Topics and Corrections

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Abstract

In corrections a focus in the first conjunct is corrected by an alternative in the second conjunct. In German, the focus in the first conjunct is usually c-commanded by the negative marker. However, if the focus is a VP focus containing a definite object (DO), that DO can also occur before the negation. The paper argues that in in these cases the DO is situated above the negation because (a) it is a sentence topic and is forced to move out of the focus domain (= the c-command domain of the negation), (b) as a topic, it serves as a salient antecedent for an implicit topic in the second conjunct, which that conjunct is still about, (c) the implicit topic is interpreted on the basis of a variable in the syntax, which is resolved by the context. In cases where the DO occurs below the negation, in contrast, the DO is not a topic and the second conjunct is not about the referent of that DO anymore.

1 Introduction

In corrections, the corrected element and the substitute offered for it are usually considered foci (Drubig 1994; Krifka 2006). (1a) is an example with direct object (DO) foci, (1b) has VP foci. The foci are marked prosodically. Pitch accents are indicated by small caps.

(1) a. John didn't drink [$_{DP}$ CIder $_{Foc}$] but [$_{DP}$ VODka $_{Foc}$].
b. John didn't [$_{VP}$ drink CIder $_{Foc}$] but [$_{VP}$ ate CHOWder $_{Foc}$].

The second conjunct is elliptic, and corresponds to the size of the focus (Lang 1984).

The negation in corrections can take positions different from normal clausal negation, cf. McCawley (1991) for English, see (2) for a variant of (1a).

(2) John drank not vodka but cider.

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In German, the negative marker usually[1] c-commands the corrected element in the first clause (cf. Jacobs 1982, 1991; Drubig 1994; Repp 2006, 2009), see (3a). The normal order in non-corrections, where the DO precedes the negation, see (4), is ungrammatical in corrections, see (3b).

(3) a. Hans hat nicht [den PiNOT] getrunken sondern [den Rioja].
Hans has not the Pinot drunk but the Rioja
b. *Hans hat [den PiNOT] nicht getrunken sondern [den RIOja].
'Hans did not drink the Pinot but the Rioja.'

(4) Hans hat den Pinot nicht getrunken.
'Hans did not drink the Pinot.'

Ordering restrictions in corrections so far have only been investigated for narrow DP focus (Jacobs 1982, 1991; Drubig 1994), and, to some extent, for wide focus on the clause, as well as multiple narrow foci (Repp 2006, 2009). This paper concentrates on VP focus in German, where the generalization that the negation must c-command the focus no longer seems valid: (5) and (6) are minimal variants where the second conjunct indicates that they are instances of VP focus but where the position of the negation w.r.t. the DO varies: in (5) the negation c-commands the DO, in (6) it does not.

(5) *A few years ago Paul wanted to go on a trip around the world but didn't have enough money. Paul thought about selling his old Buick to a collector but didn't really want to part with his favourite.*
Am Ende hat er nicht das AUto verkauft,
at.the end has he not the car sold
sondern sich bei seiner BANK erkundigt.
but REFL at his bank enquired
'In the end he didn't sell the car but enquired at his bank.'
They gave him a loan with fair conditions and he could go on his trip.

(6) *A few years ago, Paul had an accident with his old Buick, which got damaged pretty badly. Paul thought about selling it to a collector but didn't really want to part with his favourite.*
Am Ende hat er das Auto nicht verKAUFT,
at.the end has he the car not sold
sondern sich bei seiner WERKstatt erkundigt.
but REFL at his garage enquired
'In the end he didn't sell the car but enquired at his garage.'
They made him a fair price and he got the car repaired.

[1] An element in Spec,CP or C can be contained within the scope of a negation below C, see (i), which is a case of clausal focus (cf. Jacobs 1991, Repp 2009).
(i) Peter ist nicht dumm, sondern Maria ist unfähig.
Peter is not stupid but Maria is incompetent
'Peter is not stupid – Maria is incompetent.'

Obviously, the two examples occur in different contexts, and, importantly, (5) cannot occur in the context of (6), and vice versa.

