe* *caws./?*
what be.PRES.2SG you.SG PROG 3SG eat PT cheese
'what are you eating? cheese./?'

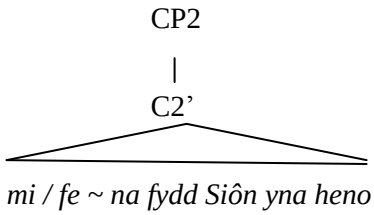
c. *ma'* *Siân* *yn* *licio* *(*ma ~ *efe)* *Iwan* *ond* *dim* *Gwyn.*
be.PRES.3SG Siân PROG like PT Iwan but not Gwyn
'Siân likes Iwan but not Gwyn.'

The restrictions can be attributed to the syntactic or semantic features on these particles. *Ma / taw / na* occur in embedded clauses, but the contexts in (20) are not embedded. *Efe* can only occur if a question is appropriate: it can occur in (20b) as a tentative answer, but not in (20a) or (20c). However, third, and last, the evidence from supposition suggests that *ma / taw / na* and ~~*ai*~~ */ efe* are like the negative focus particles. In the case of (20a), the body of the clause supposes that somebody will be there, and the particle *efe* and the fronted phrase ask whether it is Siôn. In the case of (20b), it is again supposed that somebody will be there, and the particles *ma / taw / na* and the fronted phrase declare that it is Siôn.

There are also two other points which question a complementizer analysis of focus particles. One point involves the scope of the focus particles. In (12) and (14), the complementizers c-command all or most of the clause. On this basis, it is reasonable to say that their semantics scope all or most of the clause. The force particles indicate whether the clause is declarative or interrogative, and the polarity particles indicate whether the clause is negative. But it is more reasonable to claim that the semantics of the focus particles relate only to the fronted phrase and not the whole of the clause.

The other (related) point is that the split-CP analysis does not clarify the relationship between the focus particles and the preverbal particles, which can convey the same force and polarity features. In a normal-order clause, force and polarity features can be assigned to preverbal particles which are located somewhere in the lowest complementizer phrase, namely CP2, as in (21).

21

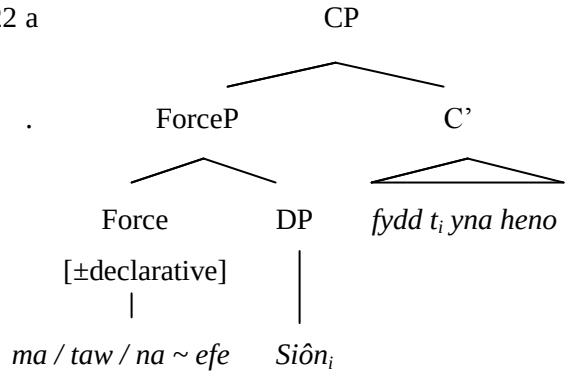


But in fronted-order clauses, force and polarity features are located in the higher complementizers in (12) and (14). We seem then to have two different locations for force and polarity features in fronted-order and normal-order clauses. Another view of this difficulty is that the split-CP analysis provides more than one location for force and polarity features in the same fronted-order clause: as well as being located somewhere in CP2, they are also located in the higher complementizers.

3.2 The head version

We can analyse the focus particles as heads of two phrases: *ma / taw / na* and ~~*ai*~~ */ efe* are the head of a Force Phrase (ForceP) and *dim / nage* are the head of a Polarity Phrase (PolP), as in (22a–b) and (23a), but not (23b). We can assess now how these configurations account for the data in section 1.2.

22 a.



