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**Papers on Information Structure in
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PREFACE

These proceedings, also online available as No. 46 in the *ZAS Papers in Linguistics* series under

have resulted from the International Conference "Focus in African languages" held October 6-8, 2005 at the Zentrum für Allgemeine Sprachwissenschaft (ZAS) in Berlin. The conference was cooperatively organized by the latter, together with the Collaborative Research Center (Sonderforschungsforschungsbereich) 632, generously funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG). It was the first conference bringing together colleagues working on this topic from all over the world in such scale.

Even though this volume contains only ten contributions out of the 35 papers presented at the conference, it displays the wide range of approaches, subjects and languages studied in the field of information structure in African languages. The collection thus reflects the synergetic atmosphere of the conference.

In the name of all organizers (Laura Downing, Ines Fiedler, Katharina Hartmann, Brigitte Reineke, Anne Schwarz, Sabine Zerbian, Malte Zimmermann) we would like to take this opportunity to thank the participant reviewers and student assistants for their contributions by which the conference became such a fruitful forum for inspiring and seminal studies in this field. Also special thanks for their effort in copy editing to our research assistants Lars Marstaller and Paul Starzmann.

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The focus particle in Kîîtharaka

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In this paper we argue that Kîîtharaka *in situ* and *ex situ* object focus constructions are exhaustive. Sentences with a preverbal focus marker are argued to be non-exhaustive. Our conclusions are based on felicity in mention-some contexts, simple and multiple questions and entailment relations.

1 Introduction

This paper investigates the interpretation of focus constructions in Kîîtharaka (SVO, Bantu, E54, Kenyan). Kîîtharaka focus constructions come in two main forms: (i) forms with the focus marker and (ii) forms without the focus marker (*in situ*). The forms with the focus marker in turn divide into two: sentences with the focus marker as the first verbal prefix and sentences with the focus marker prefixed on a fronted constituent (*ex situ*). We claim forms with the verb-adjacent focus marker are interpreted non-exhaustively; the other forms are interpreted exhaustively.

This paper is organized as follows. In section 2, we provide the general distribution of the Kîîtharaka focus marker. Section 3 provides some preliminary data on interpretation of focus constructions in simple Question-Answer contexts. In section 4, we turn to a much more detailed investigation of the interpretation of Kîîtharaka focus constructions. We examine data on mention-some answers, single-pair and pair-list answers to multiple questions, and entailment relations. The last section summarizes our findings.

2 The distribution of the focus marker

2.1 *Where* f *occurs*

The Kîîtharaka focus marker (to be referred to as *f*) occurs in a number of contexts. For example, it can appear procliticized to the verb or main predicate as in (1-a), (1-b), and (1-c). As can be seen, *f* has two allormorphs, *i* and *n*: *I* occurs preconsonantally and *n* prevocalically.[1]

(1) a. Maria *n-* a- ra- ak- ir- e nyomba
1Maria f- sm1- np- build- perf- fv 9house
'Maria built a house'

b. Kî- ûra *i-* kî- ra- rî- îr- e ma- tî
7- frog f- sm7- pn- eat- perf- fv 6- leave
'The frog ate leaves'

c. Maria *n-* ûmû- ajie
1Maria f- sm1- sick
'Maria is sick'

The focus marker may also be procliticized to a preverbal major sentential constituent. This constituent may occur clause initially, (2-a), and (2-b) for subjects, and (3-a) and (3-b) for objects – or after the subject, (4-a) and (4-b). The same generalizations concerning positioning hold also in embedded clauses. For lack of space, we will give only one example here: (3-c).

(2) a. *I- Maria* a- ra- ak- ir- e nyomba
f- 1Maria sm1- pn- build- perf- fv 9house
'Maria built a house'

b. *N- Andrew* a- ra- gûr- ir- e î- ria
f- Andrew sm1- pn- buy- perf- fv 5- milk
'Andrew bought milk'

(3) a. *I- nyomba* Maria a- ra- ak- ir- e
f- 9house 1Maria sm1- pn- build- perf- fv
'Maria built a house'

---

[1] Glosses are as follows: f (focus marker), om (object marker), sm (subject agreement), hab (habitual), pres (present), fut (future), pr (remote past), pn (near past), appl (applicative), perf (perfective), fv (final vowel). A numeral on the noun indicates the noun class, a numeral on sm, pronoun or nominal modifier indicates agreement with a noun of a particular class. ˆ refers to the tense vowels. This is the orthographical style used in the Kîîtharaka Bible and will be used in this paper. Diacritics on vowels do not indicate tone. In certain cases where the noun-class prefix is null or the morphological analysis is unclear, we do not gloss the two items individually, see, e.g., 'Maria' – 1Maria and 'nyomba' – 9house in example (1-a).

b. *N- îî- ria* Andrew a- gûr- ir- e
   f- 5- milk 1Andrew sm1- buy- perf- fv
   'Andrew bought milk'

c. Mfana a- ug- ir- e atî ka- arî ga- ka, *n- îî- buku*
   1Mfana sm1- say- perf- fv that 12- girl 12- this f- 5- book
   Mûnene a- ka- nenk- e- er- e
   1Mûnene sm1- om12- give- appl- perf- fv
   'Mfana said that this girl, Mûnene gave her a book'

(4) a. Maria *i- nyomba* a- ra- ak- ir- e
     1Maria f- 9house sm1- p^n- build- perf- fv
     'Maria built a house'

    b. Andrew *n- îî- ria* a- gûr- ir- e
     1Andrew f- 5- milk sm1- buy- perf- fv
     'Andrew bought milk'

In constructions with focus movement, the *n*-allomorph of *f* triggers lengthening of the initial vowel of the moved constituent (cf. Harford 1997).[2]

    Muriungi (2005) claims that cases where a fronted object comes after the subject, (4-a) and (4-b) involve a combination of subject topicalization and object focalization. The same analysis can be extended to (3-c), where the indirect object is topicalized, the direct object focalized, and the subject remains in its canonical position. The order of topic before focus can never be switched. We conclude that in Kîîtharaka there is a topic projection which precedes the focus projection. Moved *wh*-phrases are marked with the same morpheme, *f*, and have the same positional possibilities as the foci discussed in this paper.

    So far, we have looked at examples with focus movement only, but Kîîtharaka also allows foci (and *wh*-phrases) to remain in situ; thus, a focused object or *wh*-phrase may remain in situ, or be moved in front of the verb. The question-answer pairs in (5-a) and (5-b), and (6-a) and (6-b) provide some illustration.[3]

(5) a. **Q:** Maria a- ta- ir- e *mbi*
         1Maria sm1- fetch- perf- fv what
         'What did Maria fetch?'

    b. **A:** Maria a- ta- ir- e *rû- jî*
         1Maria sm1- fetch- perf- fv 11- water
         'Maria fetched water'

---

[2] In prior studies *f* has been treated as predicative (Harford 1997) or as a copula with an auxiliary function (Mberia 1993). We claim that it is a focus marker (see Muriungi 2005 for independent justification).

[3] In general, there is a preference for the structure of the answer to be similar to the structure of the question; *in-situ* focus for an *in-situ* question, moved focus after *wh*-movement.

(6) a. **Q:** *I- mbi* Maria a- ta- ir- e
                f- what 1Maria sm1- fetch- perf- fv
                'What did Maria fetch?'

      b. **A:** I- *rû- jî* Maria a- ta- ir- e
                f- 11- water 1Maria sm1- fetch- perf- fv
                'Maria fetched water'

Moved foci (and *wh*-phrases) are obligatorily marked with *f*, in-situ foci (and in-situ *wh*-phrases) never take the focus marker. Again, the same is true in embedded sentences: A *wh*-phrase or focus may bear *f*, in which case it is moved, or it may occur in situ without *f*.

So far we have only looked at short focus movement and short *wh*-movement. Long focus movement (and long *wh*-movement) is also possible in Kîîtharaka. The presence of the verbal pro-clitic focus marker interacts in interesting ways with *wh*- and focus movement. When the *wh*-phrase or focus is left in situ, there is no focus marking at all, (7-a). When the *wh*-phrase is moved, the focus marker appears on the verbs in all clauses that the *wh*-phrases has moved through. Since Kîîtharaka allows partial *wh*-movement, it is easy to show the incremental pattern of focus marking as the *wh*-phrase moves up. (See (7-a) through (7-d) and Muriungi (2005) for discussion).

(7) a. John *(*n)-* a- ug- ir- e Pat *(*n)-* a- ug- ir- e
            1John f-   sm1- say- perf- fv 1Pat f-   sm1- say- perf- fv
            Maria *(*n)-* a- gûr- ir- e *mbi*
            1Maria f-   sm1- buy- perf- fv what
            'What did John say Pat said Maria bought?'

      b. John *(*n)-* a- ug- ir- e Pat *(*n)-* a- ug- ir- e *i-*
            1John f-   sm1- say- perf- fv 1Pat f-   sm1- say- perf- fv f-
            mbi Maria *(*n)-* a- gûr- ir- e
            what 1Maria f-   sm1- buy- perf- fv
            'What did John say Pat said Maria bought?'

      c. John *(*n)-* a- ug- ir- e *i- mbi* Pat *(*n)-* a- ug- ir-
            1John f-   sm1- say- perf- fv f- what 1Pat f-   sm1- say- perf-
            e Maria *n-* a- gûr- ir- e
            fv 1Maria f- sm1- buy- perf- fv
            'What did John say Pat said Maria bought?'

      d. *I- mbi* John *(*n)-* a- ug- ir- e Pat *n-* a- ug- ir- e
            f- what 1John f-   sm1- say- perf- fv 1Pat f- sm1- say- perf- fv
            Maria *n-* a- gûr- ir- e
            1Maria f- sm1- buy- perf- fv
            'What did John say Pat said Maria bought?'

Muriungi (2005) argues that the *f* markers along the path of long movement are a reflex of the cyclic nature of the derivation, forced by checking of focus features in intermediate focus heads.[4]

2.2 Restrictions on the distribution of **f**

The flipside of the facts discussed in the previous section is the observation that *f* never occurs postverbally (but see footnote 4).

(8) a. *Maria a-   ra- ak-   ir-   e *i- nyomba*
         1Maria sm1- np- build- perf- fv f- house
         'Maria built a house'

   b. *Kî- ûra kî- ra- rî- îr-   e *n- îî- ria*
         7-   frog sm7- pn- eat- perf- fv f- 5- weed
         'The frog ate the weed'

Since *f* occurs on moved foci and proclitic to verbs, one might wonder what kind of relationship holds between the two items. Are they one morpheme, as our terminology suggests? Or two? One indication that they are the same morpheme comes from the fact that they have the same allomorphs in the same phonological environments. We also saw an interaction between long movement and *f*-marking, again suggesting a unified analysis. Finally, there is no clause with two occurrences of *f*. Two foci cannot both be fronted and *f*-marked in a single clause, (9-a). Similarly, a focus-fronted phrase is incompatible with verbal proclitic *f* in the same clause, (9-b).

(9) a. *I- nkû   * i- thaa inya* Gatundu   a-   tem- ir-   e
         f- firewood   f- time four 1-Gatundu sm1- cut- perf- fv
         'It is firewood, it is four o'clock that Gatundu cut'

---

[4] We should mention a morpheme that resembles the focus marker occurs pro-clitized to the demoted agent in passives. Like *f*, this morpheme has two allomorphs, *n* prevocalically and *i* preconsonantally. The *n*-allomorph again triggers lengthening of the following vowel, (i-b).

   (i) a. Maria n- a-   gûr- î-   îr- w-   e î- buku *i-   Mfana*
            1Maria f- sm1- buy- appl- perf- pass- fv 5- book (?)- Mfana
            'Maria was bought a book by Mfana'

      b. Maria n- a-   gûr- î-   îr- w-   e î- buku *n-   îî- gûna*
            1Maria f- sm1- buy- appl- perf- pass- fv 5- book (?)- 5- monkey
            'Maria was bought a book by a monkey'

   Possibly an indication that *f* in *by*-phrases also has a focusing function is the fact that *f*-marked *by*-phrases systematically resist *wh*-related extraction in Kîîtharaka. We do not discuss passives in this paper.

b. **I- nkû*   Gatundu   * *n*- a-   tem- ir-   e rûkîîrî
   f- firewood 1-Gatundu   f- sm1- cut- perf- fv morning
   'Gatundu cut firewood in the morning?'

The patterns again suggest a unified analysis of the two uses of *f*, since it is hard to capture the complementarity between them otherwise, i.e., we might try to identify *f* with Rizzi's (1997) focus head, which, crucially, occurs uniquely in the clause.[5,6]

     In the following sections, we delve into the interpretation of the presence and absence of *f* – especially on objects. The next section gives a first glimpse limited to simple question-answer (Q/A) contexts.

3 Interpretation: Simple Q/A contexts

This section investigates the felicity of sentences with and without the verbal proclitic *f* as answers to various *wh*-questions.

     To probe for lack of exhaustivity, we make use of a construction in Kîîtharaka that explicitly asks for non-exhaustive information. The relevant question is introduced by class 17 expletive morphology (cf. (10)).

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[5]   The focus marker, when proclitic to the verb never co-occurs with sentential negation, except when a question reading is forced by the insertion of the question particle *kana*. This is presumably Ladd's (1981) outer negation. Observe that the focus marker precedes subject agreement, but negation follows subject agreement. The incompatibility of focus and negation cannot therefore be blamed on competition for the same verbal slot.

   (i)   a.   *Maria *n*- a-   *ti*- ra- ak- a nyomba * (kana)
            1Maria f- sm1- neg- pn- build- fv 9house   Q
            'Maria didn't build a house'
            '✓Does it mean Maria didn't build a house?'
       b.   ✓Maria a- *ti*-   ra- ak- a nyomba
            1Maria f- sm1- neg- build- fv 9house
            'Maria didn't build a house'

[6]   The focus marker never co-occurs with the future marker, except when the combination means *must*. Muriungi (2005) speculates that this failure of co-ocurrence is lexically determined; in other words the failure of concurrence of *f* and the future is a gap resulting from the fact that *f* + future expresses a lexicalized 'must'.

   (i)   Maria *n*- a-   *ga*- ak- a nyomba
        1Maria f- sm1- fut- build- fv 9house
        '*Maria will build a house'
        '✓Maria must build a house'

(10)   Kû- rî mû- ntû   a-   thi- ir-   e thoko- ni
        sm17- be 1-   person sm1- go- perf- fv market- loc
        'Is there anybody who went to the market?

        As an answer to (10), it is sufficient to mention just one person, even if
other people went to the market as well. More complete answers are possible,
too, of course, but no implicature of exhaustivity arises. In fact this type of
question is incompatible with an explicitly exhaustive answer.

3.1   The verbal proclitic **f**

When proclitic to the verb, as in (11), the focus marker indicates sentence
focus, VP-focus, non-exhaustive subject focus, non-exhaustive object focus,
non-exhaustive adverb focus, or verum focus; it is incompatible with exhaus-
tive object-focus, exhaustive subject-focus, or exhaustive adverb-focus. (11) is
therefore felicitous as an answer to an all-new question, (12–i), VP question,
(12–ii), a non-exhaustive object question, (12–iii), and a non-exhaustive subject
question, (12–iv).

(11)   Maria *n*- a-   ra- ak-   ir-   e nyomba
        1Maria f- sm1- np- build- perf- fv 9house
        '✓Maria built a house'
        '✓Did Maria build a house?'

(12)   **Q:** (i) ✓*I- mbi* î- rî na   thîîna
                      f- what 9- be with 9problem
                      'What is the problem?'

        (ii) ✓*N- ata* Maria a-   ra- rûth- ir-   e
                      f- what 1Maria sm- pn- do-   perf- fv
                      'What did Maria do?'

        (iii)✓Kû- rî gîntû Maria a-   ra- k-   ir-   e
                      sm17- be thing 1Maria sm1- pn- build- perf- fv
                      'Is there anything that Maria built?'

        (iv)✓Kû- rî mu- ntû   a-   ra- ak-   ir-   e nyomba
                      17- be 3-   person sm1- pn- build- perf- fv 9house
                      'Is there anybody who built a house'

However, (11) cannot be used as an answer to a narrow object question, (13-a)
or a narrow subject question, (13-b).

(13)   a.   *#I- mbi* Maria a-   ra- k-   ir-   e
       f- what 1Maria sm1- p^n- build- perf- fv
       'What did Maria build'

      b.   *#N- ûû* a-   ra- k-   ir-   e nyomba
       f- who sm1- p^n- build- perf- fv 9house
       'Who built the house'

Example (15) with verbal proclitic *f* can be used for non-exhaustive adverb focus, (14-i), but not for narrow adverb focus, (14-ii) and (14-iii).

(14)   (i) ✓Kû-   rî kagiita Maria a-   ta-   ir-   e rû- jî   anga
       sm17- be time   1Maria sm1- fetch- perf- fv 11- water Q
       'Is there some time when Maria fetched water?'

     (ii) #Maria a-   ta-   ir-   e rû- jî   rî
       1Maria sm1- fetch- perf- fv 11- water when
       'When did Maria fetch water?'

     (iii)#I- rî   Maria a-   ta-   ir-   e rû- jî
       f- when 1Maria sm1- fetch- perf- fv 11- water
       'When did Maria fetch water?'

(15)   **A:**   Maria *n*- a-   ta- ir-   e   rû- jî   rûkîîrî
       1Maria f- sm1- n^p- fetch- perf- fv water morning
       'Maria fetched water in the morning'

Clearly, when *f* occurs as verbal pro-clitic, it is non-exhaustive.

3.2   **f** *on the subject*

When *f* procliticizes to the subject, (17), either the whole sentence or the subject can be focused. (17) cannot be used for VP focus, non-exhaustive object focus, narrow object focus, or non-exhaustive subject focus.

(16)   **Q:**   (i)   ✓What is the problem?
         (ii)   ✓Who built the house?
         (iii) #What did Maria do?
         (iv)   #Is there anything that Maria buit?
         (v)   #What did Maria build?
         (vi) #Is there anybody who built a house?

(17)   **A:**   *I- Maria* a-   ra- ak-   ir-   e nyomba
       f- 1Maria sm1- n^p- build- perf- fv 9house
       'Maria built a/the house'

3.3 f *on a fronted object*

When *f* procliticizes to a fronted object, (19), only VP focus or narrow focus on the fronted constituent (or one of its parts) is possible. (19) cannot be used for non-exhaustive object focus, sentence focus, narrow subject focus or non-exhaustive subject focus. Another way of saying this (see Roberts (1998)) is that the non-focal part of the clause is presupposed.

(18)   **Q:**   (i) ✓What did Maria do?
         (ii) ✓What did Maria build?
         (iii)✓Was it the white house that Maria built?, No, ..
         (iv) ✓Was it the small house that Maria built? No, ...
         (v) ✓Was it this house that Maria built? No, ..
         (vi) #Is there something that Maria built?
         (vii) #What is the problem?
         (viii)#Who built the house?
         (ix) #Is there anyone who built a house?

(19)   **A:**   *I- nyomba î- ra   nene ntune* Maria a-   ra- ak- ir-   e
         f- 9house 9- that 9big 9red   1Maria sm1- ⁿp- build- perf- fv
         'Maria built that big red house'

3.4 *No* f *in the clause*

When *f* is absent altogether, (21), narrow focus on some postverbal material is the result. For some speakers VP-focus is also an option when there is a postverbal object. (21) cannot be used for non-exhaustive object focus, sentence focus, narrow subject focus, or non-exhaustive subject focus. We investigate sentences like (19) and (21) in much more detail in the next section.

(20)   **Q:**   (i) ✓What did Maria build?
         (ii) %What did Maria do?
         (iii) #Is there something that Maria built?
         (iv) #What is the problem?
         (v)   #Who built the house?
         (vi) #Is there anyone who built a house?

(21)   **A:**   Maria a-   ra- ak- ir-   e nyomba
         1Maria sm1- ⁿp- build- perf- fv 9house
         'Maria built a house'

Summing up: We have so far examined the distribution and the interpretation of the Kîîtharaka focus marker, *f*. We have shown that *f* has three main contexts of occurrence: as a verbal proclitic, on moved foci and along the path of cyclic *wh*-movement. With respect to meaning, the verbal proclitic *f* has been shown to be the most liberal; it is non-exhaustive and allows focus projection from the verb to other constituents up to the sentence level. Subjects marked with *f* have been shown to be ambiguous between subject focus and whole sentence focus. *f* marked objects are ambiguous between VP and narrow focus. In situ objects (without *f*) indicate narrow object focus, and for some speakers, VP focus.

In the following sections we investigate the interpretation resulting from the presence and absence of *f* on focused objects in more detail.

4   Detailed distribution

We argue in this section in detail that *f*-marked and in situ focused objects are always interpreted exhaustively.[7] We also strengthen our claim from above that the verb-adjacent *f*-marker is incompatible with exhaustivity.

4.1   Complex Question-Answer Pairs

We begin by considering how fronted *f*-marked objects, in-situ focused objects and verb adjacent *f*-marking behave in context. First we consider a few question-answer pairs, then we turn to entailment contexts. An initial set of data regarding question-answer congruence was given in the previous section.

4.1.1   Incomplete and Mention-Some Answers

As we will see, verb-adjacent *f*-marking is generally impossible in answers to narrow object or narrow subject questions. We can explain this if we assume that answers generally carry an implicature of exhaustivity. Since exhaustivity is incompatible with the verb-adjacent *f*-marker, the facts fall out readily. We can confirm this conjecture, by observing the behavior of the *f*-marker in answers that are explicitly marked as incomplete by the inclusion of *kwa ngerekano* - 'for example', (22). Here the verb-adjacent *f*-marker is not only possible, the other two focus strategies are impossible. This is a first indication that the other two focusing constructions necessarily give rise to exhaustive interpretations.

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[7]   Essentially the same is true in the case of subjects. *f*-marked subjects are interpreted exhaustively, non-*f*-marked subjects are not necessarily exhaustive.

(22) **For example**

(Context: Some people come to the village and circumcise all the young boys there. One of the boys that they circumcise is Ntugi (but of course he is not the only one). Moments later, I want to convey the message that some people circumcised Ntugi among other boys.)

    a. ✓I- ba- tan- ir- e Ntugi kwa ngerekano
          f- sm2- circumcise- perf- fv 1Ntugi for example
          'They circumcised Ntugi for example'

    b. *Ba- tan- ir- e Ntugi kwa ngerekano
          sm2- circumcise- perf- fv 1Ntugi for example
          'They circumcised Ntugi for example'

    c. *I- Ntugi ba- tan- ir- e kwa ngerekano
          f- 1Ntugi sm2- circumcise- perf- fv for example
          'It is Ntugi they circumcised for example'

The same result is reproducable with a mention-some question. We contextualize the examples with the question *is there some x which Maria VP-ed*. Though technically a polar question, such questions invite the interlocuter to provide a non-exhaustive answer to the implied question *Maria VP-ed what?* In such a context, the object cannot bear *f*, and *f* has to be a verbal proclitic. This context clearly suggests that sentences with preverbal *f* are non-exhaustive.

(23) **Q:** Kû- rî gi- ntû Maria a- gûr- ir- e
             sm17- be 7- person 1Maria sm1- buy- perf- fv
             'Is there something which Maria bought?'

    A: (i) ✓{∅ | jiii,} Maria n- a- gûr- ir- e nderemende
                 yes, 1Maria f- sm1- buy- perf- fv 10sweet
            '(Yes), Maria bought sweets'

        (ii) #{∅ | jiii,} Maria a- gûr- ir- e nderemende
                yes 1Maria sm1- buy- perf- fv 10sweet
           'Maria bought sweets'

        (iii) #{∅ | jiii,} I- nderemende Maria a- gûr- ir- e
                 yes f- 10sweet 1Maria sm1- buy- perf- fv
           'Maria bought sweets'

4.2 Multiple wh-*Questions*

We turn now to multiple *wh*-questions. These are informative, because Kîîtharaka allows both single-pair and pair-list answers to such questions, but both strategies differ markedly. Thus consider the question in (24).

(24) **Q:** Ta- mb- îr- a n- ûû a- gûr- ir- e mbi
just- om1- tell- fv f- who sm1- buy- perf- fv what
'Tell me who bought what?'

