Parameters for unexpected (and expected) meanings:
Auxiliary do in affirmative contexts

GRAHAM RANGER

Université d'Avignon et des Pays de Vaucluse, EA 4277

1. INTRODUCTION

In the present article, I would like to look at a small subcategory of uses of the auxiliary *do*, in affirmative sentences of the general form Subject + *do* + Predicate, as illustrated by the following examples.[1]

(1) A: Don't like him, do you? ... What's he done to you?

    B: Nothing. And you're wrong. I *do* like him, I think he's charming.   (GVP)

(2) The chances of finding a male tortoiseshell have been calculated at about 200 to 1. They may be extremely rare but they *do* exist.   (BMG)

Such cases fit in with the theme of this volume on two counts. Firstly, "emphatic" *do* — as it is often misleadingly called — is frequently associated with contexts in which the predication may be seen as contrary to expectation and hence unexpected. Secondly, within the verbal paradigm, this use of *do* is something of a grammatical surprise, a superfluous extra, since, unlike its uses in negative or interrogative environments, there is little independent structural motivation for such a construction.

My aim in what follows is twofold:

a. To show that emphatic *do* is in fact not always emphatic — prosodically — and that descriptions of its meaning in terms of some form of opposition are invariably overspecific and hence incomplete.

b. To provide an abstract metalinguistic representation for this use of *do* which may be parametered in a principled manner to provide a range of possible values in context. This representation needs of course to be sufficiently open-ended to account for other uses of the auxiliary, even though these will not be the object of the present paper.

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[1] Unless otherwise indicated, all examples are taken from the British National Corpus material, accessed at corpus.byu.edu/bnc/. The precise text is indicated by a bracketed reference after the example. Translations of the theoretical texts are mine.

2.   VALUES OF *DO* IN SUBJECT *DO* PREDICATE

There is a long grammatical tradition of considering the auxiliary *do* as a meaningless structural tool, a "mere support" for the Tense feature when this cannot — for various transformational reasons — be affixed to the predicate. Enunciative models prefer to associate the auxiliary with an operational template, drawing attention to the fact that the auxiliary *do* occurs in contexts where, for whatever reason, the validation of the predicative relation is, in some way, an issue. Bouscaren and Chuquet (1988:66–67), for example, write:

> *Do* intervient dès qu'il s'agit de «travailler» sur la relation prédicative, autrement dit dès que l'on sort de l'affirmation non marquée. La *négation* construit une assertion complé-mentaire par rapport à l'assertion positive: bien qu'il se situe toujours dans le domaine des vérités générales, l'énonciateur ... est amené à marquer explicitement qu'il construit (ou asserte) *à propos de ce qui n'est pas*. Cette démarche se retrouve de façon encore plus évidente dans les *questions* (l'énonciateur s'en remet au coénonciateur pour pren-dre en charge, d'une manière ou d'une autre, la relation prédicative et se prononcer sur sa validité), les *assertions polémiques*, *contradictoires* dont *l'emphase* n'est qu'un cas particulier.

> [*Do* appears whenever it is a question of "working" on the predicative relation, in other words, whenever one does something other than an unmarked affirmation. Negation con-structs an opposing assertion relative to the positive assertion: although the speaker is still in the domain of general truths, he is led explicitly to mark an assertion relative to some-thing that is not the case. The same method applies more obviously in interrogatives (the speaker asks the co-speaker to endorse — one way or the other — the predicative relation) and in contradictory or polemical assertions of which emphasis is just one special case.]

Adamczewski and Delmas (1982:84) express things in a similar way:

> Que les opérations d'emphase, d'interrogation et de négation concernent au premier chef le lien prédicationnel («la soudure» en *sujet* et *prédicat*) devrait être accepté sans diffi-culté à ce stade, puisque l'emphase porte forcément sur la réalité du lien, que l'interroga-tion le met en question et que la négation le nie.

> [It should be easy by now to see that the operations of emphasis, negation and interroga-tion all concern the predicational link (the "bond" between subject and predicate) since emphasis necessarily targets the reality of this link, interrogation questions it and nega-tion denies it.]

This line of argument appears to apply quite successfully to examples (1)–(2), reproduced in (3) and (4).

(3) A: Don't like him, do you? ... What's he done to you?