In this paper, I will argue that despite first appearances, the second conjunct in cases like (5) and (6) is a reliable indicator for the size of the focus, i.e. these examples are clear instances of corrections with VP focus. I will follow assumptions made inter alia in Hinterhölzl (2006) and Repp (2009), according to which the negative marker marks the border of νP and that diverging surface orders are derived by movement of the subject to Spec,IP (and possibly further), and for objects, by scrambling. I assume that this is also valid in corrections. I will argue that the difference between (5) and (6) is one of information structure: in (6), which is the surprising case from the point of view of focus marking in corrections, the DO has left the c-command domain of the negation because it is a topic (in the aboutness sense Reinhart, 1981), and therefore has to leave the focus domain, which corresponds to νP. As a topic, it serves as a salient antecedent for an implicit topic in the second conjunct, so the second conjunct is still about the same topic. In (5), in contrast, the DO does not to leave the c-command of the negation because it is not topical, and is not picked up in the second conjunct.

2 The topic in the first conjunct

There are two types of evidence that feed the assumption that a DO which has scrambled out of the c-command domain of the negation in a correction with VP focus is topical. One type is the context – left and right – of the sentence the DO occurs in, and the other type is the syntactic and semantic characteristics the DO has if it occurs outside the c-command domain of the negation, which I will show are those of a sentential aboutness topic. I will discuss these characteristics in subsection 2.1 and then move on to questions of context in subsection 2.2

2.1 Topic characteristics of the direct object in the first conjunct

The claim I will argue for in this subsection is that the DO in the first conjunct of a correction with VP focus must be a sentence topic in the aboutness sense (Reinhart 1981), if it is to move out of the c-command domain of the negation. There is syntactic and semantic evidence supporting this claim. As for the syntax of sentence topics in German, Frey (2004) argues that in the middle field, they are situated above sentential adverbs. This is illustrated in (7) (from Frey 2004: 158). The context makes *Maria* topical: the speaker will say something about her. The DP *Maria* must occur above the sentential adverb *wahrscheinlich* ('probably').

(7) *I tell you something about Mary:*

a.	Nächstes	Jahr	wird	Maria	wahrscheinlich	nach	London	gehen.
	next	year	will	Mary	probably	to	London	go
b.	#Nächstes	Jahr	wird	wahrscheinlich	Maria	nach	London	gehen.

'Next year Mary will probably go to London.'In a correction with VP focus where the DO occurs before the negation, we find that the DO has to appear before the sentential adverb, which suggests that we are dealing with an aboutness topic:

(8) a. Am Ende hat er das Auto glücklicherweise nicht verkauft,...
at.the end has he the car luckily not sold
b. #Am Ende hat er glücklicherweise das Auto nicht verkauft,...
...sondern sich bei seiner Werkstatt erkundigt.
'In the end he luckily didn't sell the car …but inquired at his garage.'

For the order where the negation precedes the DO, this test is not informative because sentential adverbs precede the negative marker in German.

As for the semantics of aboutness topics, it was suggested by Ebert & Endriss (2004), and Endriss (2006) that certain quantifiers can, but others cannot occur in topic positions: singular indefinites, bare numeral quantifiers and the quantifier *einige N* ('some N') can be topical; modified numeral quantifiers and negative quantifiers cannot. How do these quantifiers fare in corrections with VP focus? The results seem to be mixed. We find that increasing quantifiers can occur in the purported topic position (see (9)) whereas decreasing quantifiers cannot (see (10) - to appreciate the grammaticality status of (10) make sure you interpret the whole coordination. On its own, the first conjunct is fine).

(9) *Paul ist Töpfer mit eigenem Brennofen. Sein Nachbar, der auch die Töpferei betreibt, hat sich eine neue Brennanlage gekauft. Paul ist ein neugieriger Mensch. ('Paul is a potter with his own kiln. His neighbour, who is also a potter, just got a very modern burning system. Paul is a very curious guy.')*
Gestern hat er EIne/einige/ mehr als 10 Vase (n) nicht im EIgenen Ofen gebrannt
yester-day has he one/some/ more than 10 vase (s) not in. the own kiln burned
...sondern die Anlage des Nachbarn ausprobiert.
but the system of.the neighbour tried.out
'Yesterday he burnt {one/some/more than ten} vase(s) not in his own kiln but tried out the neighbour's system.'