There is only one way to give a single-pair answer to this type of request: that in (25-i). The focus marker on the subject is obligatory. The answer is interpreted exhaustively. Examples (25-ii-iii) are ungrammatical, because, as discussed above, there is only ever one focus marker per CP. The examples in (26) are not ungrammatical, but they are not possible answers to the question. The reason for the infelicity of these examples presumably resides in the marking of the subject. A preverbal subject in clauses without verb-adjacent *f*-marker can be interpreted either as a continuation topic or as a contrastive topic (see Büring (1995), Roberts (1998)), but neither of those interpretations is available here. The subject is not a continuation topic, because the previous context does not set up a topic: the subject was questioned. But there is also no contrast here, because only one subject-predicate pair serves as the answer to the question. Example (26–iv) is impossible, because verb adjacent *f*-marking is incompatible with exhaustive interpretations. If nothing else, this paradigm serves to show that objects that are focused in-situ get an exhaustive interpretation.

(25) **Single-Pair Answers with *f*-marked subject**

A: (i) I- Mûnene a- gûr- ir- e î- ria
f- 1Mûnene sm- buy- perf- fv 5- milk
'Munene bought milk'

(ii) *N- îî- ria i- Mûnene a- gûr- ir- e
f- 5- milk f- 1Mûnene sm- buy- perf- fv
'Munene bought milk'

(iii) *I- Mûnene n- a- gûr- ir- e î- ria
f- 1Mûnene f- sm- buy- perf- fv 5- milk
'Munene bought milk'

(26) **Single-Pair Answers without *f*-marked subject**

A: (i) #Mûnene a- gûr- ir- e î- ria
1Mûnene sm- buy- perf- fv 5- milk
'Mûnene bought milk'

(ii) #N- îî- ria Mûnene a- gûr- ir- e
f- 5- milk 1Mûnene sm- buy- perf- fv
'Mûnene bought milk'

(iii) #Mûnene n- îî- ria a- gûr- ir- e
1Mûnene f- 5- milk sm- buy- perf- fv
'Mûnene bought milk'

       (iv) #Mûnene n- a- gûr- ir-   e î- ria
            1Mûnene f- sm- buy- perf- fv 5- milk
            'Mûnene bought milk'

Consider now examples (27) and (28) as answers to (24). In marked contrast to single-pair answers ((25-i) above), pair-list answers do not allow *f*-marking on the subject, (27). Again, this has to do with the fact that *f*-marking on the subject would imply exhaustivity, but none of the answers by itself is exhaustive.

    We now turn to (28). When the subject is not *f*-marked, the object can either remain in-situ or it can move and be *f*-marked, but in this case it has to appear after the subject. We interpret these data as follows. Whether the object is focused in-situ or *f*-marked, it gets an exhaustive interpretation. This is possible only if exhaustivity is calculated relative to a particular subject: Munene bought only milk, Mfana bought only bread, . . . For this to be possible, the subjects have to be interpreted as contrastive topics: There is a contrast between the subjects in the individual parts of the answer, but, relative to this topic, the answer is exhaustive. Example (28-iii) is infelicitous. This is so because the subject in a pair-list answer must be interpreted as a contrastive topic. Relative to each subject, the objects provide exhaustive foci, but verb adjacent *f*-marking is incompatible with exhaustivity by assumption.

(27)   **Pair-List Answers with *f*-marked subject**

    A: (i)   *I- Mûnene n- îî- ria a-   gûr- ir-   e i- Mfana f- mû-
               f- 1Munene f- 5- milk sm1- buy- perf- fv f- 1Mfana f- 3-
               gaate a-   gûr- ir-   e
               bread sm1- buy- perf- fv
               'Mûnene bought milk, Mfana bought bread... '

        (ii) #I- Mûnene a-   gûr- ir-   e î- ria   i- Mfana a-
               f- 1Munene sm1- buy- perf- fv 5- milk f- 1Mfana sm1-
               gûr- ir-   e mû- gaate
               buy- perf- fv 3-   bread
               'Mûnene bought milk, Mfana bought bread... '

        (iii) *I- Mûnene n- a-   gûr- ir-   e î- ria   i- Mfana n-
               f- 1Munene f- sm1- buy- perf- fv 5- milk f- 1Mfana f-
               a-   gûr- ir-   e mû- gaate
               sm1- buy- perf- fv 3-   bread
               'Mûnene bought milk, Mfana bought bread ... '

(28)   **Pair-List Answers without *f*-marked subject**

A: (i) ✓Mûnene n- îî- ria a- gûr- ir- e Mfana i- mû-
1Munene f- 5- milk sm1- buy- perf- fv 1Mfana f- 3-
gaate a- gûr- ir- e
bread sm1- buy- perf- fv
'Mûnene bought milk, Mfana bought bread... '

(ii) ✓Mûnene a- gûr- ir- e î- ria Mfana a- gûr-
1Munene sm1- buy- perf- fv 5- milk 1Mfana sm1- buy-
ir- e mû- gaate
perf- fv 3- bread
'Mûnene bought milk, Mfana bought bread ... '

(iii) #Mûnene n- a- gûr- ir- e î- ria Mfana n- a-
1Munene f- sm1- buy- perf- fv 5- milk 1Mfana f- sm1-
gûr- ir- e mû- gaate
buy- perf- fv 3- bread
'Mûnene bought milk, Mfana bought bread ... '

The same general pattern can be observed with object *wh*-questions with a conjoint subject, (29). Single answers to such questions with a conjoint or plural subject behave like normal answers to *wh*-questions and allow both in-situ and moved object focus but not verb-adjacent focus marking, (30).[8]

(29) **Q:** (i) Karîmi na Maria ba- rî- rug- a mbi
Karîmi and Maria sm2- pres- cook- fv what
'What are Karîmi and Maria cooking?'

(ii) I- mbi Karîmi na Maria ba- kû- rug- a
f- what Karimi and Maria sm2- pres- cook- fv
'What are Karimi and Maria cooking?'

(30) **Single Answers to the same questions**

a. ✓Ba- rî- rug- a 10nkima
sm2- pres- cook- fv food
'They are cooking food'

b. ✓I- nkima ba- kû- rug- a
f- 10food sm- pres- cook- fv
'They are cooking food'

c. #I- ba- kû- rug- a nkima
f- sm2- pres- cook- fv 10food
'They are cooking food'

When the two subject conjuncts receive separate answers, though, as in (31), the same pattern emerges that we saw for pair-list answers. The subject has to

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8 Note that in these examples, the marking of present tense seems to vary depending on whether there is wh/focus in situ *rî*, or *wh*-movement, *kû*.

be interpreted as a contrastive topic, i.e., it has to move to the leftmost one of the two subject positions, the object can then be interpreted as exhaustive relative to the topic and move (31-b) or remain in situ (31-c).

(31) **Conjoint Answers**

    a. *I- nkima Karîmi a- kû- rug- a na i- nyama Maria a-
        f- food 1Karîmi sm1- pres- cook- fv and f- meat 1Maria sm1-
        kû- rug- a
        pres- cook- fv
        'Karîmi is cooking food and Maria is cooking meat'

    b. ✓Karîmi i- nkima a- kû- rug- a na Maria i- nyama a-
        1Karîmi f- food sm1- pres- cook- fv and 1Maria f- meat sm1-
        kû- rug- a
        pres- cook- fv
        'Karîmi is cooking food and Maria is cooking meat'[9]

    c. ✓Karîmi a- rî- rug- a nkima na Maria a- rî- rug-
        1Karîmi sm1- pres- cook- fv food and 1Maria sm- pres- cook-
        a nyama
        fv 9meat
        'Karîmi is cooking food and Maria is cooking meat'

    d. #Karîmi n- a- kû- rug- a nkima na Maria n- a- kû-
        1Karîmi f- sm1- pres- cook- fv food and 1Maria f- sm- pres-
        rug- a nyama
        cook- fv 9meat
        'Karîmi is cooking food and Maria is cooking meat'

The question-answer facts thus seen to support our generalization that *f*-marked and in-situ focused objects are exhaustive while verb adjacent *f*-marking is incompatible with exhaustivity. Finally, subject out of focus can be interpreted either as continuation topics or as contrastive topics.

4.3 *Coordination and Entailment*

While the kind of data discussed in the previous subsection has, to the best of our knowledge, not been used to diagnose for exhaustivity, we now turn to tests that are found in the literature. Thus, Kiss (1998)[10] claims that if a sentence with a coordination does not entail the same sentence with one of the coordinates dropped, then the original construction was exhaustive. This test diagnoses the English *it*-cleft as an exhaustive focusing device, since (32-a) does not entail

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[9] Note as an aside that the presence of *kû* in both clauses when there is *wh*-movement and *rî* in both clauses with *wh*-in situ provides overt evidence for ATB extraction in both conjuncts.

[10] The test is attributed to Szabolcsi (1981).

(32-b), while regular new-information focus in English is not exhaustive, as the entailment from (33-a) to (33-b) is meant to illustrate. What is being diagnosed here is the exhaustive interpretation of the (b)-examples not the (a)-examples. Thus, (32-a) entails (33-b) and (33-a) does not entail (32-b).

(32)   a.   It was **a hat and a coat** that Mary picked for herself.
        b. ⇏ It was **a hat** that Mary picked for herself.

(33)   a.   Mary picked **a hat and a coat** for herself.
        b. ⇒ Mary picked **a hat** for herself. (Kiss, 1998, p. 250)

We now give three versions of the sentence "Ruth bought a book and a pen": with an *f*-marked conjoined object, (34), with the conjoined object focused in-situ, (35), and with the verb adjacent *f*-marker, (36). We follow each of them with three versions of the sentence "Ruth bought a book" and test for entailment. Since the test diagnoses exhaustivity on the putative entailment, we expect all three tests to come out the same way. In particular, if moved *f*-marked objects and in-situ focused objects are interpreted exhaustively, none of the entailments should go through with these, but they should go through with the verb-adjacent focus marker. This expectation is fully borne out.

When the conjoined object is moved and *f*-marked, as in (34-a), it does not entail (34-i-ii), but it does entail the sentence with the verb-adjacent *f*-marker in (34-iii). This follows on the assumption that the *f*-marked and the in-situ objects are interpreted exhaustively. Under this assumption (34-i-ii) mean that Ruth bought only a book, which contradicts the initial sentence in (34). On the other hand (34-iii) is not interpreted exhaustively – in fact it is incompatible with exhaustivity – and is, therefore, entailed by the initial sentence in (34).

(34) X+Y   N- îî- buku na ka- ramu Ruth a- gûr- ir- e
              f- 5- book and 12- pen 1Ruth sm1- buy- perf- fv
              'It is a book and a pen that Ruth bought'

    X (i) ⇏ N- îî- buku Ruth a- gûr- ir- e
              f- 5- book 1Ruth sm1- buy- perf- fv
              'Ruth bought a book'

      (ii) ⇏ Ruth a- gûr- ir- e î- buku
              1Ruth sm- buy- perf- fv 5- book
              'Ruth bought a book'

      (iii) ⇒ Ruth n̠- a- gûr- ir- e î- buku
              1Ruth f̠- sm- buy- perf- fv 5- book
              'Ruth bought a book '

The same is true for the in-situ focused object in (35), where, like in the previous example, the object is interpreted as a non-specific indefinite. (35) does not entail (35-i-ii), but it does entail the sentence with the verb-adjacent *f*-marker in (35-iii). Again, this follows on the assumption we are defending that the *f*-marked and the in-situ objects are interpreted exhaustively. Under this assumption (35-i-ii) mean that Ruth bought only a book, which contradicts (35-a). On the other hand (35-iii) is not interpreted exhaustively – in fact it is incompatible with exhaustivity – and is, therefore, entailed by the initial sentence in (35).

(35)　X+Y　　　Ruth a-　gûr- ir-　e î- buku na ka- ramu
　　　　　　　　1Ruth sm1- buy- perf- fv 5- book and 12- pen
　　　　　　　　'Ruth bought a book and a pen'

　　　X　(i)　⇏　Ruth a-　gûr- ir-　e î- buku
　　　　　　　　1Ruth sm- buy- perf- fv 5- book
　　　　　　　　'Ruth bought a book'

　　　　(ii)　⇏　N- îî- buku Ruth a-　gûr- ir-　e
　　　　　　　　f- 5- book 1Ruth sm1- buy- perf- fv
　　　　　　　　'Ruth bought a book'

　　　　(iii)　⇒　Ruth n̲- a-　gûr- ir-　e î- buku
　　　　　　　　1Ruth f̲- sm- buy- perf- fv 5- book
　　　　　　　　'Ruth bought a book'

Finally, the same holds for the last set of data ((36)).

(36)　X+Y　　　Ruth n̲- a-　gûr- ir-　e î- buku na ka- ramu
　　　　　　　　1Ruth f̲- sm1- buy- perf- fv 5- book and 12- pen
　　　　　　　　'Ruth bought a book and a pen'

　　　X　(i)　⇒　Ruth n- a-　gûr- ir-　e î- buku
　　　　　　　　1Ruth f- sm- buy- perf- fv 5- book
　　　　　　　　'Ruth bought a book'

　　　　(ii)　⇏　Ruth a-　gûr- ir-　e î- buku
　　　　　　　　1Ruth sm- buy- perf- fv 5- book
　　　　　　　　'Ruth bought a book'

　　　　(iii)　⇏　N- îî- buku Ruth a-　gûr- ir-　e
　　　　　　　　f- 5- book 1Ruth sm1- buy- perf- fv
　　　　　　　　'Ruth bought a book'

A second test taken from the literature involves the interpretation of negation. This test involves negating exhaustivity. It is used in Kiss (1998) and attributed to Donka Farkas. In a dialogue, exhaustivity alone can be negated as in (37-b)

vs. (38-b). The crucial point is the interplay between rejection and the word *too*, which shows that the content of the first utterance, here Mary's picking a hat for herself, is not being negated. It's just the claim to exhaustivity that is negated here. This test tests for exhaustivity of the (a)-examples. The (b)-examples must not be exhaustive, seeing as they contain the word *also*.

(37) a. It was a hat that Mary picked for herself
   b. No, she picked a coat, too. Kiss (1998, p. 251)

(38) a. Mary picked a hat for herself
   b. #No, she picked a coat, too. Kiss (1998, p. 251)

The examples in (39) and (40) illustrate the results of this test for Kîîtharaka. *f*-marked objects never co-occur with the word *kinya-*'also', we therefore do not include such examples below. Furthermore, in-situ focused objects are always dubious with *kinya*, hence the degraded status of (39-b-ii) and (40-b-ii). The result of this test shows again that moved and in-situ foci behave exhaustively.

(39) a.   I- mpempe Maria a- and- ir- e
        f- 10maize 1Maria sm1- plant- perf- fv
        'Maria planted maize'

   b. (i) Arî n- a- and- ir- e kinya mû- nya
        No f- sm1- plant- perf- fv also 3- sorghum
        'No, she planted sorghum also'

     (ii) ?Arî a- and- ir- e kinya mû- nya
        No sm1- plant- perf- fv also 3- sorghum
        'No, she planted sorghum also'

(40) a.   Maria a- and- ir- e mpempe
        1Maria sm1- plant- perf- fv 10maize
        'Maria planted maize'

   b. (i) Arî n- a- and- ir- e kinya mû- nya
        No f- sm1- plant- perf- fv also 3- sorghum
        'No, she planted sorghum also'

     (ii) ?Arî a- and- ir- e kinya mû- nya
        No sm1- plant- perf- fv also 3- sorghum
        'No, she planted sorghum also'

The converse of this test is the following. If a particular construction is interpreted exhaustively, then it should be impossible to follow it up by agreeing and adding an item to the focus set. The workings of this test are illustrated for English *it*-clefts in (41). Notice that (41-b-c) are not totally impossible contin-

uations for all speakers, but they always require fairly arcane contexts.

(41) a. It is a hat that Mary bought.
　　　b. #Yes, and she also bought a coat.
　　　c. #Yes, and it is also a coat that she bought.

The expectation for Kîîtharaka is that moved, *f*-marked and in-situ focused objects should be incompatible with agreement and addition of another element. Kîîtharaka does not conform with our expectations here since moved and in-situ object foci are compatible with a yes-and-also-continuation, (42) and (43).

　　　To resolve this puzzle, remember from the first section that in-situ objects without any *f*-marking are – marginally – compatible with VP-focus ((21)). It turns out that (42) and (43) are only possible in contexts where (42-a) and (43-a) can be interpreted as having VP-focus. Notice also that this option is unavailable in the examples (39) and (40) above, because the sentence setting up the context prevents VP-focus on the follow-up. The problem posed by (42) and (43) for our generalization is therefore only apparent.

(42) a.　　　I- mpempe Maria a-　and- ir-　e
　　　　　　　f- 10maize 1Maria sm1- plant- perf- fv
　　　　　　　'Maria planted maize'

　　　b. (i)　Yii na n- a-　and- ir-　e kinya mû- nya
　　　　　　　yes and f- sm1- plant- perf- fv also　3-　sorghum
　　　　　　　'Yes, and she also planted sorghum'

　　　　　(ii) ??Yii na a-　and- ir-　e kinya mû- nya
　　　　　　　yes and sm1- plant- perf- fv also　3-　sorghum
　　　　　　　'Yes, and she also planted sorghum'

(43) a.　　　Maria a-　and- ir-　e mpempe
　　　　　　　1Maria sm1- plant- perf- fv 10maize
　　　　　　　'Maria planted maize'

　　　b. (i)　Yii na n- a-　and- ir-　e kinya mû- nya
　　　　　　　yes and f- sm1- plant- perf- fv also　3-　sorghum
　　　　　　　'Yes, and she also planted sorghum'

　　　　　(ii) ??Yii na a-　and- ir-　e kinya mû- nya
　　　　　　　yes and sm1- plant- perf- fv also　3-　sorghum
　　　　　　　'Yes, and she also planted sorghum'

The data from the various entailment tests again support our hypothesis that moved *f*-marked objects and in-situ focused objects are interpreted exhaustively, and the verb-adjacent *f*-marker non-exhaustively.

5   Summary

In this paper, we have used evidence from simple and mention-some questions, single-pair and pair-list answers to multiple questions, and entailments to argue that *in situ* focus and *ex situ* focus is exhaustive and that constructions with a preverbal focus marker are non-exhaustive. Considerations of space prevent us from exploring the interaction between universal quantification, association with focus particles such as *even, also, alone, only*, and the three focusing strategies in any detail. Preliminary results indicate that the three focusing strategies interact in non-trivial ways with these items in the manner predicted by our analysis. Space limitations also prevent us from going into details concerning the syntax of the focus marker. A crucial question, for example, is whether the focus marker that attaches to a fronted XP is part of the extended projection of that XP, or whether it is directly part of the clause. This question is particularly interesting because there are indications that the focus marker is always directly adjacent to a nominal agreement morpheme. Whatever the answer to this question turns out to be, it will give rise to another: how is it possible to capture the generalization that whenever f is verb adjacent, another f cannot occur on an XP in the same clause? We leave these issues for future research.

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When verbal predicates go fronting[*]

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This paper demonstrates that there are no empirical and theoretical motivations for regarding verbal predicate focus constructions as (diachronically) derived from cleft constructions. Instead, it is argued that predicate fronting for the purpose of focus or topic is comparable to verb (phrase) fronting structures in other languages (e.g., Germanic). The proposed analysis further indicates that related doubling strategies observed in certain languages are the consequences of parallel chains that license the fronted verb (phrase) in the left periphery, and the Agree-tense-aspect features inside the proposition.

1   Introduction

In the 80s, many linguists working on certain West African languages (e.g., Kwa, Kru) and Atlantic creole languages observed that sentences involving verb doubling, for the purposes of focusing or topicalisation, represented a challenge for GB-type theories of movement and phrase structure (Koopman 1984, 2000, Lumsden & Lefebvre 1990, Manfredi 1993). The examples in (1) to (5) represent instances of verb doubling in various languages.

The Gungbe sentence in (1a) is typical of such structures: the fronted verbal category is a bare (non-finite) verb that leaves a copy inside the clause, as schematized in (1b).

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(1) a. % [Đù] wɛ̀ Sɛ́ná [đù] blɛ́đì ló
eat Foc Sena eat bread Det
'Sena **ATE** the bread!' (Gungbe (Kwa), Aboh 2004)

b. [$_{CP}$ V$_{[Focus]}$ [$_{IP}$ … V…..]]

While examples such as (1a) are often discussed in studies on verb focusing with doubling, the literature also contains more intricate sequences such as (2a), the Ewegbe variant of (1a).[1] In such constructions, the fronted verbal category reduplicates but leaves a non-reduplicated doublet inside the clause. This is illustrated in (2b).

(2) a. ɸo-ɸo é wò ɸo é
RED-beat Foc 3sg beat 3sg
'**BEATING** s/he beat him/her.' (Ewegbe (Kwa), Ameka 1992: 12)

b. [$_{CP}$ V-V$_{[Focus]}$ [$_{IP}$ …V…]]

Given that reduplication often correlates with nominalisation in these languages, cases like (2) are commonly grouped with the strategies in (3a) and (3b), where a verb form showing nominal or non-finite morphology is fronted, leaving a doublet (i.e. a finite form) inside the clause, as represented in (3c).

(3) a. O-suwa owu Puta a-mu-suwa tsono raa
Inf-wash Foc Puta SM-1sg-wash clothes her
'Puta **WASHED** her clothes.' (Tuki (Bantu), Biloa 1997: 110)

b. (ká) dɛ̄-kā àtì Àtìm dɛ̄ mango-kŭ điem
Foc eat-NR Comp Atim eat mango-Def yesterday
'IT IS **EATING** the mango that Àtìm ate yesterday.' (Buli (Gur), Hiraiwa 2005: 6)

c. [$_{CP}$ INFINITIVE/NOMINALIZER-V$_{[Focus]}$ [$_{IP}$ …V$_{FINITE}$ …]]

In (4a), we find a similar strategy in Haitian Creole: The fronted verb is associated with a copula-like element, but leaves a bare root in the clause, as illustrated in (4b).

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[1] The diacritic "%" indicates that speakers vary as to the realisation of the focus marker in such constructions.

(4) a. Se   vòlè   Bouki vòlè   lajan leta
         SE   steal   Bouki steal money state
         'Bouki **STOLE** state money.' (Haitian Creole, DeGraff 1996: 74)

     b. [$_{CP}$ COP-V$_{[Focus]}$ [$_{IP}$ …V…]]

The Yoruba example under (5) represents an interesting but rare case: The fronted verb phrase is contained in a larger aspect phrase which is repeated in the clause. This pattern is schematized in (5b), see Manfredi (1993) for discussion.

(5) a. Mí-máa-ra-ìwé   ni   Ajé   máa-ra-ìwé
         NR -Prog-buy-book   ni   Aje   Prog-buy-book
         '**IT IS CONTINUOUS BOOK BUYING** that Aje does/did [i.e., not just occasionally].' (Yoruba (Kwa), Manfredi 1993:20)

     b. [$_{CP}$ NR-AspP$_{[Focus]}$ [$_{IP}$ AspP]]

Example (6) is a Gungbe variant of the Yoruba example (5a), but the fronted category including the verb phrase is not repeated in the sentence. This strategy is represented under (6b).

(6) a. [Wémà   lɔ́   xɔ̀   ná   Kòfí] Sέná   tè
         book   Det buy for Kofi-NR Sena   Prog
         'Sena is **BUYING THE BOOK FOR KOFI**' (Gungbe (Kwa), Aboh 2004a)

     b. [$_{CP}$ NomP$_{[Focus]}$ [$_{IP}$ Asp$_{[+agr]}$ gap]]

The various strategies illustrated in these examples indicate that the typology of predicate fronting (with doubling) involves more variation than is often assumed in the literature.[2] While the sentences in (1), (2), and (3) through (5) exhibit various forms of doubling, the Gungbe example in (6) excludes doubling. Aboh (2003a, 2004a) argues that this variation reduces to VO versus OV alternation, which itself relates to aspect specification (e.g. perfective versus imperfective) in the Gbe languages. This would mean that doubling in verb focusing constructions is sensitive to the expression of aspect in these languages.[3]

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2   The term predicate fronting is meant to cover cases of predicative adjectives which in certain languages manifest doubling structures similar to verb focus (e.g. Saramaccan, Byrne 1987).