     B: Nothing. And you're wrong. I *do* like him, I think he's charming.   (GVP)

(4) The chances of finding a male tortoiseshell have been calculated at about 200 to 1. They may be extremely rare but they *do* exist.   (BMG)

In (3), in a dialogal context, speaker B affirms the predicative relation <I like him> in the face of explicit opposition from speaker A (*Don't like him, do you?*). In (4),

although the context is not explicitly dialogal, a potentially counter-oriented argument has been preconstructed by the speaker (*They may be extremely rare*) and it is this position which is then contradicted by the emphatic use of the auxiliary *do*.

However, Lapaire and Rotgé (1991:531–532) draw our attention to a number of cases where emphatic *do* does not seem to be involved in any real form of opposition, including:

> DO aux de simple assentiment ou d'attestation ... la confirmation prend les allures d'un simple accord ... "Garfield, you make a lovely fire." "I do make a lovely fire" ...
> DO aux de déduction logique ... La validation de la relation prédicative S / P est prévisible. ... "We call them ghosts in America" / "So we do here, when we see them." / "You do see them then?" ...
> DO aux de rappel ou d'inexorabilité. L'énonciateur rappelle des vérités bien connues ... "Boys do get into such indelicate positions during the obstacle race, don't they?"
> DO aux d'actualisation effective ... L'actualisation de S / P, initialement envisagée devient effective. ... "I keep my victims for a slower torture. And you'd be such an interesting one!" "Well, you do torture me; I may say that."

> [DO aux of simple assertion or attestation ... the confirmation resembles a simple agreement ...
> DO aux of logical deduction ... The validation of the Subject–Predicate relation is predictable ...
> DO aux of inexorability (reminding value). The speaker reminds us of general truths. ...
> DO aux of effective realisation ... The realisation of the Subject–Predicate relation, initially envisaged, comes into effect.]

Herment (2011), working on an authentic corpus of original recordings, provides partial confirmation of Lapaire and Rotgé's (1991) intuitions, finding at least three prosodic possibilities for the auxiliary *do* in the constructions we are interested in: contrastive emphasis, non contrastive emphasis, and unstressed *do*. This tallies with material in earlier studies by Lattes (1984), Nevalainen and Rissanen (1986), and Leoué (2003). Indeed, if we go back to examples (3) and (4), we already notice that the form of emphasis is not quite the same: in (3), *do* receives contrastive emphasis; in (4), *do* receives emphasis but no more so than the predicate which follows.

This multiplication of subtypes — some of which are apparently *not* polemical — poses problems for a unified account of such uses, as indeed does the range of prosodic possibilities available. In the next section, we will see how these subtypes — and others — may in fact be integrated into the model as specific configurations of a fundamental and necessarily underdetermined template.

3. A MODEL FOR AFFIRMATIVE *DO* IN SUBJECT *DO* PREDICATE

In keeping with previous work on the same subject (Ranger 2001, 2003 for example), I claim that the auxiliary *do* constructs a representation of the notional domain of validation and, in the case of affirmative *do*, marks an operation whereby the speaker validates a predicative relation. Validation is defined as an operation whereby

a speaker explicitly adopts a position with regard to the relation between a proposi-
tional content *p* and a reference situation Sit_2. Following Culioli (1985:69), we might
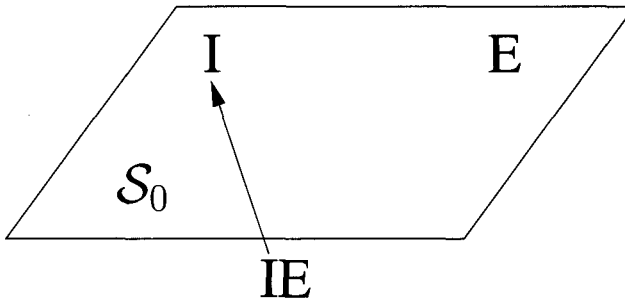represent this operation on the notional domain schematically, as in Figure 1.[2]

Figure 1: Subjective endorsement of a predicative relation

The arrow indicates that the speaker — symbolised by S_0 — moves from an initial
position — symbolised by IE — indeterminate as regards the existence of the pred-
icative relation, to a position on the Interior of the notional domain I, representing
subjective endorsement.