(10) *Paul is a potter with his own kiln. His neighbour, who is also a potter, just got a very modern burning system. Paul is a very curious guy. But he is also very cautious.*
*Gestern hat er höchstens drei Vasen nicht im EIgenen Ofen gebrannt,
yesterday has he at.most 3 vases not in.the own kiln burned
...sondern die Anlage des Nachbarn ausprobiert.
'Yesterday he burnt at most 3 vase(s) not in his own kiln but tried out the neighbour's system.'

Now, Endriss (2006) makes the following subtle difference between monotone increasing quantifiers and non-monotonic (e.g. *exactly three students*) quantifiers on the one hand, and monotone decreasing quantifiers on the other. Whereas she judges the former to sound 'extremely odd' in the position above Frey's sentence adverbial, the latter result in entirely ungrammatical sentences. Example (11a) shows that closer scrutiny of increasing quantifiers in non-corrections – i.e. careful control of the discourse context – reveals that they can occur in Frey's topic position here as well, i.e. they do not necessarily sound 'extremely odd' in non-corrections. Importantly, decreasing quantifiers cannot be ameliorated in the same way, as is shown in (11b).

(11) *Paul deals in vases. He is always out at pottery fairs and tries to secure the best deals.*

a. *Last week something strange happened.*
Paul hat mehr als 20 Meissner Vasen überraschenderweise
Paul has more than 20 Meissen vases surprisingly
einem verhassten Konkurrenten überlassen.
a.DAT hated competitor left
'Paul surprisingly left more than 20 Meissen vases to a hated competitor.'

b. *Last week we thought that he would lose several deals. But luckily he didn't.*
b' *Paul hat höchstens 3 Meissner Vasen zum Glück...
Paul has at.most 3 Meissen vases to luck
b" Paul hat zum Glück höchstens 3 Meissner Vasen...
...einem verhassten Konkurrenten überlassen.
'Paul luckily left at most 3 Meissen vases to a hated competitor.'

Ebert & Endriss (2004) exclude decreasing quantifiers as topics because they cannot form 'sensible representatives' for a discourse referent: their minimal witness set (Barwise & Cooper, 1982) is the empty set, which is not a sensible representative. For the other quantifiers, the minimal witness set provides a sensible representative (in the case of *more than ten vases*, a sum individual of ten vases). Their often-observed infelicity in topic positions is put down by Ebert & Endriss (2004) to a condition on anaphoric reference: the anaphoric potential (*ten vases* vs. *more than ten vases*) must not change when the topic referent is created on the basis of the minimal witness set.

The above observation that in some environments increasing quantifiers are perfectly grammatical indicates that the condition on the minimal witness set is appropriate whereas the other condition needs some more thought. The examples need to be better controlled pragmatically. In the right context, with the right sentence adverbial, the results are different from what Ebert & Endriss (2004) suggest. I cannot go into the details of this here[2]. For the purposes of the present paper I conclude that the scram-

[2] Ebert & Endriss (2004) and Endriss (2006) generally uses examples with low numerals, e.g.
(i) ?? Während des Vortrags haben mehr als drei Studenten interessanterweise geschlafen.
'During the talk more than three students were asleep, interestingly. (cf. Endriss 2006: 42)
I agree with the judgements they give. It seems however, that the sentence pragmatically is odd – it seems that *3 students* must be some relevant threshold in order to make it plausible to say that it is

bled DO in corrections, which I claim to be a topic, behaves like other topics in 'ordinary' topic test environments. Thus, the syntactic and semantic characteristics of the scrambled DO in the first conjunct suggest that it is a sentence topic. Let us now move on to the question of context.

2.2 The left and right context

Returning to the examples in (5) and (6) in the introductory section – which for ease of exposition I repeat here – we find that the left context on its own does not help us much to distinguish between them. Both contexts introduce the car – which warrants the use of the definite DP here – so in both contexts the car could be topical, in the sense of an active discourse referent (see fn. 5 p. 399 for more on this):

(5) *A few years ago Paul wanted to go on a trip around the world but didn't have enough money. Paul thought about selling his old Buick to a collector but didn't really want to part with his favourite.*
Am Ende hat er nicht das AUto verkauft,
at.the end has he not the car sold
sondern sich bei seiner BANK erkundigt.
but REFL at his bank enquired
'In the end he didn't sell the car but enquired at his bank.'
They gave him a loan with fair conditions and he could go on his trip.