3   A reviewer suggests that this description could be wrong because the superficial S-aux-OV structures could be reanalysed as simple SVO constructions where "the so-called

In this regard, examples (1) and (5-6) further indicate that the size of the fronted verbal element may also vary due to aspect specification. Note that the example in (1a) includes a perfective aspect while those in (5-6) involve a progressive aspect, see Aboh (2004a) and references cited there for discussion on aspect marking in Gbe.

Finally, the examples in (1) to (4) show that the fronted verbal element varies in form: it may be bare (1a), reduplicated (2a), or specified by a nominal or non-finite morpheme (3a, b) and (4a). With regard to these examples, it is worth noting that Gungbe somehow stands apart from other languages discussed here because it represents the only case where the fronted category appears in a bare non-finite form identical to the copy inside the proposition. Other languages use various morpho-phonological processes to distinguish between the two verb forms. I conclude form this observation that even though Gungbe resorts to a bare non-finite verb form in cases like (1a), this is by no means a nominalised verb. Partial evidence for this reasoning is that in Gungbe, as in most Gbe, verb nominalization often correlates with reduplication. Consider the following examples.

(7) a. Nú   ɖùɖù   lɔ́   má   nyɔ́n
         thing   eat.eat   Det   Neg   good
         'The food is not good.'

     b. Nú   ɖùɖù   má   nyɔ́n
         thing   eat.eat   Neg   good
         'Eating is not good.'

In example (7a) where the sequence NP-VV is followed by a determiner, it is treated as a normal noun phrase meaning '*food*', but in (7b) where the same sequence occurs without determiner and requires a generic meaning, we obtain a gerund-like meaning denoting an event. Since this type of reduplication is excluded in verb focus constructions in Gungbe, I conclude that the fronted category is not a nominalised verb, but a simple bare non-finite form.

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aspectual marker *tè/tò* is a locative verb used in the progressive to build a periphrastic construction [where] this OV structure […] simply constitutes the complement of the verb *tè/tò*." I have shown elsewhere (Aboh 2004a) that *tò/tè* has none of the verb properties Gungbe verbs display. One such property to the point is that it cannot be focused similarly to lexical verbs and it cannot be reduplicated. Under the reviewer's generalised SVO analysis therefore examples (1a) and (5) still differ in that the former allows fronting of the head of predicate (i.e., the verb), while the latter displays fronting of its complement. Yet, both strategies create the same semantic/pragmatic focus effect. Clearly, the generalisation remains unchanged: predicate fronting is sensitive to aspectual or lexical properties of the focused verb. See also Aboh (2003b, 2005) for discussion on OV structures in Gbe.

These details and their relations to morphosyntax are rarely discussed in the literature because most studies treat the sentences in (1) through (5) under the common umbrella of 'predicate cleft', and mainly focus on two theoretical questions:[4]

(8) a. What parameter is responsible for verbal 'predicate cleft'?

b. What principle of grammar accounts for verbal predicate doubling?

In addressing these questions, a scenario that is entertained in the literature is that the structures in (1) to (5) are verbal counterparts of nominal focus constructions, as well as wh-questions with whom they sometimes share the same focus marker. Compare for instance, the Gungbe example (1a) with the nominal focus (9a), the wh-question (9b), the predicative adjective focus (9c), and adverb focus (9d), which involve the focus marker *wὲ*.

(9) a. Sέná   wὲ   ɖù   blέɖì   lɔ́
         eat   Foc   eat   bread Det
         'SENA ate the bread!'

b. Ménù   wὲ   ɖù   blέɖì   lɔ́?
    who   Foc   eat   bread Det
    'Who ate the bread?'

c. Kpέví   wὲ   Kófi   tè   bó   yì   yòvótòmὲ
    small   Foc   Kofi   be   and   go   Europe
    'Kofi was SMALL when he went to Europe.'

d. Bléún   wὲ   Kófi   yì   yòvótòmὲ
    quickly   Foc   Kofi   go   Europe
    'Kofi quickly went to Europe.'

These examples indicate that focusing in Gungbe holds across lexical categories and does not require the fronted element to be a nominal. Therefore, the generalisation is that languages like Gungbe display a focus strategy where the focused element must front to the position left adjacent to a focus marker.

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[4] In section 3.2, I tentatively interpret these morphosyntactic differences in terms of verb topic versus verb focus distinction. See also Aboh (2003a, 2004a) for a description of the various verb focus strategies found across Kwa.

While this generalisation is correct, things are a little bit more intricate when comparing such languages to typologically different ones. An obvious observation, for instance, is that the Gungbe-type focus sentences often appear semantically and pragmatically close to clefts constructions in other languages. Consider, for example, the following English clefts (10a-b), which appear to encode emphasis/contrast and wh-question similarly to their Gungbe counterparts in (9a-b).

(10)   a. It is John who ate the bread
         b. Who is it that ate the bread?

Such parallels would therefore suggest that the focus constructions and wh-questions under (9) as well as the verbal focus sentences in (1-5) are akin to clefts in other languages. An illustration of this rationale could be that the English example (11a) would correspond to the Gungbe sentence (12a), while (11b) would be on a par with (12b).

(11) a. It is John who came   (12)   a.   Ján   wɛ̀   wá
                                                     John   Foc   come
                                                     'JOHN came'

     b. *It is eating that John did   b.   Đù   wɛ̀   Ján   ɖù nú
                                                     eat   Foc   John   eat thing
                                                     'John ATE'

One could follow this line of thinking and further suggest that the Gungbe examples (12a-b) are hidden (or grammaticalised) cleft constructions, where a former copula grammaticalised into a focus marker. For instance, under the assumption that the Yoruba element *ni* (5) is a copula, Dekydtspotter (1992), cited in Ndayragije (1993: 119-120), proposed a unified analysis for Yoruba (predicate) clefts and English clefts, where the two languages only differ with regard to the position of the clefted element. In English the clefted noun phrase follows the copula as in the following structure $[_{IP}$ it is XP_i $[_{CP}$ OP_i $[_{IP}....t_i...]]]$. In Yoruba, however, the clefted element (nominal or verbal) precedes the copula as follows $[_{IP}$ XP_i ni $[_{CP}$ OP_i $[_{IP}....t_i...]]]$. See also Lefebvre & Brousseau (2002) for treating Fongbe equivalents of the Gungbe example (1) as clefts.[5]

Since the English example (11b) is ungrammatical, unlike its Gungbe equivalent (12b), one may conclude from Dekydtspotter's (1992) analysis that Universal Grammar (UG) embeds a 'predicate cleft' parameter that is set

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[5]   Fongbe is a closely related language to Gungbe (Capo 1991).

positively in Gungbe-type languages but negatively in English-type languages. This assumption, in turn, would suggest that English-type languages have nominal clefts only while Gungbe-type languages have nominal, adjectival, adverbial predicate, and verbal 'predicate clefts'. The relevant parameter for 'predicate cleft' could therefore be a property of the lexicon (e.g. lack of clear distinction between lexical categories: verbs vs. nouns; adjectives vs. adverbs).[6]

With such a treatment of (8a), the question under (8b) boils down to what property of grammar (syntax vs. phonology) produces doublets in 'predicate clefts'. Various analyses have been proposed in terms of movement of the focused verb (or its cognate object denoting event) sentence-initially (e.g. Koopman 1984, 2000, Manfredi 1993, Aboh 2003, 2004a) or else base generation of the fronted verbal category in sentence-initial position (e.g. Lumsden & Lefebvre 1990). Though authors differ as to the category of the fronted verb and its relation to the apparent doublet in IP-internal position, the consensus in recent generative works has been to assume that the two elements belong to a chain created by movement and instantiate phonetic realization of multiple copies (Abel 2001, Nunes 2004).

This paper first takes issue with the analysis of verbal focusing in terms of 'predicate clefts'. In section 2, I show on pragmatic and structural grounds that the term 'predicate cleft' is a misnomer for a class of phenomena that are not necessarily linked to focusing and that display various properties atypical of cleft constructions (e.g. in Germanic and Romance). I conclude from this that structures involving predicate fronting cannot be equated to 'clefts' on any possible account. The moral of this section is that the term 'predicate cleft' should be avoided unless empirically motivated and formally argued for.

Section 3 shows that verb focusing in Kwa is comparable to VP-fronting under focus or topic in other languages; the only difference being that not all languages display a doublet of the fronted category inside the clause.

Building on this, section 4 briefly discusses the issue of predicate doubling. Following Chomsky's (2005) hypothesis on parallel chains, I claim that what looks superficially like an instance of phonetic realization of multiple copies, is actually an instantiation of insertion of a pleonastic element, such as *do*-support in English, to encode Agree-tense-aspect features. Building on Aboh & Dyakonova (2006), it is shown that such pleonastic verbs are not part of the same chain as the one involving the displaced predicate. Put differently, the fronted predicate and what appears to be its copy inside the IP head different chains that target distinct positions in the clause. Section 5 concludes the paper.

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[6]   I show in section 2 and subsequently that this characterisation cannot be maintained.

2   'Predicate cleft': a misnomer

As mentioned in previous paragraphs, verb focusing (e.g. in Kwa) shows structural, semantic, and pragmatic parallels with nominal focus constructions. The latter appear close to cleft constructions in typologically different languages (e.g. Romance, Germanic). A priori, the characterization of the (Kwa) focus constructions in terms of clefts therefore seems reasonable. There are, however, several reasons to believe that an analysis along this line is misleading. The following section deals with structural mismatches between the two types of constructions.

2.1   *On the missing cleft structural properties*

The examples under (13a-b) illustrate cleft sentences in English and in French.[7]

(13) a. It is John that I saw yesterday

     b. C'est   Jean que j'ai   vu   hier
        ce.be   John that 1sg.have see   yesterday

On the surface of it, such constructions involve a pronominal expletive element in sentence initial position, a copula of the *be*-type, and a relative pronoun (or complementizer). In addition, cleft structures such as (13) are typically bi-clausal and involve two tensed elements: the copula in the clefted part and the lexical verb in what can be described as the 'subordinate' part.
    Now let us compare these examples to their Gungbe counterpart in (14).

(14) Ján   wὲ   ùn   mɔ̀n tò sɔ̀
     John Foc 1sg see   at   yesterday
     'I saw JOHN yesterday'

Example (14) clearly shows that Gungbe focus construction lacks all the surface properties of clefts in Romance and Germanic: the sentence does not involve an expletive pronoun, there is no *be*-type copula, and no relative pronoun (or complementizer) occurs. In this regard, it is important to observe that relative clauses require the presence of the relative marker *ɖĕ* as in (15).

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[7]   In this section, I limit myself to very general properties of clefts in English (Germanic) and French (Romance), but see Kiss (1998) and references cited there for a more detailed analysis.

(15) Dáwè **ɖ̌ě** ùn mɔ̀n tò sɔ̀ wá
   man Rel 1sg see at yesterday come
   'The man that I saw yesterday came.'

This is piece of evidence that example (14) cannot involve a hidden relative clause including a zero relative marker.

   Another piece of evidence that constructions like (14) are not clefts, or some bi-clausal structure containing a hidden relative clause is that the focus marker in Gungbe has no verbal usage: It never shows tense or aspect specification, and cannot be claimed to be a grammaticalised form of an original *be*-type copula.[8] In addition, a Gungbe focused phrase can occur inside a relative clause (16a), but an English cleft cannot (16b).

(16) a. Có à má sɔ́ flín Súrù wá?
    Part 2sg Neg again remember Suru Part
    'Oh, don't you even remember Suru?

    Ví énɛ̀ **ɖ̌ě** [jɛ̀ có sín xó] **wɛ̀** é nɔ̀ sè !
    Child Dem Rel 2sg only Poss word Foc 3sg Hab listen
    That child who ONLY YOUR WORDS he would listened to!'

  b. *The man who it is only one novel (that) he wrote

Just as Gungbe nominal focus constructions lack all surface properties of clefts, so do the so-called 'predicate clefts'. They lack a pronominal expletive, and there is no copula or relative pronoun involved, as one could expect from a Germanic or Romance perspective.

   In this regard, the data discussed thus far, actually point to a different direction. We can see from the interpretation of sentences such as (14) that these are comparable to English focus constructions like (17a) where the focused element has been fronted, or (17b) where focus is assigned in-situ under appropriate circumstances.

(17) a. JOHN I saw yesterday

  b. I saw JOHN yesterday

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8 To my knowledge no diachronic study has ever shown this for most of the Gbe (and Kwa) languages. The same holds of the majority of West African languages for which we still lack detailed diachronic studies of these discourse morphemes.

Under the assumption that the computation driving the Gungbe example (14) and its English counterpart (17a) is basically the same, it is quite interesting to observe that the English sentence in (17a) is itself comparable to the English verbal focus in (18a). This structure is to some extent similar to the Gungbe focus sentence (18b): in both examples a verbal element or phrase is fronted in a position preceding the canonical subject.

(18) a. I asked John to cook the rice, and [cook the rice] he did

    b. Ùn zɔ́n lɛ́sì Sɛ́ná bɔ̀   [ɖà] é   ɖà   lɛ́sì lɔ́   ná   mì
       1sg order rice Sena Coord cook 3sg   cook rice Det   Prep 1sg
       'I ordered Sena some rice and he COOKED the rice for me.'

The parallel between English VP-fronting and verb focusing as in (18) is even stronger when one considers verb focus in OV constructions in Gbe. As the progressive counterpart of example (18b) shows, such sequences do not involve doubling. Instead, the IP-internal position contains only the subject and the progressive marker *tò* that has changed into *tè*, due to the fronting of its complement (see Aboh 2004a for discussion).

(19) Ùn zɔ́n lɛ́sì Sɛ́ná bɔ̀   [lɛ́sì lɔ́   ɖà   ná   mì] wɛ̀ é   **tè**
    1sg order rice Sena Coord rice Det cook Prep 1sg Foc 3sg Prog
    'I ordered Sena some rice and he IS COOKING THE RICE FOR ME.'

The striking parallels between example (19) and English VP-fronting structures as in (18a) further suggest that there is no empirical ground for relating the Gbe verbal focus constructions to clefts. This makes the term 'predicate cleft' unfortunate. After all, no one has ever treated the English (and related Germanic) verbal focus structures involving VP-fronting as 'predicate clefts'.

2.2   *On the pragmatic mismatches*

If we accept the view that the semantic (or pragmatic) properties of cleft structures have something to do with their internal syntactic structure (Kiss 1998, and much related work), then the discourse properties of (verb) focus constructions in Gbe (Kwa) further support our conclusion that these have nothing in common with clefts. Kiss' (1998) work on focus suggests that English clefts encode exhaustive or identificational focus, which "represents a subset of the set of contextually or situationally given elements for which the predicate phrase can potentially hold; it is identified as the exhaustive subset of this set for which the predicate phrase actually holds" (Kiss 1998: 1). Under

such view, clefts, which often embed contrast, cannot be used to encode new information focus which expresses *nonpresupposed information*.

Interestingly, such distinction does not seem to hold for the Gungbe-type focus constructions because they can be used for new information focus, presentational focus, and contrastive focus. The dialogue in (20a-b) illustrates new information focus. Observe from the (c) examples that the English counterparts of the Gungbe sentences are ungrammatical or infelicitous in the same contexts.[9]

(20) a. Été   wɛ̀   jɔ̀?
       what   Foc   happen
       'What happened?'

    b. Súrù   wɛ̀   kù   mótò bíɔ́ àxìmɛ̀   bò   hù   mɛ̀
       Suru   Foc   drive car   enter market   and kill person
       'SURU drove a car in the market and killed some people.'

    c. *It is John who drove a car into the market and killed some people

The sentences under (21a-b) are instances of scene-setting and presentational focus, which typically introduce a discussion/debate or a narrative. Observe from this usage that the focused constituents encode existential reading. As the ungrammatical English example (21c) shows, clefts typically exclude such a reading.

(21) a. Nú   ɖé   wɛ̀   xá   mì
       thing   Det Foc happen   1sg
       'SOMETHING happened to me,

       bɔ̀ ùn   ɖɔ̀   má   wá   zé   dó   xíá   wɛ̀
       and 1sg   say 1sg.Fut   come take plant show 2sg
       and I told myself I should come and tell you.'

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[9]   A reviewer noted that pragamatically speaking, example (20b) implies focus on the sentence. However, the interesting thing about Gungbe and similar languages is that focus on the sentence would require the sentence (as a whole) to occur to the left of the focus marker, which will then surface sentence-finally. This is additional evidence for distinguishing the Gungbe sentences from typical English or French clefts, which cannot target the clause as a whole.

b. Dáwè **ɖ**é wɛ̀ tín bò jró ná dà àxɔ́ví
man Det Foc exist and want Prep marry Princess
'There was A MAN who wanted to marry a princess.'

c. *It is something that happened to me that I would like to tell you

Finally, the question-answer pair in (22) illustrates contrastive focus.

(22) a. Mɛ́nù lɛ́ wɛ̀ ká wá àgɔ́ lɔ́ tɛ̀n-mɛ̀ ?
Who Pl Foc at.least come celebration Det place-in
'Who are the people who came to the celebration?'

b. Súrù có wɛ̀ wá, nɔ̀ví étɔ̀n **ɖ**ɛ̀ lɛ́ kpɔ́ wɛ̀ gɔ̀n
Suru only Foc come brother Poss other Pl all Foc miss
'ONLY SURU came, ALL HIS OTHER BROTHERS didn't.'

We observe from this last example that *Suru* being modified by *có* (only) is interpreted contrastively to his brothers, yet the two constituents *Súrù* and *nɔ̀ví étɔ̀n ɖɛ̀ lɛ́ kpɔ́* are focus marked by the marker *wɛ̀*. Even though English clefts may encode contrast as in (23a), it is worth noticing that a cleft counterpart of the Gungbe example (22b) is excluded, as shown in (23b).

(23) a. It is only John who came, none of his other brothers did

b. *It is only John who came, and it is all his other brothers who didn't

The generalisation here seems that English (and most Germanic/Romance) allows one clefted constituent only per sentence. The Gungbe (and Gbe) focus constructions, however, do not obey this constraint and may contain more than one focused constituent in the sentence. In these languages, each clause may license its own focus constituent and therefore contain the focus marker (see Aboh 2004a for discussion).

Given these differences between Gungbe-type nominal focus constructions and cleft constructions in other languages, it is no surprise that the so-called 'predicate clefts', supposedly verbal counterparts of nominal clefts, also display pragmatic properties that are unexpected if those were verbal counterparts of nominal clefts.

In the context of the question (20a), for instance, the sentence under (24) represents an appropriate answer. In this case, verb focus seems to express causative meaning, that is, the husband is angry because his wife *Dosi* went out.

(24) Tɔ́n   Dòsì tɔ́n zámɛ̀ bɔ̀   àsú   étɔ̀n bɛ́ tùklá
      go.out Dosi go.out night and husband   Poss start trouble
      'Dosi went out in the night and her husband started making trouble.'

While an English cleft would be possible in a context like (25a-b),

(25) a. Is it because Mary wants to divorce her husband that he is angry?
      b. No, it is because she went out so late that he is angry.

the same is impossible in a question-answer pair like (26a-b) which parallels the Gungbe question-answer pair (20a) and (24a).

(26) a. What happened?
      b. *It is because Mary went out so late that her husband is angry.

The Gungbe sentences under (27) further indicate that a question as in (27a) can be answered by sentence (27b). Here, verb focus puts emphasis on the fact that the Event happened at a moment when *Bòkɔ́* stood up/woke up.

(27) a. Étɛ́   wɛ̀   wà   Bòkɔ́?
         what   Foc   happen   Boko
         'What happened to Boko?'

      b. Fɔ́n   é   fɔ́n bò   **ɖɔ̀**   émì   ná   yì   l'àwú
         stand   3sg stand and say   3sg-Log   Fut go   wash
         'He STOOD UP/WOKE UP and was about to take a shower

         bɔ̀ nú   jɛ̀ é   jì.
         and thing fall 3sg on
         when he had a stroke.'

Put together, all these facts strongly suggest to me that the traditional characterization of the Gungbe-type nominal and verbal focus in terms of clefts has nothing to offer as to their structural make-up and the rather unexpected distributive and pragmatic properties that they exhibit.

    Being aware of this state of affairs, some scholars use the term 'cleft' in a loose sense to mean that focus constructions involve two identifiable parts: the focused element and the rest. Put another way, the term 'cleft' would then simply reflect the commonly assumed focus versus presupposition/background partition, which itself could suggest a (reduced) bi-clausal structure. While one

may be satisfied with this shift in meaning, it is worth noting that this view is also misleading for two main reasons.

First, verb focusing does not always force fronting of the verb in sentence-initial position as suggested in previous discussion. In Nweh, an SVO Grassfield Bantu language, verb focusing (28a) generates the sequence in (28b), with the focused verbal form in sentence-final position.

(28) a. Atem a   kɛʔ nčúū akendɔŋ   čúū
       Atem Agr Pst$_1$ boil plantains   Ø-boil
       'Atem BOILED plantains' (Nweh, Nkemnji 1995: 138)

    b. Subject…….V………..O……V$_{[Focus]}$

Under the biclausal nature of verb focus constructions, one could describe example (28) as involving inverse cleft.[10] But if so, it is not clear to me why two SVO languages (Gungbe and Nweh) will show such an asymmetry where Gungbe is of the type focus-[background], while Nweh is [background]-focus. Word order aside, the translation of (28a) and that of its Gungbe counterpart (29) indeed show that the two constructions are related.

(29) Ðà   Súrù ɖà   tèví
     cook   Suru cook yam
     'Suru COOKED yam'

Assuming that Bantu speakers and Kwa speakers have access to the same computational apparatus, I conclude that it cannot be the case that (29) with a verb-initial focus is a cleft (e.g. English-type cleft, Dekydtspotter 1992), while (28b) with a verb-final focus implies a different structure. A more natural approach would be to assume that these two examples involve the same computation, even though they differ with regard to word order.

Second, a more general question that is never addressed in the literature on the so-called 'predicate-clefts' is their relation to other constructions in the languages where they are found. As discussed in Aboh (2004a, b), an outstanding property of the Gbe languages is that they display focus-marked constructions alongside with topic-marked constructions. Consider the parallels in (30) where (30b) is the topic counterpart of the focus construction in (30a).

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[10] I thank a reviewer for pointing this to me.

(30) a. [Súrù   wὲ] kù   mótò yì   yòvó tò   mὲ
        Suru   Foc drive car   go   white country   in
        'SURU drove a car to Europe.'

    b. [Súrù   yà], é   kù   mótò yì   yòvó tò   mὲ
        Suru   Top 3sg   drive car   go   white country   in
        'As for Suru, he drove a car to Europe.'

Leaving aside structural differences between focus and topic constructions, it is quite obvious that the leftmost parts of these two sentences (within brackets) parallel in a striking way.[11] Both focus and topic markers require that the element under their scope surface in a left adjacent position. The generalisation therefore appears that languages of the Gungbe-type are discourse configurational languages involving discourse markers (e.g. focus, topic, interrogative) which systematically take scope over the element immediately to their left (Aboh 2004a, b). Be it so, singling out focus constructions like (30a) or (29) and labelling them clefts on a part with Romance and Germanic clefts appears an empirical and methodological fallacy.[12]

    In this regard, the following section presents additional cross-linguistic data indicating that the so-called 'predicate cleft' is not restricted to African or creole languages. It further appears that the construction is akin to VP-fronting and may encode topic specification in some languages.

3   Against verb (phrase) fronting exceptionalism

Once we allow ourselves to look at verb focus constructions as banal predicate or verb (phrase) fronting for the purpose of some discourse-related property, such as focus or topic, we realize that the phenomenon occurs beyond African, creole, or other 'exotic' languages.

3.1   *Verb (phrase) fronting: a common phenomenon*

While the literature is rich of examples of VP-fronting similar to the English constructions exemplified in (18a), not much is said of VP-fronting structures involving doubling as the one discussed thus far. Yet, the following examples provide snippets of current literature on predicate focusing with doubling. This

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[11] Topic constructions involve a resumptive pronoun unlike focus constructions (see Aboh 2004a for discussion).