I can imagine at least two possible objections to such a model for the auxil-
iary *do*.

Firstly, it might be argued that the operation sketched out above is simply the
operation of assertion which — so *many* grammars tell us — is marked by the simple
tense forms. In response to this, I would claim that the simple tense forms do *not*
mark the operation of validation. Admittedly, validation is often vehicled with simple
tense forms, but this — I maintain — is a derived value resulting from contextual
factors, not a constitutive property of the forms themselves. When there are good
reasons to mark validation explicitly, then a suppletive form is required.

Secondly, it might be said that the other auxiliaries also allow the same sorts
of operations as *do*, those operations which grammatical tradition has referred to
as the NICE properties ("Negation, Interrogation, Code, and Emphasis"; Huddleston
1976:333).

Should the other auxiliaries also receive the same sort of characterization? To
this I would answer that, like *do*, the other auxiliaries do indeed also construct a
representation of the domain of validation, which is submitted to further operations
accordingly — leading to aspectual or modal representations. It is therefore unsur-
prising that they should be able, in certain constructions, to vehicle the same sorts of
values as *do* — though not necessarily *all* of them. However, in the absence of other
auxiliaries, *do* is required to construct this representation explicitly.

Now the key point, in the constructions of the Subject *do* Predicate type which
we are interested in, is that the operation of validation marked by *do* is generally

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[2]The cursive script is meant to render the fact that the speaker is a hybrid category, both
linguistic and extralinguistic. The index 0 marks that this is the enunciative origin — relative
to which other enunciative sources may be successively situated.

made not for its own sake but with reference to some preconstructed subjective position on the same notional domain. And so the values generated — invariably attributed to *do* — in fact result from this complex construction: *the interaction of this operation of speaker validation with a preconstructed subjective position on the same domain.* Let us now look more closely at how this actually happens on some genuine examples.

4.   CASE STUDIES 1: POSITIONING RELATIVE TO E

We shall first focus our attention on cases where *do* validates *p* relative to some preconstructed subjective position on E, the Exterior of the associated domain.

4.1   Dialogal opposition

The simplest case is that where two speakers are in explicit opposition, as in (1), repeated here as (5).

(5) A: Don't like him, do you? [...] What's he done to you?

    B: Nothing. And you're wrong. I *do* like him, I think he's charming.   (GVP)

Here the validation of *p* <I/like him> is made in light of an opposed preconstructed position, held by the cospeaker S_0'. We can represent this diagrammatically as in Figure 2, using brackets for the preconstructed term.
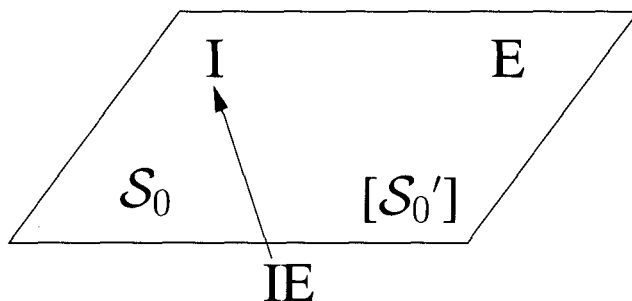

Figure 2: Speaker/co-speaker opposition

Note that the preconstructed position on the Exterior is not established by the auxiliary *do* but by the surrounding context, which clearly places the speaker and the co-speaker in opposition relative to the domain. It is in this sort of case that the auxiliary *do* receives contrastive emphasis, the phoneticians' high-fall.

Such examples are not limited to dialogue, however, as the cases in (6) and (7) testify.

(6) He was musing that the synthetic religions of Stalin and Hitler should neither of them properly be called pagan, but if you *do* call them pagan then we must say that they're inferior as religions to genuine primitive pagan religion.   (A6B)

(7) Cocaine is the kind of drug that does not have to do you harm — unless you're stupid with it. You use it for a high, like a shot of whisky. There's no reason you should be hooked. But if you *do* get hooked … well, that is your affair.   (J13)

