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Case, J.T.

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CHAPTER 6

Information structure and Siona DCM

The previous chapters in this dissertation establish that information structure plays an indispensable role in Siona DCM patterns. Firstly, the *preliminary description* in Chapter 3 employs a QUESTION-ANSWER (Q-A) congruence heuristic to establish the paradigmatic distribution of PLAIN vs. PROMINENT case-markers in the grammar. This aligns with the notion of the interrogative type of information focus in the literature (e.g., Dik et al. 1981, 1997; Kiss 1998). The Q-A pair presented in (1) exemplifies the general pattern of obligatory case-matching in information questions:

- (1) a. QUESTION: *quebi iño aide'oquë ?*
ke-e *(-bi) iñño ai + de'o-ki
WH-CL:GEN-SBJ here big + become-2/3S.M.PRS.N.ASS
'What grows here?'
- b. ANSWER: *jaiye jorobi aide'oji iño*
hai-je horo #(-bi) ai + de'o-hi iñño
big-CL:GEN flower-SBJ big + become-3S.M.PRS.ASS here
'Many FLOWERS grow here.' [VOL/SUG: 20230622ejabi002.003a-b]

Secondly, Chapter 3 also demonstrates that the emphatic contrast reading is typically evoked by the presence of PROMINENT case-marking in non-interrogative contexts. This function of DCM finds counterparts in other languages spoken in the putative NWA region, as discussed in Chapter 4 — including Colombian Siona [^c*snn*] (Wheeler 1970, 1987), Koreguaje [*coe*] (Cook and Levinsohn 1985), and the non-Tukanoan languages Tariana [*tae*] (Aikhenvald 2003) and Murui [*huu*] (Wojtylak 2021). The minimal pair presented in (2) illustrates the interpretative effects associated with PROMINENT-marking on the Experiencer argument. Whereas the use of PLAIN *-re* marking in (2a) produces an unmarked reading; PROMINENT *-ni* marking in (2b) evokes an interpretation where the denoted referent is contrasted with salient alternatives:

- (2) a. *iye cocabi yě're jěaji*
 i-je kohka-bi **ji'i-re** hia-hi
 DEM.PROX-CL:GEN language-SBJ 1SG-N.SBJ be_hard-3S.M.PRS.ASS
 'This languages is difficult for me.'
- b. *iye cocabi yě'ni jěaji*
 i-je kohka-bi **ji'i-ni** hia-hi
 DEM.PROX-CL:GEN language-SBJ 1SG-N.SBJ2 be_hard-3S.M.PRS.ASS
 'This languages is difficult for ME (i.e., not for somebody else).'
[Speaker comment: -ni means it is only hard for me.]
 [VOL: 20230525ejabi002.005a-b]

(2a) and (2b) assert the same content; however, the latter evokes a set of alternative propositions, which are subsequently excluded for the sake of interpretation. This effect meets the generally accepted definition for contrastive focus (e.g., Rooth 1985, 1992; Selkirk 2008).

Baseline definitions aside, there is general consensus that there exists no monolithic notion of focus which is cross-linguistically valid (van der Wal 2015, 2016, 2022; Kratzer and Selkirk 2020). An important question arises as to whether the Q-A pattern shown in (1) may be analyzed together with the contrast-related pattern shown in (2). This dissertation has already established that both are important components of any adequate analysis of information structure-driven DCM in Siona. Another immediate question which arises is whether PROMINENT-marking is also implicated in other typical focal contexts — e.g., corrective focus, selective focus, etc. (Dik et al. 1981, 1997 — see Krifka 2011 for a recent overview). The distribution of PROMINENT-markers under these different contexts provides insights into their precise semantico-pragmatic function. After all, Matić and Wedgwood (2013) argue that the distribution of a certain marker may be related to focus, without encoding focus per se.

The present chapter investigates whether the above-noted information structure-driven patterns of Siona DCM may be unified under a single analysis — i.e., PROMINENT-marking is obligatorily used in overt Q-A constructions and to induce the emphatic contrast effect. For the sake of the present discussion, these are referred to as the information focus effects and the contrastive focus effects of Siona PROMINENT-marking. On this analysis, Siona DCM might be argued to be a focus-encoding strategy in its own right (Büring 2003, 2009). For instance, such an analysis would be compatible with Siona DCM information structure effects as driven by underlying (implicit) question-answer sequences across-the-board (e.g., the *question-under-discussion* approach developed in Roberts 2012, etc.). It will be demonstrated that this analysis is likely too strong since it (wrongly) predicts PROMINENT-marking to occur in a number of contexts where it is absent.

The alternative view is that the information focus-related function of PROMINENT-marking in Q-A contexts ought to be separated from its contrastivity-encoding function. Basically, in non-interrogative contexts, PROMINENT-marking is found primarily in contrastive contexts. In the terminology of this dissertation, the latter analysis maintains that Siona DCM has two strong TRIGGERS — i.e., one for information focus and another for contrastive focus, or perhaps contrastivity more broadly. It is relevant to recognize that PROMINENT-marking is not utilized to encode contrastive topicality; which recruits a dedicated marker =*kato* (glossed TOP). Section 6.4.2 identifies the distribution and function(s) of this and other information structure-related nominal morphology. Ultimately the aim of this chapter is to describe the distribution

of PROMINENT case-marking as conditioned by information structure. This analysis implements an elicitation-driven methodology (inspired by van der Wal 2015, 2016).

The remainder of this chapter is organized as follows: Section 6.1 outlines the elicitation techniques employed to derive the data for this chapter. Section 6.2 situates the PROMINENT case-marking strategy in the typology of focus-encoding strategies, corresponding to the notion of FOCUS REALIZATION (cf. Buring 2009; Zimmermann and Onea 2011; Aannestad 2021). Section 6.3 addresses questions relating to FOCUS SIZE, which analyzes the scopal properties of the PROMINENT-marking strategy. Section 6.4 assesses the distribution of PROMINENT-marking strategy across typical focus contexts. This section also provides a description of the interaction of PROMINENT-marking with discourse markers in the language. Section 6.5 concludes this chapter.

6.1 Methodology: Controlled elicitation

The data presented in this chapter are collected via elicitation-based techniques designed to target focus-encoding strategies, as recently outlined in van der Wal (2015, 2016). The incorporation of elicitation-derived data into the description of Siona DCM is appealing on several grounds: i.e., these techniques permit for fine-grained researcher-control over variables and context, and for the production of negative examples (Matthewson 2004, 2022). Three classes of elicitation-based heuristics inform the present analysis: (i) Q-A heuristics; (ii) CONTEXT-CONJURING heuristics; and (iii) CO-TEXT heuristics.

Q-A heuristics are a classical diagnostic used to assess the size of the focalized constituent at interpretation (Dik 1997; Rooth 1985, 1992; Krifka 2011; Roberts 2012; and others — see van der Wal 2016, §3). In the domain of WH-questions, one particular type of focus is targeted, labeled COMPLETIVE FOCUS in Dik (1981, 1997),¹ where the listener is presumed to be aware of all information besides the focalized element. The formalization in (3) demonstrates how the Q-A heuristic can be operationalized:

(3) **Q-A test:**

If a question asks for some X (X being a syntactic category), in a direct answer to this question, the constituent which corresponds to X is [focalized].
[as formalized in Kasimir 2005, 12; cited in van der Wal 2016, 265]

Van der Wal goes on to provide the illustrative instances from English adapted in (4):

- (4) a. [What kind of juice did Little Tiger drink?]
He drank APPLE juice.
b. [What did Little Tiger drink?]
He drank APPLE juice.
c. [What did Little Tiger do?]
He drank APPLE juice.

The sentences in (4) demonstrate that the same form is used to answer various questions. Each question targets a different (sub-)constituent of the sentence, such that the

¹As discussed in Krifka and Musan 2012, many earlier accounts presume that Q-A diagnostics involve *information focus*, rather than *contrastive focus*. Following Kratzer and Selkirk 2020, and others, this chapter does not place weight on this distinction for the analysis of Siona DCM patterns.

- (7) *huëhuëyere yëyë*
wiwi-je #(-re) jii-ji
 run-CL:GEN-N.SBJ want-N3S.PRS.ASS
 ‘(I) want to RUN.’ ⇒ {I want to hunt, I want to fish, . . . }
 [Context suggested by speaker: You prefer to run over participating in
 the other activities planned for a particular event.]
 [VOL: 20241104ejabi001.015]

The final heuristic employed in this chapter concerns what van der Wal (2016, §6) labels CO-TEXT diagnostics. These diagnostics are implemented as a class of translation tasks, where the researcher uses complex prompts to induce a contrastive context on a particular constituent in order to assess the activity of the target focus-encoding strategy. The two examples below illustrate rich prompts, which are designed to explicitly contrast nominal constituents in juxtaposed sentences:⁴

- (8) [*bahuë yohuë hueroye*] [*te’ë guënarore huerohuë*]
 bää-wi **jo-wi** wero-je **te’-e**
 NEG.AUX-N3S.PST.ASS canoe-CL:CONT buy-CL:GEN one-CL:GEN
gīna-ro #(-re) wero-wi
 metal-CL:RECIP-N.SBJ buy-N3S.PST.ASS
 ‘[I didn’t buy a BOAT], [(I) bought a COOKing pot].’
 [VOL/SUG: 20230623ejepa001.013]
- (9) [*yë’ a’yëbi goameña nequëa’bi iño*] [*cui’ne yë’ yojeibi ye’yequëa’bi*]
ji’i a’j-i-bi goa-mahña nee-ki-a-’bi ihño kwī’ne
 1SG older_sibling-CL:M-SBJ thing-DIM.PL make-CL:M-COP-3S.M here also
ji’i johe-i-bi je’je-ki-a-’bi
 1SG younger_sibling-CL:M-SBJ study-CL:M-COP-3S.M
 ‘[My OLDER brother works here], [but my YOUNGER brother studies].’
 [VOL: 20230617elupa001.002]

CO-TEXT heuristics provide means to test the role of PROMINENT-marking outside of Q-A contexts, as discussed in Section 6.4. A combination of the three families of focus heuristics outlined above is employed to establish the empirical backdrop for the analysis of Siona PROMINENT-marking strategy in this chapter.

6.2 Case-marking as a focus strategy

This section develops the analysis for how Siona PROMINENT-marking may be conceived as a (morphological) focus-encoding strategy. The following sections will determine to what extent the distribution of these markers is focus-sensitive. The domain of FOCUS REALIZATION refers to the range of strategies which languages may employ to express focal meaning — see Zimmermann and Onea 2011 for recent discussion. According to the fine-grained typology outlined in Biring (2009), languages may

⁴Per van der Wal (2016, §6), (8) and (9) diagnose different focal effects. The former concerns an *exclusive continuation* sequence (X . . . but not Y); whereas the latter provides an instance of *overtly juxtaposed sequences* (X . . . , and Y . . .). In future work, particular co-textual diagnostics will be applied in a more careful way to test for exhaustivity effects.

recruit one or several prosody-, syntax-, and morphology-based strategies of focus realization. Focal case-marking is considered a morphological focus-marking language, belonging to the PARTICLE LANGUAGE-type proposed by Büring (2009, 22-24), where a special morpheme marks focus. This would be a purely morphological language since other devices such as word order and prosody are not at play. Many languages have dedicated focus particles, however PROMINENT case-marking strategy is fused with case-marking. A similar focal case-marking strategy is illustrated for Chickasaw in (10):⁵

- (10) Chickasaw (*cic* — MUSKOGEAN)
[Gordon 2007, cited in Büring 2009, 22, ex. (44)]
- a. *hat:ak-at koni(ã) pisa*
man-SBJ skunk sees
'The man sees the skunk.'
 - b. *hat:ak-akot koni(ã) pisa*
man-SBJ.FOC skunk sees
'The MAN sees the skunk.'
 - c. *hat:ak-at koni-akõ pisa*
man-SBJ skunk-OBJ.FOC sees
'The man sees the SKUNK.'

In languages displaying the focal case-marking strategy, the realization of the focus is restricted to nominal hosts. Following the terminology proposed in Aannestad (2021), focal case-marking is a type of ARGUMENT-ASSOCIATED FOCUS REALIZATION STRATEGY; as compared to SYMMETRICAL FOCUS SYSTEMS, which permit focus to be realized on hosts of various syntactic categories. The former type is exemplified for Rendille in (11), where separate strategies mark argument-level and predicate-level focus. The latter type is shown for Gürüntùm in (12), where a single marker arises on nominal and verbal hosts, inducing different focal interpretations respectively. In neither language is case-marking realized to encode focus:

- (11) Rendille (*rel* — CUSHITIC)
[Oomen 1978, 48-49, as cited in Aannestad 2021, 29]
- a. *ínam=é y-imi*
boy=FOC 3SG-come:PST
'The BOY came.'
 - b. *ínam á-y-imi*
boy PRED.FOC-3SG-come:PST
'The boy CAME.'

⁵Compared to the Siona PROMINENT-marking strategy, the Chickasaw pattern in (10) seems to be more transparent. In the latter language, focal case-markers are more complex than plain case-markers on morphological grounds, such that focal case-markers contain the sequence *-ko-*. This morpheme does not arise independently from case-marking. Setting aside the degree of opacity, Siona and Chickasaw are taken to display compatible focal case-marking strategies.