[12] By arguing against the cleft analysis, I implicitly reject a bi-clausal approach to these constructions. Space limitations prevent me from discussing this issue here, but the presented examples speak for themselves.

list of typologically unrelated languages clearly indicates that verbal phrase fronting with doubling is more common than often assumed.

(31) a. **Essen est** Maks fish
    to-eat eats Max fish
    '*As for eating*, Max eats fish.'

   b. [**Essen** fish] **est** Maks
    to-eat fish eats Max
    '*As for eating fish*, Max eats them.' (Yiddish, Cable 2004: 2)

(32) a. **Comprar**, Juan ha **comprado** un libro (aunque luego no lo ha leido)
    buy.Inf John has bought a book but later not CL has read
    '*As for buying*, Juan has bought a book, although he didn't read it later.'

   b. [**Comprar** un libro], Juan lo ha **comprado**
    buy.Inf a book John CL has bought
    '*As for buying a book*, Juan has bought it.' (Spanish, Vicente 2005: 44)

(33) a. **Temperar** o cozinheiro **temperou** o peixe.
    to-season the cook seasoned the fish
    '*As for seasoning*, the cook seasoned the fish.'

   b. [**Temperar** o peixe] o cozinheiro **temperou**.
    to-season the fish the cook seasoned
    '*As for seasoning the fish*, the cook seasoned it.' (Brazilian Portuguese, Cable 2004: 21)

(34) a. **Tzelovatj**-to my ešče ne **Tzelovalisj**.
    kiss.Inf-Top we.Nom yet not kiss.Pst.Pl.
    '*As to kissing*, we HAVE NOT kissed yet.'

   b. ?[**Pomnitj**-to ih] ja **pomnju**.
    remember.Inf-Top them.Acc I.Nom remember
    '*As to remembering them*, I DO remember.' (Russian, Dyakonova 2005)

(35) a. **Liknot**, hi **kanta** et ha-praxim.
    To-buy she bought Acc. the-flowers
    '*As for buying*, she bought the flowers.'

b. [**Liknot** et ha-praxim], hi **kanta**
   to-buy Acc. the-flowers, she bought
   '*As for buying the flowers*, she bought.' (Hebrew, Landau 2006: 37)

All the languages listed here display some form of verbal predicate fronting with doubling that is similar to the cases discussed thus far for African languages. As these new comparative data appear in the literature, we observe another point that undermines the cleft analysis or description, while shedding some light on predicate doubling structures. Indeed, a close look at these examples compared to the previous examples under (1) to (6) reveals an intriguing difference in terms of information structure. All examples from (1) to (6) encode some type of emphasis or focus on the verb (phrase) while all examples from (31) to (35) involve some sort of topic reading on the verb (phrase). In addition, all the (b) examples in (31-35) indicate that, in languages that allow the topic reading, the fronted verb may pied-pipe an internal argument. I assume that the topic versus focus partition between examples (1-6) and (31-35) cannot be accidental.

A possibility that immediately comes to mind is that the focus flavour of the constructions in (1) to (6) derives from the fact that verbal predicate fronting in those languages is often regarded as a means for encoding contrast. But, since contrast per se does not suffice to identify a focus construction, we cannot exclude the possibility that some constructions in (1) to (6) derive from topicalisation of the verbal predicate as well.

Even though this view awaits further confirmation as of Kwa and Bantu languages, it is striking that all the examples in (31) to (35) involve a non-finite verb in sentence-initial position. As can be seen from the provided translations, such non-finite verb forms are often interpreted as nominalised verbs (or gerund). This is not surprising though: The relation between nominals and non-finite verbal forms is rather intricate. In (non-)standard French, for instance, certain non-finite verbs can be used as nouns that take the determiner. An illustration of this is given in (36).

(36) Avoir ➔ l'avoir; manger ➔ le manger; boire ➔ le boire; coucher ➔ le coucher; lever ➔ le lever; dire ➔ les dires.

Let us assume therefore that verbal non-finite affixes may encode nominal features. This would mean that the non-finite verbal forms in (31-35) are to some extent comparable to the verb forms in (2), (3), and (5) which appear nominalised or exhibit non-finite morphology. These facts in turn raise the

question of why the fronted verbal element must be nominalised or non-finite in some languages.[13]

As things stand, it seems reasonable to assume that nominalisation of the verb is not a syntactic requirement on the fronting operation itself. Put more specifically, it does not seem plausible that the verb must nominalise (or get a non-finite affix, presumably in the morphological component) before it moves in syntax. Instead, I take the focus versus topic partition observed here seriously, and propose, for all the relevant cases, that the nominal morphology on the fronted verbal element is a morphological requirement of the topic head that attracts the verb phrase. This is so because:

(37) Topics must be referential, but focus need not.

3.2 Verb (phrase) fronting: a topic versus focus asymmetry

Based on the description in (37), I claim that verbal predicate fronting generally involves two classes of phenomena: verbal predicate topicalisation versus verbal predicate focusing. The former is referential but not the latter.[14] An immediate consequence of such a typology is that the topic verbal element, being a referential expression, is likely to behave like simple topic DPs.

Interestingly enough, a set of properties often associated with fronted nominalised or non-finite verbal elements appears parallel with certain properties which topic DPs exhibit.

For instance, Landau (2006) shows that Hebrew verbal predicate fronting with doubling displays similar properties with DP topics because it is unbounded (see also Cinque 1990). This is illustrated in (38) where the topic verbal phrase is moved across an intervening complementizer (Landau 2006: 42).

(38) a. La'azor   le-Rina,   eyn   li   safek
        to-help   to-Rina   there-isn't to-me   doubt
        še-Gil   hivtiax   še-hu   ya'azor
        that-Gil   promised   that-he   will-help
        'As for helping Rina, I have no doubt that Gil promised he would help.'

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[13]   See Manfredi (1993) for discussion.
[14]   This characterisation also undermines the cleft approach to verb focusing or topicalisation.

b. La'azor,   eyn   li   safek
   to-help   there to-me doubt

   še-Gil   hivtiax   še-hu   ya'azor   le-Rina
   that-Gil   promised   that-he will-help   to-Rina
   'As for helping, I have no doubt that Gil promised he would help Rina.'

Yet, Hebrew predicate fronting with doubling exhibits island effects. The following examples show that extraction from a wh-island is prohibited (Landau 2006: 43).

(39) a. ??Likro et   ha-safer,   ša'alti   *matay* Gil   kvar   kara
        to-read Acc the-book   asked.1sg   when Gil   already read
        'As for reading the book, I asked when Gil had already read.'

   b. ??Likro,   ša'alti   *matay* Gil kvar   kara   et   ha-safer
      to-read   asked.1sg   when Gil already read Acc   the-book
      'As for reading the book, I asked when Gil had already read.'

On the other hand, Aboh (2003a, 2004a) discusses certain facts about verbal predicate fronting in Kwa languages, where constructions involving a bare verb form are clause-bound and show sensitivity to negation while constructions involving a nominalised verb form are unbounded and may cross negation. For instance, the Gungbe sentences under (40) indicate that the focused verb cannot be extracted out of the embedded clause.

(40) a. *Gbá ùn sè   ɖɔ̀   Séná [gbá]ᵢ xwé ló   ná   Kòfí
        build 1sg hear that Sena build house Det for   Kofi
        'I heard that Sena BUILT the house for Kofi.'

   b. Ùn sè   ɖɔ̀   [gbá]ᵢ Séná [gbá]ᵢ xwé ló   ná   Kòfí
      1sg hear that build Sena build house Det for   Kofi
      'I heard that Sena BUILT the house for Kofi.'

Example (41) further shows that V-focusing in Gungbe is sensitive to negative islands because the focused verb cannot move across the sentence negative head.

(41) *[Gbá]ᵢ   Séná má   [gbá]ᵢ xwé ló   ná   Kòfí
     build   Sena Neg   build house Det for   Kofi
     'Sena did not BUILD the house for Kofi.'

Contrary to Gungbe, the Yoruba fronted VV-form, which is commonly analysed as a nominalised form of the verb, allows for long extraction because the fronted reduplicated verb can move across the overtly realised complementizer *pé*, as in Hebrew.

(42) Rírà   ni mo wí pé Ajé ra   ìwé   [Aboh 2004a: 275]
      RED-buy   ni 1sg say that Ajé buy book
      'I said that Ajé BOUGHT a book.'

In addition, fronting of the reduplicated verb shows an interesting behaviour when it comes to negation. Yoruba displays two negative particles: the argument negation particle *kọ́* that negates (nominal) arguments, and the negation particle *kò* that functions as sentential negation. Interestingly, the fronted reduplicated verb only selects argument negation, but excludes sentential negation as illustrated in (43a-b). This asymmetry further points to the nominal status of the fronted reduplicated verbal element in Yoruba (see Aboh 2004a and references cited there for discussion).

(43) a. Rírà   kọ́   ni   Ajé   ra   ìwé
         RED -buy Neg ni   Ajé   buy   book
         'Ajé BOUGHT not a book.'

     b. *Rírà   kò   ni   Ajé   ra   ìwé
         RED -buy Neg ni   Ajé   buy   book
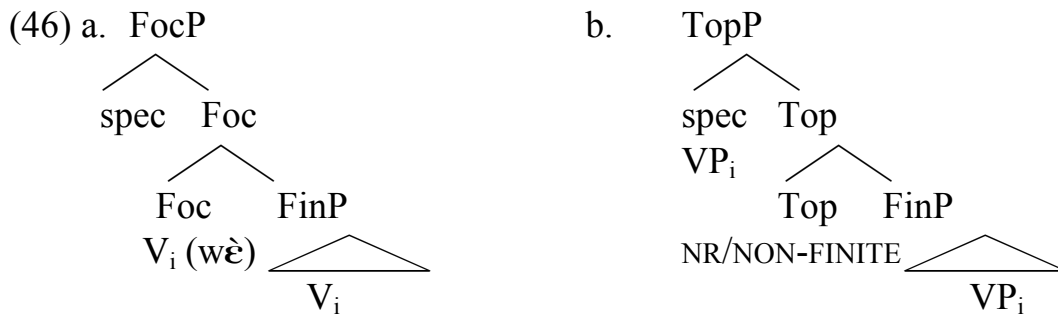   'Ajé did not BUY a book.'

Under the present focus versus topic partition, the Gungbe examples involve verb focusing while the Yoruba sentences behave like verbal topicalisation. The topic versus focus characterisation finds support in typologically different languages. The Russian sentence under (44a) indicates that the non-finite fronted verbal element may include a particle (e.g., *–to*) that is sensitive to referentiality or topicality. Example (44b) shows that the same holds of Korean.

(44) a. Tzelovatj-to   my   ešče ne   Tzelovalisj.
         kiss.Inf-to   we.Nom   yet   not   kiss.Pst.Pl.
         'As to kissing, we HAVEN'T kissed yet.' (Russian, Dyakonova 20059

     b. ilk-ki-nun   Chelswu-ka   chayk-ul   ilk-ess-ta
         read-ki-topic   Chelswu-Nom   book-Acc   ilk-Past-Decl
         'Read the book, Chelswu does.' (Korean; Hagstrom 1995: 38)

These facts contrast with the Gungbe focus example under (45a) which may require the focus marker, but excludes the topic marker (45b).

(45) a. %[Gbá]   wɛ̀   Séná [gbá]ᵢ xwé lɔ́   ná   Kòfí
       build   Foc   Sena build house Det   for   Kofi
       'Sena BUILT the house for Kofi.'

   b. *[Gbá]   yà   Séná [gbá]ᵢ xwé lɔ́   ná   Kòfí
       build   Top   Sena build house Det   for   Kofi
       'As for building, Sena BUILT the house for Kofi.'

I tentatively conclude from this that the nominal (or non-finite) morpheme assigned to the fronted verb in certain languages is an expression of the feature [referential/topic] that is anchored on the topic head. Following current approaches to topic and focus constructions (e.g. Rizzi 1997), this would mean that focused verbal predicates and topicalised verbal predicates target different positions in syntax. Adopting the cartography approach and building on previous work on verb focusing (Aboh 2003, 2004a), I conclude that bare verbal predicate fronting of the Gungbe-type targets (or adjoins to) the focus head, as in (46a) while verbal predicate topicalisation involves movement of a phrase to [spec TopP], as sketched in (46b). I assume that the nominalizer morpheme or the non-finite morpheme is an expression of the topic head (just as the focus marker is an expression of the focus head).

(46) a. FocP   b.   TopP

     spec   Foc   spec   Top
                       VPᵢ

       Foc   FinP   Top   FinP
       Vᵢ (wɛ̀)   NR/NON-FINITE
           Vᵢ   VPᵢ

It also appears from these representations that verb focusing may involve the verb (or some larger constituent), while verb topicalisation minimally requires that the verb phrase be fronted. This correlates with the observation made earlier that languages that allow topic reading, also permit pied-piping of the verb with its internal argument.

    In addition, the structures in (46) lead us to conclude that language variation with regard to predicate fronting reduces to topic versus focus opposition. Accordingly, the answer to question (8a) above is that there is no parameter in UG that would explain the existence of the so-called 'predicate

cleft' in some languages. Given this, we can now turn to question (8b), repeated here as (47), for convenience.

(47) What principle of grammar accounts for verbal predicate doubling?

The next section briefly discusses this issue and proposes that predicate fronting involves verbal doubling only apparently.

4   Predicate fronting and the realisation of multiple chains

There have been several attempts to account for the syntactic properties that permit doubling of the focused or topicalised verbal predicate, as illustrated in previous examples. With Chomsky's revival of the copy-theory of movement, recent works on verb focusing with doubling analyse these structures as instances of multiple spell-out of copies. Under such views, verb focusing with doubling represents strong empirical support for the analysis of traces as genuine copies of the displaced element (e.g. Abel 2001, Nunes 2004, Landau 2006).

Even though existing analyses shed some light on the syntax of verbal predicate fronting with doubling to various degrees, it is fair to say that they fail to accommodate the fact that the verb form occurring inside the proposition is the one that expresses the semantic content of the predicate. The fronted verbal element or phrase, on the other hand, only encodes the focus or topic feature. In a resumptive V-type approach to predicate doubling, this would lead to the counter-intuitive situation where the resumptive verb is the one that bears the semantic content identifying the c-commanding antecedent. Similarly, in a copy approach, the lower copy is more contentful than the higher one, but the theory has no way of explaining this semantic discrepancy.

Finally, previous analyses are at odds with the fact that predicate fronting with doubling is sensitive to aspect licensing. Recall from previous discussion that the Gbe languages involve a perfective VO versus imperfective OV asymmetry where predicate fronting in VO structures result in verb phrase doubling as in (48a). On the other hand, OV structures, often introduced by an aspectual verb or auxiliary, exclude verb phrase doubling (48b-c).

(48) a. Sà (wɛ̀) Sɛ́ná sà   wémà lɔ́   ná   Kòfĩ]
         sell Foc Sena sell   book Det   Prep Kofi
         'Sena SOLD the book to Kofi.'

b. [Wémà ló   sà   ná   Kòfí]   wɛ̀   Séná tè
   book   Det sell Prep Kofi-NR   Foc   Sena Prog
   'Sena is SELLING THE BOOK TO KOFI.'

c. *Sà Séná tò   wémà ló   sà   ná   Kòfí
   sell Sena Prog book Det sell for Kofi-NR
   'Sena is SELLING THE BOOK TO KOFI.'

In what follows, I briefly sketch a new proposal made in Aboh & Dyakonova (2006) who see these facts as evidence that the two apparent doublets are actually involved in different chains. Adopting the copy theory of movement along the lines of Chomsky (1995), Nunes (2004), and much related work, Aboh & Dyakonova (2006) propose that predicate fronting with doubling are instances of parallel chains in the sense of Chomsky (2005).

     This view, which appears compatible with Koopman's (1984) characterisation of verb focus in Vata and Gbadi, suggests that verb movement for the purpose of tense requirements and verb movement for focus or (topic) are triggered in parallel by an active phase head located within the clausal left periphery. This amounts to saying that the traditional A' versus A distinction with regard to phrasal movement translates into V' versus V movement with respect to head movement, where a V' position (e.g. Foc, Top) equals one that is activated by an edge feature of a phase head while a V position (e.g. T) is sensitive to the Agree-tense-aspect features of a phase head (e.g. finiteness under Rizzi 1997). Under this formulation, verb movement to (Foc, Top) for focusing or topicalisation, and verb movement to (T, Asp) for tense or aspect licensing are triggered in parallel.[15]

     Applying this analysis to verb focusing in Gungbe VO sentences, we reach the conclusion that a sentence like (49a) has the derivation in (49b).

(49) a. [Xíá]   Séná nɔ̀   [xíá] wémà   ná   Kòfí
       read   Sena Hab read   book   for Kofi
       'Sena habitually READS books for Kofi!'

   b. [FocP [Foc **xíá**[F] [TP Séná [T [AspP [Asp nɔ̀ [AspP [Asp **xíá**[Asp] [vP [VP ~~xíá~~ wémà ná Kòfí]]]]]]]]]]

In representation (49b), the discourse-related focus features of Foc° (or Top for that matter) attract V triggering the V'-chain involving the fronted verb and the

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[15] See Aboh (2004a) for details of the clause structure in Gbe (Kwa) and arguments in favour to V-to-Asp movement in these languages.

copy in the base position while the Agree-tense-aspect-features of Asp attract V to Asp, creating the V-chain that consists of the raised verb under Asp and the lower copy in the VP.[16] These movement operations result in two chain links (xíá$_{[F]}$, xíá) and (xíá$_{[Asp]}$, xíá), with no direct relation between (xíá$_{[F]}$) and (xíá$_{[Asp]}$). Under current minimalist assumptions the copy internal to the lower phase *v*P is recoverable at the phase level memory and is deleted accordingly (Chomsky 2005). The two higher copies, however, must remain because they head different chains. This analysis shows that what previous works regard as links of the same chain are actually part of two distinct chains. Put another way, apparent doubling in predicate fronting for focus or topic is a side effect of parallel chains.

This new approach to predicate fronting with doubling accounts for the absence of intervention effects between the fronted verb and the elements of the IP-domain in a straightforward manner. For instance, the fronted verb can cross various tense and aspect markers as in (50), even though it is sensitive to negation as previously shown by example (41).

(50) [Xɔ̀] Sɛ́ná ná   nɔ̀   [xɔ̀] wémà   ná   Kòfĭ
      buy Sena Fut Hab buy book   for   Kofi
      'Sena will habitually BUY a book for Kofi.'

In addition, an approach to predicate fronting in terms of parallel chains accounts for the impossibility of the fronted verb to successively adjoin to the intervening tense and aspect morphemes on its way to Foc°, as indicated by the ungrammatical sequence (51) (see Koopman 1984, Aboh 2003, 2004a).

(51) *[xɔ̀]-nɔ̀-ná   Sɛ́ná [xɔ̀] wémà ná   Kòfĭ
       buy-Hab-Fut   Sena buy book for   Kofi

In previous works, these facts were interpreted as instances of long head movement, but no such stipulation is needed in the current account. Head movement to Foc° (i.e. in one fell swoop) is made possible here because the phase head triggers all operations and its edge features as well as the Agree-tense-aspect features are valued simultaneously. The facts in (51) are therefore correctly ruled out because unmotivated (see Aboh & Dyakonova 2006 for discussion).

In a similar vein, the proposed analysis is compatible with the fact that in cases like (48) where the edge features of C under (Foc) and the Agree-tense-aspect features attract two distinct heads, namely the lexical verb and the

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[16] Under the split-C and the split-I hypotheses (Pollock 1989, Rizzi 1997, Cinque 1999) it is arguable that T and Asp belong to a domain such that the tense-aspect features inherited from C can be transmitted to T and Asp.

auxiliary (here the progressive), no doubling is allowed. Under this view, a Gungbe sentence like (48b) would have the derivation in (52), irrelevant projections ignored.

(52)   [FocP [Wémà lɔ́ sà ná Kòfí][F] [Foc wɛ̀[F] [TP Sɛ́ná [T [AspP
        [Asp tè [vP [VP w̶é̶m̶à̶ ̶l̶ɔ̶̶́   ̶s̶à̶ ̶n̶á̶ ̶K̶ò̶f̶í̶]]]]]]]]]]]

The argument goes as follows: the discourse-related focus features of Foc° attract the phrase including the verb phrase to [spec FocP] as an instance of Generalized Pied-piping (Chomsky 1995, Aboh 2004b, c). On the other hand, the Agree-tense-aspect features of Asp attracted by the phase head are expressed by the progressive marker *tò/tè*. Accordingly, the only chain link formed is the one between the fronted focused constituent and its copy in the base position. The latter is deleted under normal economy considerations.[17]

    Russian provides further illustration of the absence of doubling in cases where the edge features of C under (Foc, Top) and the Agree-tense-aspect features attract two distinct heads. As already discussed in the literature, doubling is prohibited in Russian predicate fronting structures involving an auxiliary. This is shown by examples under (53) which involve the future auxiliary, see Abel (2001), Dyakonova (2005) and references cited there for discussion.

(53) a. On   budet čitat'
         he   will   read

    b. *čitat' (-to)   on   budet čitat'
        read Part   he   will   read

    c. čitat' (-to) on   budet
       read Part   he   will
       'He will read'

The observations in Gungbe and Russian lead me to further conclude that verbal predicate with doubling may not exist in languages with an auxiliary (or verbal) element that can license T (or Asp) while the verb (phrase) is being attracted to the left periphery (i.e. to Foc or Top in the higher phase). The impossibility of VP-fronting with doubling in English, and the obligatory application of *do*-support in this language clearly support this view. Under this analysis, English *do* in (54a), does the same job as *tò/tè* in (52) in the sense that it realises T while the verb phrase is attracted to [spec FocP] as represented in (54b).

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[17]   See Aboh & Dyakonova (2006) for discussion on how deletion is licensed in these cases.

(54) a. I told John to wash the car and wash the car he did

b. …and [$_\text{FocP}$ [wash the car]$_{[F]}$ [$_\text{Foc}$ [$_\text{TP}$ he [$_\text{T}$ did [$_\text{vP}$ [$_\text{VP}$ ~~wash the car~~]]]]]]

This analysis suggests that the real parameter distinguishing between Gungbe-type languages and English-type languages boils down to the types of elements that can function as pleonastic auxiliary/verb in the clause. Comparing the Gungbe representations in (49b) and (52) to the English case (54b), it should be noted that while the IP-internal verb in Gungbe-type languages expresses the semantic content of the predicate, English *do* does not play the same function. Instead, the latter licenses a null category (i.e. a non-pronounced VP) expressing this semantic content. I consider this asymmetry to derive from the syntax of lexical verbs versus that of auxiliaries or modals in English (Haegeman 1994, Aboh 2006).

5   Conclusion

This paper proposes that the term 'predicate cleft' is a misnomer for different construction types that encode predicate focus or topic cross-linguistically. In terms of the proposed approach, linguistic variations may result from the topic or focus nature of the fronted predicate: topic predicates are referential and behave like topic DPs, unlike focus predicates. This would mean that there is no 'predicate cleft parameter'.

With regard to the syntax, I propose that verb focusing or topicalisation may trigger predicate fronting with insertion of a pleonastic verb (e.g. English *do*) or else a doublet is merged within IP that recalls the fronted predicate. Assuming parallel chains, the proposed analysis concludes that the fronted verb (phrase) and the V-doublets (or pleonastic verb) do not form a uniform chain. Instead, the fronted verb (phrase) and the doublet head two parallel chains (Chomsky 2005). The relevant parameter distinguishing between languages (e.g. English vs. Gungbe) therefore reduces to the presence or absence of a pleonastic auxiliary/verb that would head the V-chain licensing tense/aspect while the focused or topicalised lexical verb is being attracted to the clausal left periphery.

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Genitive focus in Supyire

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Supyire has two distinct genitive constructions, one consisting of juxtaposed nouns, and the other marked with a particle. This study demonstrates that the marked genitive correlates significantly in natural discourse with contrastive focus as operationally defined in Myhill and Xing (1996). The method used avoids the vicious circularity of many discourse-based studies of focus. Contrastive focus, rather than being "coded", is a pragmatic construal which is dependent on other elements in the communicative context. This construal is only one of the possible construals of the marked genitive (contra Carlson 1994). In this it is not unlike other so-called "contrastive focus" constructions noted in the literature, such as contrastive stress in English.