Here, affirmative *do* aux appears in conditional contexts, allowing the speaker hypothetically to entertain a proposition which — as the surrounding context makes clear — they do not endorse. Things, then, are slightly different in that here, it is the preconstructed position on the Exterior of the domain which is that of the speaker, while *if* constructs a position on the Interior of the domain located relative to some fictitious enunciative source, in this case differentiated from the speaker (Figure 3).[3]
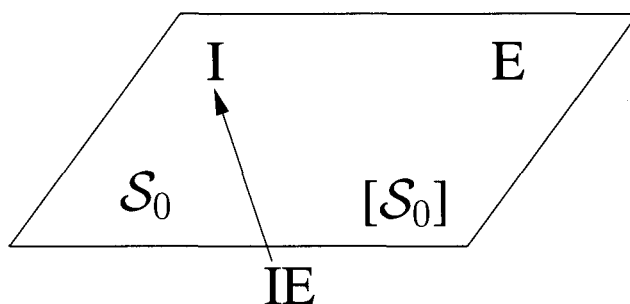

Figure 3: Hypothetical speaker/speaker opposition

In both cases, however, the validation marked by the *do* clause is diametrically opposed to the preconstructed position and it is this which justifies the distinctive contrastive emphasis we find in such examples.

4.2   Concessive or adversative values

Concessive or adversative values may be illustrated by example (2), repeated here as (8).

(8) The chances of finding a male tortoiseshell have been calculated at about 200 to 1. They may be extremely rare but they *do* exist.   (BMG)

Let us label the first proposition *they be extremely rare, p* and the second clause *they exist, q*. In saying *but they do exist*, the speaker is both acknowledging the legitimacy of a possible path of argument leading from the premise *they are extremely rare* to a potential conclusion *they do not exist* and denying the efficacy of this path in the particular case in point. This is of course the general process underlying concessive utterances.[4] The difference between such concessives and the dialogal opposition

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[3]This is a short cut: *if* constructs a fictitious enunciative source which can be retroactively associated with or differentiated from the speaker, or indeed left neutral. See de Vogüé (1987) for the concept of *rebroussement*, which I have rendered elsewhere as *subjective weighting*. The speaker endorsing a proposition here is a fictitious instance, whose role is momentarily assumed for the sake of argument by the locutor.

[4]See Ranger (1999) for a general discussion of concessive constructions in English.

previously studied is that, in the concessive schema, the speaker acknowledges — in general terms — the validity of concluding *non-q* from *p*, but maintains *q* in a specific instance. In anticipating potential counter-arguments in such a way, the source speaker envisages possible objections from some generic enunciative instance — a fictitious "any-speaker".

In terms of the model proposed here for affirmative uses of the auxiliary *do*, in these concessive or adversative values, a speaker validates the predicative relation in light of preconstructed, potential opposition not from the co-speaker this time but from a generic enunciative instance — $\mathcal{S}_0^1$ — axiomatically neither identified with nor differentiated from the speaker (Figure 4).
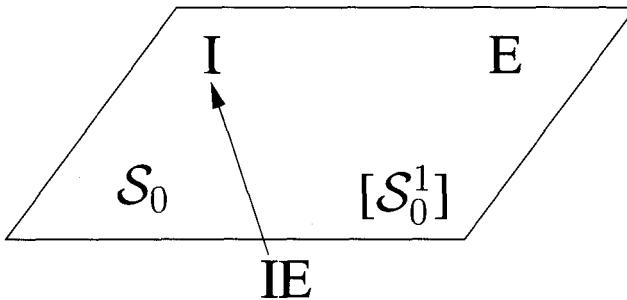

Figure 4: Speaker/generic speaker opposition

The same representation might be applied to the following examples:

(9) I've ... qualitative field review forms, yeah qualitative data review forms yeah qualitative research approval forms. ... It *does* exist, but ... it's not referenced here, but it does exist. [spoken]   (J97)

(10) I can't claim complete recall but I *do* remember 91–92 like it was only last year. (J1G)

In prosodic terms, it would appear that in such cases, the auxiliary *do* receives emphasis but not contrastive stress (see Rivara 1976, 2004; Lattes 1984; and Herment 2011). If we admit that in cases of dialogal opposition, the validation of *p* disqualifies *non-p*, whereas in concessive or adversative cases, the validation of *p* recognizes the potential validation of *non-p* in similar cases, then we might see a certain iconicity in the characteristic prosodic contours of each use.[5]

Interestingly, a search for left-hand collocates of affirmative *do* in such constructions carried out on the BNC yields four clearly concessive terms — *nevertheless, although, admit,* and *nonetheless* — among the ten most frequent collocates (*but* and other excessively common items are excluded). This would tend to confirm my own intuition that the concessive-adversative context is probably more common for affirmative *do* than oft-cited contradictory uses of *do* in dialogal opposition.