- (12) Gùrùntùm-Mbaaru (*grd* — WESTERN-CHADIC)⁶
 [Hartmann and Zimmermann 2009, in Assmann et al. 2023, 1352-1353]
- a. *á fúrmáyò bà wúm y-imi*
 FOC Fulani PROG chew colanut
 ‘The FuLani is chewing colanut.’
- b. *tí bà ròmb-á g^wéì*
 3SG PROG gather-FOC seed
 ‘He is gathering the SEED(S).’

Upon further scrutiny, ARGUMENT-ASSOCIATED FOCUS REALIZATION STRATEGIES, as exemplified in (11), are commonplace in the Tukanooan language family.⁷ For instance, the Desano [*des*] and Barasano [*bsn*] sentences shown in (13) and (14) illustrate uses of exclusively-nominal focus-encoding morphology:

- (13) Desano (*des* — EASTERN-TUKANOAN)⁸
 [Silva 2012, 162, ex. (96); 164, ex. (103)]
- a. *gɥa-pɥ weka-pɥ ~ bobe-~ da-ka*
 1PL.EXCL-CONTR above-CONTR work-EXRT-EVID:REAS
 ‘WE (EXCL) work up THERE (upstream).’
- b. *si-bu-pɥ-de koa-du api-a-bɥ*
 DEM.DIST-CL:BASKET-CONTR-N.SBJ gourd-CL:CONC leave-COMP-N3.PST
ɥɥɥ
 1SG
 ‘I put the gourd in THAT one (another basket).’
- (14) Barasano (*bsn* — EASTERN-TUKANOAN)
 [Jones and Jones 1991, 175, ex. (563)]
- to-re yá-ka-hɥ wɥhɥ yoe-se-bã*
 there-REF be-RMT.PST-3 reed(species) long-NMLZ-FOC
 ‘There was *wɥhɥ* reed, the LONG stuff (not another material).’

Many Eastern Tukanooan languages display the ARGUMENT-ASSOCIATED FOCUS REALIZATION type; however, the FOCUS PARTICLE is not fused here with case-marking. This is clearly demonstrated in (13b) for Desano, where the case-marker *-re* and the focus-marker *-pɥ* are produced in sequence. Conversely, Siona exhibits a pattern where the presence of (certain) case-markers induces an information focus or contrastive reading in the sentence. Moving forward this is referred to as the focal case-marking strategy.

To summarize: Siona makes use of a case-marking strategy, which is restricted to arising on nominal hosts, whose distribution aligns with certain focus contexts.

⁶The authors indicate that the focus-marking found in (12b) is also used to achieve narrow verbal focus — i.e., Gathering vs. another activity concerning seeds, and broad predicative focus. A discussion of other scopal ambiguities arising with focus-encoding strategies is undertaken in Section 6.3.

⁷A similar nominal-specific focus clitic is described for A’ingae [*con*] (Fischer and Hengeveld 2023, 92, ex. (93)). This language is in intimate contact with Siona+ languages — see Chapter 4.

⁸(13a) illustrates an instance where the focus-marker, *-pɥ* arises on two nominals. In Siona, there is resistance to PROMINENT-marking on multiple core arguments of a clause; although, admittedly, patterns of multiple foci, including argumental and spatial nouns remain to be checked. I return to this point briefly in the following section of this chapter.

Concretely, in the relevant contexts, focus is expressed via the selection of the PROMINENT case-marker, as determined by the grammatical relation and the animacy class of the nominal host. On this basis, a leveled paradigm of PLAIN and PROMINENT case-markers emerges, as shown in Table 6.1 (adapted from Table 3.9 in Chapter 3):

	INANIMATE		ANIMATE (\wedge \uparrow INAN)	
	PLAIN	PROMINENT	PLAIN	PROMINENT
Argumental DCM:				
SUBJECT (S)	$-\emptyset$	<i>-bi</i>	$-\emptyset$	<i>-bi</i>
DIRECT OBJECT (P)	$-\emptyset$	<i>-re</i>	<i>-re</i>	<i>-ni</i>
INDIRECT OBJECT, e.g., (R)		<i>-re/-na</i>	<i>-re</i>	<i>-ni</i>
Spatial DCM:				
	INANIMATE		\uparrow INANIMATE	
LOCATION (L)	$-\emptyset$	<i>-re</i>	<i>-re</i>	<i>-ni</i>
GOAL (G)	$-\emptyset$	<i>-na</i>		<i>-na</i>

Table 6.1: Siona DCM paradigm, PLAIN- vs. PROMINENT-marker mapping

An immediate consequence of the analysis proposed in Table 6.1 pertains to what is labeled the SPLIT *-re* ANALYSIS in Chapter 3. In short, the case-marker *-re* is not a PROMINENT-marker per se; rather its PROMINENT-marking status depends upon the noun class of the argument at hand. The two sentences provided in (15) are a case in point: The PLAIN *-re* in (15a) is required with the animate P for grammatical reasons, whereas PROMINENT *-re* on the inanimate P in (15b) evokes the emphatic contrast reading, as demonstrated by the context suggested by the speaker:

- (15) a. *yě' ñicuě ai yěquěa'bi bi'are*
 jì'i ñihkw-i ai jii-ki-a-'bi bĩ'ã *(-re)
 1SG grandparent-CL:M INTENS like-CL:M-COP-3S.M bird-N.SBJ
 'My grandfather loves birds.' [VOL: 20240918ejabi001.004]
- b. *yě'ě ocore ucusi'i cayě*
 jì'i ohko #(-re) ùhku-si'-i kaa-jì
 1SG water-N.SBJ drink-FUT-N3S say-N3S.PRS.ASS
 'I want to drink water.' \Rightarrow {I want to drink coffee, to drink tea,... }
 [Context suggested by speaker: A boy comes home to find coffee and tea on the table.] [VOL/SUG: 20230623ejabi001.024-025]

Ultimately, the differences between morphological focus languages with dedicated (nominal) focus-markers on the one hand, and with fusional, focal case-marking strategies is a matter of morphology. The underlying syntax for the two types of languages is presumed to be identical. I propose the outline for a syntactic analysis of (certain) case-markers as focus particles in Section 6.5. Inasmuch as this discussion points to a plausible formal analysis of Siona information structure-driven DCM as focus-marking, the following sections scrutinize the distribution of PROMINENT-marking to ascertain the degree of focus-sensitivity exhibited by this case-marking category. This evidence is subsequently evaluated to determine if Siona DCM is focus-encoding or whether it is simply focus-related (Matić and Wedgwood 2013).

6.3 Focal case-marking: The size question

This section is concerned with the semantic notion of *focus size*, namely the amount of structure which may be focalized by the presence of the PROMINENT case-marker. The previous section establishes that this strategy is limited to being expressed on nominal hosts; however, this section shows that this strategy is not limited to a narrow, argument focus interpretation. Firstly, Section 6.3.1 explores the availability of narrow and broad interpretations for the PROMINENT-marking strategy. Secondly, Section 6.3.2 explores how focal interpretations are established within complex nominal constituents. Two types of complex complements are considered in particular: (i) nominals with relative clause modifiers, and (ii) nominalized sentential complements to desire and modal predicates.

6.3.1 Broad and narrow interpretations for focal case-marking

Patterns where a particular form of focus-marking is recruited to focalize constituents of various sizes, are commonplace in the typological record (e.g., Arregi 2016; Samek-Lodovici 2016; Assmann et al. 2023). For instance, a minimal pair is reported for Buli (16), where each sentence accepts two focal interpretations accordingly: In the case of (16a), where the focus particle *alè* occurs, either narrow SUBJECT focus or sentential focus is available. On the other hand, in (16b), where another particle, *ká*, arises in the immediately post-verbal position, either narrow OBJECT focus or broad predicate focus is available. The available interpretations are ascertained based upon the questions which they felicitously answer (i.e., via Q-A heuristics):

- (16) Buli (*bwu* — NIGER-CONGO)
 [Assmann et al. 2023, 1356-1357, exx. (6)-(7)]
- a. i. [Narrow SUBJECT focus: Who ate a mango?]
 (**ká**) Àtìm **alè** dè mángó
 FOC A FOC ate mango
 ‘Atim ate a mango.’
- ii. [Sentential focus: Why are you angry?]
 (**ká**) Àtìm **alè** dè mángó
 FOC A FOC ate mango
 ‘Atim ate a mango.’
- b. i. [Narrow OBJECT focus: What did Atim eat?]
 wá dè **ká** mángó
 3SG ate FOC mango
 ‘He ate a mango.’
- ii. [Broad predicate focus: What did Atim do?]
 wá dè **ká** mángó
 3SG ate FOC mango
 ‘He ate a mango.’

The pattern where one form corresponds to multiple interpretations is often termed a *focus syncretism*, as shown for the Buli sentences (16a) and (16b) above; and in the

English examples in (4). On the one hand, the pattern of SUBJECT-sentential focus syncretism shown for Buli in (16a) does not arise in Siona grammar. However, on the other hand, a compatible pattern of narrow OBJECT-broad predicate focus syncretism is attested for the Siona focal case-marking strategy.

On the basis of the Q-A evidence shown in (17), the same answer is provided for the narrow-scope question in (17a) and for the broad-scope question in (17b), corresponding to different sizes of focal material in each answer:

- (17) a. i. NARROW-SCOPE QUESTION: *quere nede'huaquë'ne ?*
ke-e-re nee + de'wa-ki-'ne
 WH-CL:GEN-N.SBJ make + repair-2/3S.M.PRS.N.ASS-Q
 'What are you (M) fixing?'
- ii. ANSWER: *yë'ë jaërëre nede'huayë*
 ji'i **hãĩ-rĩ #(-re)** nee + de'wa-ji
 1SG hammock-CL:MAIZE-N.SBJ make + repair-N3S.PRS.ASS
 'I am fixing a/the HAMMOCK.'
- b. i. BROAD-SCOPE QUESTION: *quere yo'quë'ne ?*
ke-e-re jo'-ki-'ne
 WH-CL:GEN-N.SBJ do-2/3S.M.PRS.N.ASS-Q
 'What are you (M) doing?'
- ii. ANSWER: *yë'ë jaërëre nede'huayë*
 ji'i **hãĩ-rĩ #(-re)** nee + de'wa-ji
 1SG hammock-CL:MAIZE-N.SBJ make + repair-N3S.PRS.ASS
 'I am fixing a/the HAMMOCK.' [VOL/SUG: 20230617elupa001.017a-d]

Two critical insights emerge based upon the example presented in (17): Firstly, the focalizing effect of PROMINENT case-marker in Q-A contexts can scope beyond the nominal constituent which hosts it. This fact highlights a fundamental disconnect between the morphological realization of focal case-marking and the size of the interpretation that it achieves. Secondly, obligatory PROMINENT *-re* marking is observed in the answers in (17), as it is on the WH-item arising in each question, *ke-e-re* (what). These case matching effects are a component of Q-A congruence effects noted in the information question-answer construction.

As regards the second insight, this is not an instance of straightforward, surface case-matching. Instead, this may be re-framed as a PROMINENT case-matching requirement, such that the appropriate PROMINENT-marker is forced to arise on the focalized constituent and the WH-item in the question, even where surface mismatches obtain. Such discrepancies arise, for instance, where an animacy class mismatch arises across the focalized non-SUBJECT constituents. For instance, (18) adapts the answers to both the narrow- and broad-scoping questions in (17). In (18), the noun is fitted with a post-nominal relative clause modification, inducing the promotion procedure (detailed in Section 3.2.2). Per the paradigm in Table 6.1, the promoted noun displays the animate case-marking pattern, and PROMINENT *-ni* marking is required accordingly:

- (18) a. [NARROW-SCOPE QUESTION: What are you (M) fixing?]
 ANSWER': *yě'ě jaěřě yetesiconi nede'huayě*
 jǐ'i ↑[**hǎĩ-rǐ** **jehte-sih-ko** *(-ni)/(#-re)] nee
 1SG hammock-CL:MAIZE tear-PERF-CL:F-N.SBJ(2) make
 + de'wa-jǐ
 + repair-N3S.PRS.ASS
 'I am fixing a/the frayed hammock.'
- b. [BROAD-SCOPE QUESTION: What are you (M) doing?]
 ANSWER': *yě'ě jaěřě yetesiconi nede'huayě*
 jǐ'i ↑[**hǎĩ-rǐ** **jehte-sih-ko** *(-ni)/(#-re)] nee
 1SG hammock-CL:MAIZE tear-PERF-CL:F-N.SBJ(2) make
 + de'wa-jǐ
 + repair-N3S.PRS.ASS
 'I am fixing a/the frayed hammock.' [VOL/SUG: 20230617elupa001.017e-f]

In a similar vein, the broad-scoping question in (19a) accepts various answers, which contain nominals belonging to different grammatical relations. Where the answer contains an inanimate OBJECT-argument, as in (19b), the anticipated PROMINENT *-re* marker is required. However, PROMINENT *-na* marking is forced on the spatial GOAL-argument, as associated with the directed motion predicate *sai-* (go) in (19c):

- (19) a. QUESTION: *quere ñamina'a yo'ja'quěa'ne ?*
ke-e-re ñahmina'a jo'hǎ'-ki-a-'i
 WH-CL:GEN-N.SBJ tomorrow do-PRP-CL:M-COP-Q
 'What are you (M) doing tomorrow?'
- b. ANSWER: *gonore neja'quěa'ě*
gōno #(-re) nee-hǎ'-ki-a-'i
 chicha-N.SBJ make-PRP-CL:M-COP-N3S
 '(I) am going to make chicha.'
- c. ANSWER': *airona sai'ja'quěa'ě*
ai-ro #(-na) sai-hǎ'-ki-a-'i
 big-CL:LOC-GOAL go-PRP-CL:M-COP-N3S
 '(I) am going to go to the forest (i.e., to go hunting).'
 [VOL: 20241104ejabi001a-d]

The examples in (19) demonstrate that the appropriate PROMINENT-marking is forced to arise on the nominal within the focalized predicate in these instances. On this basis, the fact that PROMINENT-marking is rejected on the SUBJECT-argument in contexts of broad-scoping Q-A sequences, as shown in (20), is unsurprising. In this case, the nominal is part of the presupposition and not contained within the focalized constituent:

- (20) a. QUESTION: *quere yo'co ?*
ke-e-re jo'-ko
 WH-CL:GEN-N.SBJ do-2/3S.F.PRS.N.ASS
 'What are you (F) doing?'