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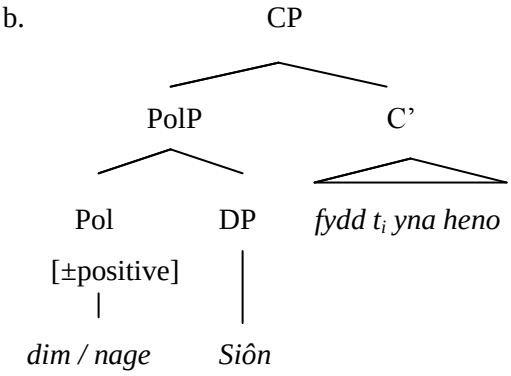
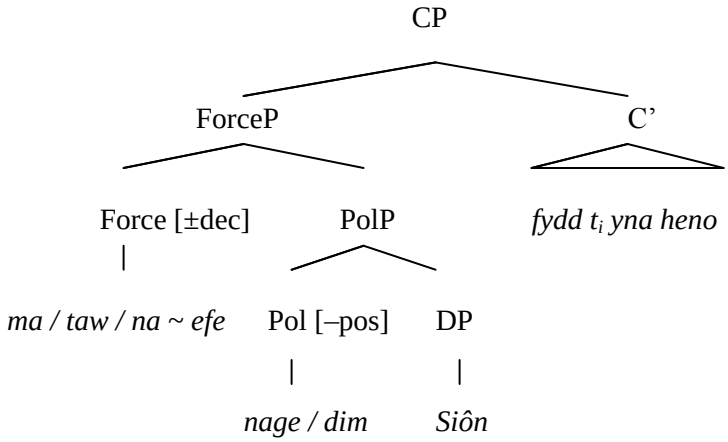


23 a.



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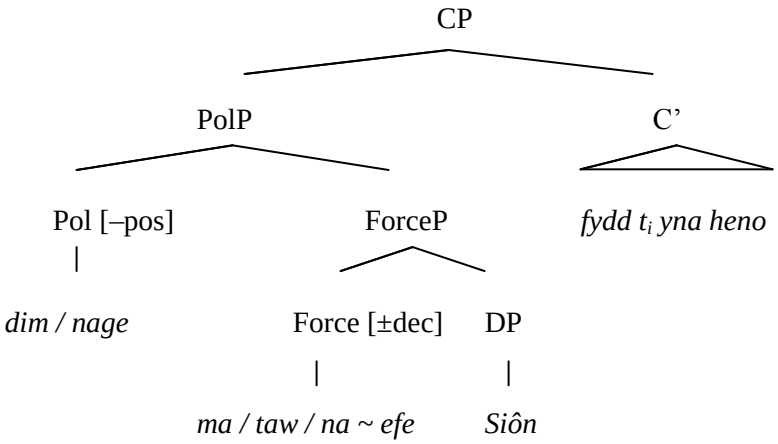


First, accounting for the initial position of focus particles in fronted-order clauses is less straightforward in these configurations. Complement selection alone cannot produce proper positioning in the clause. It must also be stated that ForceP and PolP are located in Spec CP and the other limited contexts in (18) and (20). Further, unlike the relatively simple selection which is involved in the split-CP analysis, both heads in the phrasal analysis select a greater number of phrases, which include a DP in (22a) and (22b) and also PP, VP, and AP (which are not illustrated). But properties of complement selection can also account for the co-occurrence of *ma / taw* / *na* and *dim* / *nage* and, possibly, *efe* and *dim* / *nage*: force particles can also select PolP but the polarity particles cannot select ForceP. We have (23a) but not (23b).

Second, accounting for constraints in non-embedded and embedded contexts is also less straightforward in these configurations. They cannot be accounted for by the selection of complements by a higher head. In the phrasal analysis, in embedded contexts, it is CP which is selected by a head, thus XP[X CP], and not ForceP, which occur in Spec CP, thus XP[X CP[ForceP C’]]. But the constraints can be accounted for by c-command. On the basis of this configuration, *ma / taw / na* occur are c-commanded by a higher head X, while *efe* is not c-

commanded by a higher head. We can represent this with the feature specification [±C-COMMAND]. *Dim* / *nage* are not constrained by embedding, and the simplest approach is to omit them from any statement of constraints.