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[5]Contrastive stress, underlying speaker/cospeaker opposition, and disqualifying *non-p* in dialogal *do*, involves greater prosodic energy than stress in *do* concessives.

4.3   Speaker realization

Unsurprisingly, there are few examples of the rather paradoxical situation of a speaker validating a proposition — or situating himself on the Interior — in light of his own preconstructed position on the Exterior. The example below appears however to fit this pattern, once the necessary adjustments for Free Indirect Speech have been made:

(11) "You must let me handle this," he said quietly. "This party ... I'm snowed under with work and I've taken too much time off to be with you. Will you help me?" She frowned, sensing that he was holding something back. "How?" she asked, disappointed that he wasn't confiding in her. All in good time, she told herself. He'd come round. "Help me organise the party," he said. She was surprised, but pleased. He *did* need her, after all.

(H94)

Here, the source speaker *she*, whose point of view is focalized in this extract, validates the proposition *<he need her>* in light of a previously held opposing position. The switch from the Exterior to the Interior, from *non-p* to *p*, is marked contextually by *surprised* and the stance adverbial *after all*.

5.   CASE STUDIES 2: POSITIONING RELATIVE TO I

We move on now to those apparently less common cases where affirmative *do* marks the validation of a proposition in the light of a preconstructed position on the Interior of the domain.

5.1   Dialogal confirmation

Firstly, in the examples below, the speaker validates a proposition, confirming their own endorsement of a position preconstructed for the co-speaker. Consider (12).

(12) A: D'ya really have a bath you do don't you?
      B: Yes I *do* have a bath. Come on. [spoken]   (KNY)

Such cases frequently involve some sort of lexical reformulation, as in (13) and (14), but the principle remains the same.

(13) A: ... I have to say that Mr Chatterton does look extremely well.
      B: Yes, he *does* look marvellous, doesn't he.   (HTG)

(14) A: ... we'll have to go and get Christopher's present won't we? On Monday. Still seems quite keen on a train".
      B: Yes he *does* seem keen on the railway track. [spoken]   (KBG)

Diagrammatically, the representation in Figure 5 would appear sensible, showing the speaker S_0 rallying to a position already held by the co-speaker S_0'.

This type of example is, of course, particularly problematical for models which maintain that *do* involves some sort of threat to the validation of a predicative relation. Here, both parties concur. The difference between the utterance with *do* and the corresponding utterance without an auxiliary is that the use of *do* indicates the validation of *p* explicitly, while in the non-auxiliaried utterance, the domain of validation is not explicitly constructed and so the process marking the position of the speaker
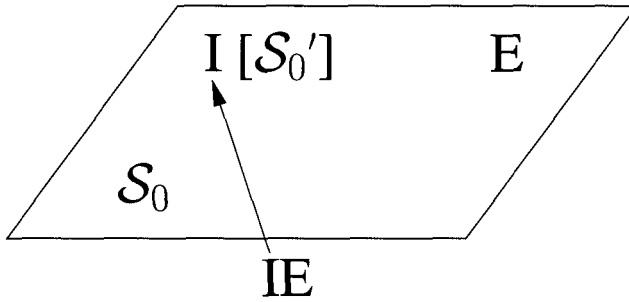
Figure 5: Speaker/co-speaker alignment

relative to some other position is lost. Informally, one might say that the utterance with *do* has a memory and the non-auxiliaried utterance does not.

5.2   Gnomic confirmation

A further possibility exists when a speaker validates a proposition in light of some validation preconstructed independently of the current enunciative situation. This is often the case when a specific event or situation is seen to confirm some proverbial adage, as in examples (15)–(17).

(15)   This would be the first opportunity that your potential client has to meet you, remember first impressions *do* count. You never get a second chance to make a first impression. [spoken]   (J3U)

(16)   Besides, he probably felt that he'd been made to look foolish, and men *do* hate that.
                                                                                                                                    (H8S)

(17)   "I do not think any of us be [sic] the same," said Heinrich, frowning." Murder is not a usual thing." I still think it was an accident," said Emily. "Accidents *do* happen — "
                                                                                                                                    (H8A)

In using affirmative *do* rather than a simple form, the speaker situates their own validation of *p* relative to a generally held opinion in such a way that what might be viewed as an isolated occurrence is made to correspond to a larger pattern, a teleology. Predictably, this might be represented diagrammatically as in Figure 6.