1   Unmarked and marked genitives in Supyire

Supyire has two genitive constructions, one marked with a genitive particle, the other unmarked. Carlson (1994) devoted a single paragraph to the marked genitive:

> "Constrastive focus on a genitive (possessor) noun phrase is indicated by placing a genitive particle *u* between the genitive and the head noun. This particle has weak mid tone, and behaves tonally as if it were a possessed noun, becoming high after a mid tone, and low-weak mid after a low tone. It is obviously related to the independent possessive pronoun root *wu-*. The head noun following the particle is completely unaffected tonally." (Carlson 1994: 591)

Although this information is basically correct (though the genitive particle is now written *wu* in the orthography, and I would now label what I then called the "independent possessive pronoun" as *possessum pronoun*), the functional claim ("contrastive focus") was unsubstantiated beyond the furnishing of two

examples which follow the above paragraph in Carlson (1994). It is the purpose of this paper to both justify and modify that claim.

Genitives in Supyire, whether marked or unmarked, have the obligatory order POSSESSOR – POSSESSUM.

There is no genitive case marking of nouns, and there are no genitive forms of pronouns. In the ordinary genitive the possessor and possessum NPs are merely juxtaposed. The possessum, however, in many cases undergoes a tonal change. As noted in the paragraph quoted above, the genitive particle also undergoes these changes, but the following possessum is unaffected tonally. Compare the following examples: in each ordinary genitive (the (a) examples) the possessum undergoes a tonal change, whereas in each *wu*-marked genitive (the (b) examples) the possessum has its base tone.

(1) possessum weak mid tone becomes high after mid tone possessor
    a. *mu túŋi*   ORDINARY
       you father
       'your father'
    b. *mu wú tūŋi*   MARKED
       you FOC father
       'YOUR father'

(2) possessor ends in floating weak mid tone[1]
    a. *mìì túŋi*   ORDINARY
       I   father
       'my father'
    b. *mìì wú tūŋi*   MARKED
       I   FOC father
       'MY father'

(3) possessum weak mid becomes low after a low possessor
    a. *wà mὲὲ*   ORDINARY
       INDEF voice.G3S
       'one's voice'
    b. *wà wù mεε*   MARKED
       INDEF FOC voice.G3S
       'ONE'S voice'

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[1]   The second, weak mid, tone of *mìì* floats and then disappears after causing a following weak mid to become high. The sequence L wM wM thus becomes L H.

(4) possessor ends in a floating low tone[2]
    a. *ɲ̀jé   jwùmpé*   ORDINARY
       these words
       'the words of these'
    b. *ɲ̀jé   wù jwumpé*   MARKED
       these FOC words
       'the words of THESE'

(5) possessum low becomes mid after a mid tone possessor
    a. *mu ŋkuuɲí*   ORDINARY
       you chicken
       'your chicken'
    b. *mu wú ŋkùùɲi*   MARKED
       you FOC chicken
       'YOUR chicken'

The *wu*-marked genitive in Supyire is not only marked in a morphological sense, but it is also marked in a discourse sense. In the coded part of the text database used for this study[3], of the total of 2,738 genitive constructions, only 135 (=4.7%) are *wu*-genitives.

      As noted in the quote from Carlson (1994) above, the genitive particle *wu* is obviously related to the pronominal possessum form *wu-,* its probable historical source.[4] The pronominal possessum, as its name implies, is obligatorily possessed. It agrees in gender/noun class with its "antecedent". I put "antecedent" in quotes because, of course, the referents of the possessum pronoun and its "antecedent" are not ordinarily the same. The possessum pronoun indicates another referent of the same category as the "antecedent", as in the following example:

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[2]   All demonstrative pronouns and all definite noun suffixes end in a floating low tone. This floating L docks onto the following word if it can.

[3]   The total database currently numbers 45,560 clauses. Of these around 20,000 have been grammatically coded. Many examples of *wu*-marked genitives from the uncoded part of the database have been used for this study, but the statistics quoted here are based on the coded part.

[4]   It is easy to see how a possessum pronoun of this type, meaning, roughly, "another of the same category as a referent already mentioned or evoked in the context" could be reinterpreted as a possessor focus marker. The referent of the possessum pronoun necessarily forms a set with its "antecedent" (see below for "antecedent", and section 2 for the role of sets in the construal of contrastive focus). Its possessor will thus also form a set with any possessor of the "antecedent", and the stage is then set for a contrastive construal. I assume that originally the possessum noun in a *wu* genitive was an appositive of the *wu* possessum pronoun. With reanalysis, the noun class marking on the *wu* pronoun would be completely redundant and be dropped.

(6) *mìì túŋi   nà   mu   wúŋi*
    I   father and you POSS.DEF
    'my father and yours'

Ordinarily this would be understood as referring to two different fathers. Since pronominal possessa will appear in many examples below, the forms are given in Table 1 for reference.

Table 1: Forms of the possessum pronoun

GENDER	SINGULAR		PLURAL		NON-COUNT	
	INDEFINITE	**DEFINITE**	**INDEFINITE**	**DEFINITE**	**INDEFINITE**	**DEFINITE**
1	*wu*	*wuŋí*	*wúu*	*wúubíí*		
2	*wogo*	*wogé*	*wuyo*	*wuyí*		
3	*wuu*	*wuuní*	*wógii*	*wógigíí*		
4					*woro*	*wooré*
5					*wumɔ*	*wumpé*

2   Operationalizing contrastive focus

Lambrecht (1994) shows that focus stress in English, although it has often been claimed to encode contrastive focus, in fact is by no means confined to cases which can be shown to be "contrastive" on the definitions of Halliday (1967: 206 "contrary to some predicted or stated alternative") or Chafe (1976). Lambrecht suggests that contrast should be treated not as a grammatical category, but as a generalized conversational implicature. However, given the relatively strong intuitions that numerous linguists have noted concerning the interpretation of contrastive stress, and given the fact that a contrastive interpretation is very often one of the available interpretations in the made-up examples which form the bulk of Lambrecht's data, it would be interesting to see from actual discourse data[5] how often there is a "stated alternative" in the discourse context of focus stress examples. This of course raises the methodological question of how to actually recognize, in a replicable way, an instance of contrast in a text.

    Myhill and Xing (1996) set out to provide an answer to this methodological question, and apply it to Biblical Hebrew and Chinese discourse data. For reasons of space they look only at cases of fronted direct objects in the two languages, but they are able to provide evidence that (i) fronting of objects does indeed correlate significantly with contrast, using their operational definition of contrast, and (ii) a significant number of fronted objects do not have anything to do with contrast as so defined. The interest of Myhill and

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[5]   That is, what Lambrecht calls "attested examples."

Xing's study is that by operationalizing the notion of contrast to overtly observable phenomena in a text, they escape from methodological circularity. The danger of such circularity is particularly high in the case of *wu*-marked genitives in Supyire. It is all too easy to fall into the following type of "analytical" practice: "Hypothesis: *wu* marks contrastive focus on the possessor NP in a genitive construction. Here is a *wu* marked genitive. Let me see, what is the contrast in this example?" Only an explicit and objective definition can guard against this type of circularity.

Basically, Myhill and Xing look at "stated alternatives" (and in a very restricted way at implicit alternatives, corresponding roughly to Halliday's "predicted alternatives") and are able to say what proportion of object fronting is covered by these cases. The notion of alternative implies a set relation between the alternatives.[6] Operationalizing the notion of set is difficult. In this study I have used Myhill and Xing's list of types of groupings that may be considered a set (1996: 310-311):

(7) a. **Complementary:** Any pair of elements which are represented as complementary parts of a whole constitute a set…

 b. **Organizational:** A group of people and things which are in the same 'social organization' constitutes a set. As types of organization, we counted families, companies, military units, etc. Possessions are counted as being part of a set with their owners…

 c. **Proximate:** A group of people who are at the moment physically together, as in a conversation or on a trip, constitute a set…

 d. **Hierarchical:** Specific individuals who are at the same level of a larger set of individuals constitute a set. This includes members of a family of the same generation, people at the same rank in a company, etc.…

 e. **Rhetorical:** Entities or concepts which are habitually grouped together in terms of activities or proverbs/slogans by a particular culture constitute a set for that culture…

 f. **Conjoined:** A set may be constituted by explicitly conjoining the NPs involved… The entities referred to by the conjoined NPs then constitute a set in the discourse and presumably remain as a set for some time.

 g. **Analogical:** Any pair of elements which have a parallel relationship with members of a set (e.g. the names of brothers, the parents of a husband and wife) also constitute a set. For example, in *We will give our daughters to you, and we will take your daughters for ourselves,* the speaker and the listener constitute a set (type c), and therefore their daughters also constitute a set.

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[6] Cf. Chafe's (1976) requirement for contrast that there be a set of possible candidates for the role that is being contrasted.

Myhill and Xing propose two operational definitions that cover the cases that have been called contrastive in the literature. They call the two types "list" and "contrast" (1996: 306ff). In the "list" type, there are two NPs in their respective clauses which are elements of a set as defined above, while the verbs and other information in the clauses is essentially the same. For the "contrast" type, which approximates Chafe's "double contrast", there are two subtypes. In one (called "verbal contrast"), the verbs in the two clauses are opposite, either because one is negated, or because they are antonyms of some sort. In "non-verbal contrast", on the other hand, there is a further pair of NPs, one in each clause, which are elements of a set as defined above.

Adopting Myhill and Xing's method to genitive constructions in Supyire, I will say that a genitive possessor is clearly contrastive if in the immediate context (not more than 6 clauses away) there is (i) another NP such that the genitive possessor and this other NP are elements of a set as defined above, and (ii) this NP is also either explicitly or by implication the possessor of a possessum such that the possessa of the two genitive constructions (that is, the *wu*-marked genitive and the one with which it contrasts) are elements of a set as defined above. If all other elements in the two clauses are the same, then the example approximates what Myhill and Xing call the "list" function. If there are further contrasting elements in the two clauses, the example is similar to Myhill and Xing's "contrast" function. There are in turn two subtypes of additional contrastive elements, (i) antonymous possessa in the two genitives, and (ii) predicates with opposite meaning (either due to negation of one of them, or use of antonymous verbs or adjectives). In some cases, the contrasting predicate is not explicit but must be inferred.

In this study I look only at *wu*-marked genitives. In further research, I intend to look at both ordinary genitives and genitives with pronominal possessa. Of the 214 *wu*-marked genitives in the corpus, 113 (= 52.8%) may be identified as contrastive by the above definitions. Of these, 56 (= 26.2% of the total) are explicitly constrasted with another genitive in the context. This second genitive may or may not be marked itself with *wu.* Those examples approximating the "list function" of Myhill and Xing number 24 (= 11.2% of total). These will be treated in section 3 below. All the others (N = 89 = 41.6% of total) have additional contrastive elements in the context. These will be discussed in sections 4 (those with explicit contrasting genitives) and 5 (those with implied contrasting possessa). The remaining 101 examples, which cannot be shown to be contrastive by the definitions above, will be treated in section 6.

3   Constrastive possessors in "listed" genitives

The following examples illustrate constrast between possessors that are merely listed. If the possessa are distinguished only by their possessors, they may be coded with possessum pronouns:

(8) *Lɛɲjyaàyi taanna-ŋkā̄nni: pi   màha bànnibíí   le,*
crossbeams line.up-manner   they   HAB transverse-beams   put
'The way the crossbeams are lined up: they install the transverse beams,

 <u>*niŋké   wù   bànnà-ɲí*</u>   *nà* <u>*canɲa cwumɔ   wú-ɲi*</u>
middle   FOC transverse.beam-DEF.G1S and day   falling   POSS-DEF.G1S
when <u>THE MIDDLE transverse beam</u> and <u>THE WESTERN one</u>

 nà <u>*canɲa foromɔ   wú-ɲi*</u>   *kà   pìyé   shɔ́,*
and day   coming.out POSS-DEF.G1S   COND   themselves take
and <u>THE EASTERN one</u> have connected with each other,

 pi   màha ná   à   ŋkèrèmè wù-yí   yà   wìì.
they HAB   afterwards SCN side   POSS-DEF.G2P INDEF.G2P look.at
they choose (lit. look at) some of the side ones (i.e. side crossbeams).'

In the following example, the possessa set is sums of money given on a particular occasion. The possessor set is those who gave the sums in question. The particle *yòo* has as one of its functions the marking of items in a set, and is therefore glossed LIST.

(9) *Ká Bùgùdɔgɔ-ɲí   sì   ɲ̀-cyà.*
and Bugudɔgɔ-DEF.G1S   NARR   INTR[7]-seek
'Then the Bugudɔgɔ was fetched.

 <u>*Mìì bíduuru-ɲí*</u> *yòo,* <u>*Zùmanì wú daashíí   káŋkúrú-ɲi*</u>
I   50-DEF.G1S LIST Zumani FOC 5.franc.piece   five-DEF.G1S
<u>My 250[8] francs,</u> <u>ZUMANI's 25 francs</u>

 u   à   cya Bàba á   ge, maá   úrú kán u   à,
he PERF seek Baba from REL   and.NARR it   give him to
which he had got from Baba, [we] gave it to him (= to the Bugudɔgɔ),

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[7]   The intransitive prefix occurs only after certain tense-aspect auxiliaries (among them the narrative auxiliary, as here) and only when the verb begins with a voiceless plosive.

[8]   Money is counted using the basic unit of the smallest coin, 5 francs. Thus 50 (units of 5 francs) equals 250 francs, and five (units of five francs) equals 25 francs.

lù-wu-ŋ'   *â, maá*   *yí jwú u*   *a*   *si ná*   *ú é.*
water-pour-DEF.G1S to and.NARR it say he SBJCV.IMPFV go with it with
to the libation-offerer, and said he should take it away.'

4   Additional contrastive elements in the context

In a further 32 examples, there is additional contextual support for a contrastive
interpretation. In some cases this is merely negation: one of the contrasted
genitives is in a clause with a negated predicate whereas the other one is not.
The following two examples come from a tale in which Coucal and God have a
contest to see whose voice will carry the farthest. In (10) the same verb is used
in the two clauses (one of which is negated). The situation in (11) is more
complicated: in the first clause the contrasted genitive is the subject, and the
predicate is "heard God's", while in the second clause the contrasted genitive is
a goal postpositional phrase in a negative clause "Coucal's didn't arrive". The
song being heard by the addressee can be counted as synonymous with the song
arriving at the addressee. This example is thus similar to (10) in that one of the
synonymous predicates is negated.

(10) *Kà Dúdugo rí*   *ńpá lí tá* **_uru wù mɛɛ-ní_**   *ɲɛ a*   *jà*
     and Coucal NARR come it find he FOC voice-DEF.G3S NEG PERF be.able
     'Then Coucal realized that <u>HIS voice</u> had not been able to

     à   *nɔ*   *u* *wú cwǒŋi*   *na mé,* **_Kile wùù-ní_**   *d'* `a ¯nɔ ...*
     SCN arrive he FOC wife.DEF.G1S at NEG God POSS-DEF.G3S ADV PERF arrive
     reach his wife, whereas <u>GOD's</u> had reached …'

(11) *Kà*   **_Kile_**   **_wù_**   **_cwɔ̌-ŋi_**   *dì*   *Kile wù-yí*   *lògò,*
     and God   FOC   wife-DEF.G1S NARR God POSS-DEF.G2P hear
     '<u>GOD's wife</u> heard God's [song],

     Dúdugo wú-yi   *ɲɛ à*   *nɔ*   *mé,* **_uru wù cwɔ̌-ŋi_**   *na mɛ́.*
     Coucal   POSS-DEF.G2P NEG PERF arrive NEG he   FOC wife-DEF.G1S at NEG
     Coucal's [song] didn't reach, didn't reach <u>HIS wife</u>.'

The additional contrast may stem from the use of antonyms. The following
example, a proverb, has antonymic possessa (good deed vs. bad deed):

(12) **_Wà_**   **_wù_** **_ka-cènnè_**   *màha mpyi* **_wà_**   **_wù_**   **_ka-pii._**
     INDEF FOC deed-good.G3S   HAB be   INDEF FOC deed-bad.G3S
     '<u>ONE PERSON's</u> good deed is <u>ANOTHER PERSON's</u> bad deed.'

The antonyms may be elsewhere in the context. In the following example, from a discourse on how to weave, the verbs of which the possessa are subjects are antonyms (go down vs. go up):

(13) *Mu ahá ŋké tɔɔgé   tànhà, **kuru ndiribíí-ni**   màha ntìgè,*
you COND this foot.DEF.G2S put.down it.G2S pedal.DEF.G3S HAB go.down
'When you lower this foot, <u>its pedal</u> goes down,

sììzi-ŋ'   ásì múgó, mu arì kàzo-ní   wà.
thread-DEF.G1S HAB open   you HAB shuttle-DEF.G3S   throw
the threads open and you throw the shuttle.

*`Ŋké tɔɔgé   sānŋke, **kuru wù ndiribíí-ni**   màha   dugo,*
this foot.DEF.G2S other   it.G2S FOC pedal.DEF.G3S   HAB   go.up
This other foot, <small>ITS pedal</small> goes up

sììzi-ŋ'   árì   ǹtò…
thread-DEF.G1S   HAB   close
and the threads close…'

The following example has both antonymous verbs (refuse to take vs. take) and antonymous adjectives (good/clean vs. dirty). Note that there is a double *wu,* and both sets of possessors are contrasted:

(14) *Pi a   cyì   **wùu m̀píí niɲcenm-píí   wù yaa-yí   niɲcen-yí***
they PERF refuse we   these good-DEF.G1P FOC things-DEF.G2P good-DEF.G2P
'Have they refused to take and drink <u>the water of <small>THE CLEAN THINGS of US GOOD</small></u>

wù lwɔ-hé   *shwo-mbya-ga, sí   ǹkwɔ́ **yìi m̀píí   wù***
FOC water-DEF.G2S take-drink-G2S SBJCV finish you these   FOC
<small>PEOPLE</small>, in order to take and drink <u>that of <small>THE DIRTY LITTLE CALABASH</small></u>

cee-ɲwɔhɔ-ré   **wɔ̀-gé**   *shwɔ m̀byà la?*
calabash-dirty-DIM   POSS-DEF.G2S   take   drink QUES
<u>of <small>YOU</small></u> here?'

Fully sixteen examples show some combination of negation and antonyms. Following, by way of illustration, is a complicated but not atypical example. The possessors are contrasted as expected (today vs. tomorrow). There is a further contrast between the possessa (few vs. many fish) which is distributed differently in the two clauses: a negated verb ('not be many') in the first clause

contrasts with an adjective modifying the possessum in the second clause ('many'). There is a further constrastive set in the context ('me' vs. 'you') which contributes to make a highly contrastive example.

(15) *A,* <u>*nínɲáà wu fya-ŋgú-re*</u>   *nàha à ɲyaha mέ.*
    ah today FOC fish-small.and.bad.quality-DEF.G4 NEG.here PERF be.many NEG
    'Ah, <u>TODAY</u>'s miserable small fish are not many.

    Mu nínɲáà wòò-ré   *yaha mìi á,*
    you today POSS-DEF.G4   leave me to
    You should let me have today's,

    <u>*nùmpanŋa wóó-re*</u>   *niɲyaha-ré, wùu ú ŋ́pá tíré kán mu á.*
    tomorrow POSS-DEF.G4 many-DEF.G4 we SBJCV come them give you to
    <u>TOMORROW</u>'s numerous ones, we will give them to you.'

Besides negation and antonyms, one further type of contextual reinforcement of contrast is the use of the overt comparative construction. In the following example, from a conversation about two balafons, there are two pairs of contrasted genitive constructions, each in a comparative clause:

(16) N: `*Ŋké sí ɲ̀-jà mεε máhá mεε céè ke,*
     this FUT FP-be.able song every song sing REL
    'Whatever song this one can play,

    ŋ̀ké màha lire cèè. Aan.
    this HAB it sing yes
    this [other] one can play. Yes.

  A: *Mὲὲ* <u>*wà wù ɲ̀kɔ̀ɔ̀n-g'*</u> *a tààn* <u>*wà wò-gò*</u> *nà la?*
    but INDEF FOC throat-DEF.G2S PERF be.sweet INDEF POSS-G2S on QUES
    But is <u>the sound of ONE</u> more pleasant than <u>that of THE OTHER</u>?

  N: <u>*Wà wù ɲ̀kɔ̀ɔ̀n-g'*</u> *a pὲὲ* <u>*wà wò-gò*</u> *nà …*
    INDEF FOC throat-DEF.G2S PERF be.big INDEF POSS-G2S on
    <u>The sound of ONE</u> is louder than <u>that of THE OTHER</u>…'

5 Contrast without an explicit second genitive construction

As noted above, a *wu*-marked genitive possessor may be contrasted with another member of its set which is mentioned explicitly in the context, but which is not the possessor in a second genitive construction. In these cases, it is clear that the

"missing" possessum, which is of course evoked by the explicit possessum, is implicit in the conceptualization of the scene. In the following example, 'another snake' in line 4 is contrasted with 'the python' which is the possessor of the *wu-*genitive in the final line. The implicit member of the possessum set 'poison (of snakes)' is of course implied by the bite of the second snake in line 4.

(17) *Fyì-ŋi*   *kà*   *mu* *nɔ,*
     python-DEF.G1S   COND you bite
     'If the python bites you,

     mu *méé*   *ḿpyí mu ɲɛ à*   *wyɛrɛ*   *pyi mé,*
     you even.if be   you NEG PERF medicine do   NEG
     even if you don't treat it,

     yafyîn ɲɛ na   *mu táà*   *mɛ.*
     nothing NEG PROG you get.IMPFV NEG
     nothing happens to you.

     Lire kàntugo, **wwò-ŋi**   **wàbérè**   *kà*   *mu* *nɔ,*
     that behind   snake-DEF.G1S another   COND   you bite
     Later on, if <u>another snake</u> bites you

     kà *mu* *ú*   *wyɛrɛ* *pyi uru wwò-ŋi*   *tà-nɔŋ-ké*   *na,*
     and you NARR medicine do   that snake-DEF.G1S LOC-bite-DEF.G2S   on
     and you treat that snake's bite,

     fyì-ŋi   *màha*   *mu* *bó.*
     python-DEF.G1S   HAB   you kill
     the python kills you.

     Ɲàhá ná yɛ,   *u*   *màha*   *jwo,*
     what on QUES   he   HAB   say
     Why? Because he says,

     "*Mìi* *u*   *ɲye*   *wwòo-bíí*   *puní màsàké-ŋi,*
     I   he be   snakes-DEF.G1P   all   king-DEF.G1S,
     "It is I who am the king of all the snakes.

     ká *mìi*   *í*   *mu* *nɔ,*
     and I   NARR you bite
     I bit you,

mu ɲyɛ à   wyɛrɛ   pyi mɛ́.
you NEG PERF   medicine do NEG
but you didn't treat the bite.

Mìì bílí-ŋi   wà   à   pà   mu   nɔ,
I   slave-DEF.G1S   INDEF   PERF come you bite
Then one of my slaves came and bit you,

kà   mu ú   úrú   wyɛ́rɛ́   pyí,
and you NARR it   medicine   do
and you treated it.

mu à   wurugo."
you PERF do.   wrong
You have done wrong."

<u>Fyì-ŋi</u>   <u>wù</u>   <u>sɔɔ̀n-re</u>   màha mu bó.
python-DEF.G1S   FOC   poison-DEF.G4 HAB you kill
The python's poison kills you.'

In the following example, the *wu*-marked possessor (the Wara fetish) is explicitly contrasted with the king of Sikasso. They form a set in that both are executing wrongdoers in Sikasso. The implicit member of the possessum set ('people-killing') is of course implied in the clause "you (= the king of Sikasso) are killing people".