(6) *A few years ago, Paul had an accident with his old Buick, which got damaged pretty badly. Paul thought about selling it to a collector but didn't really want to part with his favourite..*
Am Ende hat er das Auto nicht verKAUFT,
at.the end has he the car not sold
sondern sich bei seiner WERKstatt erkundigt.
but REFL at his garage enquired
'In the end he didn't sell the car but enquired at his garage.'
They made him a fair price and he got the car repaired.

Obviously, the *discourse* topic in the two examples is different. Whereas the discourse in (5) is about Paul's trying to find enough money to go on a world trip, (6) is about Paul's deciding what to do with his damaged car. These discourse topics are carried through in the subsequent discourse, which in (5) is about finding money, and in (6) about the damaged car: enquiries at banks usually, and also in this case, are about money; enquiries at garages are usually about cars, and in this case can be inferred to have been about the car in question, say about prices, or about the availability of spare parts.

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interesting that more than 3 students were asleep. With higher numbers such thresholds are easier to motivate, see (ii), although I suspect that an appropriate context could also license a 'low' threshold.
(ii) Während des Vortrags haben mehr als 700 Studenten interessanterweise geschlafen.

Thus, in (6) it is the car that remains topical throughout – the second conjunct of the correction is still about the car – whereas in (5) this is not the case. Now, the difference in structure between the two examples is that the DO *das Auto* ('the car') in (5) is in the c-command domain of the negation and in (6) it is not. So what we find is that if the referent of the DO *the car* remains topical in the second conjunct the DO must leave the c-command domain of the negation.

The following naturally occurring example illustrates the same point. It is from an online blog of pet lovers, where a cat owner relates her experiences with a vet.

(12) *In the evening, after the x-ray was done, the vet called me into the surgery and showed me the x-ray photograph. She said that it didn't look good and that it was FIP (feline infectious peritonitis) or something else. To find out, she would have to get liquid from my cat's belly. She gave her an anasthetic and after 5 minuntes called me back into the surgery. She had a syringe with a yellow liquid in her hand and said that it definitely was FIP. That there was no cure. I read the report on catgirl.de. It says that there is a 50% chance for it being something else. I would like to know if I should go to a different vet or if I should do more tests like a blood test or a scan. [I am also convinced, that ...]*

[Ich bin auch überzeugt davon, dass…]

meine	Tierärztin	die	Flüssigkeit		nicht	untersucht	hat.
my	vet	the	liquid		not	examined	has
sondern	anhand	der	Farbe	die	Diagnose	gestellt	hat.
but	from	the	colour	the	diagnosis	made	has

'… my vet didn't examine the liquid but gave the diagnosis on the basis of the colour.'

She wanted to put my cat down immediately.

In this example, *die Farbe* ('the colour') referred to in the second conjunct is an inalienable property of something contextually present, which in the present context is to be inferred the liquid – the referent of the DO of the first conjunct. Thus, the second conjunct in this correction is still about that liquid. Note that the DO in the first conjunct is not in the c-command domain of the negation and what is more, the sentence would be deviant, if it were: I suggest that this is because there is no salient entity in the wider context whose colour could serve as the basis for the diagnosis in question, which means that the use of the relational definite DP *the colour* cannot be accommodated.

To conclude so far, in corrections with VP focus containing a definite DO that DO must leave the c-command domain of the negation in the first conjunct if the second conjunct is still about the referent of that DO. There need not be an overt expression corresponding to that referent, i.e. it can remain implicit.[3] In the next section I shall investigate the nature of the implicit referent in the second conjunct.