- b. ANSWER: # *yě'bi caiñē yure*
j'i (# **-bi**) *kāi-ñi* jure
 1SG-SBJ sleep-N3S.PRS.ASS now
 Intended: 'I am sleeping right now.'
 [Speaker comment: Using *-bi* is odd in this case. Something is missing
 and it seems that the speaker has more to say.]
 [VOL/SUG: 20230622ejabi022a-c]

The examples above illustrate how PROMINENT-marking arises on a nominal host within the focalized constituent; corresponding to a narrow, argument-focus reading, or a broad, predicate-focus reading accordingly. The data presented here are ascertained on the basis of Q-A diagnostics. These findings are corroborated by naturalistic instances, such as (21) lifted from *The demon kwēwahi* tale in the narrative sample analyzed in Chapter 5. In this excerpt, the P-token in (21b) bears PROMINENT *-re*, which signals a contrast between the *activity* performed by the wife character and that performed by the husband — i.e., an instance of broad focus:

- (21) a. *nocabo jěosaiye ba'ěña i iō ejēmaca ...*
 nohka-bo hio + sai-je
 banana-CL:ENCLOS clear + go-CL:GEN
 ba-~'-i-ña [ĩ-i ã-o
 be-RMT.PST-2/3S.M.PST.N.ASS-REP 3PRO-CL:M 3PRO-CL:F
 ãhĩ-mahka]_i
 husband-DIM.SG
 'Her husband_i went to tend to the banana plantation ...'
 b. *... iomacacato aore sěoco ñucoña*
 ĩ-o-mahka=kato_j **ãō-re** sio-ko
 3PRO-CL:F-DIM.SG=TOP cassava-N.SBJ fry-S.F.DEP
 ñuh-ko-ña
 be_seated-2/3S.F.PST.N.ASS-REP
 '... (~as for her,) she_j was sitting, frying cassava.'
 [NAT*: 20151112oespa001.164-165]

The empirical evidence considered in this section demonstrates that the Siona PROMINENT-marking strategy displays the typologically common pattern of narrow-broad focus syncretism in overt Q-A pairs (cf. Selkirk 1984; Lambrecht 1994; Rochemont 1998, 2013; Arregi 2016; Assmann et al. 2023 and references therein). PROMINENT case-marking arises on a nominal host which resides within the focalized constituent, such that the scope of the focus interpretation is underspecified. A series of related questions arise relating to the scopal properties of focus within complex noun phrases (e.g., as in the English distinction, 'the red CAR' vs. 'the RED car'). The following subsection explores focal case-marking within complex nominals.

6.3.2 Focal case-marking within complex nominals

The discussion thus far has considered (PROMINENT) case-marking on simplex nominals, which bear a single case-marker on their right edge. This subsection explores the expression and interpretation of PROMINENT-markers within complex nominals. In particular, two types of complex nominals are considered: (i) nouns with relative

clause modifiers, and (ii) nominalized clauses, with clause-internal arguments. Each of these configurations contain multiple nominal (sub-)constituents which may host case-marking morphology.

To begin with a consideration of relative clauses, Section 3.2.2 details how Siona displays parallel strategies for relative clause modification: (i) the pre-nominal modification strategy, and (ii) the post-nominal modification strategy. Speakers do not report any relevant interpretative differences between these alternatives. In the latter case, the modifier surfaces as a nominalization, which has implications for the process of promotion on inanimate singular nouns. (22) provides instances of pre- and post-nominal paraphrases for (18), repeated from the preceding section; illustrating obligatory PROMINENT-marking for each alternative:

- (22) a. [QUESTION: What are you (M) fixing?]
 ANSWER: *yě'ě yetesi jaěrěre nede'huayě*
 jì'ì [jehte-si hāĩ-rì #(-re)] nee + de'wa-jì
 1SG tear-PERF hammock-CL:MAIZE-N.SBJ make + repair-N3S.PRS.ASS
 'I am fixing a/the frayed HAMMACK.'
- b. [QUESTION: What are you (M) fixing?]
 ANSWER: *yě'ě jaěrě yetesiconi nede'huayě*
 jì'ì †[hāĩ-rì jehte-sih-ko *(-ni)/(#-re)] nee
 1SG hammock-CL:MAIZE tear-PERF-CL:F-N.SBJ2 make
 + de'wa-jì
 + repair-N3S.PRS.ASS
 'I am fixing a/the frayed HAMMACK.'
- [VOL/SUG: 20230617elupa001.017d-g]

The nominal in (22) is modified by a straightforward relative clause, formed via a property-denoting predicate, *jehte-* (be torn). A single case-marker surfaces at the right edge in both instances. In more complex cases, the relative clause modifier may itself contain nominal constituents which are viable targets for PROMINENT case-marking. This is the case in (23), which displays the answer segment to a SUBJECT-oriented question where the focalized SUBJECT has a relative clause modifier. Two acceptable case-marking configurations are noted: In (23a), the canonical configuration arises where case-marking surfaces at the right edge of the noun phrase. In (23b), the embedded SUBJECT receives PROMINENT-marking, and the right edge is left unmarked:

- (23) a. [QUESTION: What just went by?/What type of creature just went by?]
 ANSWER: *yě' a'yě ñasi bĩ'abi ja saja'i*
 [jì'ì a'j-ì ñaa-si bĩ'ã #(-bi)] hā sa-ha'i
 1SG older_sibling-CL:M see-COMP bird-SBJ just go-3S.M.PST.ASS
 'The BIRD that my older brother saw just flew by.'

- b. [QUESTION: *What just went by?/What bird just went by?*]
 ANSWER': *yě' a'yěbi ñasi bī'a ja saja'i*
 [jī'i a'j-i #(-bi) ñaa-si bī'ã (*-bi)] hã sa-ha'i
 1SG older_sibling-CL:M-SBJ see-COMP bird just go-3S.M.PST.ASS
 'The bird that my older BROTHER saw just flew by.'
 [Context suggested by speaker: There are several birds that everybody is taking about. Specifically, the one that your older brother and not, e.g., younger brother or father, saw flies by.]
 [VOL/SUG: 20241104ejabi001.003-004]

The answers in (23) assert the same content, although they evoke different sets of alternatives, which are appropriate in different contexts. In fact, the answer suggested in (23a) accepts two possible readings. This answers the SUBJECT-oriented question directly. However, in another context, this PROMINENT-marking on the head of the noun phrase, *bī'ã-bi* (bird), contrasts this species of animal with others (e.g., bats, wasps). Such instances where a single focus morpheme corresponds to focalization of the entire constituent or of only the marked sub-constituent are considered a sub-type of DISJUNCTIVE FOCUS SYNCRETISM by Assmann et al. (2023, §4.2.1).

By way of contrast, the answer in (23a) focalizes the embedded SUBJECT-argument in the complex nominal constituent, presupposing that there are multiple salient birds in the context at hand.⁹ The configuration in (23b) contributes a new finding to the description of Siona focal case-marking: The obligatory PROMINENT-marker in answer turns need not arise at the right edge of the noun phrase. A single instance of case-marking within the nominal constituent satisfies the Q-A congruence requirement, with concomitant effects on the interpretation.

A further refinement to the observation that a single case-marker satisfies the Q-A congruence requirement is in order: The requirement that PROMINENT-marking arises on one, but not all, eligible nominal hosts in the focalized constituent is separate from the overt case-marking requirement for animate non-SUBJECT arguments. (24) presents a similar instance to (23), which answers a question narrowly targeting the LOCATION-argument. The LOCATION in (24) contains a post-nominal relative clause, which triggers promotion accordingly. Two possible case-marking patterns are noted: Either a single PROMINENT *-ni* marker surfaces at the right edge of the nominal; or, the embedded SUBJECT receives PROMINENT *-bi* marking and the right edge of the promoted nominal bears PLAIN *-re* marking:

- (24) a. [QUESTION: *Where do you (PL) live?*]
 ANSWER: *yěquē ba'icua'ia'ē huē'e ñicuēbai nesiconi*
 jīhki ba'i-ko-wa'i-a-'i ↑[wī'e ñihk^w-i-bāi
 1PL.EXCL live-CL:F-PL.AN-COP-N3S house grandparent-CL:M-PL.AN
nee-sih-ko *(-ni)/(#-re)
 make-PERF-CL:F-N.SBJ2
 'We (EXCL) live in the HOUSE that (our) grandparents built.'

⁹The sentence in (23b) may serve as an answer to the same question as in (23a). It is generally acceptable to answer a question by addressing a more specific sub-question (e.g., Roberts 2012) — for this reason (23b) is shown to answer both the super- and the sub-question accordingly. This matches speaker judgments.

- b. [QUESTION: Where do you (PL) live?/Which house do you (PL) live in?]
yëquë ba'icua'ia'ë huë'e ñicuëbaibi nesicore
 jìhki ba'i-ko-wa'i-a-'i ↑[wì'e ñihk^w-i-bāĩ #(-bi)]
 1PL.EXCL live-CL:F-PL.AN-COP-N3S house grandparent-CL:M-PL.AN-SBJ
 nee-sih-ko *(-re)]
 make-PERF-CL:F-N.SBJ
 'We (EXCL) live in the house that (our) GRANDparents built.'
 [Context suggested by speaker: In the community there are many
 groups of houses, built over several generations. You live in a house built
 by your grandparents and not by, say, your parents and their siblings.]
 [VOL/SUG: 20241202ejabi001.002a-c]

The interpretations noted in (24) for the LOCATION-argument align neatly with those noted for the SUBJECT-argument in (23a). Where the embedded SUBJECT is PROMINENT-marked, PROMINENT-marking is not accepted at the right edge of the complex nominal. However, due to the case-marking requirement for promoted non-SUBJECTS, the PLAIN *-re* marker is obligatory in that position. In this way PLAIN and PROMINENT case-markers execute different roles in the language, a testament to the multi-dimensionality of Siona DCM. Only the latter class of case-markers encode focus-related information.

A final pair of sentences containing a complex nominal with a nominalized modifier is demonstrated in (25). These examples complement (24), by separating the role of PLAIN *-re* marking and PLAIN *-ni* on animate non-SUBJECTS. These examples are not Q-A pairs. The assertive sentences below concern a discontinuous animate OBJECT-argument, where the nominalized relative clause modifier itself contains an embedded animate OBJECT. Each sub-constituent of the discontinuous noun phrase must bear PLAIN *-re* marking in order to produce a grammatical sentence — mirroring so-called 'co-case-marking' patterns described for Quechuan languages (e.g., Lefebvre and Muysken 1988; Muysken 1989; Hastings 2003) — whereas a single PROMINENT *-ni* marker affects the scope of the contrastive interpretation in the sentence.¹⁰

- (25) a. *ye'yaquëbi te' joyaëre isibi betere be'tequëni*
 je'ja-ki-bi [te'-e hoja-i *(-re)] ñhsi-bi
 teach-CL:M-SBJ one-CL:GEN dog-CL:M-N.SBJ give-3S.M.PST.ASS
 [behte *(-re) be'te-ki *(-re)]
 duck-N.SBJ chase-CL:M-N.SBJ
 'The teacher (M) gave (me) a dog_(M) that chases ducks.'

¹⁰Although the speaker naturally produces *-bi* marking on the SUBJECT in (25), this is not a focal instances of PROMINENT-marking, as indicated by the suggested translation. Rather, overt case-marking is often utilized on deverbal nominalizations like these for the sake of communicative efficiency — i.e., conceived as a component of the disambiguating function of Siona DCM to be studied in greater detail in future research.

- b. *ye'yaquëbi te' joyaëre isibi beteni be'tequëre*
 je'ja-ki-bi [te'-e hoja-i *(-re)] ïhsi-bi
 teach-CL:M-SBJ one-CL:GEN dog-CL:M-N.SBJ give-3S.M.PST.ASS
 [behte *(-ni)/(#-re) be'te-ki *(-re)]
 duck-N.SBJ2 chase-CL:M-N.SBJ(2)
 'The teacher (M) gave (me) a dog (M) that chases DUCKS.'
 [Context suggested by speaker: The teacher has several dogs and he
 lends one that chases ducks, for hunting, but not the other animals in the
 forest.] [VOL/SUG: 20241119ejabi002.006-008]

In (25a), PLAIN *-re* marking arises on both sub-constituents for the matrix OBJECT, and on the embedded OBJECT, such that no focal-marking is expressed within this complex noun phrase. Correspondingly, none of these (sub-)constituents are focalized for the sake of interpretation. Conversely, in (25b), PROMINENT-marking arises on the embedded OBJECT-argument, and this argument is focalized accordingly, as expected. As is the case in (24b), the presence of PROMINENT-marking on the embedded constituent does not affect the PLAIN-marking patterns which satisfy the case-marking requirement for animate non-SUBJECTS independently.

