This paper argues for a refinement of the common ground (Stalnaker, 2002) that includes a structured QUD that may differ for each discourse participant. The QUD contains a maximal QUD which is the main question to be answered, as well as a set of other questions relevant to the main question (Ginzburg, 1995). I provide evidence for this structured QUD from a discourse particle in Finnish.

The main focus of this paper is the Finnish discourse particle -hAn. This particle has received a small amount of attention in the past, usually in papers that only report positive data and consultant comments (Abraham and Wuite, 1984; Karttunen, 1975). I present data on -hAn used in a variety of contexts that I collected through fieldwork with native speakers. I then use these data to propose use conditions for the discourse particle which require a structured QUD.

One relevant context is in response to questions. Finnish -hAn may not be attached to a direct response to a question (1), but it is very natural attached to an indirect response (2). Based on these and many other types of data, I propose that -hAn is used to re-direct the hearer’s attention to a particular fact or question invoked by the sentence. If -hAn is used with a declarative sentence, the relevant fact is the proposition expressed by the declarative. If the declarative sentence does not have a Focused element, the question invoked is the polar question with possible answers p and ¬p, where p is the descriptive content of the sentence (Rooth, 1996). If the sentence does have Focus, the question invoked is the wh-question whose possible answers are propositions made by replacing the Focused element with its Focus alternatives.

Formally, -hAn can only be used if the relevant question is not in addressee’s QUD, and the addressee is not attending to the proposition expressed by the declarative. Thus, in (1), -hAn cannot be use because the question invoked is ‘How much does it cost?’, which is obviously in Onni’s QUD. In (2), however, -hAn can be used because ‘Are his lights on?’ is not part of A’s QUD. The question of whether Pentti is at home is maximal in both A’s and B’s QUDs. However, B is attending to the relevant question of whether Pentti’s light are on. If A were attending to the question of whether Pentti’s lights were on, he would have simply looked and confirmed that they were, and never asked the question ‘Is Pentti home?’

In this paper, I present a wide variety of new data about Finnish -hAn. These data show that the addressee attention analysis of the use conditions for -hAn are more successful than previous analyses in the literature. A formalization of this analysis requires a QUD that is contains a set of related questions that may differ between speakers. This paper therefore argues for such a QUD.
(1) Onni: Kuinka paljon se maksaa?
   how much it costs?
   ‘How much does it cost?’

Hanna: Se(#=hän) on 50 euroa.
   it(#=HAN) is 50 euro.PART
   ‘It’s 50 euros.’

(2) A: On=ko Pentti kotona?
   is=Q Pentti home.ess
   ‘Is Pentti home?’

B: Sen=hän valo on päällä
   3SG.ACC=HAN light is on
   ‘His lights are on’, #...if A cannot see the lights in Pentti’s house.

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