[3] As the wording suggests the implicit topic in the second conjunct can be made explicit. This holds for all the examples discussed in this paper. If explicit, the chosen form is usually a pronoun, which, interestingly, need not occur outside the vP of the second conjunct. Fanselow (2006) suggests that topics do not obligatorily move to the topic position suggested by Frey (2004) but that there is an interaction

3 The implicit referent in the second conjunct

The implicit referent in the second conjunct is interesting from (at least) two points of view. On the one hand, we need to ask what grammatical status that referent might have. This is discussed in section 3.1 and will be specified in more detail in section 4. I shall argue that the implicit referent is an *implicit argument* or, an *unarticulated constituent*, which is anaphoric to an antecedent in the context. In section 3.2 I shall demonstrate that topics – such as the one in the first conjunct – are very good antecedents to be picked up by anaphora.

3.1 Implicit arguments and unarticulated constituents

The examples we have seen all look like they involve what has been called an *implicit argument*. An implicit argument is a non-overt element that is part of the interpretation of a predicate and is usually thought to occur in positions which are licensed for a thematic argument, which, however, are not overtly realized (cf. Williams 1985, Roeper 1987, Engelberg 2002). For the examples discussed above, this reads as given in very rough form in (13), where the implicit argument occurs between brackets:

(13) a. to enquire at the garage (about x)
b. the colour (of x)

Implicit arguments can receive different interpretations (see e.g. Bhatt & Pancheva 2006). They can be interpreted as existential as in *Paul is eating (something)*, generic as in *(PRO) to dance is fun,* or definite and contextually determined as in *John finally accepted (x)*. The definite, contextually determined cases are the ones that resemble the correction data most closely. (Some) implicit arguments can pick up previously introduced antecedents (cf. Härtl 2008) as in *John got the boxes and stuck the labels on*, where the labels in all likelihood are stuck on the boxes, or as in *Paul bought the best-seller and read all night*, where Paul in all likelihood read the best-seller (but also see Martí 2006 on this). I shall not dwell here on the question of how particular types of implicit arguments are analyzed.[4] The reason is that the argument structure in the second conjunct upon closer scrutiny turns out to be not that important, as example (14a) from an online lexicon on media law illustrates: there is no implicit argument of the sort described above involved but still the second conjunct contains an implicit referent picking up the topic (=DO) of the first conjunct: the authorities use other sources of the journalist's than his/her 'voice', i.e. the second conjunct still is about the journalist. (14) is also different from the previous examples in that the order of the negation and the DO is flexible. In (14b), the negation precedes the DO of the focused VP. The example

with foci occurring below the sentential adverb. I think that Fanselow's observations are correct but I cannot investigate this matter here for reasons of space.

[4] The various sorts differ substantially, see Bhatt & Pancheva (2006), Härtl (2008).

also is fine. Importantly, there is a difference in interpretation between (a) and (b). In (b), the authorities use other sources than the interrogation of the journalist, i.e. the journalist is not topical in the second conjunct.

(14) *Confiscation of means of evidence. § 97 Abs. 5 StPO prohibits the confiscation of journalistic documents as means of evidence. This holds only, however, to the same extent that the media person has the right to refuse to give evidence. The prohibition of the confiscation of means of evidence is a necessary addition to the media's right to refuse to give evidence. [If it didn't exist the investigating authorities could very easily circumvent the right to refuse to give evidence,...]* [Existierte es nicht, könnten die Ermittlungsbehörden es leicht aushebeln, …]

a. indem sie den Journalisten nicht befragen,…
by they the journalist not interrogate

b. indem sie nicht den Journalisten befragen,...
...sondern gleich die Durchsuchung der Redaktionsräume und die Beschlagnahme des Recherchematerials anordnen.
'...by not interrogating the journalist, but ordering the search of the editorial offices and the confiscation of research material straightaway.'

I would like to argue that the second conjunct in (14a) contains what in truth-conditional pragmatics has been called an *unarticulated constituent (UC)* (Perry 1986, 1998; Recanati 2002, 2004; and for an opposing view Stanley 2000, Martí 2006). As summarized by Stanley (2000: 410), unarticulated constituents are elements "supplied by the context to the truth conditions of utterances" without being the "semantic values of any constituents in the actual structure of natural language sentences". To illustrate, consider Perry's (1986) example in (15):

(15) It is raining.