The above examples demonstrate how focal case-marking arises in complex nominals, formed with relative clause-modifiers. The PROMINENT-marking strategy arises equally within independent and dependent clauses on the basis of the facts considered thus far. Similar facts emerge where the clausal complements of certain predicates are taken into account, which are required to be event nominalizations.¹¹ Such event nominalizations, contrary to participant-denoting nominalizations, never undergo promotion, since they are derived via the generic classifier, *-je* (or nasal *-ñe*), as discussed in Bruil 2019. This discussion considers two classes of constructions which take nominalized non-finite complements: (i) desire constructions (e.g., *ji-* (want/like); *goe-* (not want/like)), and (ii) impersonal modal constructions.¹²

To begin, (26) shows the possible PROMINENT-marking configuration available to the nominalized complement clause of the desire construction, *ji-* (want/like).¹³ These assertive sentences do not display obligatory PROMINENT-marking, such that where no such case-marking is produced, as in (26a), no contrastive (focus) effects arise. Nonetheless, where PROMINENT-marking is used, either on the event nominalization itself, *ñaañe* (see/read), as in (26b); or on the the embedded OBJECT, *bãkohka* (Siona language), as in (26c), a focus interpretation emerges narrowly on its nominal host. Speakers reject the sentence where PROMINENT-marking co-occurs on both the event nominalization and the embedded argument:

¹¹Siona exhibits several complementation strategies. Some predicate types take finite complements (e.g., *report*, *perception* predicates), whereas others select for non-finite complements.

¹²Although the negative copula does take the main verb in generic nominalized form, speakers reject the presence of *-re* on the main predicate in any context: e.g., *bãñi ba'ije(*-re) ñno* (intended: I don't LIVE here). It remains to be explored whether further differences exist for these functions of the event nominalization.

¹³This is one common strategy to express 'to want/to like to X' in Siona. The transitive *desire construction* in (26) is used alongside another impersonal strategy with the desiderative applicative *-ia-* (glossed DES), and an idiomatic construction which is directly translated as 'X says X will do Y'. More specifically the latter strategy recruits the verb *kaa-* (say) with a co-referential *s* in the subordinate clause with the verb in the future tense. Neither of these strategies take nominalized complements of the pertinent type.

- (26) a. *iye mo'se yě' ye'yaco yěco bāĩcoca ñaĩe*
 i-je mo'se jì'ì je'ja-ko jìi-ko [bāĩ
 DEM.PROX-CL:GEN day 1SG teach-CL:F want-3S.F.PRS.ASS person.COL
 + kohka ñaa-ñe]
 + language see-CL:GEN
 'Today my teacher (F) wants (us) to read Siona.'
- b. *iye mo'se yě' ye'yaco yěco bāĩcoca ñaĩere*
 i-je mo'se jì'ì je'ja-ko jìi-ko [bāĩ
 DEM.PROX-CL:GEN day 1SG teach-CL:F want-3S.F.PRS.ASS person.COL
 + kohka ñaa-ñe #(-re)]
 + language see-CL:GEN-N.SBJ
 'Today my teacher (F) wants (us) to READ Siona.'
 [Context suggested by speaker: In class the teacher wants to do
 reading excercises instead of other tasks — e.g., writing, singing.]
- c. *iye mo'se yě' ye'yaco yěco bāĩcocare ñaĩe*
 i-je mo'se jì'ì je'ja-ko jìi-ko [bāĩ
 DEM.PROX-CL:GEN day 1SG teach-CL:F want-3S.F.PRS.ASS person.COL
 + kohka #(-re) ñaa-ñe (*-re)]
 + language-N.SBJ see-CL:GEN
 'Today my teacher (F) wants (us) to read Siona.'
 [Context suggested by speaker: At school there are materials written
 in several languages, but the teacher chooses the Siona reading.]
 [VOL/SUG: 20230614erepa001.005a-d]

The examples in (26) demonstrate that Siona does permit for narrow verbal focus interpretation in constructions where the verbal element takes the form of an event nominalization. The derived nominal is a viable host for case-marking, such that the presence of PROMINENT-marking focalizes the event nominal itself — i.e., as shown in (26b). In order to focalize the embedded OBJECT, this argument must be PROMINENT-marked. On this basis, within nominalized complement clauses, the DISJUNCTIVE FOCUS SYNCRETISM effects observed with complex nominals with relative clause modifiers in (23) are blocked. The implications of this discrepancy for the syntax of relative clauses as compared with event nominalizations as in (26) remain to be fully unpacked in future research.

Event nominalizations are also selected in impersonal modal constructions (recently discussed by Jeretič (2021)). Two modal constructions are of interest to the present discussion: (i) the strong modal *ba'ì-*, and (ii) the weak modal *de'o-*.¹⁴ The predicate arises with default agreement (third-person masculine, singular), and the Experiencer-argument displays the dominant animate non-SUBJECT case-marking alternation: i.e., PLAIN *-re* vs. PROMINENT *-ni*. As anticipated, obligatory PROMINENT *-ni* marking arises on both the WH-item and the corresponding focalized Experiencer in the Q-A pair in (27):

¹⁴I neglect the negative counterpart *beo-* for this discussion, although it seems to behave in the same relevant ways noted for the affirmative modals.

- (27) a. QUESTION: *queini hua'i moñe de'oque?*
ke-i *(-ni) wa'i moo-ñe de'o-ki
 WH-CL:M-N.SBJ2 meat fish-CL:GEN be_good-2/3S.M.PRS.N.ASS
 'Who is allowed to go fishing? (lit. To whom is fishing good?)'
- b. ANSWER: *jaëni hua'i moñe de'oji*
hã-i *(-ni)/(#-re) wa'i moo-ñe de'o-hi
 DEM.MED-CL:M-N.SBJ2 meat fish-CL:GEN be_good-3S.M.PRS.ASS
 'HE is allowed to go fishing (lit. Fishing is good to HIM).'
 [VOL: 20230614ejabi001.013a-b]

In the same elicitation session, the speaker is asked a follow-up to (27). The speaker is asked to produce a similar instance, except where the activity of fishing is contrasted with other activities. The resulting sentence is reported in (28), along with the conjured context, where PROMINENT *-re* marks the event nominalization, *mooñe-re* (to fish), producing a similar effect to that noted in (26b):

- (28) ... *më'recato hua'i moñere de'oji*
 mi'i-re=kato [wa'i **moo-ñe #(-re)**] de'o-hi
 2SG-N.SBJ=TOP meat fish-CL:GEN-N.SBJ be_good-3S.M.PRS.ASS
 'As for you, you can go FISHing.'
 [Context suggested by speaker: At an event where several other activities are planned, you can go fishing, but not participate in other planned activities.]
 ⇒ {You can go hunting, You can go canoeing, ... }
 [VOL: 20230614ejabi001.014]

As demonstrated in (26) for complement clauses in desire constructions, the placement of PROMINENT-marking within an event nominalization in modal constructions has implications for the focal interpretation. (29) reports a pair of instances elicited via the CONTEXT CONJURING technique where PROMINENT *-re* is placed on different constituents within the dependent clause:

- (29) [Context suggested by speaker: A mother is talking to her child about learning life skills. ...]
- a. *duruhuëare isiyere ye'yeye ba'iji*
 [duhru-wi-ã **#(-re)** ihsi-je je'je-je]
 basket-CL:CONT-PL.INAN-N.SBJ give-CL:GEN learn-CL:GEN
 ba'i-hi
 be-3S.M.PRS.ASS
 '(You) must learn to sell BASKETS.' ⇒ {... sell bags, ... sell clothes}
- b. *duruhuëa isiyere ye'yeye ba'iji*
 [duhru-wi-ã **ihsi-je #(-re)** je'je-je]
 basket-CL:CONT-PL.INAN give-CL:GEN-N.SBJ learn-CL:GEN
 ba'i-hi
 be-3S.M.PRS.ASS
 '(You) must learn to SELL baskets.'
 ⇒ {... weave baskets, ... sort baskets} [VOL: 20230617elupa001.007a-c]

Together examples (26) through (29) demonstrate that narrow verb focus is attainable in Siona grammar, yet only under conditions where they arise as event nominalizations. Unlike the patterns of scopal underspecification noted in main clauses in Section

6.3.1, the scope of focalization is fixed in the case of event nominalizations and their internal nominal constituents. I am unaware of a grammaticalized strategy for narrow verb focus in the language outside of the embedded contexts considered here.

In order to round off the description of the distribution of PROMINENT case-marking on embedded event nominalizations, a final example is provided in (30). This example considers the Q-A heuristic, as applied to the nominalized complement clause to the desire construction, *jii-* (want/like). Whereas the WH-item in the question in (30a) demonstrates obligatory PROMINENT-marking, as anticipated, *kee-re* (what); the focalized event nominalization in the answer in (30b) resists PROMINENT-marking, as does the embedded OBJECT. This finding merits further investigation:

- (30) a. QUESTION: *quere yo'ye yěquě ?*
ke-e-re jo'-je jii-ki
 WH-CL:GEN-N.SBJ do-CL:GEN want-2/3S.M.PRS.N.ASS
 'What do you (M) want to do?'
 b. ANSWER: *baicoca ye'yeye yěyě*
 [bāi + kohka je'je-je] jii-ji
 person.COL + language learn-CL:GEN-N.SBJ want-N3S.PRS.ASS
 '(I) want to learn/practice Siona.' [VOL: 20241104ejabi001.016a-b]

The discussion in this section demonstrates that the *size* question regarding focal effects for Siona DCM is not as straightforward as it might appear. In addition to a handful of focus syncretisms, the choice of host for PROMINENT-marking on a sub-constituent of complex nominals has interpretative consequences. The distribution of PROMINENT-marking is largely driven by the expression of information focus in interrogative contexts across all DCM relations, and by the encoding of contrast (or contrastive focus) in non-interrogative contexts. The majority of elicited data considered thus far concerns information focus uses of the PROMINENT case-marking strategy. The following section delves into the distribution of PROMINENT-marking across a range of (non-)interrogative focus contexts in order to better characterize its semantico-pragmatic function.

6.4 Distribution check: Siona DCM and focus

Whereas the previous section analyzes the scopal properties of PROMINENT-marking, the present section addresses the range of focal constructions where this strategy is attested. It is well-established in the literature that the precise distribution of focus-encoding strategies varies on language-by-language basis (e.g., Zimmermann and Onea 2011; Matić and Wedgwood 2013; van der Wal 2011, van der Wal 2016, 2022; Kratzer and Selkirk 2020). Ultimately this discussion contributes to the determination of whether the Siona PROMINENT-marking strategy is a bona fide focus-encoding strategy, or whether a weaker position is warranted — i.e., Siona DCM has a focus-sensitive distribution.

The discussion in this section is broken into two parts: Section 6.4.1 assesses the activity of Siona PROMINENT case-marking across a handful of constructions where focus strategies are implicated cross-linguistically: including, different types of questions, corrective focus constructions, similarity and opposition constructions. Section 6.4.2 describes the interaction of PROMINENT case-marking with nominal discourse

markers — i.e., *-se'e* (only), *-hẽ* (also), *-tã'ã* (even)¹⁵, and the contrastive topic clitic, *=kato*. Together these sections reveal the distribution of the PROMINENT-marking strategy, which in turn sheds light on its semantico-pragmatic nature.

6.4.1 Siona DCM patterns across focal construction types

The data considered in the preceding sections of this chapter have demonstrated that focal case-marker is implicated in both interrogative contexts and to encode the emphatic contrast reading in plain assertions — i.e., information focus and contrastive focus (Dik et al. 1981; Dik 1997; Kiss 1998; Repp 2016; etc.). The former type displays obligatory, construction-level case matching effects, whereas the latter does not. This section explores both interrogative and assertive instances of Siona focal case-marking, each of which displays a more limited distribution than might be anticipated based upon the foregoing discussion. The discussion is designed moreso as a contribution to the empirical description of Siona DCM than as a full-fledged theoretical account of the patterns.

As a point of departure, (31) enumerates a set of constructions, where focus strategies prototypically occur on a cross-linguistic basis (inspired by Becker and Schneider-Blum 2020). Siona DCM is implicated in a subset of these constructions (identified with ✓), and is absent in others (identified with ✕). This section retains the shorthand labels in (31) to categorize examples in the discussion below as a matter of convenience:

- (31) a. i. [✕] ALTERNATIVE QUESTION constructions (henceforth Q-ALT):
e.g., Do you want [coffee]_{A1} or [tea]_{A2}?
- ii. [✕] Answer to (31a-i) (henceforth SEL-ALT):
e.g., (I want) [coffee]_{A1}.
- b. i. [✓] INFORMATION QUESTION constructions (henceforth Q-WH):
e.g., [What]_{A} do you want?
- ii. [✓] Answer to (31b-i) (henceforth SEL-WH):
e.g., (I want) [coffee]_{A1}.
- c. [✕] SIMILARITY constructions (henceforth SIM):
e.g., I made [the muffins]_{A1} and I also made [the cake]_{A2}.
- d. [✓] OPPOSITION constructions (henceforth OPP):
e.g., [[John]_{A1} is mowing the lawn]_{A1}, but [[Pete]_{A2} was pruning the roses]_{A2}.
- e. [✕] CORRECTION constructions (henceforth CORR):¹⁶
e.g., [Tom]_{A1} did not make dinner, [Lea]_{A2} made dinner.