Example (18) obeys a similar logic, only this time the preconstructed validation is not the result of some proverbial instance but of a written notice.

(18)   On the sheet were thick black letters that read: LOOK OUT AT THE STATION. A lot of people *did* look out at the station, but they saw nothing strange.   (FRY)

5.3   Quasi-exclamative values

A further category is provided by quasi-exclamative values, where the use of *do* appears to reinforce the degree of validation of the proposition, in a way analogous to exclamatives. Consider the examples in (19)–(21).

(19)   "One makes one's reputation, and one's reputation enables one to achieve the conditions in which one can do good work."

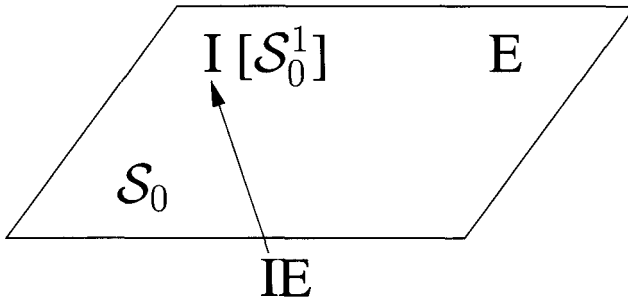"You *do* talk a lot of shit sometimes, John," said Bob mildly.   (G12)

Figure 6: Speaker/generic speaker alignment

(20) "At least we'll be taking two kids off drugs," I said warmly, "and that's something to be proud of."

"Jesus wept," she said in disgust. "I *do* hate goddamn junkies, and I especially hate rich goddamn junkies. They don't even have the excuse of poverty for their addiction."
                                                                                                    (CCW)

(21) Sometimes we're se–, we're treating a very sensitive skin, sometimes we're stre–, we're treating a very dry skin, or it could be dry and sensitive. So it does depend on what skin type, and we actually choose the erm (pause) aromatherapy oils according [sic] the skin type. ... And, I must say ladies, they *do* smell very nice! [spoken]   (FX6)

In each of these examples, a reformulation with an exclamative appears tolerably close to the original:

(19′) ... What a lot of shit you talk sometimes ...

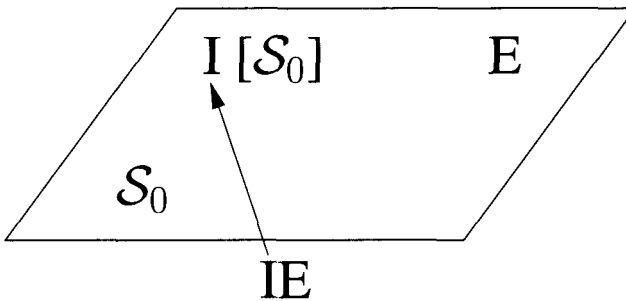p is drawn to the attracting centre of the domain in question.[6] This is schematically represented in Figure 7.

Figure 7: Speaker/speaker alignment — exclamative values

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[6]See Culioli (1975, 1999) and Méry (2003) for fuller discussion of such circular patterns.

6. FURTHER CASES

One last case I would like to mention involves the use of affirmative auxiliary *do* with what we might broadly term verbs of belief or opinion.[7] Indeed, if we restrict the search for affirmative *do* in the BNC to sentences of the form *I do* V, then the ten most frequent accompanying verbs are, respectively, *know, think, hope, believe, feel, like, say, want, remember*, and *love*. Examples of this type are provided in (22)–(24).