Third, the semantic features can be accounted for with feature specifications on the heads, along the lines outlined for the split-CP analysis in section 2. The force particles are [±DECLARATIVE] and the polarity particles are [±POSITIVE].

These details are summarised in table 4.

Table 4. Feature specifications of the focus particles in informal Welsh — head analysis

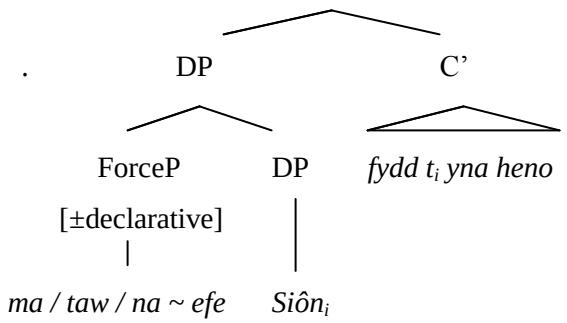
	semantic	selection of complement	selected by head
efe	–DECLARATIVE	DP, PP, AP, VP	–C-COMMAND
ma / taw / na	+DECLARATIVE	DP, PP, AP, VP, PolP	–C-COMMAND
dim / nage	–POSITIVE	DP, PP, AP, VP	

This analysis shares with the split-CP analysis a standard feature specification for the basic meanings of the focus particles. But it has different ways of accounting for position and embedding constraints. Proper positioning cannot be achieved with complement selection alone, and there must also be a requirement that the focus particles occur in Spec CP and the other contexts in (18) and (20).

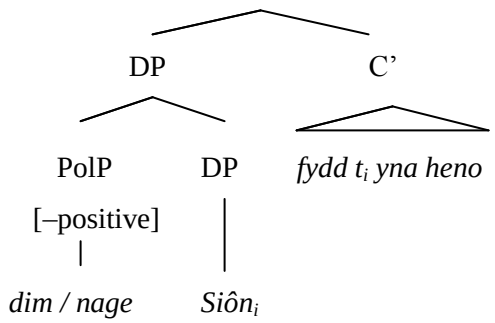
3.3 The adjunct version

We now consider the focus particles as adjuncts which adjoin to the fronted phrase, as in (24) for single occurrences and (25a) for co-occurrences, but not (25b). We shall treat them as phrasal adjuncts, again ForceP and PolP (but for economy of presentation, the structure of ForceP and PolP has been simplified).

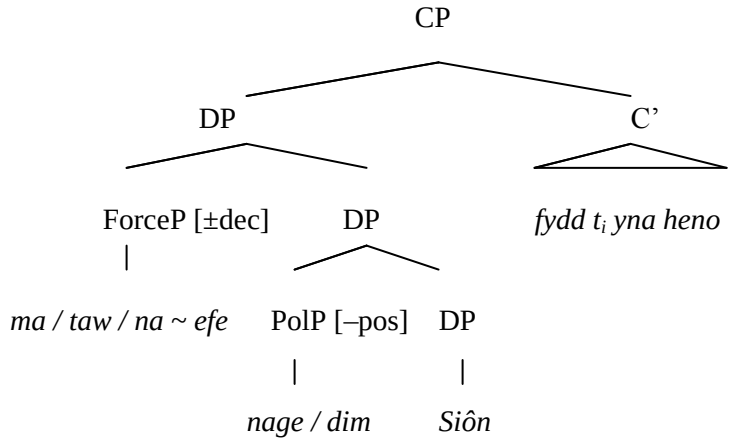
24 a.