¹⁵The morpheme *-tã'ã* is the COUNTER-EXPECTATIVE marker. Its precise semantic contribution is difficult to unpack, so for the present purposes ‘even’ is suggested as a basic English translation based upon glosses used elsewhere in the literature for markers with similar meanings.

¹⁶On the one hand, the bi-clausal CORR construction shown in (31e) often recruits PROMINENT-marking along the lines of the OPP construction archetype. However, in short corrective sentences speakers tend to reject PROMINENT-marking in the absence of explicit alternatives — e.g., ‘John made dinner’ → ‘No, MARY made dinner’. In such instances a periphrastic strategy is selected in Siona.

- (33) a. Q-ALT: *tsoa ějao bānĭje mĕ' gajeo goame necoa'ne iñona ?*
tsoa + ĭha-o bānihĕ **mĭ'ĩ gahe-o** goa-me nee-ko-a-'ne
 tall + foreign-CL:F or 2SG friend-CL:F task make-CL:F-COP-Q
 ihño-na
 here-GOAL
 'Does the tall FOREIGNER (F) or your FRIEND (F) work here?'
- b. SEL-ALT: *tsoa ějao goame necoa*¹⁹
tsoa + ĭha-o (#-bi) goa-me nee-ko-a
 tall + foreign-CL:F-SBJ task make-CL:F-COP.3S.F
 'The FOREIGNER (F) works (here).' [VOL: 20230617eyopa001.033]

Just as alternative question-answer sequences do not implicate DCM, neither is it implicated in polar question constructions (Q-POL and SEL-POL examples). As a case in point, (34) shows a polar question-answer sequence lifted from a telephone call role-play task. The speaker is calling a friend who works in a repair shop, and asks if he is fixing something particular, *tojasaiwĩã* (desks), in (34a). His friend responds in the negative and corrects the item which he is repairing in (34b), where he does not naturally produce PROMINENT *-re* marking:

- (34) a. Q-WH.POL: *nede'huaquĕ toyasaihuĕã ?*
 nee + de'wa-ki **toja + sai-wi-ã**
 make + repair-2/3S.M.PRS.N.ASS write + furniture-CL:CONT-PL.INAN
 'Are you (M) fixing desks?'
- b. SEL-WH.POL (\simeq CORR): *bañĕ – jaĕrĕ nede'huayĕ*
 bāã-ñi **hãĩ-ri (#-re)** nee
 NEG.AUX-N3S.PRS.ASS hammock-CL:MAIZE-N.SBJ make
 + de'wa-ji
 + repair-N3S.PRS.ASS
 'No, I'm fixing a HAMMOCK.' [VOL: 20241015ejabi001.017a-e]

Although the original Q-POL turn in (34a), volunteered by the speaker, does not contain PROMINENT-marking; upon further scrutiny, the speaker accepts this case-marking when asked. The speaker conjures the context laid out in (35a) where the expected contrastive interpretation emerges in that sentence. Nonetheless PROMINENT case-marking is still dispreferred on the focalized constituent in the Q-POL turn in (35b):

- (35) a. Q-WH.POL': *nede'huaquĕ toyasaihuĕgre ?*
 nee + de'wa-ki **toja**
 make + repair-2/3S.M.PRS.N.ASS write
 + **sai-wi-ã #(-re)**
 + furniture-CL:CONT-PL.INAN-N.SBJ
 'Are you (M) fixing DESKS?' \Rightarrow {... fixing bicycles, ... fixing chairs, ... }
 [Context suggested by speaker: The friend he is calling owns a repair shop where they fix everyday items.]

¹⁹The speaker comments that, if *-bi* marking is used in (33b), it seems like there is more to say about the foreign woman. They deem this to be an odd answer to (33a). To my view, this judgment is similar to topicality effects described for related DCM patterns in Koregua,je [cœ] in Cook and Levinsohn 1985. Overt case-marking signals that the referent is important to the immediately ensuing discourse.

- b. SEL-WH.POL (\simeq CORR): *bañē – jaērē nede’huayē*
 bāā-ñi hāi-ri nee + de’wa-ji
 NEG.AUX-N3S.PRS.ASS hammock-CL:MAIZE make + repair-N3S.PRS.ASS
 ‘No, I’m fixing a HAMMOCK.’ [VOL: 20241015ejabi001.017a-e]

The examples in (34) and (35) show that PROMINENT-marking is not implicated in polar question constructions, although these also seem to have a corrective flavour. Corrections are a common focus construction cross-linguistically (i.e., Dik et al. 1981, 1997); which is not surprising, given that they negate a particular overt alternative, and suggest another. Outside of interrogative contexts, sentences such as (36) demonstrate that PROMINENT-marking is not recruited in more canonical corrective constructions either, as indicated in (31):

- (36) CORR: *curare cua’coye ba’iji baji noca*
 tsia kwa’ko-je ba’i-hi bāā-hi nohka
 egg cook.TRN-CL:GEN be-3S.M.PRS.ASS NEG.AUX-3S.M.PRS.ASS plantain
 ‘(You) have to cook EGGS, not plantain!’
 [Context suggested by speaker: One offers to help their mother with cooking dinner. They grab a plantain to cook...]
 [VOL: 20230625ejabi001.007]

The final focus construction, which is claimed in (31) not to implicate the focal case-marking strategy, concerns so-called similarity constructions (SIM examples). This meaning is achieved by the additive suffix, *-hē* (also),²⁰ as shown in (37). This marker is compatible with PROMINENT-marking, as demonstrated in Section 6.4.2; however, the construction does not force the presence of the PROMINENT-marker:

- (37) a. SIM: *gucubi soquētenereje tsiayare go’eo*²¹
 guhku-bi sōhkitene *(-re)-hē tsia-ja-re
 owl-SBJ catfish(spec)-N.SBJ-ADD river-CL:RIV-N.SBJ
 go’e-o
 look_for-3S.F.PST.ASS
 ‘Owl (nickname) was also looking for CATfish (nickname) at the river.’
 b. SIM’: *gucuje soquētenere tsiayare go’eo*
 guhku (#-bi)-hē sōhkitene *(-re) tsia-ja-re
 owl-SBJ-ADD catfish (spec)-N.SBJ river-CL:RIV-N.SBJ
 go’e-o
 look_for-3S.F.PST.ASS
 ‘Also OWL (nickname) was looking for Catfish (nickname) at the river.’
 [VOL: 20230627elupa001.019a-c]

The general pattern is such that PROMINENT case-markers are often avoided where the nominal is marked with focus-sensitive enclitics, such as *-hē* (also) and *-se’e* (only).

²⁰This is a multi-functional morpheme, which also shows a related simulative function — e.g., *ji’i ha’ki-hē ba’i ñaagoañōñi* (I look like my father [VOL: 20241010ejabi001.003b]). This same marker exhibits interesting behaviour under negation and quantification, which merits further investigation — Martine Bruil, p.c.

²¹The speaker indicates that *-ni* marking is grammatically possible, *sōhkitene-ni-hē* (CATfish too), but it is odd in the case of (37a).

Nonetheless, this incompatibility is not a morphological co-occurrence restriction on case-marking, given instances such as (37a) where *-hē* occurs with the obligatory PLAIN *-re* marker on the animate non-SUBJECT argument as expected. Further details are considered in Section 6.4.2.

Up to this point this discussion has considered focus constructions where the PROMINENT-marking strategy is inactive. The remainder of this section explores the distribution of this strategy in those constructions where it is active: namely, information question-answer sequences, and opposition constructions. In fact, this strategy is only implicated in a subset of each construction type, further militating against the strong analysis of PROMINENT-marking as a focus-encoding strategy. These construction types are explored in greater detail in Section 6.4.1.1 and Section 6.4.1.2 respectively.

6.4.1.1 Case-marking and information-seeking questions

QUESTION-ANSWER congruence phenomena are central to the conception of Siona DCM patterns as PLAIN-PROMINENT pairs, introduced in the *preliminary description* in Chapter 3. More concretely, the Q-A diagnostic is applied to ascertain the PROMINENT-status of a given case-marker based upon their obligatory usage in information question-answer sequences. A subset of information questions demonstrate congruence effects, and PROMINENT-marking in the answer turn is only obligatory where it is also required in the corresponding question turn. To adequately establish the connection between PROMINENT-marking and particular information questions, a brief description of Ecuadorian Siona WH-item lexicon is in order.

Firstly, independently of their case-marking properties, all WH-items are fronted to the left clausal edge. Since only constituent WH-items concern this discussion, the high frequency interrogative particle, *me* (how, why), is set aside.²² Siona constituent WH-items fall into two series, formed around two interrogative roots: i.e., *ke-* and *he-*.²³ Table 6.2 enumerates the WH-item inventory in Siona, where items identified with X^{PROM} display obligatory PROMINENT-marking:²⁴

²²Schwarz (2014, §2.3) provides a compatible description of the cognate item, *me* (how, why) as found in Ecuadorian Sekoya.

²³Interestingly, the series *he* is not attested in Colombian Siona (Wheeler 1970, discussed in Schwarz 2014, 5-6). However, unlike Ecuadorian Sekoya, I have not come across human-denoting uses of the *he*-series, described in Schwarz (2014, 6-7) in Ecuadorian Siona. This variety is a middle ground.

²⁴I have also come across one instance of *ke-o* (lit. what (F)) which was naturally produced where the answer is presupposed to be a de-verbal nominalization — e.g., [↑]*kohka kaako* (cellphone), discussed in Chapter 3: (*keo-ni ko'eko?* [What (F) are you (F) looking for?]). This same strategy may be used with an animate OBJECT-seeking question, where the referent is presupposed to be feminine. Further work is needed to fully unpack the precise distribution of this item in both of these contexts.

ROOT	CLASSIFIER+	MEANING(S)
<i>ke</i>	-i (CL:M) ^{PROM}	who (M, <i>default</i>); what (ANIM)
<i>ke</i>	-o (CL:F) ^{PROM}	who (F)
<i>ke</i>	-je (CL:GEN) ^{PROM}	what (INAN)
<i>ke</i>	+ NP — e.g., <i>je'jekĩ</i>	what student (M)
<i>he</i>	-ro (CL:LOC) ^{PROM}	where
<i>he</i>	-sõ + NP	how many (ANIM/INAN)
<i>he</i>	-ja'ye + NP	how X, how many (INAN)
<i>he</i>	-j'wa	when
<i>he</i>	+ NP — e.g., <i>wi'e</i>	which house

Table 6.2: Constituent WH-item inventory, x^{PROM} must bear PROMINENT-marking

The first take-away from Table 6.2 is that PROMINENT-marking is only required in question-answer sequences with simplex WH-items. Conversely, complex WH-items, such as *ke je'jekĩ* (which student (M)), do not require PROMINENT-marker. Contrast the near-synonymous information question-answer sequences in (38) and (39):

- (38) a. Q-WH: *queibi ba'iquë iye huë'e ?*
ke-i-bi^{< PROM >} ba'i-ki i-je wi'e
 WH-CL:M-SBJ live-2/3S.M.PRS.N.ASS DEM.PROX-CL:GEN house
 'Who lives in this house?'
 b. SEL-WH: *yëquë tsëcabëbi ba'iyë*
jihki tsihka-bi #(-bi)^{< PROM >} ba'i-ji
 1PL.EXCL family-CL:COL-SBJ live-N3S.PRS.ASS
 'Our family is living (there).' [VOL: 20220617ecebi001.016a-c]
- (39) a. Q-WH: *que tsëcabë icore ba'iyë ?*
[ke tsihka-bi] ih-ko-re ba'i-je
 WH family-CL:COL DEM.PROX-CL:F-N.SBJ live-N2/3S.PRS.N.ASS
 'Which family lives here?'
 b. SEL-WH: *yëquë tsëcabë ba'iyë*
jihki tsihka-bi (#-bi) ba'i-ji
 1PL.EXCL family-CL:COL-SBJ live-N3S.PRS.ASS
 'Our family is living (there).'²⁵ [VOL: 20220617ecebi001.014a-b]

A similar pattern is reported in (40), where the complex WH-item designating the OBJECT in the question turn does not bear *-re* marking. The speaker did not produce PROMINENT-marking on the focalized constituent in the answer turn in (40b), but did not reject it when asked. For the current purposes, this instance of PROMINENT-marking is reported as optional. This is crucially dissimilar to the PROMINENCE-matching pattern noted with simplex WH questions:

²⁵The speaker provides a similar judgment to that noted in (33b), namely that there is more to say about the referent, our family, as the conversation continues. This usage does not align with the focal case-marking patterns discussed in the present discussion.

