On certain distributional restrictions on the discourse particle *punya* in Colloquial Malay

In Soh (2014, 2015), I propose that the use of the discourse (sentence final) particle *punya* in Colloquial Malay, as in (1), indicates that the speaker is certain about the truth of the propositional content of the utterance (see also Koh 1990; Yap 2007a,b), and that the source of the information presented is of the inferential type. I show that while the attitude holder is often the speaker, it can also be the external argument of verbs of saying (*kata* 'say') and beliefs (*ingatkan* 'think'; *fikir* 'think') in embedded contexts.

(1)   Ali   dah   tahu   (**punya**).
         Ali   PERF know   PUNYA
          'Ali knew it (for sure/inference).'

Certain distributional restrictions observed with *punya* do not seem to follow from the meaning of *punya*. They involve the incompatibility of *punya* with focus particles *–lah* (first observed in Yap 2007b) and *pun* 'even' (see (2)).

(2)   **Dia-lah** (yang) /**Dia-pun**   datang cari   aku (**punya).
         3SG-LAH that   / 3SG-even come   look.for 1SG   PUNYA
         'It's s/he who /Even s/he came to look for me (for sure/inference)'

Note that no such restriction is found when the narrow focused constituent is marked only with phonological prominence (see (3)).

(3)   Dia pergi cari   **Ali** (**punya**), bukan pergi cari   **Minah**.
         3SG go   look.for Ali PUNYA   not   go   look.for Minah
         'S/he went to look for Ali (for sure/inference), rather than Minah.'

In Soh (2014), I propose a constraint on focus marking given in (4) that distinguishes morphological or syntactic markings of focus from phonological markings of focus.

(4)   **The *i*-within-*i* Constraint on Focus Marking**
         It is not possible to <u>morphologically or syntactically</u> mark a constituent and a sub-constituent simultaneously as being focused.

I assume that *punya* <u>syntactically</u> marks its complement CP (headed by a Force-C) as broad focus (cf. Cheng (2008) on Mandarin *de*), and due to the constraint in (4), it cannot have within its scope another focused constituent associated with a focus particle such as *–lah* and *–pun*.

In this paper, I present a new account of the incompatibility of *punya* with focus particles *–lah* and *–pun* that connects more directly with the meaning of *punya*. The current approach is motivated by the new observations that in addition to *–lah* and *–pun* 'even', *punya* also may not occur with *je* 'only', *cuma* 'only', the additive *juga* 'also', and the sentence final aspectual particle *dah* (in contrast to the pre-verbal aspectual particle *dah*) (see Soh (2011, 2012) for distinctions between these two instances of *dah*).

 (5)   a.   Minah-**je**   /**Cuma** Minah ada   boyfriend (**punya).
                Minah-only /only   Minah have boyfriend   PUNYA
                'Only Minah has a boyfriend (for sure/inference).'
         b.   Ali **juga** nak   pergi (**punya).
                Ali also want go   PUNYA
                'Ali also want to go (for sure/inference).'
         c.   Dia pergi ke KLCC (**punya) **dah** (**punya).
                3SG go   to KLCC   PUNYA DAH PUNYA
                'He has already gone to KLCC (for sure/inference)'.

While many of the lexical items incompatible with *punya* are associated with focus, not all of them are. I argue that the items incompatible with *punya* are associated with certain presuppositions. I propose an account of the distributional restrictions in terms of the interaction between the meaning of *punya* and the presuppositions associated with these items.