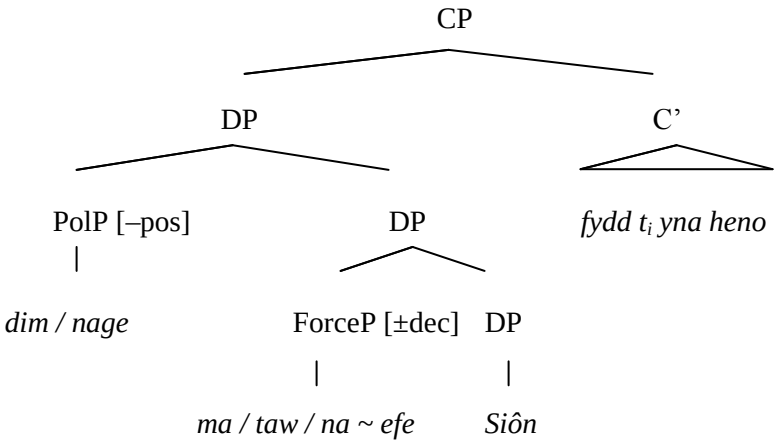
b.



25 a.



b.



First, the proper positioning of the particles is simpler to explain in this analysis. No rules of selection are involved. We can simply say that focus particles are adjoined to phrases which can receive focus, which mainly occur in Spec CP but also in the contexts illustrated in (18) and (20). The force adjuncts have the additional possibility that they can be adjoined to a phrase which contains the polarity adjuncts as in (25a), but the polarity particles cannot be adjoined to a phrase which contains the focus particles as in (25b).

Second, as in the head version of the phrasal analysis, accounting for the syntactic properties which relate to embedding must again refer to the CP, as it is the latter which is selected by a

higher head and not the focus particles. However, in the adjunct analysis, the relationship between the higher head and the force particles is even more distant. The force particles do not head Spec CP, as they do in the head analysis, but occur in fronted phrases which head Spec CP, such as a DP, thus XP[X CP[DP[ForceP DP] C']]. However, we can again say that *mai / taw / na* occur when they are c-commanded by a higher head while *efe* occurs when no c-commanding head occurs. We can use the same feature specification that is used in the head version of the phrasal analysis, [±C-COMMAND]. *Dim / nage* are again unaffected by the configurational context.

Third, the semantics of the adjuncts can be accounted for with standard feature specifications, [±DECLARATIVE] for the force particles [±POSITIVE] for the polarity particles.

These details are summarised in table 5.

Table 5. Feature specifications of the focus particles in informal Welsh — head analysis

	semantic	adjunction	selected by head
efe	–DECLARATIVE	adjoin to focus phrase	–C-COMMAND
ma / taw / na	+DECLARATIVE	adjoin to focus phrase & [PolP focus phrase]	–C-COMMAND
dim / nage	–POSITIVE	adjoin to focus phrase	

Like the split-CP analysis and the head version, this analysis uses a standard feature specification for the basic meanings of the focus particles. It shares with the head version the use of c-command to account for the embedding constraints, but it has different a way of accounting for position.

3.4 Summary

In summary, the phrasal analyses require only a single CP, and account for the focus particles as constituents of a phrase which occurs in Spec CP. They avoid the difficulties which challenge the split-CP analysis: they can capture the fact that the focus particles form a constituent with the fronted phrase; they can also show that the meanings of the focus particles scope the fronted phrase and not the clause; and they can account for the location of force and polarity features separately in the fronted phrase and in the body of the clause. They can also account for the fact that the force particles and the negative particles can co-occur. In the phrasal analyses, there are two sorts of force and polarity features: phrasal features whose scope relates to the fronted phrase alone and which are indicated by focus particles within the constituency of the fronted phrase;

and clausal features whose scope relates to the clause and which can be indicated by preverbal particles in the constituency of the body of the clause, perhaps as a complementizer or a category which forms a constituent with the finite verb. But the body of a fronted-order clause cannot be interrogative. Although examples like (19a) are punctuated as interrogatives in the written medium, it is only the fronted phrase which is interrogative. Polarity and force in the body of a fronted-order clause are thus different: the body of the clause can be either positive or negative, but it can only be declarative and not interrogative.