- (40) a. Q-WH: *je ocohuë baco jaŋ ?*
he ohko-wi baa-ko hã-o
 WH water-CL:CONT have-2/3S.F.PRS.N.ASS DEM.MED-CL:F
 ‘Which water bottle does she have?’
- b. SEL-WH: *baco yë’ ocohuë*
 baa-ko **ji’i ohko-wi(-re)**
 have-3S.F.PRS.ASS 1SG water-CL:CONT-N.SBJ
 ‘(She) has MY water bottle.’ [VOL/SUG: 20220620eeupa001.012]

Per Table 6.2, quantity WH-expressions formed with *hesõ* (how many) do not bear PROMINENT-marking. This is demonstrated in (41), where PROMINENT *-ni* marking does not arise on the animate WH-expression, or in the corresponding SEL-WH turn in (41b). Instead PLAIN *-re* marking arises on the animate OBJECT as expected:

- (41) a. Q-WH: *jeso yaëre airo ñaë ?*
[hesõ ja-i*(-re)] ai-ro ñaa-i
 how_many jaguar-CL:M-N.SBJ big-CL:LOC see-2/3S.M.PST.N.ASS
 ‘How many jaguars did (you (M)) see in the forest?’
- b. SEL-WH: *si’ahua’i yaëre ñahuë*
[si’a-wa’i ja-i*(-re)] ñaa-wi
 all-CL.ANIM jaguar-CL:M-N.SBJ see-N3S.PST.ASS
 ‘(I) saw ALL of the jaguars.’ [VOL/SUG: 20230619elupa002.007a-b]

In a follow-up to (41b), the speaker accepted the suggested PROMINENT *-ni* marking on the OBJECT-argument, and conjured the context reported in (42). In this instance, the head noun of the OBJECT nominal receives the emphatic contrast interpretation:

- (42) SEL-WH’: *si’ahua’i yaëni ñahuë*
[si’a-wa’i ja-i#(-ni)] ñaa-wi
 all-CL.ANIM jaguar-CL:M-N.SBJ2 see-N3S.PST.ASS
 ‘(I) saw all of the JAGuars.’
[Context suggested by speaker: You are out surveying the hunting paths in the forest and come across many species of animals. There are many jaguars, but also tapyrs and peccaries, and other creatures.]
 [VOL/SUG: 20230619elupa002.007a-b]

The quantity question-answer sequence shown in (41b), together with (42), demonstrates PROMINENT-marking is still available with WH-expressions that do not force the marking. A similar pattern is shown in (43), where the presence of PROMINENT *-re* on the inanimate OBJECT achieves an emphatic contrast reading:

- (43) a. Q-WH: *jeso jachohuëa baquë ?*
[hesõ hacho-wi-ã] baa-ki
 how_many shoot-CL:CONT-PL.INAN have-2/3S.M.PRS.N.ASS
 ‘How many rifles do (you (M)) have?’
- b. SEL-WH: *jachohuëa bayë cayaye*
[hahcho-wi-ã] baa-ji **[kaja-je]**
 shoot-CL.CONT-PL.INAN have-N3S.PRS.ASS two-CL:GEN
 ‘(I) have TWO rifles.’

- c. SEL-WH': *jachohuĕāre bayē cayaye*²⁶
 [hahcho-wi-ā-re] baa-ji [kaja-je]
 shoot-CL.CONT-PL.INAN-N.SBJ have-N3S.PRS.ASS two-CL:GEN
 '(I) have two RIFLES...'
 [Context suggested by speaker: You own various weapons and other
 implements for hunting, which you can lend out, but only two rifles.]
 [VOL/SUG: 20220617ecebi001 .016a-e]

The examples shown in this section have demonstrated that Q-A congruence effects strictly obtain with a handful of simplex WH-items identified in Table 6.2. In other information question-answer sequences, PROMINENT-marking is not required on either turn in the information question construction. In these contexts, PROMINENT-marking exhibits the same contrastive focal effects noted in non-interrogative contexts. This fact in and of itself favours the weaker analysis proposed above, where Q-A case-matching effects are treated separately from contrastive (focus) effects. The following section explores the distribution of PROMINENT case-marking in a certain family of non-interrogative focus constructions, namely opposition constructions.

6.4.1.2 DCM and opposition constructions

Opposition constructions (i.e., OPP) belong to the umbrella category of PARALLEL FOCUS contexts identified by Dik (1981, 1997, etc.). On the basis of co-textual diagnostics (outlined in Section 6.1), rich contexts are established to elicit sentences where overt alternatives are explicitly contrasted in juxtaposed sentences. PROMINENT-marking is produced on one or both contrasted constituents. The one-marker pattern is demonstrated for animate OBJECT-arguments in (44), whereas the double-marking pattern is shown for spatial GOAL-arguments in (45) respectively:^{27,28}

- (44) OPP: [*ñeñebēre mohuē te'e yohuē*] cuj'ne [*suarani a'rimañña tseghuē*]
 ñeñebi-re moo-wi te'e jo-wi kwī'ne
 pícolo-N.SBJ fish-N3S.PST.ASS one-CL:GEN canoe-CL:CONT also
 swara-ni a'rimañña tsēā-wi
 bocachico-N.SBJ2 few catch-N3S.PST.ASS
 '[I caught ~one canoe-full of Pícalo (fish species)], and [(just) a few
 bocaCHICOS (fish species)].' [VOL: 20240918ejabi001.006]
- (45) OPP: [*yē'ē tsiayana gajeyē*] [*yē' yojei saiji huē'ena*]
 jī'i tsia-ja #(-na) gahe-ji jī'i johe-i
 1SG river-CL:RIV-GOAL go_down-N3S.PRS.ASS 1SG younger_sibling-CL:M
 sai-hi wi'e #(-na)
 go-3S.M.PRS.ASS house-GOAL
 '[I am going to the River], (whereas) [my little brother is going HOME].'
 [VOL: 20230617eyopa001.014-015]

²⁶When asked, the consultant found it odd to place *-re* on the numeral element in (43c).

²⁷In the suggested English translation in (44), it is natural to produce a connector, e.g., *whereas*, although, for Siona speakers, a prosodic pause suffices to separate the opposed clauses in the construction.

²⁸The pattern where only one overtly contrasted noun phrase is PROMINENT-marked may account for certain instances of PLAIN-marking on contrastive nominal tokens in the quantitative study in Chapter 5. In many instances a single focal case-marker suffices to establish the contrast.

On the one hand, in the case of (44), the speaker produces PROMINENT-marking in the first clause, but PLAIN *-re* marking in the second clause. When asked, PROMINENT-marking on both constituents is possible, but deemed to be slightly odd in this context. On the other hand, in (45), the speaker rejects PLAIN zero-marking on either spatial GOAL constituent. Although a degree of optionality regarding the selection of the one- or double-marker configuration is noted, a crucial generalization emerges: At least one PROMINENT-marker must be present on the focalized constituent in the opposition construction. Some descriptive nuance is added to this generalization in what follows based on a consideration of certain sub-types of opposition constructions.

There is a sub-class of opposition constructions where the one-marker pattern arises predictably. I label this the *polar* opposition construction. This construction juxtaposes one affirmative and one negative clause, sometimes containing the element *jo'okitā'ā* (but),²⁹ which does not the PROMINENT-marking pattern. The single PROMINENT-marker arises invariably within the affirmative clause, whereas PLAIN-marking is selected within the negative clause.

Three examples illustrate the polar opposition constructions in (46) through (48) below. (46) and (47) demonstrate instances of this construction targeting inanimate and animate OBJECT respectively. (48) provides a comparable instance targeting the Experiencer argument as found with the impersonal predicate, *sihsi-* (be cold). PROMINENT-marking is confined to the affirmative clause, and the ordering of negative and affirmative clauses has no bearing on case-marking:

- (46) OPP: [*bahuë yohuë hueroye* NEG] [*te'e guënarore huerohuë* AFF]
 bāā-wi **jo-wi** wero-je **te'e**
 NEG.AUX-N3S.PST.ASS canoe-CL:CONT buy-CL:GEN one-CL:GEN
gīna-ro #(-re) wero-wi
 metal-CL:RECIP-N.SBJ buy-N3S.PST.ASS
 'I didn't buy a BOAT NEG], [(I) bought a COOKing_pot AFF].'
 [VOL: 20230623ejepa001.013]
- (47) OPP: *go'ye mo'se* [*tsihua'ore ñāñe bahuë* NEG] [*tsihuaëni ñahuë* AFF]
 go'je mo'se **tsi-wa'o-re** ñāa-ñe bāā-wi
 before day child-SG-CL:F-N.SBJ see-CL:GEN NEG.AUX-N3S.PST.ASS
tsi-wa'i *(-ni)/(#-re) ñāa-wi
 child-SG-CL:M-N.SBJ2 see-N3S.PST.ASS
 'Yesterday [(I) didn't see a GIRL NEG], [(I) saw a BOY AFF].'
 [VOL: 20230617elupa001.019]
- (48) OPP: [*Palomani tsëtsëji* AFF] *yo'quëta'a* [*maire baji tsëtsëye* NEG]
Paloma *(-ni)/(#-re) sihsi-hi jo'okitā'ā **mai-re**
 P-N.SBJ2 be_cold-3S.M.PRS.ASS but.M 1PL.INCL-N.SBJ
 bāā-hi sihsi-je
 NEG.AUX-3S.M.PRS.ASS be_cold-CL:GEN
 '[PaLOma is cold (lit. it's cold to PaLOma) AFF], but [WE (INCL) aren't cold
 (lit. it's not cold to US) NEG].'
 [VOL: 20230617elupa001.021]

A point of clarification is in order: There is no general restriction on PROMINENT-marking within negative clauses; rather this is best viewed as a construction-specific

²⁹The conjunction *jo'okitā'ā* has several gender-based alternatives chosen based on the gender of the speaker: i.e., *jo'okotā'ā* (F), *jo'okwa'itā'ā* (PL).

property. In independent negative clauses, Siona DCM behaves in the expected way. For instance, (49) is a volunteered negative sentence where PROMINENT-marking triggers the anticipated contrastive focal reading:

- (49) *airo bahuē baini ñañe*
 ai-ro bāā-wi **bāi *(-ni)/(#-re)** ñaa-ñe
 big-CL:LOC NEG.AUX-N3S.PST.ASS person.COL-N.SBJ2 see-CL:GEN
 ‘(I) didn’t see PEOPLE in the forest.’
 [Context suggested by speaker: You went to look for whoever was using
 the forest paths frequented by the Sionas. You didn’t find them, but saw
 something else... e.g., creatures, trash.] [VOL: 20230615elupa001.007d]

This section has confirmed that the opposition construction, like certain Q-A constructions, implicates Siona DCM in a principled way. Concretely, PROMINENT-marking encodes local contrasts between overt constituents. The marked constituent in the polar opposition construction is always in the *affirmative* clause. It remains to be determined whether this is a rigid syntactic pattern, or whether this generalization has information structural implications. Klein and de Swart (2011) recognize similar certain ‘construction effects’ in better-studied DCM languages — e.g., Turkish OBJECT-oriented DCM is conditioned by embeddedness, Romanian *-pe* is obligatory on the OBJECT in the comparative construction (*id.*, 11-12).

The instances of obligatory PROMINENT case-marking discussed here for opposition constructions are similar to many naturalistic instances identified in the narrative sample in Chapter 5. However, the examples elicited via co-textual techniques here always contain two overt constituents. PROMINENT case-marking is forced on at least one nominal where both nominals are overtly expressed, although it is unclear what effect that argument-dropping in naturalistic speech has on these patterns. Argumental noun phrases are more often covert than they are overt in the narrative sample — as shown in Table B.9 in Appendix B. In any case, these findings are taken as corroborating evidence for the contrastive focal effects in Siona DCM.

Up to this point it has been shown that focus-sensitive case-marking is not recruited in *all* contexts where it might be expected based on focus semantics alone; rather the PROMINENT-marking has a more narrow distribution. To round off this discussion, the following section considers the connection (or lack thereof) between PROMINENT-marking and nominal discourse markers, such as *-se’e* and *-hē* introduced above.

6.4.2 Compatibility of focal case- and discourse-marking

In addition to PROMINENT case-marking as a focus-encoding strategy, Siona exhibits a series of nominal discourse markers. This set comprises four morphemes, which arise at the right edge of the noun phrases alongside case-marking morphology in a particular order. This dissertation adopts the labels, and the glossing conventions regarding the suffix vs. enclitic status of the discourse markers, utilized in Bruil (2014, *et seq.*), as enumerated in (50):

- (50) a. The EXCLUSIVE marker: e.g., *ohko-se'e* (only water).
 b. The ADDITIVE marker: e.g., *Guhku-hě* (Owl (nickname) too).³⁰
 c. The COUNTER-EXPECTATIVE marker: e.g., *hāmu-tā'ā* (even the armadillo).
 d. The TOPIC marker: e.g., *jī'i=kato* (as for me ...).³¹

Any nominal word which may host case-marking may also bear the nominal morphemes outlined in (50). Each of these morphemes has a dedicated position at the right edge of the nominal constituent, typically arising as phrasal suffixes in the order schematized below in the form of a nominal template (Good 2011, 2016):

	CL	PL	DIM	INTENS	EXCL	CASE	ADD	TOP	CNT.EXP
ROOT	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
e.g.,	-ki	-wa'i	-mahka	-reba	-se'e	-re...	-hě	=kato	-tā'ā

The above nominal template comprises two major suffixal sequences — i.e., the inner positions 1 through 4,³² which arise closer to the root, and peripheral positions 5 through 9. Whereas the former comprises several morphemes which are sensitive to the φ -properties of the nominal, the latter grouping concerns morphemes which are sensitive to the discourse status of the nominal. The case-marker occupies an intermediate position (position 6), displaying sensitivities to both properties.