(18) *Ká mu ú   jwú "é! fãnhàfee shuunní   sì   ɲ̀-jà   m̀-pyì*
     and you NARR say e! kings   two   FUT FP-be.able FP-be
     'Then you (= the king of Sikasso) said, "E! There cannot be two kings

Sukwol'e mɛ́." Mu na   supyì-re   kwùù, Wárá-ŋi   sìi
Sikasso in NEG you PROG people-DEF.G4 kill.IMPFV wara-DEF.G1S ADV.PROG
in Sikasso." You are killing people, yet the Wara (= a type of fetish) is also

supyì-re   kwùù.   Mu na cáà wárá-ŋi   fɔ̀ɔ tàha à wárá-ŋi
people-DEF.G4 kill.IMPFV you PROG FUT Wara-DEF.G1S owner use SCN Wara-DEF
killing people. You will sacrifice the Wara owner to the Wara.

sun.   <u>Wárá-ŋi   wù supyi-bɔ̀-ni</u>   li gû   ɲ̀-jyɛ́rɛ́.
offer.sacrifice Wara-DEF.G1S FOC people-kill-DEF.G3S it POT   FP-stop.
It is the Wara's killing of people that would stop.'

It is also possible for the contrasting member of the possessor set to be present in the speech situation rather than mentioned in the discourse. In the following example, the set given in the speech situation is that of all those offering sacrifices on a particular occasion. In most sacrifices, a chicken or goat must be brought by each head of household. He typically says, as he hands the sacrificial animal to the sacrificer, "This is MY chicken," or "Here is MY animal." In lieu of an actual animal, the offering may consist of a sum of money, but even in that case the offerer will say "Here is MY animal." In the following example, the occasion was the inauguration of a new jinn house. Heads of household and various individuals brought chickens to sacrifice. Speaker A was interviewing speaker K while the ceremony was going on. Speaker K is a uterine niece of the patriclan that was inaugurating the jinn house. The object of the interview was to find out what role K played as a uterine niece at the event. K states that she gave money in lieu of an animal. She implicitly contrasts herself with all the other people who offered sacrifices that day.

(19) A: *Ɛɛ,mu à... yìì* [9] *à pa jíná-bagé ɲ̀cyènɲí naké,*
    uh you PERF you.PL PERF come jinn-house inauguration onTIME.CLAUSE
    'Uh, since you … you have come to the inauguration of the jinn house,

  K: *Hmm.*
    Yes.

  A: *narafem-báárá na ɲyɛ nahá la? Jíná-bagé ɲ̀cyènɲí cyàgé e la?*
    narafoo[10]-work PROG be here QUES jinn-house inauguration place in QUES
    is there any role for a uterine niece? At the inauguration of the jinn house?

  K: *Aan.*
    Yes.

  A: *Mu à pa gé, ɲàhá ná ɲàhá mu à pyi yɛ?*
    you PERF come TIME.CLAUSE what and what you PERF do QUES
    Since you came, what things have you done?
  K: *Mìì à pa maá wyéré wwúl' `ā tìrìgè,*
    I PERF come and.NARR money take.out SCN put.down
    I came and put down some money,

---

9 The interviewer (A) is considerably younger than the interviewee (K). He starts to address K with the singular pronoun *mu* and then thinks better of it and switches to the plural pronoun *yìi*, which is more respectful. The … is not an omission, but merely signals the restart. The interviewer switches back to a singular pronoun in line 5 of the example.
10 *Narafoo* is the term used for both uterine nephew and uterine niece of a clan.

A: *Hmm.*
   Yes.

K: *ɲ̀jwù, "__Mììِ   wú   yatɔɔ̀-ge__   ku   ŋkíré."*
   I.said I   FOC   animal-DEF.G2S   it   this
   and said, "This is <u>MY animal</u>."

Another speech situation with an obvious contrastive set is any conversation, where the interlocuters form a set (cf. 7c above).

(20) *Là   màha pi   sanmpíí   jà,   mu màha   ja   lire   na.*
   INDEF HAB them   rest   defeat you HAB   be.able   it   on
   'Something may be too much for the others, but you are able to handle it.

   __Mìì wú hákìlì-ɲí__   na, lire na   ɲyɛ kyaà niɲcɛnnɛ.
   I   FOC mind-DEF.G1S   at   that PROG   be   thing good
   In <u>MY opinion</u>, that's a good thing.'

6   Non-contrastive examples

A large number of *wu*-marked genitives (101, = 47.2%) cannot be shown to be contrastive in the operational sense employed above. This is not surprising in that other focus constructions which may also be interpreted as at least sometimes contrastive and that have been discussed in the literature are also reported to have non-contrastive uses. For focus stress in English, see Lambrecht (1994: 286ff). Unfortunately, Lambrecht does not provide any actual discourse data (there is only one "attested" example in the discussion), let alone any frequencies. Myhill and Xing (1996) show that 51% (59 of 116) of fronted objects in their corpus of Biblical Hebrew can be shown to be contrastive using their operational definition (1996: 325). In Chinese they investigated four different "patient-fronting" constructions, and they show that contrastive uses account for 15%, 32%, 22%, and 11% of the respective constructions (1996: 329). A proportion of 52.8% (N = 113) for *wu*-marked genitives in Supyire thus falls in about the same range as object fronting in Biblical Hebrew.

   Following are three examples of non-contrastive *wu*-marked genitives by way of illustration. The first example is from the same interview as example (19) above.

(21) A: *Ɲàhá ná ɲàhámu rá   à   pyi   a ní   Nacíní   yɛ?*
   what and what   you   go   PERF   do there   Nacin in   QUES
   'What things did you go do there in Nacin?

Cyire *ɲcyíí cyìì yɛ?*
these these INDEF QUES
What things of this sort?

K: `*Ncyíí*   *mìi à*   *pyi*   *aní*   *niɲcyiigíí*   *ge,*
these   I   PERF   do   there   first.ones   REL
The first things I did there,

A: *Aan.*
Yes.

K: <u>**ceè-ɲi**</u>   <u>**wà**</u>   <u>**wù**</u>   <u>**kììshyàhà**</u> *mpyi*   *à*   *waha,*
woman-DEF.G1S   INDEF   FOC   luck   PAST   PERF   be.hard
<u>a certain woman's luck</u> was bad,

u   *gú*   *ràa*   *ntàà*   *mɛ.*
she   POT   PROG   get.IMPFV   NEG
she wasn't getting children.'

The following example is from a folktale.

(22) *Nyā, pi*   *a*   *sà*   `*Mpi*   *yaha aní*   *ke,*
well they   PERF   go   Hare   leave there   TIME.CLAUSE
'Well, when they went and left Hare there,

maá   *yí*   *jwú*   `*Mpi*   *á,*
and.NARR   it   say   Hare   to
they said to Hare,

(*Lire tèn' a*   <u>**sùpyíi-bíí**</u>   <u>**pìì**</u>   <u>**wù**</u>   *kerege ta aní*   *númê.*)
 this   time PERF people-DEF.G1P   INDEF   FOC   field   find there   now
(At that time <u>a field of some people</u> was there.)

pi   *a*   *yì*   *jwù*   `*Mpi*   *á*   *ke,*
they PERF   it   say   Hare   to   TIME.CLAUSE
when they said to Hare,

"*Bɔn ɛɛ si-shyé-nàmbaabíí kà*   *m̀páa*   *pi*   *si-shê-bɔ́rigíí*
 bon uh bush-go-men   COND come.IMPFV   they bush-go-bags
"OK, uh, when the farmers are coming and hanging up their

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> *yùù   na   duruge…*
> take.IMPFV PROG raise.IMPFV
> farming bags…'

In both of the previous examples the possessor is indefinite, although referential. In the final example, from another interview, it is definite:

(23) A: *Bɛ́mii   ɲɛ ɲàhá yɛ?*
      bɛmii   be what QUES
      'What are *bɛmii*?'

    D: *Ɲwɔ̀hɔ̀yyee cyáge, nàmpèyyè-yí   tàtèèn-gé.*
       men.old   place men.hero.old-DEF.G2P   dwelling.place-DEF.G2S
       The place of the old men, the dwelling place of the heros of old.

       Fólófóló <u>**wùu tìi-bíí**   **wù tatɛɛ̀n-ge**</u>,
       long.ago we   fathers-DEF.G1P FOC dwelling.place-DEF.G2S
       <u>The dwelling place of our fathers</u>

       kuru ku ɲɛ bɛ́mii.
       that it be bɛmii
       of long ago, that is *bɛmii*.'

7   Discussion

The construal of an entity as an "alternative" is a pragmatic act, whether that entity is referred to in the discourse, inferred from some other entity that is mentioned, or present in the speech situation. Even if there is an overt second genitive, as in the examples in sections 3 and 4, it still must be *interpreted* as contrastive to the *wu*-marked genitive. There may be other genitives in the context which are not to be construed as contrastive. The construction of sets, itself a pragmatic act, for both possessors and possessa, is crucial. For instance, in example (11) there are two genitive constructions, with pronominal possessa, which intervene between the two genitive constructions which I take to be contrastive. The possessa of the intervening genitives do not form a set with the possessa of the contrasting genitives, although their possessors are the same. The pragmatic construal of contrast by the hearer crucially depends on the construction of sets. These sets are not marked in any way, but must be inferred.

     We may assume that the *wu*-marked genitive has the effect of triggering an "open presupposed genitive" (MY *father* implying *x's father*) analogous to the "open presupposed proposition" said to be triggered by focal stress in English (SUE *hit Bill* implying *x hit Bill*) (Lambrecht 1994: 277ff; cf. Breheny 1998). The

Supyire hearer is thus cued to be ready for the possibility that the referent of the x variable *may* be an something else in the context, and will be ready to draw that contrastive inference in case that "something" is encountered (usually coming in the next clause or two, but sometimes already in working memory from a previous mention).[11] The evidence reviewed above shows that roughly half the time such an inference will be highly supported by the context. It is interesting that in more than half the cases the construal of contrast is supported by further elements in the context (antonymous possessa or other antonyms outside the genitive constructions themselves or negation), as shown in section 4.

Almost half the time there is no obvious contrast in the context. These cases will have to be studied further in order to see whether (i) there is contrast, but it is arrived at via inferences which are more subtle than those captured by Myhill and Xing's operationalization of contrast, or (ii) *wu*-marked genitives encode general focus which is not always contrastive. The latter seems the more likely in view of Lambrecht's claims about English focal stress. In fact, as Myhill and Xing's study hints, and as Lambrecht suggests, it may be the case that no language has a construction which is uniquely devoted to contrastive focus, but that contrast is always only one of the possible interpretations of a given focus construction. In view of this likelihood, the statement in Carlson (1994) quoted in section 1 should be revised by removing the word "contrastive".

It remains to be seen if other subtypes of focus can be operationalized in a fashion similar to the operationalization of contrastive focus. If so, it will be possible to see if *wu*-marked genitives correlate with other types of focus so defined. It seems likely, though, that the very vaguenss of the notion of focus ensures that a construction such as the Supyire *wu*-marked genitive can be construed contextually in a number of ways. We should not expect a 100% "coding" relation between such a construction and any particular independently defined type of focus.

As noted above, the other half of this study remains to be done. Ordinary genitives will need to be examined to see how many of them correlate with contrastive focus as operationally defined above. My hypothesis is that a much lower percentage will occur in contexts which explicitly invite a contrastive inference.

8   Abbreviations

ADV   adversative auxiliary
COND   conditional mood auxiliary

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[11]   I assume a relatively small "contrastive space" for the processing of contrast (cf. Breheny 1998). This is the main reason for limiting the search space to 6 clauses in either direction.

DEF	definite noun suffix (also marks noun class)
DIM	diminutive noun suffix
FOC	genitive focus particle
FP	future tense verb prefix
FUT	future tense auxiliary
G1S	gender 1 singular noun suffix
G1P	gender 1 plural noun suffix
G2S	gender 2 singular noun suffix
G2P	gender 2 plural noun suffix
G3S	gender 3 singular noun suffix
G4	gender 4 noun suffix
HAB	habitual tense auxiliary
IMPFV	imperfective aspect (auxiliary or verb suffix)
INDEF	indefinite pronoun or determiner
INTR	intransitive verb prefix
LOC	locative nominal prefix
NARR	narrative tense auxiliary
NEG	negative auxiliary or clause final marker
PERF	perfect tense-aspect auxiliary
POSS	possessum pronoun
POT	potential auxiliary
PROG	progressive aspect auxiliary
QUES	clause final question marker
REL	relative clause marker
SBJCV	subjunctive mood auxiliary
SCN	serial verb connective
SEQ	sequential tense auxiliary

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Condition, topic and focus in African languages: Why conditionals are not topics.

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Since Haiman (1978), a general assumption concerning the information structure of conditional sentences is that "conditionals are topics". However, in Chadic South Bauchi West languages spoken in Northern Nigeria, as well as in Banda Linda, an Adamawa language spoken in the République Centre-Africaine, conditionals share their structure with focus, not topic. This seriously questions Haiman's claim and forces us to reconsider the facts and characterizations of conditionals, topic and focus in general.

In order to do this, we will first examine the facts of conditionals in some Chadic languages, then their information structure. We will see how both data and theory invalidate Haiman's claim. Then we will see that if they are not topics, they are different from focus as well. We will argue that if the elements which make a topic or a focus can appear in conditionals, these must be separated from what constitutes the identity of conditions. Then, we will see if these can be characterized in the same way as Lambrecht characterizes temporal clauses, viz. as "activated propositions" (Lambrecht 1994). We will finally conclude that they should rather be defined as "fictitious assertions" (Culioli 2000).

1   Introduction

It is generally assumed, following Haiman (1978) that in the information structure of conditional sentences, conditionals play the role of topics. However, in a few isolated cases, such as the Chadic languages spoken in the South of Bauchi State (Nigeria), henceforth SBW, or Banda Linda, an Adamawa language spoken in the République Centre-Africaine, the marking of conditionals is identical with that of focus. Even if only a few languages are concerned, this brings forward a flaw in the usual analysis of the information structure of conditional systems. Faced with this kind of data, we have to reconsider the analysis of conditionals as topics, and examine precisely the respective properties of topics and foci, and whether they match those of

conditionals. Actually, conditionals have as many properties in common with antitopics and questions as they have with topics. This leads to the redefinition of the information status of conditionals as frames rather than topics. However, this does not account for the morphological exponents that conditionals share with focus in SBW and Banda Linda. Our hypothesis is that, since focus is a complex operation[1], conditionals need not share its whole information structure, but may share one of its components, viz. the assertive component. We want to explore the possibility of characterizing conditionals as a type of assertion, viz. fictitious assertions, which may borrow different means of expression such as the assertive component of focus or yes/no question.

2   Conditional systems

When two clauses X (protasis) and Y (apodosis) entertain a relation, whether conditional or temporal, they form a Conditional System if the existence of X must be ascertained (whether in reality or in imagination) in order for Y to be realized. X is called a conditional clause or conditional.

Generally, Conditional Systems in African languages are not very different from their European counterparts. In Hausa[2] for example, the Conditional System is very much like the French or English ones. It follows the order <protasis, apodosis>, <*if..., (then)...*> under the form <*in/idan …, (sai) …*>:

(1) | in | mutà:ne: | sun | shiryà:, | (sai) | mù | tàfi. |
| if | people | 3P.PERF | get.ready | (then) | 1P.SUBJ | leave |

  'If people are ready, let's go.'[3]

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[1]   Caron (2000)

[2]   Our Hausa examples are borrowed from Jaggar (2001) and Newman (2000). The African languages quoted in the article are tone languages. High (H) and Low (L) tones are transcribed respectively by acute (á) and grave (à) accents. Falling (F) and Rising (R) tones are marked respectively by a circumflex accent (â) or a chevron (ǎ). Length in vowels is marked by a colon.

[3]   Abbreviations:

 1,2,3, person; ACC, completed; ANAPH, anaphora; COMP, complementizer; COND, conditional; CONT, continuous; COP, copula; DEICT, deictic; DUR, durative; FOC, focus; FOCS, subject focus; FUT, future; GL, genitive link; IMPERF, imperfective; INCH, inchoative; INJ, injunctive; IRR, irrealis; MID, middle; NEG, negation; P, plural; PERF, perfective; POS, positive; PUNCT, punctilliar; REL, relative pronoun; S, singular; SUBJ, Subjunctive; TAM, Tense-Aspect-Mood; VN, verbal noun.

However, one difference arises from the relationship between temporal clauses and the potential, temporal and irrealis readings of conditional clauses. It is most common in European languages to find a morphological difference drawn between conditional clauses introduced by *if* (English) or *si* (French) and temporal clauses introduced by *when* (English) or *quand* (French). Then the TAM in the conditional clause may introduce a further difference beween the potential and irrealis readings of the conditional such as English *If you come, I will pay you.* (potential) and *If you had come, I would have paid you.* (irrealis).

The situation is different in the African languages studied here. In Hausa for example, the conditionals introduced by *in*, 'if' can have both a temporal and a potential reading but cannot have an irrealis reading.

Hausa Conditional Clause: potential reading

(2) in za: kà hu:tà:, | kà   zaunà: nân.
    if FUTI 2S rest | 2S.SUBJ sit   here
    'If you want to rest, sit here.'

Hausa Conditional Clause: temporal reading

(3) in mun   gamà cî-n   àbinci | sai mù   fìta   ya:wò:.
    if 1P.PERF finish eat-GL food | then 1P.SUBJ go out stroll
    'When we have finished eating, we'll go for a walk.'

The irrealis hypothesis where the protasis expresses a counterfactual past event uses a construction different from the Conditional System, involving a discontinuous morpheme *dà: … dà:*.

(4) dà: | sun   tàimàke: mù, dà: | mun   gamà:.
    IRR | 3PERF help   1P   IRR | 1P.PERF finish
    'If they had helped us, we would have finished.'

We will now proceed to study the informational structure of conditionals.

3 Conditionals and topicality

3.1 Haiman: Conditionals are topics

In his seminal 1978 paper[4], Haiman compares Conditional Clauses to topics: they have the same distribution at sentence initial position and the same information status.

> "[…] conditionals are topics (= givens, presuppositions) of their sentences, […] (Haiman 1978: 567). The topic represents an entity whose existence is agreed upon by the speaker and his audience. As such, it constitutes the framework which has been selected for the following discourse." (Haiman 1978: 585)

In South Bauchi Chadic languages, this seems to be confirmed by the existence of paratactic Conditional Systems where the Conditional Clause appears like an unmarked topic. The conditional readings are inferred from the mere juxtaposition of protasis and apodosis:

Zaar[5]: paratactic Conditional System; potential reading

[Context : in this traditional riddle, the narrator asks the hearers to solve the following problem: how do you take a hyena, a goat and beans across a river on a boat that can only take two at a time?]

(5) kyá: mbí: ma:t,
    2S.IMPERF take goat
    kə   ga: mbə́rgə̀ptəŋ ɗaɗáni   tə́ zà:m.
    2S.SUBJ leave hyena   there   with beans
    'If you take the goat, you leave the hyena with the beans.' (Caron 2005)

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[4] Haiman, John. 1978. Conditionals are Topics. *Language* 54: 564-589.
[5] Zaar, Zoɗi and Polci are South Bauchi West (SBW) languages spoken in Northern Nigeria, dominated and endangered by Hausa. They belong to the same West branch of Chadic languages as Hausa.

Zoɗi: paratactic Conditional System; iterative/habitual reading

[Context : A chief narrates his role in former local wars.]

(6) áma: wu   ya:kɔ́ŋ ŋak|
1S.IMPERF   say   saliva ACC|
to: man tʃí-ni gálba a bɘt 'yerɔ́m ma:ŋti gɘm.
well   1P.FUT eat-MID victory at on friend war 1P.POSS
'When I bless them, we beat our enemies.' (Caron 2002)

Topics can be multiple, and likewise Conditional Clauses. See the following examples in Zaar.

Zaar multiple Conditional Clauses

(7) kúmá tsɔ́tn-kɔ́nì-atn ɗangəní,|
also   live-VN-1S.POSS now |
'As for my life today,'

ló:kací   yó:ɗaŋ mi-ká   tsɔ́tn-kɔ́nì, ‖
time   REL   1S-CONT   live-VN   ‖
'what I live today,'

ra: wum-kɔ́nì gɘtn   ɗaŋ á-tâ-yá: wum ‖
heart feel-VN   1S.POSS REL 3S-PAST3-IMPERF   feel ‖
'the sadness I used to feel'

á-tá-yi   tu   murkɔ́dən-atn   tà   məs-í: ‖
3S-PAST3-PUNCT COMP husband-1S.POSS   PAST3   die-ACC ‖
'(because) my husband had died,'

tô: ra:-atn   bà: á-tâ-yá: mbút ɗa gì:ri hɔ́ŋ,
well heart-1S.POSS NEG 3S-PAST3-IMPERF rest   at   well NEG
'well, I was not happy,'

àmmá: ɗangəní râ:s   à: mbút-ni.
but   now   heart.ANAPH 3S.PERF rest-INCH
'but now I am happy.' (Caron 2005)

[Context : A butcher boasts of being able to drink and go on working without getting drunk.]

(8) yâ:n ka   və̀r-ə̀m ɮwà:p-kɛ̂n |
    if   2S.FUT give-1S skewer-VN
    'If you give me [meat] to skewer,'

    kyá: jòm ɬû:-wà: ɗan   ni: |
    2S.IMPERF   pile meat-3S.POSS like   what |
    'if you pile up a huge amount of meat,'

    myá: ɬyá   jíkô á   ɓân-í ‖
    1S.IMPERF   drink beer 3S.SUBJ finish-ACC
    'if I drink a lot of beer,'

    wàllây ma   ɮwá:p-í   swâtswât.
    oath   1S.FUT skewer-ACC   perfectly
    'I swear I will skewer [the meat] perfectly.' (Caron 2005)

3.2   *Conditional clauses are not presupposed topics*

First, let us remove a small problem which arises from the characterization given by Haiman in terms of truth value:

> "[...] topics, like conditional clauses, are presuppositions of their sentences. [...] For an NP, it is the EXISTENCE of its referent which is presupposed. [...] For an S, however, it is the TRUTH of the proposition of the sentence which is presupposed." (Haiman 1978: 585f., original emphasis)

The definition of presupposition in terms of truth value is the first problem with Haiman's characterization of conditionals. The concept of truth value borrowed from the world of mathematical logic refers to a stable and objective referent, to a state of affairs than can be verified by everyone. When dealing with the information structure of natural languages, we must provide a means to account for activities whose referents do not exist in external reality, such as lies, imagination, etc.

    Lambrecht (1994) avoids this problem when he redefines a number of concepts in terms of information structure by using the notion of 'state of mind of the speakers', as it is expressed in utterances, without involving the extra-

linguistic dimension. His definitions of topic and presupposition (as opposed to assertion) are as follows:

- Topic expression

  "A constituent is a topic expression if the proposition expressed by the clause with which it is associated is pragmatically construed as being about the referent of this constituent." (Lambrecht 1994: 131)

- Pragmatic presupposition

  "The set of propositions lexicogrammatically evoked in a sentence which the speaker assumes the hearer already knows or is ready to take for granted at the time the sentence is uttered." (Lambrecht 1994: 52)

- Pragmatic assertion

  "The proposition expressed by a sentence which the hearer is expected to know or take for granted as a result of hearing the sentence uttered." (Lambrecht 1994: 52)

If we combine these definitions with Haiman's claim, Conditional Clauses are still characterized as (presupposed[6]) topics, falling outside the scope of the assertion. We will see that Conditional Clauses share properties with questions and antitopics which makes them incompatible with this status of presupposed topics.

3.2.1 Conditional clauses and questions

Haiman notices the affinities between conditionals and Yes/No questions, and gives the following examples where a Conditional Clause can be glossed by a question:

> "Is any among you afflicted? Let him pray." (Haiman 1978: 570)
> If any among you is afflicted, let him pray.

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[6]   In our own terminology, we would use the term "preconstruct" rather than presupposition. Cf. (Caron 2000).

Likewise, Frajzyngier (1996) states that morphemes marking condition and Yes/No questions are often related in Chadic, to the extent that he thinks the former are derived from the latter.

This points in a new direction for conditionals. Questions are not presupposed, they are a different type of assertion: they are not asserted as regards polarity: the speaker is unable to do so, and resorts to the co-speaker to assert the corresponding proposition. In the case of Yes/No questions, the proposition is neither presupposed, nor asserted positively or negatively. We want to argue that the status of Conditional Clauses is, to a certain extent, similar to that of those questions.

3.2.2 Conditional clause and antitopics

Conditional Clauses can occur in the same position as antitopics:

Postposed Hausa virtual Conditional Clause

(9) kadà kà   sàya: │in ya: yi tsà:da:.
    NEG 2S.SUBJ buy │if 3S.PERF do expensiveness
    'Don't buy [it] if it is [too] expensive.'