4 Embedded interrogatives

In informal Welsh, *os* occurs in examples like (26a), and seems to replace the focus particle *ai* which occurs in formal Welsh, which is illustrated in (26b). This form in other contexts means 'if' and occurs in conditional clauses, as in (26c).

26 a. *wn i ddim os Siôn* ~~*a*~~ *fydd yna.*
know.PRES.1SG I NEG if Siôn PT be.FUT.3SG there
'I don't know if it is Siôn who will be there.'

b. *nid wn i ai Siôn a fydd yna.*
PT know.PRES.1SG I whether Siôn PT be.FUT.3SG there
'I don't know whether it is Siôn who will be there.'

b. *os bydd Siôn yna, fydd Mair yna.*
if be.FUT.3SG Siôn there be.IMPF.3SG Mair there
'if Siôn is there, Mair will be there.'

The question arises as to whether *os* in examples like (26a) is an interrogative focus particle, or whether it is a conditional conjunction. The claim that *os* is a focus particle relies on examples like (26a–b), which appear to show that *os* shares the same distributional context as formal *ai*, and can therefore be seen as a stylistic substitute for *ai*. But there are other data which show that this analysis is questionable. First, there are examples which show that we cannot always account for *os* as a replacement of *ai*. Example (27a) shows that *os* can occur before *ma / taw / na* in informal Welsh. But *ai* cannot precede *mai* in formal Welsh, as (27b) illustrates, and *os* cannot be a replacement for *ai*.

27 a. *wn i ddim os ma / taw / na Siôn* ~~*a*~~ *fydd yna.*
know.PRES.1SG I NEG if PT Siôn PT be.FUT.3SG there
'I don't know if it is Siôn who will be there.'

b. * *nid wn i ai mai Siôn a fydd yna.*
PT know.PRES.1SG I whether PT Siôn PT be.FUT.3SG there
'I don't know whether it is Siôn who will be there.'

Ai can also occur in non-embedded clauses as in (28b). But example (28a) shows that *os* does not occur in such clauses and cannot then be a replacement for *ai*.

28 a. * *os Siôn ~~a~~ fydd yna?*
if Siôn PT be.FUT.3SG there
'if it is Siôn who will be there?'
b. *ai Siôn a fydd yna?*
PT Siôn PT be.FUT.3SG there
'is it Siôn who will be there?'

Second, *os* occurs not only before a fronted phrase as in (26a) but also before a finite verb in a normal-order clause, as in (29a), in which case it appears to replace the interrogative preverbal particle *a* which occurs in formal Welsh as in (28b).

29 a. *wn i ddim os bydd Siôn yna.*
know.PRES.1SG I NEG if be.FUT.3SG Siôn there
'I don't know if Siôn will be there.'
b. *nid wn i a fydd Siôn yna.*
NEG know.PRES.1SG I PT be.FUT.3SG Siôn there
'I don't know whether Siôn will be there.'

The forms of all other focus particles are different to preverbal particles which share the same syntactic and semantic features. Data from formal Welsh fully illustrate this point, as summarized in table 6.

Table 6. Correspondences of focus particles and normal-order preverbal particles

	Non-embedded				Embedded			
Preverbal normal-order	null / *mi, fe* / *y(r)*	*ni*(*d*)	*a*	*oni*(*d*)	*y*(*r*)	*na*(*d*)	*a*	*oni*(*d*)
Focus particles	null	*nid*	*ai*	*onid*	*mai*	*nad*	*ai*	*onid*

It would be unusual for *os* to be both a focus particle and a preverbal particle. Third, we have argued that *ma / taw / na* are declarative, but, in examples like (27a), if *os* is interrogative we

either have a contradiction or *ma / taw / na* lose their declarative meaning. Fourthly, and finally, *os* can also precede the co-occurrence of *ma / taw / na* and *dim / nage*:

30 *wn* *i* *ddim* *os* *ma* *dim* *Siôn* ~~*a*~~ *fydd* *yna.*
know.PRES.1SG I NEG if PT NEG Siôn PT be.FUT.3SG there
'I don't know if it isn't Siôn who will be there.'