(15) is incomplete if no place is supplied, and cannot be evaluated for truth or falsitiy, i.e. failure to provide the UC results in vacuity. No proposition is expressed. The idea in truth-conditional pragmatics is that there is free pragmatic enrichment (top-down), which is necessary to interpret such sentences. Next to UCs supplied by the context, there are also 'metaphysical' UCs, as in *Mary is dancing*, where the place where Mary is dancing, is not required to express a proposition and assess its truth. The fact that Mary is dancing somewhere is a metaphysical fact, i.e. one of the real world: every action takes place somewhere (or at some time …). The views on metaphysical UCs differ but the assumption that they are 'truly' unarticulated is common – i.e. they are not part of the interpretation. If interpreted at all, they are a matter of pragmatics. Their interpretation is existential.

Going back to (14a), we find that the second conjunct contains an implicit referent that could be classified as a metaphysical UC if it were not provided contextually: that there is a relation between the journalist and his various potential sources of evi

dence, which might be interesting to the authorities, is a metaphysical fact. That we infer this information to be present in (14a) – it is the *journalist's* editorial offices whose search is ordered and *his/her* research material that is to be confiscated – shows that UCs which are not required to express a proposition can be present in the interpretation of a sentence if they are provided contextually. Importantly, their presence has an effect on grammar – the DO in the first conjunct of the correction takes a different position if the UC is present: it occurs above the negation because it is a topic and serves as the contextual antecedent of the UC. This supports opponents of the free enrichment view (e.g. Stanley 2000, Martí 2006)), who claim that there are no unarticulated constituents of the contextual sort. The referents in question are articulated (at LF): as variables that need to be contextually resolved. Also note in this connection the felicity of the order negation > DO in (14b): in this order, there is no contextual UC, it stays metaphysical, as it were.

In the present analysis, I shall lump implicit arguments and unarticulated arguments together, see section 4 for the specific proposal. Nevertheless, I suspect that there might be a difference between the two types of implicit referents because the case with the unarticulated constituent allows both orders of DO and negation, whereas the cases with implicit arguments do not.

3.2 An antecedent for the implicit referent

In the previous subsection I suggested that the value for the implicit referent in the second conjunct is provided by the context and that it is the topical DO in the first conjunct that serves as the antecedent. Frey (2007) discusses the relation between topichood and anaphoric reference and points out that it is standardly assumed that anaphoric expressions like pronouns refer to previously introduced referents that are salient (e.g. Ariel 1990; Gundel et al. 1993). Being a topic is one way to be salient (e.g. Gundel et al 1993; Erteschik-Shir 1997). Frey (2007: 12) disputes this traditional assumption on the basis of the following minimal pair – the judgement is Frey's:

(16) a. Gestern hat überraschenderweise [den Paul]$_1$ [der Direktor]$_2$ getroffen.
yesterday has surprisingly the.ACC Paul the.NOM director met
b. Gestern hat [den Paul]$_1$ überraschenderweise [der Direktor]$_2$ getroffen.
a&b. Er$_{*1/2}$ hat sich sehr darüber gefreut.
he has REFL very about.it happy
'Yesterday the director$_2$ surprisingly met Paul$_1$. He$_{*1/2}$ was very happy about it.'

In (16a), the DO in the first sentence is non-topical, whereas in (16b) it is topical. Frey says that the anaphoric possibilities in (a) and (b) are the same, i.e. there is a subject preference. My intuitions and those of a fair number of informants I consulted about (16) are different: Whereas in (16a), the indexation is as indicated, in (16b), the pronoun *he* refers to Paul, and not the director. I suggest that the judgements are subtle because the topic 'competes' with the subject as a potential antecedent: there is a strong

subject reference for pronoun resolution in general, as has been shown in experimental studies by e.g. Crawley & Stevenson (1990), Stevenson & Urbanowicz (1995). Kaiser (2006) found that subject preference is influenced by, but still overrules factors like preference for focus and topicality (which is implemented as givenness in her, and many other psycholinguistic studies[5]). Kaiser (2006) concludes that topicality does have an effect on pronoun resolution (also Arnold 1998) but interacts with other factors.