(22) Now, I've seen both sides and I *do* believe that Blackburn are going to present the bigger problem. [spoken]   (KRT)

(23) "I *do* think the courts should have powers to send really persistent, nasty little juvenile offenders away somewhere where they will be looked after better and where they will be educated," Mr Clarke said.   (K5D)

(24) ... most people keep the refrigerator either ... in the passageway or in the living room, now it *does* seem to me with hindsight that if that's planning I, to use an old fashion [sic] London phrase, I'm a Dutchman. [spoken]   (F82)

Such cases are extremely common and yet do not appear to correspond exactly to any one of the values we have studied so far. The closest type we have seen seems to be the exclamatives and yet *I do believe Blackburn are going to present the bigger problem* cannot legitimately be reformulated as *how I believe Blackburn are going to present the bigger problem*. At most, I suggest (22) corresponds to *I really believe ...* that is to a form where the speaker's subjective endorsement is made explicit. This makes sense, since it might be argued that in their simple forms, many of the verbs cited above function more as indicators of modality than as fully-fledged main verbs. The association of affirmative *do* with this category of verbs might then be a means of reinvesting the verbs in question with typically verbal properties and, in particular, of allowing a speaker to explicitly mark his or her knowing adoption of a subjective position in contrast with other potentially opposing perspectives.[8] This point would, however, require further study, in particular on authentic oral corpora.

7. CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

Before concluding, I would like to make several comments and qualifications regarding the suggestions I have just made — which represent in many ways a reformulation in line with theoretical developments of previous work I have dedicated to the same question.

The auxiliary *do* is a fairly recent addition to the English auxiliary system.[9] It is used in various ways in different varieties of English. The system I have sketched out

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[7]My thanks go to Ronald Flintham and to Stéphane Gresset for discussion of such cases.

[8]One argument in favour of this might the relative mobility, within the clause, of segments such as *I think* and *I believe*, in opposition to their auxiliaried counterparts, *I do think* and *I do believe*, which appear more often to function standardly as main clauses.

[9]See for example Denison (1985) or Ellegård (1953) and Denison (1985) for diachronic accounts.

here is, I feel, fairly open-ended, but I would not like to claim that it is a plausible account of how such utterances work in *all* varieties of the language.

I have focused within this paper on affirmative uses of the auxiliary *do*, followed by the base form of the verb, that is the Subject + *do* + Predicate form. I did so since this particular configuration corresponds nicely to the theme of the current volume. However, the account of *do* as a marker allowing a speaker explicitly to mark subjective positioning on a notional domain of validation may naturally be extended to account for other uses of the auxiliary, a task I have attempted in previous research (Ranger 2001, 2003). I would doubtless do things slightly differently today, but the main arguments remain the same.

Additionally, one might argue that *do* does not have exclusive rights since other auxiliaries can also contribute to the construction of these values of opposition and confirmation. This is to be expected since the other auxiliaries also imply operations bearing on the validation of a predicative relation relative to some subjective source. *Do* is required only in the absence of other auxiliaries.

The question of whether the model can be extended to account for uses of *do* as a lexical verb remains open as, indeed, does the more general question of whether — and how far — a schematic form can be allowed to evolve. It is, for example, perfectly plausible to consider that, although the auxiliary *do* has developed diachronically from lexical *do*, the schematic forms one might now attribute to the two are necessarily different.[10]

Let me quickly run over what I feel are the main conclusions we might draw from the preceding discussion.

The class of what are traditionally referred to as "emphatic" uses of the auxiliary *do* is not limited to polemical reassertion of some contextually preestablished relation. There is in fact quite a range of utterances of the general form Subject + *do* + Predicate which are not emphatic, whether the notion of emphasis is considered semantically or prosodically.

Consequently, I suggest that the auxiliary *do* merely constructs, in the absence of other auxiliaries, a representation of the notional domain of validation, and that, in the affirmative, its role is to mark explicitly the speaker's endorsement of a predicative relation — in a way that simple forms do not.

The range of values available for "emphatic" *do* can, then, be formalized as variations on two key parameters:

a. a preconstructed position on the notional domain which may, in the cases we have dealt with, be on the Interior or the Exterior;

b. the subjective localisation of this position (three possibilities: the speaker S_0, the co-speaker S_0', or the *doxa* S_0^1, essentially).

In fact, in light of the preceding discussion, it appears imprecise to speak in terms of a range of values for the auxiliary *do*. The various values adduced do not belong to *do* alone but are the result of complex constructions, the interaction of the — admittedly

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[10]I recommend in particular the article by Lowrey and Toupin (2010), which considers just this sort of question. See also Miller (2000).

minimal — operation marked by the affirmative auxiliary *do* with specific contextual configurations.

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