Postposed Hausa habitual Conditional Clause

(10) ta-kàn gan shì│in ta: je: kà:suwa:.
    3S-HAB see 3S │if 3S.PERF go market
    'She always sees him when she goes to the market.'

Antitopics have a different information function from topics: as afterthoughts, antitopics are used to add some information to utterances that are usually incomplete. If Conditional Clauses have the same function as antitopics, they convey some kind of unshared knowledge that is subject to some sort of assertion.

Given the fact that the information function of Conditional Clause is not different, whether they appear on the left or the right of the main clause, we want to argue that Conditional Systems are complex utterances articulating two propositions which entertain a relation different from that of topic-comment, while each of them has its own type of assertion.

3.3   *Conditional clauses are frames*

Broadly speaking, conditionals belong to the same syntactic class as adverbial clauses. We have seen in ex. (3) that conditionals can have a temporal reading, and this ambiguity is commonly tolerated in Hausa, whereas counterfactual hypotheses are specifically marked with the discontinuous marker *dà: … dà:* (cf. ex.. 4 above).

Both adverbial and Conditional clauses appearing in the left periphery of the sentence have to be distinguished from the topic proper. We owe the proof that this left periphery has its own complex structure to Morel and Danon-Boileau (1998, 1999). It is called the 'preamble' when it is associated with a predication which functions as a rheme. Within the preamble, the 'topic' has to be distinguished from the 'frame'. The topic is a referential construct which will become an argument of the rheme; the frame is the area in which the predication holds true. Conditionals and initial adjuncts are just different types of frames.

3.4   *Conditional clauses and activated propositions*

Lambrecht (1994) notices that initial adverbial clauses in English bear a special type of stress. Now, in English, stress has always been associated with focus while topics are never focussed. Stress indicates the existence of an assertion-bearing element, whereas the topic is not asserted. Lambrecht interprets this stress as a mark of *reactivation* :

> "the function of the accent is to reactivate the referent of the presupposed proposition and to announce its role as a scene-setting topic for the main-clause proposition." (Lambrecht 1994: 219)

However, not all adverbial clauses are presupposed, and conditionals are not, as we have seen above. In the same way that initial adverbial clauses in English seem to share stress with focus, some African languages seem to have a common structure for Conditional Clauses and focus.

4   **Conditionals and focus**

4.1   *Polci (SBW ; Northern Nigeria)*

In Polci, a Chadic language of Northern Nigeria, focussed constituents and Conditional Clauses appear on the left periphery marked by the idenfifying copula *kən*, 'it is'.

Focus

(11) | wún gi kən | yu ɲen a ga: gi.
    girl DEICT COP | pour milk in calabash DEICT
    'THE GIRL poured milk into the calabash.'

Conditional

(12) | Gǎrbà kən | ndʒaŋ ło: wú ‖ ɗe kə fŭ:-m.
    Garba COP | cut meat ACC ‖ INJ 2S.SUBJ tell-1S
    'If Garba slaughters an animal (lit. GARBA slaughters an animal), tell me.'

4.2 Zoɗi (SBW ; Northern Nigeria)

The same applies to Zoɗi, another Chadic language of the same area, where the identifying copula is *si*. The following example has an ambiguous reading between conditional and focus :

(13) | sɔ́ŋ si | ní: rɔ́s-ti re: mɔ́ł ma:ŋti a ga erɔ́m ma:ŋti.
    3P FOC | FUT leave-3P go take war at near thing.of war
    'THEY will go and fight the enemies. If/when they go, they fight the enemy.'

In the following Conditional System, the protasis could be an autonomous utterance with the reading *'THEY (are the ones who) will follow them.'*:

(14) | sɔ́ŋ si | ɗo: sɔ́ŋ ŋak, ‖
    3P FOC | follow 3P ACC
    to: ta: tsúl-ti sɔ́ŋ gu doŋ sɔ́ŋ ndi.
    well 3P.PROG follow-VN 3P REL come.back 3P NEG
    'If they follow them, they leave and don't come back.'

4.3 Banda Linda (Adamawa, RCA)

This phenomenon is not limited to these few Chadic languages. It was first noticed in Banda-Linda - an Adamawa language spoken in RCA - by France Cloarec-Heiss (1982, 1995, 2000).

The "usual" Conditional System of Banda-Linda uses *ə̀də́*, 'if' to introduce the protasis, and the verb of the protasis is prefixed with *kə̀-*.

(15) <u>*ədə́*</u> gbə̀lákà <u>*kə̀*</u>-ká gáé‖
    if   tray   COND-PERF.is_finished POS
    ə̀njā̄ vɔ̂tə́-wà ónú nə̀.
    one PERF.INCH-CUT sesame   the
    'When the tray is finished, one starts cutting the sesame.' (Cloarec-Heiss 1986)

Another strategy uses the same markers as focus. In Banda-Linda, when a constituent is focussed it is fronted and followed by *kə̀* when it is the subject and *də́* when it has another syntactic function:

(16) ‖ ̄əmā̄ *kə̀* ‖ zɨ́ sə́ngbā nə̀.
    ‖ I   FOCS ‖ ACC.eat meat   the
    'I (am the one who) ate the meat.' (Cloarec-Heiss 2000)

The same structure can be observed for the Conditional System. Compare examples (18) and (19) where the Conditional Clause in (19) can stand on its own as an utterance where the subject *ə̀bə̀* is focussed:

(17) ə̀bə̀ *kə̀* gbɔ̂gbɔ̂.
    you FOCS DUR.is_strong
    'YOU are the strongest.'

(18) ə̀bə̀ <u>*kə̀*</u> gbɔ̂gbɔ̂ ‖bə̀ zá ngá zə̀ gáʃú.
    you FOCS DUR.be_strong‖you PERF.put friend_of you out
    'If you are strong, you throw your friend out.' (Cloarec-Heiss 2000)

4.4 Is the conditional clause the focus of the conditional system?

If conditional clauses are not topics, they are not focuses either. Lambrecht defines focus as "the semantic component of a pragmatically structured proposition whereby the assertion differs from the presupposition" (1994: 213). In a focus structure, the focussed argument is asserted, whereas the predication is presupposed, or preconstructed, following Caron's (2000) terminology. If the Conditional Clause (protasis) were the focus, that would make the apodosis the presupposition of the Conditional System. Now, as we saw above, both apodosis and protasis are asserted. This means that the identification which functions both in focus and conditional structures has to be accounted for in a different way.

    In Banda-Linda, the identification marker can have a thetic reading inside a presentational structure. This is the case in ex. (19) below where the narrator introduces himself at the beginning of his tale.

(19)

ə̄mə̄	méyā	nɔ́	ngɔ̀njēnɔ́	kə̀	sɔ́,	ʔá	pà
I	Méya	from	Ngonjeno	FOC.S	COP	then	say

cémà	mə̄	kó
speech.of	me	ANAPH

'I am Méya of Ngonjeno [lit. It is I, M. of N.], I will tell you a story [of my own].' (Cloarec-Heiss 2000).

(19) can be compared to the following French example where the identifier (*c'est…*, 'it is') introduces the protagonist of a story:

(20)

C'	est	Toto	qui	rentrait	de	l'	école...
it	is	Toto	who	come_back.IMPERF	from	the	school

'It's (the story) of Toto who was coming back from school.'

In examples (19) and (20), neither of the identified elements (Meya of Ngonjeno or Toto) is focussed. The sentences consist of two predications that are both asserted, and the information value of the first predication is thetic.

     Our hypothesis is that the same type of thetic identification is used in Conditional Clauses, making them work as a frame for the following apodosis.

> "With 'if', the existence of p [protasis] is constructed in relation with a second term, q [apodosis] consequent to the first. The result is a chaining relation (p implies q : if p, then q) where nothing is said about p' (complementary of p)." (Culioli 1999: 179).

If they are a frame, what type of frame are they, and the result of what type of assertion ?

5   Conditionals are fictitious assertions

From the point of view of assertion, the protasis is a fictitious assertion, i.e. " asserted from a subjective imaginary locator, detached from the present enunciator, and enabling a complex representation. " (Culioli 1999: 160). The Conditional Clause is a fictitious frame belonging to the preamble.

     The constuction of this fictitious frame is compatible with different syntactic structures such as parataxis, thetic identification, or specialized conjunctions like English *if*, or Hausa *in*, Banda *ə̀də́*. However, within the Conditional Clause, topic and focus structures can be used to build an information layering where these structures are used as a foundation for the making of the Conditional Clauses which, itself, does not work as a focus or a

topic, but as a referential frame, detached from the actual assertion situation (hic et nunc). This detachment explains the production of different referential values: temporal, habitual, future, irrealis (with the addition of specific morphemes).

The same process is used when asking a yes/no question. A yes/no question is not asserted from the point of view of polarity. The suspension of polarity has to do, from a cognitive point of view, with the fictitious assertion at work in Conditional System. Both are detached from the hic et nunc of straight assertion. This could explain the common morphological origin of yes/no question words and protasis markers in Chadic. (Frajzyngier 1996).

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Argument focus in Kar (Senufo)

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Focus theories distinguish different types of focus according to the pragmatic conditions or communicative point on the one side and different scopes of focus on the other side. The assertion in term focus constructions (Dik 1989), called by others argument focus constructions or identificational sentences (Lambrecht 1994), has the purpose of establishing a relation between an argument and an open proposition. Kar, a north-eastern Senufo language of Burkina Faso, which has the basic word order S-Aux-O-V-other, has at its disposal different strategies to mark argument focus, among them fronting of the focused item. In many West African languages the displacement of the focused argument involves other devices, such as the use of special verb forms. In Kar fronting of a focused argument requires the use of special pronouns in the out-of-focus part of the sentence, called background subject pronouns. They are used in other backgrounded contexts, too, for example in relative clauses, adverbial clauses and constituent questions. Their inconsistent use is attributed to a particular sociolinguistic situation in which the data has been collected. The use of the same focus strategies for completive and contrastive focus suggests that Kar does not distinguish pragmatic conditions on the level of sentence grammar.

1   Introduction

1.1   Theoretical considerations

Dik (1989) defines focus as a formally marked pragmatic function attaching to the most important or salient information in the given communicative setting with respect to the modifications which the speaker wishes to effect in the pragmatic information of the addressee and with respect to the further development of the discourse. Lambrecht (1994) specifies that focus is that semantic element that makes a proposition into an assertion, and consequently, into a potential piece of information. It follows that each proposition has to have a focus to be informative. Different focalizing devices like prosodic prominence,

special constituent order, focus markers and special constructions serve to distinguish several communication points on the one side and various scopes of focus on the other side.

The following typology of focus in Dik *et al.* (1981 – reproduced among others in Drubig & Schaffar 2001) and its revised version (Dik 1989, I) from which the example sentences are adopted have been established on the basis of languages like Aghem, a Grassfield Bantu language, where a rather wide range of structural distinctions in the coding of focus corresponds to differences of pragmatic conditions (Watters, cited in Dik *et al.* 1981). The main difference is that between completive and contrastive focus, whereby the last one is subdivided into some other categories as shown in figure 1. Completive focus corresponds here to an assertion X that fills the gap in an open proposition as it appears in wh-questions, reflecting the addressee's ignorance, for example in the following sequence adopted from Dik (1989, I: 328):

A: Where is John going?
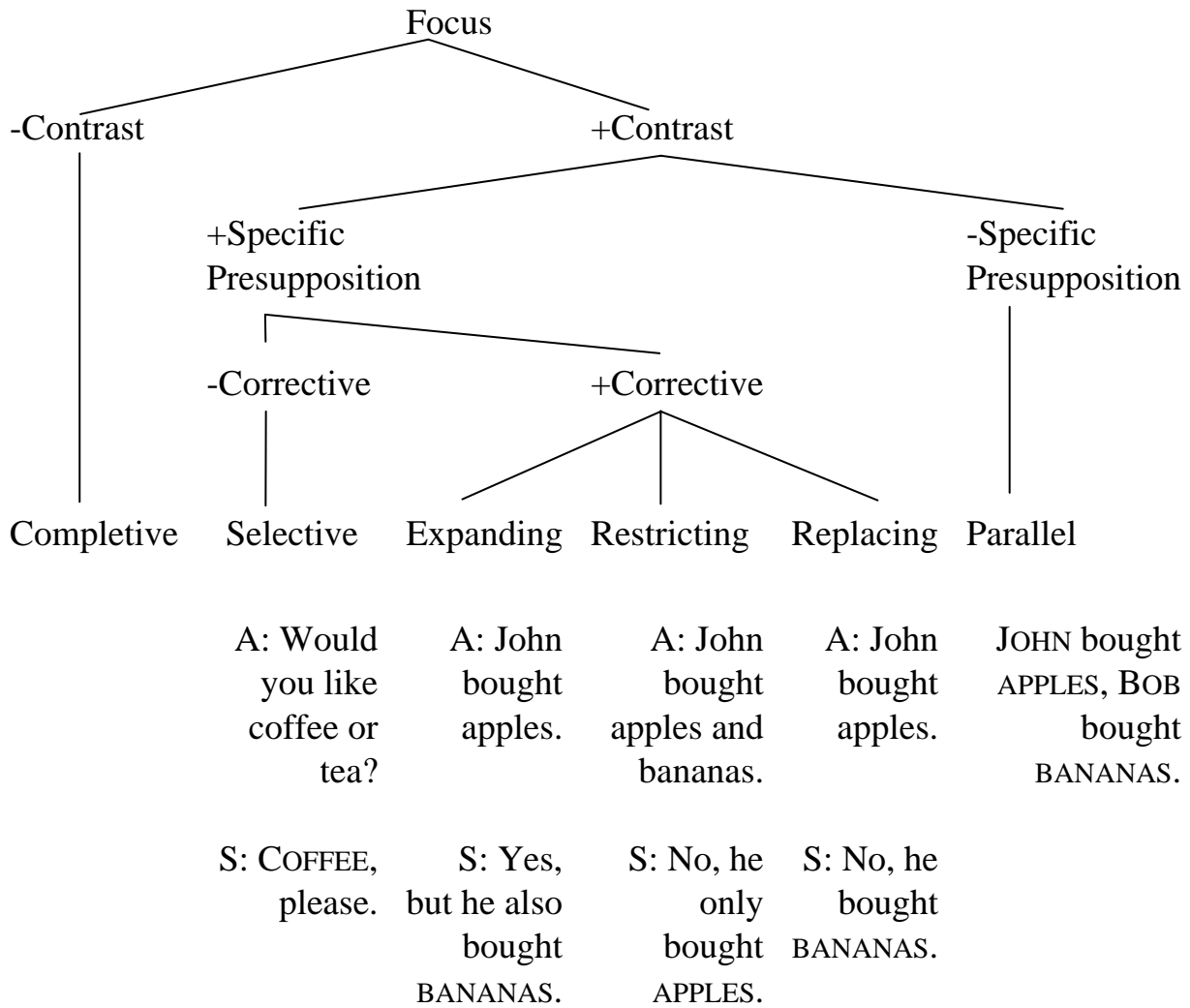B: (a) John is going to the MARKET.
       (b) To the MARKET.

Contrastive focus is a reply to the addressee's contrary belief of information. For Dik et al. (1981: 58) the term 'contrast' refers to a "[...] case in which one piece of information, say x, is explicitly or implicitly opposed to some other piece of information, say y, which stands in some specific relation of opposition to x in the given setting".

The terms of completive and contrastive focus have different synonyms in the literature: completive focus is sometimes also called presentational focus, information focus or focus of assertion, while contrastive focus is known as identificational focus, operator focus or narrow focus[1].

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[1]   See especially Kiss (1998), whose terminology is based on semantic and syntactic grounds.