Apart from the sentence medial topics, Frey (2007) discusses data with left dislocation in German, where, in his view, a dislocated topical direct object does not serve as an antecedent for a pronoun in the next clause if a subject is present that can serve as an antecedent for that pronoun. I think that this does not hold generally. In the following example it is completely unclear whether the DO or the subject is the antecedent for the pronoun in the follow-up clause, as is illustrated by the two options, (a) and (b), to continue the discourse.

(17) *Max cannot see his friends tonight.*
[Den Paul]$_1$, den hat [der Hausmeister]$_2$ eingespannt.
the.ACC Paul him has the.NOM janitor monopolized
Er$_{1/2}$ baut das Schuhregal für die ersten Klassen.
he builds the shoe.shelves for the first grades
'As for Paul$_1$, the janitor$_2$ is monopolizing him$_1$. He$_{1/2}$ is building the shoe shelves for the first graders.'

a. Paul hilft ihm$_2$ dabei.
Paul helps him with.this
'Paul is helping him$_2$.'

b. Das hat er$_1$ dem Hausmeister vorigen Monat versprochen.
that has he the janitor last month promised
'That's what he$_1$ promised the janitor last month.'

Thus, topics can and do compete with subjects for the role of most salient antecedent. In harmony with much of previous psycholinguistic literature I assume topics to be good antecedents. In the corrections, the scrambled DO in the first conjunct is a topic, which serves as the antecedent for the implicit referent in the second conjunct.

4 The (information) structure of corrections with VP focus

In the previous sections I argued that in corrections with VP focus containing a definite DO in the first conjunct, that object must precede the negation if it is topical itself and if the second conjunct still is about that topic, even though the topic in the second conjunct is implicit. I suggest that this implicit topic is represented syntactically by a topic-marked *pro*, where the topic feature has the following denotation:

[5] Many psycholinguistic studies work with the notion of 'active discourse referents', where givenness is one indicator for being active.

(18) $[\![\text{TOP}]\!] = \lambda x \lambda P\ [\exists i.g(i) = x : P(x)]$

Thus, it is presupposed that x is a salient individual in the context,[6] and it is asserted that the predicate P applies to that individual. The [TOP] feature occurs on an entity-denoting constituent, which in the present case is the implicit argument in the second conjunct. The denoation of a topic-marked constituent $\alpha_{[\text{TOP}]}$ is given in (19)[7]:

(19) $[\![\ \alpha_{[\text{TOP}]}]\!] = [\![\text{TOP}]\!]\ ([\![\alpha]\!])$
$\lambda P\ [\exists i.g(i) = [\![\alpha]\!] : P([\![\alpha]\!])]$

In (6), which is repeated below without its context, the individual in question is the topic of the corrected clause (see (20) for the precise structure).