The internal structure of the Siona nominal word aligns with that described for the Eastern Tukanoan language Koitiria: “Suffixes that are closest to the stem tend to be lexical, more closely linked to the core meaning of the word; suffixes that are farther from the stem mark the word for its role in the clause, and then for its role in discourse” (Stenzel 2013c, 168). Returning to Siona, the naturalistic sentence in (51) contains various nominals fitted with peripheral discourse markers, illustrating their respective interpretative functions. Most (if not all) of these markers interact with focus semantics in one way or another — see Krifka and Musan 2012 for an overview:

- (51) ... *yě'cato*, *ĩño yě'se'e yě' huaredohuēmañaja're ba'iyě yě'je*
jī'i=kato *ihño jī'i-se'e jī'i ware-dowi-mahña-ha're ba'i-jī*
 1SG=TOP here 1SG-EXCL 1SG child.COL-PL.AN-DIM.PL-COM live-N3S.PRS.ASS
jī'i-hě
 1SG-ADD
 ‘As for me^(TOP), I also^(ADD) live here, just me^(EXCL), with my children.’
 [NAT: 20140816saupi001.080]

Although both classes of nominal morphology are focus-sensitive in one way or another, perhaps surprisingly, the bulk of nominals bear either a discourse marker *or* a

³⁰This marker also functions as a SIMILARITY marker — e.g., *ha'ki-hě* (like his father). It is interesting to note that this is considered to be a case function in certain descriptive traditions: including the ‘essive case’ in the Finnish tradition (Karlsson 2015, 148-150), and the ‘semblative case’ in the Australian tradition — e.g., Evans 1985 for Kayardild. Of course, this dissertation argues against *-hě* as a case-marker in Siona.

³¹I follow Bruil 2014 (and elsewhere) in treating the contrastive topic marker *=kato* as an enclitic rather than a suffix. This move is motivated by phonological criteria.

³²For the present purposes, the intensifier morpheme, *-reba*, is not treated as having a discourse-related function. A common usage of this morpheme is *ihño-reba* (right here) — this marker contributes a meaning such as ‘precisely’, or ‘the very X’.

case-marker (or neither) in Siona speech. This subsection explores the co-occurrence patterns of PROMINENT-marking and nominal discourse particles as a contribution to the description of Siona DCM — i.e., inspired by the conception of (IN)COMPATIBILITY DIAGNOSTICS for focus-encoding strategies in van der Wal (2015, 2016, etc.).

An initial observation is in order: Discourse markers and case-markers are not in complementary distribution. Instances where both types of markers co-occur on the same nominal constituent arise in elicitations and in texts. (52) lifts several tokens from the narrative sample analyzed in Chapter 5 where discourse marking and case-marking co-occur — see Table B.10 in Appendix B for a complete overview of discourse markers in the sample:

- (52) a. [Context: The children of Baina are eating various jungle creatures.]
jaēreje ani jeoni ...
hã-i-re-hē ãni + hēō-ni
 DEM.MED-CL:M-OBJ-ADD eat + leave_behind-SS
 ‘(They) ate him too (and moved on) ...’
 [NAT*: 20150811sfryi001.549]
- b. *io neato ñami ti’ani aisicobi ani chaoni irecato acoña ...*
 ĩ-o nea-to ñahmi tĩ’ã-ni ãĩ-sih-ko-bi ãni + chao-ni
 3PRO-CL:F dark-COND night arrive-SS eat-COMP-CL:F-SBJ eat + finish-SS
ĩ-i-re=kato ãh-ko-ña
 3PRO-CL:M-N.SBJ=TOP eat-2/3S.F.PST.N.ASS-REP
 ‘... she came later in the night, the (demon (F)) who had been eating
 (him) came back to finish eating him up.’
 [NAT*: 20151112oespa001.025]
- c. [Context: The only female survivor of the global flood event comes to the spot where her house once stood.]
... goa yēĩñē ai jaiñēse’bi baquēña
 goa [jĩi-ñi ai hai-ñi-se’e-bi]
 CNT.EXP cotton-CL:TREE very big-CL:TREE-EXCL-SBJ
 bah-ki-ña
 be-2/3S.M.PST.N.ASS-REP
 ‘... but (to her dismay), there was only a big COTton tree there.’
 [NAT*: 20151112oespa001.025]

The presence of both morphemes may have semantic implications, or not. For instance, in the naturalistic sentence in (53), the complex promoted LOCATION-argument comprises a head noun with a post-nominal relative clause nominalization — i.e., of the type discussed in Section 6.3.2. There are two viable hosts for case-marking and, by proxy, for discourse markers: On the one hand, PLAIN *-re* marking flags nominalized modifier, *timisihkoreba-re* (... which was very full), at the right edge of the noun phrase, which strictly satisfies the syntactic case-marking condition for promoted non-SUBJECT nominals. On the other hand, the head nominal is not case-marked, but rather marked with the topic marker *=kato*, which evokes a contrastive topic reading of the spatial constituent, *wi’ereba=kato* (that very house — i.e., not other houses which have been mentioned). A similar effect for *=kato* is noted in (52b) above:

- (53) ... *jai huë'erebacato aireba tëmësicorebare bareña*
 ↑[**hai + wi'e-reba=kato ai-reba timi-sih-ko-reba *(-re)**]
 big + house-INTENS=TOP very-INTENS be.full-COMP-CL:F-INTENS-N.SBJ
 bah-te-ña
 be-N2/3S.PST.N.ASS-REP
 '(Everybody) was in that big house, which was very full (so they say).'

[NAT: 20140816saupi002.072]

At this stage a generalization emerges such that discourse markers are compatible with case-marking, although their co-occurrence is relatively rare. With this morphosyntactic generalization at hand, the question of how *focal* case-marking interacts with discourse markers may be adequately addressed. For instance, in (53), PLAIN *-re* marking does not make a semantic contribution per se; so semantic incompatibility is not at issue. Conversely, in (52c), *haiñi-se'e-bi* (only a big TREE), focal case-marking naturally arises with the exclusive discourse marker. As discussed in Section 6.4.1, this co-occurrence is not required, and only arises in rare instances. The remainder of this discussion considers co-occurrence patterns between PROMINENT case-markers and discourse markers.

In order to demonstrate that PROMINENT-marking and discourse marking are *morphologically* compatible, but not necessarily semantically compatible, this discussion shifts to a consideration of elicited Q-A data points. Comparing (54) and (55), the former reports a polar question-answer sequence — i.e., where PROMINENT-marking is not expected to arise; whereas the latter reports an information question-answer sequence. The latter pair implicates DCM in the form of Q-A congruence effects, such that the focalized animate OBJECT argument bears obligatory PROMINENT *-ni*:

- (54) a. Q-WH.POL: *ñare tsire ?*³³
 ñaa-re **tsĩ** *(-re)
 see-N2/3S.PST.N.ASS child.COL-N.SBJ
 'Did (you (PL)) see the kids?'
 b. Q-SEL.POL: *ñahuë tsihua'ose're*
 ñaa-wi **tsi-wa'-o-se'e** *(-re)/(#-ni)
 see-N3S.PST.ASS child-SG-CL:F-EXCL-N.SBJ
 '(We) only saw the GIRL.' [VOL: 20230617eyopa001.017]
- (55) a. Q-WH: *queini ñare ?*
ke-i-ni ñaa-re
 WH-CL:M-N.SBJ2 see-N2/3S.PST.N.ASS
 'Who did (you (PL)) see?'
 b. Q-SEL: *tsihua'ose'ni ñahuë*
tsi-wa'-o-se'e *(-ni)/(#-re) ñaa-wi
 child-SG-CL:F-EXCL-N.SBJ2 see-N3S.PST.ASS
 '(We) only saw the GIRL.'

³³The noun produced by the speaker in (54a), *tsĩ* (children) is classified as belonging to the class of lexical generics for the coding of the Siona narrative dataset in Chapter 5. This is due to the fact that narrators often produce these items with no case-marking outside of SUBJECT contexts — such that they pattern with the inanimate noun class. It is curious that the speaker rejects zero-marking in the context of this elicitation task. Similar judgments are made by other speakers. More work is needed to properly unpack the case-marking facts for these few items.

[**Context suggested by speaker:** As a follow-up to (54) – A parent has two children, a boy and a girl. Both children leave the house, so the parent asks their neighbour if they saw them leave. The neighbour says (55b), indicating that they did not see the son leaving, but only the daughter.] [VOL: 20230617eyopa001.018]

On the basis of the above examples, Q-A congruence are not overridden by the presence of the exclusive discourse marker. Thus, although their co-occurrence is grammatically licit, speakers hesitate to produce instances where these co-occur outside of question-answer sequences. The only non-Q-A instances which arise in my field notes concern spatial DCM examples, such as (55):

- (56) *iye ye'yahuë'ese'na goamaña neñë*
 [i-je je'ja + wi'e-se'e-na] goa-mahña nee-ñi
 DEM.PROX-CL:GEN teach + house-EXCL-GOAL task-DIM.PL make-N3S.PRS.ASS
 '(I) am working (lit. doing little tasks) only at this school.'
 [**Context suggested by speaker:** The speaker is a teacher who used to work at various local school. When asked about his current situation, he states (56).] [VOL: 20230626eyopa001.021]

As is found in the narrative sample in Chapter 5, on the basis of instances like (56), it appears that spatial nouns arise with PROMINENT-marking more readily than their argumental counterparts. More work is warranted to further unpack this morphological discrepancy and its possible semantico-pragmatic underpinnings. In a similar vein, further research remains to check whether the case-marking effects noted with the exclusive discourse marker can be replicated for the additive marker (-*hë*) and the counter-expectative marker (-*tã'ã*).

The remainder of this discussion concerns the contrastive topic clitic, =*kato*. This is the most frequently-utilized discourse marker in Siona speech.³⁴ The contrastive status of this marker is clear on the basis of naturalistic instances such as (57), and the lines in (58) lifted from *The demon kwëëwahti* tale analyzed in Chapter 5:

- (57) [**Context:** The speaker's wife says she is from the Cuyabeno region. . .]
jaiyana aide'osiquëa'ë yë'cato
 hai-ja-na ai + de'o-sih-ki-a'-i j'i'i=kato
 big-CL:RIV-GOAL big + become-COMP-CL:M-COP-N3S 1SG=TOP
 'As for me, I grew up at the big river (i.e., Napo river).'
 [NAT: 20150810sbopa001.004]

- (58) a. *nocabo jëosaiye ba'ëña i io ëjëmaca . . .*
 nohka-bo hñõ + sai-je
 banana-CL:ENCLOS clean + go-CL:GEN
 ba-~'-i-ña [ĩ-i ã-o
 be-RMT.PST-2/3S.M.PST.N.ASS-REP 3PRO-CL:M 3PRO-CL:F
 ãhĩ-mahka]_i
 husband-DIM.SG
 'Her husband_i went to tend to the banana plantation . . .'

³⁴The full distribution of discourse markers and their co-occurrence with case-marking is reported in Table B.10 in Appendix B.

- b. ... *iɔmacacato aɔre s̄ooco ñucoña*
ĩ-o-mahka=kato_{ii} ãõ-re sio-ko
 3PRO-CL:F-DIM.SG=TOP cassava-N.SBJ fry-S.F.DEP
 ñuh-ko-ña
 be_seated-2/3S.F.PST.N.ASS-REP
 ‘... (as for her,) she_{ii} was sitting (there), frying cassava.’
 [NAT*: 20151112oespa001.164-165]

The fact that both the topic marker =*kato* and PROMINENT case-marking have contrastive semantics of some type is indicative of semantic incompatibility. This is expected on the conception of topical material as presupposed, compared with focal material which is novel information (Dik et al. 1981, 1997; Chafe 1987; and many more).

The anticipated semantic incompatibility between =*kato* and PROMINENT-marking is borne out as a grammatical co-occurrence restriction. This fact is already presumed for PROMINENT *-bi* marking on the SUBJECT-argument. For instance, =*kato* marking motivates the exclusion of 46 S-tokens in the preceding chapter, given that these PLAIN tokens are invariably zero-marked.³⁵

In the case of non-SUBJECT arguments, regarding animate nominals, the presence of =*kato* does not satisfy the syntactic overt case-marking requirement. In these instances, =*kato* co-occurs with obligatory PLAIN *-re* marking.³⁶ Reconsider (59) from the discussion of event nominalization complements to model constructions in this chapter. In this sentence, the Experiencer argument must be marked with the PLAIN *-re* marker in order to form a grammatical sentence:

- (59) ... *mě'recato hua'i moñere de'oji*
mĩ'ĩ *(-re)/(*-ni) =**kato** [wa'i moo-ñe #(-re)] de'o-hi
 2SG-N.SBJ(2)=TOP meat fish-CL:GEN-N.SBJ be_good-3S.M.PRS.ASS
 ‘As for you^{TOP}, you can go FISHing^{FOC}.’
 [Context suggested by speaker: At an event where several other activities are planned, you can go fishing, but not participate in other planned activities. A parent says (59) to one of their children, expressing that they may only go fishing; but the other sibling can do as they please.]
 [VOL: 20230614ejabi001.014]

In addition to representing a morphological restriction, (59) elucidates the contrastive topic interpretation which it induces on the Experiencer constituent. Whereas the focal PROMINENT-marker *-re* produces a strong contrastive reading for the activity denoted by the event nominalization; impressionistically, the topical =*kato* marker induces a weaker brand of contrast. The construction shown in (59), implicating both a contrastive topic and contrastive foci, resembles constructions described for

³⁵It is conceivable that similar co-occurrence restrictions observed in Colombian Siona, regarding the cognate, *-ga*, underpin the analysis of this morpheme as a case-marker. Since multiple case-marking is not attested in Siona+ languages (see Chapter 4), *-ga* is tricky to tease apart from focal case-marking, like in Ecuadorian Siona.