If *os* were a focus particle, we would have complex analyses both in terms of a split-CP and phrasal analysis: the former would require a four-way split, and the latter would require a more complex phrase.

We can resolve all these problems by claiming that *os* is a conditional conjunction and not a focus particle. That is, *os* does not form a constituent with the fronted phrase, including those fronted phrases which contain a proper focus particle. It forms a constituent with all of the clause. We have [*os* [fronted phrase + rest of the clause]] and not [[*os* fronted phrase] + rest of the clause]. To maintain this explanation, we shall claim (i) that *os* conditional clauses can also occur as complement clauses, and (ii) that they only occur as complement clauses which are indirect questions, which occur after certain lexemes. Analysing *os* as a conditional conjunction and not a focus particle resolves the problems which are outlined above. It explains why *os* cannot always be accounted for as a stylistic replacement of *ai*. It also explains why *os* does not occur in non-embedded clauses as shown in (28b), as the conditional clause only occurs as an indirect question in complement clauses. It also explains why *os* also appears to occur as a preverbal particle in clauses of normal order as in (29a) — we again have an indirect question in a complement clause. It also resolves the apparent problem that an interrogative particle occurs with a declarative particle as in (27a). And, finally, the interpretation of *os* as a conditional conjunction means that the sequence *os* {*ma / taw / na*} {*dim / nage*} in (30) is not a complex sequence of three focus particles but is a sequence of conditional conjunction and two focus particles. It may be that contact with English has promoted the use of *os* in embedded indirect questions. But this development can also be promoted by the fact that the contingent and non-assertive nature of the semantics of conditional clauses allows them to function as indirect questions in complement clauses.

5 Summary and conclusions

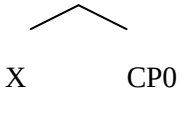
We have presented three formal analyses of the focus particles: the split-CP analysis, the head version of the phrasal analysis, and the adjunct version of the phrasal analysis. In the split-CP

analysis, the fronted phrase is in the specifier of the lowest CP, and the focus particles are complementizers in higher CPs, as in (12) and (14). In the phrasal analysis, the fronted phrase is in the specifier of a single CP, and the focus particles form a constituent with the fronted phrase. In the case of the head version, the focus particles are heads of two phrases ForceP and PolP, and fronted phrases can occur as their complements, as in (22a–b) and (23a). In the adjunct version, the focus particles are adjuncts which occur within the constituency of fronted phrases, as in (24a–b) and (25a). The effectiveness of these three analyses is assessed by how well they can account for (i) the semantics of the focus particles, (ii) the positioning of the focus particles and, related to this, the scope of their semantics, and (iii) the occurrences or otherwise of the focus particles in embedded contexts.

All three analyses allow a standard account of their semantics in terms of feature specifications, [±DECLARATIVE] for the force particles and [±POSITIVE] for the polarity particles, and no analysis has advantages in this respect.

The three analyses represent the embedding contexts as shown in (31a) for the split-CP analysis, in (31b) for the head version of the phrasal analysis, and (31c) for the adjunct version.

31 a.



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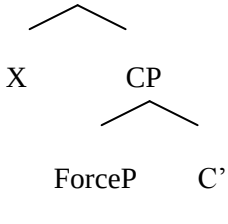

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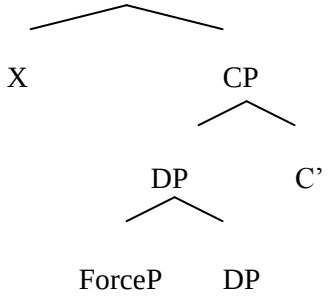

It will be recalled that the embedding constraints apply to the force particles, which are in CP0 in (31a) and in ForceP in (31b) and (31c). In the split-CP analysis, the constraints can be explained by complement selection: *ma / taw / na* can be selected but *efe* cannot. This is not possible with the phrasal analyses as the higher head selects CP and not ForceP: in the head version, the force particles are lower in Spec CP, and in the adjunct version they are even lower in the fronted phrase which heads Spec CP. The split-CP analysis seems to give the simplest and most direct account. But c-command can provide a single explanation, as the force particles in each case are c-commanded by the higher head: *ma / taw / na* can be c-commanded by the higher head but *efe* cannot.