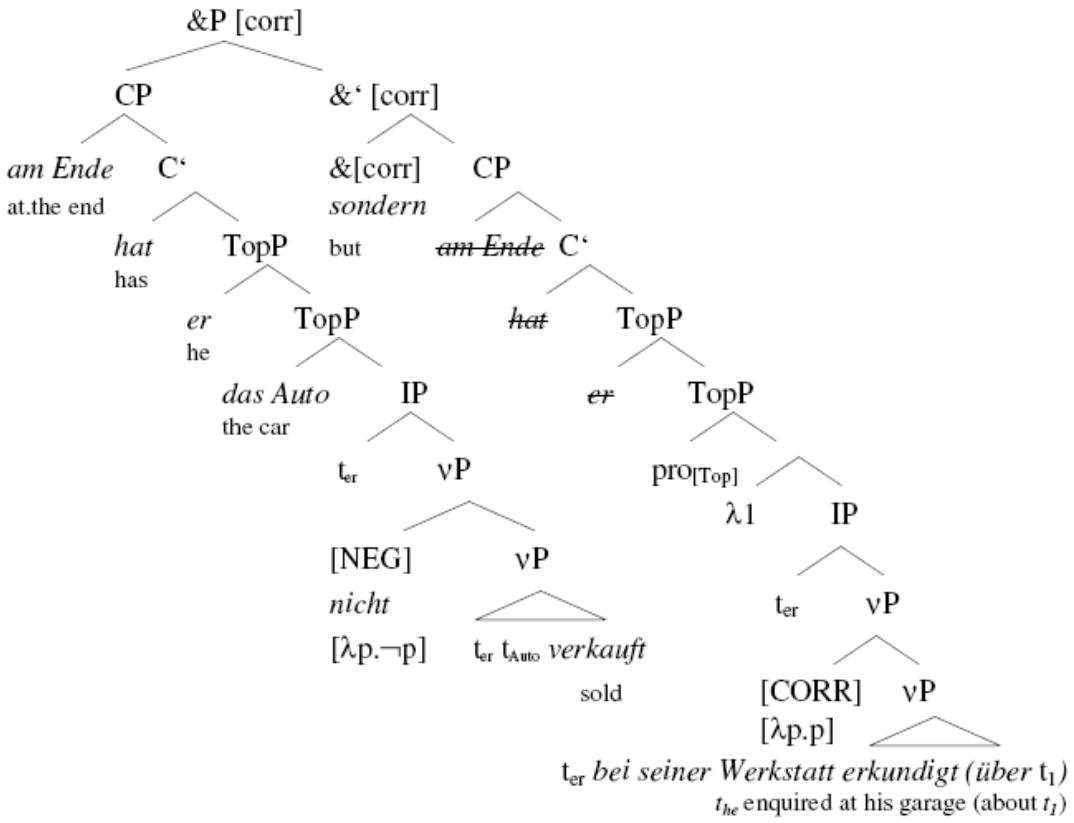
(6') Am Ende hat er [das AUto $_{\text{Top}}$] nicht [$_{\text{vP}}$ verkauft $_{\text{Foc}}$]
at.the end has he the car not sold
sondern sich pro$_{[\text{TOP}]}$ [$_{\text{vP}}$ bei seiner Werkstatt erkundigt $_{\text{Foc}}$]
but REFL at his garage enquired
'In the end he didn't sell the car but enquired at his garage.'

In the order where the negation c-commands the direct object, viz. (5), the context does not provide such an individual. If *pro$_{[TOP]}$* occurs in the structure, presupposition failure ensues.

It is worth pointing out that the structure of (6) corresponds to Vallduvi's (1993) tripartite information structure setup: in addition to the topic (= Vallduvi's link) and focus, there is material that can be classified as the ground: *am Ende hat er* ('in the end he has'). I assume that whereas the implicit topic in the second conjunct is retrieved on the basis of *pro$_{[TOP]}$* introduced above, the ground is retrieved on the basis of ellipsis processes. The ellipsis process in question is left peripheral deletion, which happens under phonological identity with material in the first conjunct (cf. Wesche 1995; Repp 2009). The analysis for (6) is given in (20). The ellipsis site in the second conjunct is indicated by strikethrough. The position of *pro$_{[TOP]}$* is above IP, which corresponds to Frey's (2004) topic position. As for the structure of the correction itself, I follow the assumption in McCawley (1991) and Lang (1991) that *not-but* is a complex operator. I propose that its parts NEG and CORR are licensed by Agree with a coordination head that is marked as corrective, and which hosts *sondern*. [8]

[6] I am borrowing here from Sauerland (2004) who suggests that an individual is given if it is the value of some index of the assignment *g*, where only individuals that are salient are stored in *g*.
[7] I am abstracting away from indefinite topics (Endriss 2006) here as they are not relevant in the present discussion.
[8] For reasons of space I could not discuss pronouns here, which behave different from definite DOs in corrections: they are never c-commanded by the negation even if they are not picked up by a topical referent in the second conjunct. The behaviour of pronouns in corrections parallels that of pronouns in other environments, e.g. DP scrambling has an information-structural effect on the next lower DP (provided the scrambled DP is not contrastive), pronoun movement does not. Thus, the high position of

(20) Analysis for (6):



5 Conclusion

I have argued that despite first appearances in corrections with VP focus, the negation in the first conjunct c-commands the focus just as in corrections with narrow(er DP) focus. If, however, the DO in such a VP is topical and is picked up by a(n implicit) topic in the second conjunct, the DO leaves the c-command domain of the negation. The implicit topic in the second conjunct structurally is represented as a pro element with a topic feature.

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pronouns in the middle field is licensed by givenness alone and does not necessarily interact with other information-structural categories.

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