³⁶Technically speaking, the fact that PROMINENT *-ni* is unavailable to P-tokens renders these tokens invariable. In follow-up studies, these tokens ought to be excluded. Since only 5 such tokens arise in the narrative sample in Chapter 5, this does not have a big effect on the statistical findings reported there.

languages such as German and Hungarian by Büring (2003, 2016). The corresponding Siona construction deserves more attention.

A final observation is in order regarding the semantic incompatibility of *=kato* and focal case-marking, based upon corroborating evidence from the corpus-based investigation in the previous chapter. Of the total set of 67 (non-temporal) nominal tokens bearing *=kato* marking in the Siona narrative dataset (see Table B.10), these *all* refer to established referents. None of these tokens coded in the sample pertain to first-mention tokens. This finding supports the initial analysis of *=kato* as a topic marker, in addition to inducing a contrast.

To summarize: Discourse particles resist co-occurrence with PROMINENT-marking to varying degrees, and their co-occurrence is often deemed odd. Nonetheless, this co-occurrence is not grammatically blocked, and the presence of most discourse markers in (information) question-answer sequences, for example, does not interfere with the regular patterns of Q-A congruence. The contrastive topic marker *=kato* is an exception to this generalization, and a grammatical co-occurrence restriction arises. In order to fully unpack the semantic and grammatical dimensions of the noted incompatibility, a more elaborate semantic study of the phenomenon is appropriate. Such a study is outlined in the conclusion in the following chapter of this dissertation. For the present purposes, this section provides indispensable insights into the distribution of PROMINENT case-marking in Siona DCM.

6.4.3 In summary: Focus-sensitive Siona DCM

This chapter began with an analytical question: Can the obligatory case-marker congruence patterns be unified with the emphatic contrast patterns be unified under a single analysis — i.e., Siona PROMINENT case-marking is a bona fide focus-encoding strategy? The alternative is that information focus related to (certain) interrogative constructions is to be treated separately from the contrastivity effects discussed for Siona DCM in this chapter and elsewhere in this dissertation.

The discussion here has demonstrated that PROMINENT case-marking has a relatively limited distribution, strictly arising in a subset of the most common focus-related constructions. On the one hand, besides particular simplex WH-questions and their answers, and opposition constructions (X is doing Y, but Z is doing A), the PROMINENT-marking strategy is typically associated with the contrastive (focus) reading. Otherwise, as shown in (31), PROMINENT-marking is not implicated in alternative Q-A constructions, in similarity constructions (X did Y, X also did Z), or in correction constructions (X didn't do Y, Z did Y). On the basis of this limited distribution, an analysis of PROMINENT-marking as a bona fide focus-encoding strategy is untenable.

Taken together the data presented in this dissertation points to two separate information structure-related TRIGGERS, which largely determine the presence of PROMINENT case-marking across all principled DCM patterns in Siona grammar. On this basis, Siona DCM is better viewed as focus-sensitive, rather than focus-encoding per se (in the sense of Matic' and Wedgwood 2013). On the one hand, under the appropriate Q-A contexts, case-marking is predictable. This is best treated as a component of simplex WH-question constructions themselves — i.e., a construction-level effect (Klein and de Swart 2011, 11-13). On the other hand, all else being equal, the dominant semantico-pragmatic effect of PROMINENT-marking is what I have labeled the emphatic contrast reading. This is even the effect which arises in interrogative contexts besides the relevant simplex WH-question constructions, which override this main

effect, namely where the referent of the relevant constituent is contrasted with salient alternatives. Of course, this is highly similar to the finding that contrastivity status is the strongest factor in the corpus analysis presented in Chapter 5.

6.5 Towards a theory of discourse-driven DCM

This chapter assembles a range of data which refines the characterization of information structure and the distribution of Siona DCM. Under the appropriate contexts, information focused or contrastive nominal constituents are marked with PROMINENT case-markers in a predictable way. This chapter argues that contrastivity is the dominant function of PROMINENT-marking, whereas certain Q-A sequences display PROMINENT case-matching patterns on a construction-specific basis. The same class of PROMINENT-markers are selected in each of these contexts. This empirical backdrop lays the groundwork for the development of a formal theory which is largely set aside for future research. The present section closes this chapter by considering the theoretical implications of the information structure effects described for Siona PROMINENT-marking above.

The first set of theoretical implications which concerns this discussion pertain to questions of focus realization, as examined in Section 6.2. On the one hand, Siona DCM is compatible with the FOCUS PARTICLE strategy (Büring 2009, 22-24), where a morpheme is responsible for realizing an underlying contrastive (focus) feature. Following the logic in Kratzer and Selkirk (2020), this is ought to be viewed as an interface feature, e.g., [\pm Contrast], whose distribution varies from language-to-language based upon the precise contrastive meaning that the structure conveys. In Siona grammar, this feature is strictly grammaticalized within the nominal domain, which accounts for its relatively limited distribution.

On the other hand, Siona does not make available focus-specific morphology, rather the putative [\pm Contrast]-feature factors into the realization of case-marking morphology on the noun phrase. Therefore, this feature has a similar status to the [\pm Animacy]-feature, which codifies the overt case-marking requirement on animate non-SUBJECT arguments. As such, the primary difference between these two nominal features is that [\pm Contrast] is active across all DCM relations, whereas the [\pm Animacy]-feature does not apply to the SUBJECT-argument. This analysis also makes the assumption that the simplex WH-construction supersedes the general usage of [\pm Contrast], and forces this feature to arise on the WH-item and on the focalized element in the corresponding answer turn.

The conspiracy of these features is most evident as case-marking patterns on the DIRECT OBJECT — i.e., where the case-marker *-re* is the PROMINENT-marking for the inanimate noun class, and the PLAIN-marking for animates.³⁷ This is labeled the SPLIT *-re* ANALYSIS in Chapter 3. Following conventions of Distributed Morphology (Halle and Marantz 1993, 121-124), (60) posits a featural decomposition³⁸ for case-marker morphemes inserted at Position 6 in the nominal template shown above. This position may correspond to an underlying K head in the extended nominal projection.

³⁷The promoted inanimate noun class must acquire an [\pm Anim]-feature at some point in the derivation in order to capture the DCM patterns.

³⁸The suggested decomposition provides privative feature representations by convention. Not much hinges on the binary or privative status of these features for the present purposes from what I gather.

However, it is not immediately clear how to handle instances of multiple case-marking (case concord effects) or what the status of the other nominal discourse markers would be. The feature [N] represents nominal category, and the [Acc] is an abstract Case category, presumably assigned to the nominal before Spell-Out occurs:³⁹

- (60) a. *x-re* ↔ [N, Acc, Anim]
 b. *x-re* ↔ [N, Acc, Foc]
 c. *x-ni* ↔ [N, Acc, Anim, Foc]

Per (60), the marker *-re* is selected on the basis of a featural disjunction: i.e., either it has the [±Animacy]-feature, as in (60a), or it has the [±Contrast]-feature, as in (60b), but never both. Conversely, (60c) represents the featural make-up for the marker *-ni*, which realizes the conjunction of these features. Following the definitions established in this dissertation, only those instances which realize an underlying [±Contrast]-feature constitute PROMINENT-marking. Non-focal, inanimate P does not receive overt case-marking because there simply is no overt morpheme which corresponds to the minimal entry [N, Acc]. On the other hand, no [±Animacy]-plus-[±Contrast] featural conjunction is implicated in the calculation of SUBJECT case-marking. To capture PROMINENT *-bi* marking, a more straightforward entry such as (61) is required, where [Nom] is presumed to be assigned by the T-head:

- (61) *x-bi* ↔ [N, Nom, Foc]

There are two possible analyses for (PLAIN) zero-marking: (i) There simply is no morphological entry for these case-marking, (ii) Features are deleted via an Impoverishment rule (e.g., Glushan 2010; Keine 2010; Keine and Müller 2015; Bárány 2018). This rule suppresses the case-marker terminal and eliminates case-marking morphology accordingly. One analysis accounts for certain instances, and the other analysis for other instances where morphological case-marking is absent. An Impoverishment-type approach has some merit since non-focal arguments may still arise with case-marking, as shown to be the case in the quantitative study in Chapter 5. In fact, there may even be several types of non-focal PROMINENT-marking — i.e., (i) Those driven by WEAK TRIGGERS, such as specificity, topicality, and word order; (ii) Those driven by the disambiguation function of DCM (e.g., de Swart 2007; Malchukov 2008; Klein and de Swart 2011). To my view, this is not a language-specific issue, but rather an analytical puzzle concerning multi-dimensional case-marking systems and the analysis of WEAK TRIGGERS for DCM more broadly.

A final comment is in order regarding the connection between [±Contrast] and the empirical evidence considered in this chapter. In light of the prevalence of rigid Q-A congruence patterns in Siona grammar, PROMINENT case-marking appears to be compatible with the family of ‘question-under-discussion’ (qud) approaches (Velleman and Beaver 2016 for recent overview). This framework is developed on the basis of the

³⁹I remain non-committal regarding the processes of (accusative) Case-assignment in Siona for the sake of this brief discussion. Siona, like many (DCM) languages displays similar case-marking facts for (IN)DIRECT OBJECTS, and it is not clear whether the same mechanism assigns the same Case value in both instances. For that matter, assuming that DIRECT OBJECTS are formally syncretic with LOCATIONS regarding case-marking, it is conceivable that a single mechanism ‘assigns’ the same Case feature to these spatial nominals as well. An adequate theory ought to unify the case-marking licensing mechanism across these grammatical functions in an informative way.

notion that natural discourse may be modeled as question-answer sequences, where questions may be explicit or implicit.

At first glance, the QUD approach is an appealing analytical direction since it permits focal case-marking in interrogative and assertive contexts to be unified under a single analysis. For example, the non-interrogative focal instance in (62), produced in the context of a CONTEXT CONJURING task, aligns formally with the corresponding Q-A example in (63) on the basis of PROMINENT-marking patterns:

- (62) [Implicit Q-WH: What do you want to drink?]
 (SEL-WH) *yě'ě ocore ucusi'i cayě*
jì'i ohko #(-re) ùhku-si'-i kaa-jì
 1SG water-N.SBJ drink-FUT-N3S say-N3S.PRS.ASS
 'I want to drink water.' ⇒ {I want to drink coffee, I want to drink tea, ... }
 [Context suggested by speaker: A boy comes home to find coffee and tea
 on the table.] [VOL/SUG: 20230623ejabi001.024-025]
- (63) a. Q-WH: *quere ucusi' caquě ?*
ke-e-re ùhku-si'-i kaa-ki
 WH-CL:GEN-N.SBJ drink-FUT-N3S say-2/3S.M.PRS.N.ASS
 'What do you (M) want to drink?'
- b. SEL-WH: *yě'ě ocore ucusi'i cayě*
jì'i ohko #(-re) ùhku-si'-i kaa-jì
 1SG water-N.SBJ drink-FUT-N3S say-N3S.PRS.ASS
 'I want to drink water.' [VOL/SUG: 20230627ejabi001.012-014]

Although the appeal of the QUD approach is evident, it runs into some analytical problems for the Siona data. Obligatory PROMINENT-marking only arises for a subset of information Q-A sequences, as discussed in Section 6.4.1.1. Although all WH-items are fronted, only a subset require PROMINENT-marking, and force it to arise on the focal element in the answer. In these explicit question-answer sequences, no contrastive context is required per se; however, outside of these constructions, a contrastive context is required for the felicitous usage of PROMINENT-marking. (This excludes certain uses of overt case-marking for ambiguity avoidance or communicative efficiency purposes.)

On this basis, the distribution and the function of PROMINENT-marking in non-contrastive explicit question contexts does not align with those found in implicit question contexts. The latter contexts are necessarily contrastive. An analysis conflating implicit and explicit question contexts would predict an even more limited distribution of PROMINENT-marking than is observed in practice. For instance, such marking would be expected to be incompatible with contrasting quantities, since *jesō* (how many) does implicate PROMINENT case-marking, or with any complex questions such as *ke mamaki* (which boy) for the same reason. However, contrastive focus uses of PROMINENT-marking have been demonstrated for each of these contexts in the discussion above. Ultimately, interrogative focus effects, arising with certain WH-items, ought to be treated as a separate, secondary effects in Siona DCM; whereas the dominant information structural driver of overt PROMINENT-marking is to induce the emphatic contrast reading, highlighting particular referents in discourse. These observations corroborate the statistical evidence for contrast-driven usage of PROMINENT-marking in Siona narratives in Chapter 5.