Both versions of the phrasal analysis are preferable in accounting for the scope of the semantics of the focus particles, which can be explained in terms of the positioning of the particles. The split-CP analysis achieves the right position in a straightforward way through the complement selection of the focus complementizers. Further, complement selection in the split-CP analysis has few choices and is thus simple to state. But it allows the particles to c-command all of the clause, and this gives their semantics wide scope, which conflicts with the semantics of any preverbal particles. Both versions of the phrasal analysis confine the focus particles to the constituency of a phrase within Spec CP. This limits the scope of the semantics of particles to that phrase and avoids any conflict with the preverbal particles. On this important basis, both versions of the phrasal analysis are preferable.

We can now consider whether there are grounds for preferring either the head version or the adjunct version. First, in accounting for embedding constraints on the basis of c-command, the head version has a more direct relation between the higher head and the force particles and is marginally preferable (if preferable at all on this basis). Second, the adjunct version has the advantage that a phrase in a canonical position can be moved into Spec CP, and the force and polarity particles are adjoined to that phrase as adjuncts thus maintaining its categorial status. In the head version, fronting cannot be viewed as a simple matter of moving a phrase from its canonical position to Spec CP. It is moved into the complement position of either ForceP or PolP, which are located in Spec CP. Third, in the adjunct version, the position of the particles can be simply explained by saying that they adjoin to a phrase which can receive focus (mainly in Spec CP), without having to list types of phrases, but with the added provision that force and polarity particles can co-occur. The head version explains the positioning of the particles in terms of their complement selection, and this involves listing several types of phrases which can be selected, including DP, PP, AP, VP, and PolP. Fourth, the adjunct version also has the advantage that adjunction can more readily apply to focussed phrases in other contexts, which are illustrated in (18) and (20).

In brief, the split-CP system has a complex c-system and a simple specifier in the lowest CP. The phrasal analyses have a simple c-system and a complex Spec CP. The matter of scope makes the phrasal analyses preferable, and the simplicity of fronting and adjunction makes the adjunct version preferable to the head version. There may be arguments for a split-CP analysis in other respects, but focus particles do not provide convincing grounds for multiple CPs in Welsh.

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[1] The orthographic look of this form may suggest that *efe* has been added to *nag*. But in southern dialects there is a pattern of adding either *fe* (following a consonant) or *e* (following a vowel) to certain words. Examples are *do + fe* as in *ma' fe wedi mynd, dofe?* 'he's gone, has he?', *oes + e* as in *ma' 'na ormod, o'se?* 'there's too much, is there?', and *ynte + fe* as in *Siôn fydd yna, yntefe*. This can also explain *efe*, which is from *ie+fe*, to give *ife* (and its variant *efe*). Likewise, *nagefe* is *nage + fe* and not *nag + efe*.

[2] Some southern speakers can use *nag* before copula forms which begin with a vowel, as in *nag yw Siôn yna* 'Siôn is not there.'. This is another preverbal particle.

[3] There is another use of *d* / *t* in exclamative sentences, in which it can occur without another negative word, as in *dydy Siôn yn dal!* 'isn't Siôn tall'. In formal Welsh, *oni* (*onid* before vowels) occurs, and exclamative *d* is the remnant of *onid*.

[4] An example of the view that preverbal particles form a constituent with the verb is found in Jones and Borsley (2005), Harlow (1983), and Willis (2011), although they vary in detail.

[5] It is a matter of expositional convenience to talk about phrasal and clausal but in X-bar terms a clause is also a phrase.