Figure 1 Typology of focus according to Dik et al. (1981)

```
                              Focus
                 ┌──────────────┴──────────────┐
           -Contrast                        +Contrast
               │                 ┌──────────────┴──────────────┐
               │            +Specific                      -Specific
               │          Presupposition                 Presupposition
               │          ┌──────┴──────────┐                  │
               │      -Corrective        +Corrective           │
               │          │        ┌───────┼───────┐           │
          Completive  Selective  Expanding Restricting Replacing  Parallel
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	Selective	Expanding	Restricting	Replacing	Parallel
	A: Would you like coffee or tea?	A: John bought apples.	A: John bought apples and bananas.	A: John bought apples.	JOHN bought APPLES, BOB bought BANANAS.
	S: COFFEE, please.	S: Yes, but he also bought BANANAS.	S: No, he only bought APPLES.	S: No, he bought BANANAS.	

While some, but not all languages, make distinctions in the coding of focus types according to the pragmatic conditions mentioned above, most languages distinguish the coding of focus according to its scope. Dik (1989, I: 330) makes out constructions where one of the following constituents is in focus:

1) a predicate operator, like in: John HASn't painted the house, he IS painting it right now,
2) the predicate itself or a part of it: I didn't PAINT the house, I REpainted it,
3) a term, (subject or another term) as demonstrated in the examples above where the different types of focus have been discussed.

Lambrecht (1994), who among others is interested in pragmatic functions topic and focus as constituent parts of information structure, does not distinguish Dik's categories 1) and 2), subsuming them under the type he calls topic-

comment sentences. The purpose of the assertion of topic-comment sentences is to "pragmatically predicate some property of an already established discourse referent" (Lambrecht 1994: 126). Topic-comment sentences where the focus is on the predicate constitute the unmarked type of sentences. Dik's category 3) corresponds to Lambrecht's identificational sentence where the assertion has the purpose of establishing a relation between an argument and an open proposition. Here, the focus is on the argument. Additionally to Dik's categories, Lambrecht (1994: 233ff) recognizes another kind of sentences, the event-reporting sentences. The assertion in these sentences has the purpose of expressing "a proposition which is linked neither to an already established topic nor to a presupposed open proposition" (Lambrecht 1994: 126). The focus lies here on the entire sentence, which means on the argument(s) and the predicate. These structures correspond to thetic sentences, lacking a topic and thus lacking the bipartite structure of topic and comment characteristic of categorical sentences. They are found in replies to the question 'what happened?' or 'what's the matter', for ex. in the German: 'Mein HALS tut weh', 'My THROAT hurts' as opposed to the categorical sentence 'Der HALS tut mir weh', 'My THROAT hurts', having an argument focus interpretation (Lambrecht 1994: 256).

1.2 The aims of the paper

In this paper, some aspects of focus in Kar, a Northeastern Senufo language of Burkina Faso, will be discussed. After the presentation of some typological characteristics of Kar, I shall describe the main focusing devices of argument focus. The main focus strategies in Kar will be exemplified on clauses with different arguments in focus (syntactic subject, direct object and oblique object), whereby special attention will be paid to the marking of the out-of-focus part of the sentences. Subsequently I shall discuss the question whether the language disposes of special formal means to differentiate the pragmatic conditions shown in Figure 1 above, in which case it would resemble languages like Aghem, or whether the means to code different types of focus are identical, which would make Kar more similar to Wambon, a Papuan language of Irian Jaya (Vries 1985).

1.3 The Kar language

Kar has, like other Senufo languages, the word order S - Aux - O - V - Other, where 'other' represents oblique objects or satellites, usually followed by a postposition. Nouns are distributed in 8 classes mostly according to their semantic properties. Six of them form singular - plural genders, the other two

assemble non-countable entities. A vast system of pronouns and determiners is equally organised in those noun classes[2].

The Kar verbs display primarily an aspect distinction: apart from a lexical base, each verb appears in perfective and imperfective forms, distinguished on the tonal level. However, the tonal distinction between the verb bases is neutralized when the verb is preceded by an object. In such cases, the tone of the object determines the tonal shape of the following verb, while the tone of the subject pronoun and eventually any auxiliary morphemes indicate tense, modality and aspect distinctions.

Following is an example of a sentence with an unmarked predicate focus, bearing the canonical word order Subject - Auxiliaries - Object - Verb - Other, as shown in example (1).

(1) ù   ga   nàa   dyìgì wɛ̃̀ɛ̃̀ ma   kɨ̃̀
     PR1   FUT   PROG   food   give   2SG   to
     S   Aux   O   V   indO
     'He will provide you with food.' (lit. He will be giving food to you.)
     (Musa 0885)

1.4   The data

The discussion of focus in Kar is based on data gathered in the town of Banfora in Burkina Faso in the context of the linguistic project A1 of the SFB/FK 560 at the University of Bayreuth. It consists of free interviews between different pairs of Kar speakers, resulting in conversational dialogues. According to Vries (1985: 171), conversational dialogues belong to this type of discourse where "[...] the development of saliency is generally more complex [...]" than in narrative discourse for example, in which topic continuity, which means the establishment and the maintenance of a topic is more important. Vries specifies that in conversations "[...] the speaker thinks the hearer needs more guidance as to what information he should pick up as salient" (1985: 171). Actually, the Kar data originating from conversations displays a great number of different focus constructions that will be exemplified in the following sections.

2   Focus strategies in Kar

Under the title of emphasis ('*emphase*', '*mise en relief*') Creissels (1978) lists a number of focus devices appearing in more than twenty West African languages from different language families. He concentrates on sentences bearing

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[2]   Cf. Dombrowsky-Hahn (to appear).

argument focus and identifies an important range of focus devices which include a special morphology and word order change. According to the language under consideration, a special morpheme is 1) connected to the argument in focus (it follows or precedes it), and very often it is identical with the identificational morpheme ('*prédicat d'identification*') or 2) it is connected to the verb (here Creissels subsumes also the use of only tonally different verb forms in a marked vis-à-vis the unmarked sentence) or 3) it appears in the final position of the sentence. Word order change is applied differently according to the language: some languages do not displace the focused argument, making use exclusively of focusing *in situ*. Where the focused item is displaced in the initial position of the sentence, a pronoun may or may not recall the referent in its usual position. The author mentions that coexistence of different devices in one language is not rare; sometimes their use is conditioned by the syntactical nature of the focused constituent[3].

We shall see that the last of Creissels' statements is valid for Kar sentences with a focused argument. Among the strategies mentioned by the author we find constructions with focusing *in situ* using special focus morphemes, simple fronting of the focused item, fronting accompanied by a special focus morpheme following it and fronting accompanied by an identificational morpheme called a cleft construction even though it is very different from clefts in English or French. In addition, in all the constructions where displacement of the focused constituent is one of the focus devices it is combined to another one, not occurring in the sample of languages studied by Creissels: a special subject pronoun occurring in the out-of-focus part of the sentence.

2.1 *Focusing in situ*

Constructions where the focused term, followed by a special morpheme, remains in its usual position are not as frequent as constructions with a displaced constituent. Most frequently, the accompanying morphemes are those expressing contrast implicitly, such as *ya* 'only' and *gɛɛ* 'even', both invariable morphemes. More rarely a general focusing morpheme is found, bearing the form C-*oò*, corresponding to the paradigm of emphatic pronouns shown in table (1), which appear in agreement to the noun class of the referent. As will be demonstrated later, this kind of morpheme is frequently used with displacement

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[3] Creissels' interpretation is a structural study in reply to a typological account of emphasis phenomena by the generative linguist Maurice Coyaud. Creissels does not consider pragmatic conditions that may require different focus devices in a language. Given the scarcity of the material he had at his disposal for the study this wouldn't even have been possible.

of the focused argument. Following a focused noun, the morpheme shows a variable tonal behaviour according to the tone of the noun. Alternatively the bare form of the morpheme, lacking the class marking consonant, sometimes with a glide, *oò* ou *woò* is used independently of the noun class to which the referent belongs.

Table 1: Noun class system of Kar with simple and emphatic pronouns

singular classes		plural classes	
emphatic	simple	simple	emphatic
woò	1. u	2. pɩ	poò
koò	3. kɩ	4. tɩ	toò
loò	5. lɩ	6. kɩ	koò
classes of uncountables			
emphatic	simple		
toò	7. tɩ		
poò	8. pɩ		

The emphatic personal pronouns have, at least in the singular, similar forms (table 2):

Table 2: First and second person pronouns

Person	simple	emphatic pronoun
1sg	n (ta)	ndoò
2sg	ma	mboò
1pl	wó	wéè
2pl	yé	yéè

The following utterance (2), a contrastive parallel construction containing two clauses, each with a direct object in focus[4], exemplifies both kinds of focus morphemes: the first clause displays the contrastive morpheme *gɛɛ* 'even', the second one the general focus morpheme *loò* of class 5, in agreement with the reference noun *wãl* 'matter'. The verbs have opposite meaning; the first one being the negation of the second, the direct objects refer to entities which are elements of a set in the sense defined by Myhill & Xing (1996).

(2)   *[Context: The sentence is uttered by a speaker reporting an accident which occurred when he was crossing a large river on a slippery log,*

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[4]   The two propositions are in fact interrupted by a relative, which is an explanative digression. This is why the different subject morpheme is used in the second proposition.

carrying a big sack of corn. He had fallen into the deep water together with the food.]

bɔ̃	wò	sí̃	sì̃		naa	dyìr	wá̃l	gɛɛ	kà	yɛ̌
well	1PL	NEG	however		PROG	food	matter5	even	think	NEG

...

wo	n	kɪ	ndoò	yɛ̀rɛ̂	wã̃lìgì	wá̃l	loo	kà.
1PL	DS	DEF3	1SG.EMPH	own(<Dy)	coming.out	matter5	EM5	think

'We didn't even consider the problem of the food, it was the problem of my own coming out we were thinking about.' (Seku 236-238)

2.2   Focusing by fronting

Fronting as a focus strategy involves some other devices, especially the use of particular subject pronouns in the out-of-focus part of the sentence and the use of a prefix in certain aspectual forms of the verb. As they are the same for the three fronting strategies described below, they will be given in detail only once, within the section 2.2.1.

2.2.1 Simple fronting

The most common strategy to focus a term is its fronting. If the focused item is a noun, it is just put in the initial position of the clause. The following two clauses are pragmatically distinct, (3a) is unmarked, and (3b) bears a focus on the fronted direct object *wápwɔ̀*.

(3)   a. | wo | naa | wápwɔ̀ | dyi | yàʔàmbaa. |
|-----|-----|---------|-----|-----------|
| 1PL | PROG | cowrie1 | eat | moreover |

'Furthermore we used to spend cowries.'

b.   *[Context: The speaker has already spoken about some differences between former times and the current period. Now he approaches the subject 'means of payment'. Money, the term that cowrie is contrasted with, is mentioned later.]*

wápwɔ̀	roo	nàà	ndyî	yàʔàmbaa.
cowrie1	1PLBACK	PROG	IP-eat	moreover

'Furthermore, it is cowries we used to spend (lit. to eat).' (Ournan 0228)

Beyond the position of the focused item, preverbal in the unmarked, sentence initial in the marked sentence, the comparison of the two utterances above shows two other differences. First, the simple subject pronoun in the unmarked sentence (3a) *wó* 'we', is replaced by the background subject pronoun *roo* in the out-of-focus part of (3b), a clause where the direct object is displaced. The pronoun *roo* belongs to a paradigm of pronouns shown in table (3). The corresponding paradigm of third person pronouns is given in table (4). It is interesting to consider their form: the first and second person and the class 1 background pronouns maintain and lengthen the vowel of their simple counterparts, the initial consonant *t-* (often realised *r-*) being here characteristic of the feature 'backgrounding'. The third person background pronouns except the one of class 1 on the other hand show the consonants characteristic of the noun classes and the vowel *-ii*. The contexts of their use will be discussed below in section 3.

Table 3: First and second person simple pronouns and background subject pronouns

Person	simple	background subject pronoun
1sg	n (ta)	**tĩ ~ rĩ**
2sg	ma	**t**aa ~ **r**aa
1pl	wó	**t**oo ~ **r**oo
2pl	yé	**t**ee ~ **r**ee

Table 4: Third person (noun class) simple pronouns and background subject pronouns

singular classes		plural classes	
background	simple	simple	background
tuu ~ **r**uu	1. u	2. pɪ	bii ~ pii
kii	3. kɪ	4. tɪ	tii ~ rii
lii	5. lɪ	6. kɪ	kii
classes of uncountables			
background	simple		
tii ~ rii	7. tɪ		
bii	8. pɪ		

The second difference between ex. (3a) and (3b) concerns the verb forms used. In the unmarked sentence the verb *dyî* is directly preceded by the object; in the sentence with a fronted object the verb *ndyî* is not immediately preceded by the object and shows therefore a nasal prefix assimilating to the initial consonant of the verb. The nasal prefix on the verb appears in the imperfective aspect (including the progressive) when there is no direct object immediately preceding the verb. The most common context of the occurrence of this feature (which is well known in many Senufo languages) is their use as intransitive verbs, the reason why the prefix is called 'intransitive prefix'.

It is worth mentioning that if a part of a noun phrase has to be focused such as for example a numeral quantifying a noun, it is the entire noun phrase that is fronted. This is demonstrated in ex. (4a)

(4)   a.   *[Context: Asked 'How many years have you spent in Ivory Coast?', the speaker answers:]*

        dyè   bwɔ̀   tóó   pyè   dugu le.
        years6(B)   five   1PLBACK(B) do.PF   forest in(B)
        'We have spent five years in Côte d'Ivoire.' (Mlata 0119)

Correspondingly, the simplest answer to the interviewer's question, leaving out the out-of-focus part, would not be the quantifier alone but the entire noun phrase:

      b.   dyè   bwɔ̀.
          years6(B)   five
          'Five.'

In the above mentioned examples (3b, 4a) the focused argument is the direct object. Of course, other arguments can be focused, too. Example (5a) illustrates a focused subject. Its neutral counterpart would be example (5b). As its usual position is already sentence initial, a focused subject is not displaced but it is however recalled in the out-of-focus part of the sentence. So the differences between (5a) and (5b) are the following: the clause (5a) with a focused subject bears an emphatic first person pronoun *wéè*, instead of a simple *wó*, and it is resumed by the background subject pronoun *róó*[5].

(5)   a.   *[Context:The speaker was asked about all the people working in his workplace. Having listed all of them, the speaker resumes ...]*

wéè	róó	tũ̀n	tũ̀	ŋ́wò.
1PLEM	1PLBACK:IMPF	work5(B)	work(B)	here

‘It's us who are working here.’ (Musa 0269)

       b.

wó	tũ̀n	tũ̀	ŋ́wò.
1PL:IMPF	work5(B)	work(B)	here

‘We are working here.’

Beyond direct objects and subjects, indirect objects and satellites can be focused by means of fronting. In the neutral form of a sentence, they follow the verb and, most of the time, are marked by a postposition. This is demonstrated in clause (6a):

(6)   a.

wò	wíì	cã	kɩ	fla	nà
1PL	1PLREF	know.PF	DEF3	place	at

‘We knew each other in that place.’

When focused, they are fronted without the postposition as ex. (6b) illustrates. In the mentioned example there is no case ambiguity, as the direct object (*wíì*) is present in the presupposed part of the clause.

       b.

tɛ́ɛ̀	koò	fla	too	wíì	cã?
isn't.it	EM3	place	1PLBACK	1PLREF	know.PF

‘Isn't it in that place that we knew each other?’ (Mlata 0509)

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[5]   The high tone on the pronoun *roo* marks imperfective aspect.

As in the examples illustrating a subject and a direct object focused by fronting, here too the subject of the out-of-focus part is coded by a background subject pronoun.

Cases of focused indirect objects or satellites are rather rare. Concerning the latter ones one can hypothesise that this may be due to the fact that, according to Givón, optional elements attract the scope of assertion even in the usual word order, so focusing seems to be less necessary than in the case of a direct object for example.

2.2.2 *Fronting + focus morpheme*

The fronted item may be followed by any of the focus morphemes already mentioned: the morphemes implying contrast as for example *ya* 'only' and the morphemes corresponding to the emphatic pronouns. Ex. (7) contains a focused direct object, (8) a focused subject.

(7)   *[Context: The speaker calculates the years spent on migration according*
       to his age.]

       kı   fȁbáá   wòò rĩ   gá pìì   ŋ̀wààlâ
       PR3   big.part(<Dy)1 EM1 1SG:BACK go do.PF there
       lúgù   laam   wô
       forest inside in
       'It's the biggest part (of my life) I have spent in Ivory Coast.' (Seku 198)

(8)   *[Context: When asked to tell a story, the speaker, an old man, answers*
       that he has forgotten a lot. Then he explains that being a youngster he
       used to pass whole nights telling stories, but getting older ....]

       <u>láá   lòò</u>   lii   yí   ŋ̀kȃȁ̀   ma   nà
       INDEF5   EM5   BACK5   get.out IP-get.off:IMPF   2SG   on
       '(When you get older), things start to slip your mind (in the sense of 'there
       is even a lot that slips your mind').' (Ournan 0375).

2.2.3 *Fronting + identification morpheme*

The third kind of coding focus to be discussed here is a cleft construction, making use of an identification morpheme. The same identification morpheme functions as predicate in independent clauses. Its forms, figuring in the outside columns of table (5), agree with the noun class to which the focused item belongs.

Table 5: Identification morphemes

singular classes		plural classes	
ident. morph.	simple pronoun	simple pronoun	ident. morph.
wṹ ~ kĩ̀	1. u	2. pɩ	mì
kĩ̀ ~ ŋì	3. kɪ	4. tɪ	nì
nì	5. lɪ	6. kɪ	kĩ̀
classes of uncountables			
ident. morph.	simple pronoun		
nì	7. tɪ		
mì	8. pɪ		

Used in independent clauses, these morphemes have the function of identification or classification. In the data they appear often as commentaries or explanations of the discourse, interrupting it more than adding something to the thread of the discourse. They can thus be designated as thetic utterances (cf. Sasse 1987). This is the case in ex. (9), an extract of a conversation.

(9)　*[Context: The speaker was told the story of people who had to abandon their villages because the government established sugar cane fields on their surface. To save their goods, especially cowries, the villagers hid them in holes in the ground. However, strangers dug them out. The conversation partner goes on with the story after the following interruption.]*

　　éeè　　kapã̀-pee　　　nì
　　EXCL　　speech-bad5　　IDENT5
　　'It is bad speech.' (Ournan 0337)

The same morphemes are used as focus morphemes in sentences with a fronted argument (10) and (11). The out-of-focus parts are characterized by the features required when an argument is fronted.

(10)   *[Context: Asked about the difference of the Kar dialects spoken by the speaker and her husband and about what conditions the language one speaks she explains that one's natal village is decisive.]*

      lér   klò   yùr   nì   raa   gà   nàa
      EM5(B) village5 language7 IDENT7 2SG.BACK FUT   PROGR
      mpã̰̀.
      PI:speak:IMPF
      'It is the language of this village (the one you are born in) you will speak.'
      (Mlata 0200)

Example (11) illustrates the possibility of multiple marking of a focused item. Here, the negative question with a focused subject is marked by the identification morpheme *wṵ̀* and, in addition, by the morpheme *ya* 'only', implying a restriction.

(11)   *[Context: The addressee has spoken about his work. The place being rather big, it seems not to be possible that the addressee is the only person working there.]*

      mboò   nìn   ya   sî́   wṵ̀   táá   tĩ̀n   tĩ̀
      2SGEM   one1 only NEG IDENT1 2SGBACK:IMPF work5 work
      ŋ́wò   yè   rɛ?
      here   NEG FOC
      'But of course, you are not the only one who is working here, are you?'
      (Musa 0256)

The structure of the affirmative clause (12) is very similar to the negative question (11) with the only exception that in (12) the focused item is a satellite. As in all other utterances with a fronted satellite, the postposition common in unmarked sentences (here it would be *kaʃıgı nìŋ ya* **nà**) is dropped:

(12)   *[Context: The speaker reports that during his stay in Ivory Coast he has lived near a river.]*

bɔ̃   kaɣɪgɪ nɪ̀ŋ   ya   ŋɪ̀   róó   ǹdyɛ̌l,
well   tree3   one3 only IDENT3   1PL:BACK IP:cross
kɪ́   sɪ̋   mà   latã́ãŋgbã̂ŋ
PR3   however   COP   stream-big
'Well, it's only a log we use to cross (the river), although it is a large stream.' (Seku 207-209)

3   Problem of coding the out-of-focus portion of the clause

All three strategies involving fronting display the following characteristics: The fronted focused item is not resumed in the out-of-focus part of the sentence, except for a focused subject. Furthermore, in all constructions mentioned so far, we find only pronouns filling the subject function in the presupposed part of the sentence. This is not surprising, as the presupposed information concerns given participants or old information, characteristically subject to pronominalization (Chafe 1976). According to Lambrecht (1994), pronouns embody the participants that are considered to be active in the auditor's consciousness, most typically, active topics. In the examples presented up to now, the subject pronoun in the presupposed part of the sentence is what is called here background subject pronoun.

The background subject pronoun, called "*pronom thématisé*" or "*substitutif thématisé*" by Wichser in her description of Kar (1994: 280), is defined by the author as a subject pronoun representing the least informative term in a sentence. According to the author, special forms of this pronoun exist only for the first and second person pronouns and for class 1. In the other classes the simple pronoun with high tone takes over the function of a '*pronom thématisé*'. In our data however, the oldest of our informants uses forms for the other noun classes, too, as can be seen in table 4 and in ex. (8). On the other hand, we find a lot of examples where the simple pronoun (not always with high tone) is used in the subject function within the presupposed part, even if it is the first or second person pronoun. This is illustrated in utterance (13), which is only one of numerous cases where the presupposed part of the sentence starts with a simple (or another, for instance an emphatic) subject pronoun (here *ǹ*).

(13) *[Context: A merchant talking about the languages she speaks: If I hadn't travelled...]*

tš	wË¨r		ya	Ø̱n̲	ga	nš		nØaa
DEF7	Tiéfora.language		only	1SG	FUT	NON-actual		PROGR

 m̀pã̀ã̌.
IP:speak
'...I would have known to speak only the dialect of Tiéfora.' (Juma 399)

Background subject pronouns appear in several other contexts beyond the out-of-focus parts of sentences with a fronted focused item. In all of the contexts the referent of the background subject pronoun is considered to be active in the auditor's consciousness and belongs to backgrounded information.

1) It appears in restrictive relative clauses modifying definite head nouns. Definite head nouns and the events coded in the relative clauses modifying them are identifiable, known or familiar to the addressee. Ex. (14) is a relative clause with the emphatic first person plural pronoun *wéè* in subject function determined by the relative pronoun of class 2, *m̋pȉ̀ɲ* and resumed by the first person plural background subject pronoun *too*:

(14) *[Context: The speaker was asked about the persons who work with him at his work place.]*

wéè	m̋pȉ̀ɲ	tóó	tȕ̀n	tȕ̀	ŋ̋wò,
1PLEM	REL2(B)	1PLBACK:IMPF	work5(B)	work(B)	here

wéé	mà	naweè	tã̀ã̌
1PLEM	COP	people2	three

'We who are working here we are three persons.' (Musa 0262)

2) Another context of use of background subject pronouns is in adverbial clauses of time indicating the simultaneity of the events expressed in the subordinated clause and in the main clause. Usually the information conveyed in such an adverbial clause is backgrounded and has been mentioned before. In ex. (15) the speaker has just mentioned that he has spent 20 years in Ivory Coast, so the adverbial clause conveys some known, presupposed information, creating the background of the following main clause.

(15) too   gá   fɔ́   dyè,   ta   nalɔɔ bíí   kà
      1PLBACK go   do.for.the.first.time enter.PF 1SG uncle PAST(L) go
      ra   nɪ̀.
      1SG with
      'When we went (to Côte d'Ivoire) for the first time, my (maternal) uncle
      went with me.' (Seku 0201)

It is not surprising to name the relative and the adverbial clauses side by side
using the same kind of pronoun. Usually time adverbial clauses can be
paraphrased as relative clauses, with which they often share properties
(Thompson & Longacre 1985).

      3) Other contexts displaying the background subject pronouns are
constituent questions where the constituent consisting of or containing a
question word is clefted. This construction, called by Dik Q-Focus (exemplified
in ex. 16 and 18) because of its resemblance to focus cleft constructions,
alternates in Kar with constituent Q-Pattern questions where the question word
constituent is placed *in situ* (exemplified in 17) (Dik 1997: 278). Of course, it is
only the Q-Focus construction that bears a background subject pronoun within
the presupposed part.

(16) *[Context: If you meet some Karaboro from another village, for example*
      from Boussara, Séréfédougou or Ténguéréla, do you understand each
      other?]

      làà   yòr   ríí   nì   r<u>éé</u>   m̀-pã̀ã̀?
      or   language7   INTER7   IDENT7 2PLBACK:IMPF   IP-speak
      'Or, otherwise what language do you speak?' (Oti 0501)

(17) *[Context: Following a conversation about the parents' languages:]*

      àpɪ   rícàr, <u>póó</u>   yòr   riipã̀ã̀?
      and   DEF2   children PR2EM language7   INTER7   speak
      'And the children, what language do they speak?' (Mlata 0222)

These are the main contexts of use of the background subject pronoun. Their
inconsistent use has been observed in the presupposed part of clauses with
fronted or clefted focus items and in their interrogative counterparts, the
constituent questions with a clefted question word. As it is rather uncommon for
a language to have two forms for exactly the same function, this brings about the

question what conditions the use of one or the other kind of pronoun in such contexts.

It was not possible for me to see a functional distinction in the use of the one or the other sort of pronoun in clauses bearing argument focus: its use neither seems to depend on the aspect of the verb nor on the variety of the focus construction – simple fronting, fronting with a focus morpheme or cleft construction – nor on some nuance of the pragmatic conditions. What is more, sometimes, even the same speaker alternates between the use of the simple and the background pronoun when uttering almost the same question with different conversation partners as can be seen in examples (18) where it is a single person he addresses and (19) where two persons are the addressees:

(18) tĩ̀n   lii   nì   ráá   n̄-tĩ̀   Gbààfɔ   nà
work5 INTER5 IDENT5 2SGBACK:IMPF IP-work Banfora in
ma   pwai   nî?
2SG husband with
'What work are you and your husband doing in Banfora?' (Juma 091; speaker: D.S.)

(19) tĩ̀n   lii   nì   yé   n̄-tĩ̀   cigɩgɩ
work5 INTER5 IDENT5 2PL:IMPF IP-work.IMPF precisely
kɪ   dyḕ   gbeɲ   ŋgìì   laam   wô?
DEF6 years6 20 DEM6 interior in
'What work have you been doing precisely during those 20 years?'
(Mlata 0130; speaker: D.S.)

While working on the texts with my main informant, she accepted replacing all the occurrences of a simple pronoun in subject function of the presupposed part of the focus constructions with a background subject pronoun.

The use of simple pronouns instead of background subject pronouns in contexts with an evident argument focus structure seems to be due to the situation in the urban context from which the texts have been taken. In the town of Banfora, Kar speakers live together with speakers of about 40 other languages, using more and more the lingua franca Dyula to communicate with each other. The frequent use of the lingua franca has a detrimental effect on the Kar language, insofar as the second generation only occasionally speaks the parental language and the first generation is losing a number of distinctions in the language. The loss of the distinction between pronouns used especially in presupposed pieces of an utterance and those used in non-presupposed parts is only one point in a series of reductions and simplifications observed in the data. The fact that only our oldest informant uses some other forms of the background

subject pronouns than those indicated by Wichser in her description (1994) corroborates the hypothesis of the process of loss of an entire function.

4 Coding of focus in different pragmatic conditions

In the previous sections the different focusing devices existing in Kar have been described. Their coexistence raises the question if it is the communication point that requires the choice of one or the other constructions. It has been mentioned in the introductory notes to the theoretical ideas about focus that some languages subdivide the saliency dimension into several types of saliency on the level of sentence grammar. This is the case of the often cited Aghem. Other languages such as Wambon, a Papuan language do not (de Vries 1985). Neither does Supyire, a Senufo language related to Kar, where the same strategies are used in contrastive focus and in the so called 'strong focus of assertion' (Carlson 1994:468), displayed in replies to constituent questions. Kar seems to behave in a similar way. So cases with clear restrictive focus, using the implicit contrast morpheme *ya* 'only' occur with all focus strategies: focusing *in situ* (cf. ex. 21) and fronting with (ex. 10) or without (ex.14) the identification morpheme.

(21)   *[Context: Differences between former times and the actual period. Roads and vehicles are contrasted with paths and walking.]*

      yè   hɪ̃̀   ga   nàa   ɲɲã̀ã̀r trɛ̀ɛ̀ ya   nî   kɪ   rǎŋ
      2PL then FUT PROGR IP:walk feet4 only on DEF3 way
      'You were then walking (lit. on foot) only.' (Ournan 0986)

On the other hand, completive focus occurs coded in several strategies described, too. Thus, the pragmatic conditions seem neutralized, resulting in the same strategies for completive and for contrastive focus.

Myhill & Xing (1996) in their outline of an operational definition of contrast discuss the problem of a correspondence between such a function as 'contrast' and one particular construction. They state that there is not necessarily any construction which is only or always used for a function like 'contrast'. This means that a categorical correspondence between one function and one particular construction may not exist. Instead, one is likely to find strong statistical correlations between the function of contrast and the use of a particular construction (Myhill & Xing 1996:304). However, at the time being, such a statistical analysis of the Kar data is not possible and remains a project for the future.

In conclusion I shall summarise my main findings: I have shown the main focusing strategies of a term in Kar consisting of fronting the focused item and a

cleft construction. While the combination of the focused item with a focus morpheme is optional in the strategies comprising fronting, it seems to be obligatory for the focusing *in situ*. In constructions with a fronted focused term, Kar bears some special forms in the presupposed part of the clause, distinguished from those appearing in unmarked clauses. It resembles several other languages in this point. However, while languages such as Wolof (Robert 2000) or Hausa (Creissels 1975) exhibit special verb forms in this part of the construction, Kar shows special subject pronouns, called background subject pronouns. The inconsistency of coding the subject within the presupposed part of clauses containing a focused constituent raised the question if there is some conditioning of the use of background subject pronouns versus simple pronouns. As no morphological, syntactic or pragmatic condition for the use of the one or the other sort of pronoun could be identified, and as the younger speakers have a reduced set of background subject pronouns, I have attributed the inconsistent use to a sociolinguistic situation bringing about simplification and loss in diverse areas of the language.

5   List of abbreviations

(<D)	borrowing from the lingua franca Dyula (Mande)	BACK	background subject pronoun
		DEF	definite marking
(B)	variant from the dialect of Boussara	DS	different subject
		EM	emphatic pronoun
(L)	variant from the dialect of Labola	FUT	future
		IDENT	identification morpheme
1PL	first person plural pronoun	IMPF	imperfective
1PLBACK	first person plural background subject pronoun	INDEF	indefinite pronoun
		INTER	interrogative pronoun
		IP	intransitive prefix
1PLREF	first person plural reflexive pronoun	PF	perfective
		PR	third person simple pronoun
2SG	second person singular simple pronoun	PROG	progressive
		REL	relative pronoun and determiner
2SGEM	second person singular emphatic pronoun	5	class 5 (etc.)

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Syntactic focus marking in Khoekhoe ("Nama/Damara")

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Khoekhoe syntax exhibits an unusually flexible constituent structure. Any constituent with a lexical head can be preposed into the focal initial slot immediately before the PGN-marker that marks the subject position. Two strategies of focalisation by foregrounding need to be distinguished: inversion and fronting. Inversion amounts to an inversion of subject and predicate in their entirety. Such sentences have two readings, though, according to their underlying constituent structure: "predicative" or "copulative". Fronting amounts to the preposing of a lexical constituent into the focal initial slot, with subsequent dislocation of the lexical specification of the subject from that slot.

The present analysis has wider implications, particularly:

The generally accepted view that Khoekhoe has coreferential/equational "copulative" sentences of the type $NP_{subject} = NP_{complement}$ is a fallacy. Such sentences actually are sentences with their predicate fronted into the focal initial slot. They amount to cleft constructions.

The fact that the primary focal position is immediately before the PGN-marker of the subject is further independent evidence for the "desentential hypothesis", according to which subject and object NPs in the underlying matrix sentence consist of only an enclitic PGN-marker, and for the claim that Khoekhoe underlyingly is a SVO language, not a SOV language as generally held. By implication these findings affect the analysis of other Central Khoesaan languages.

1   Introduction

Khoekhoe[1], which is spoken in Namibia and is the largest surviving Central Khoesaan language, exhibits a remarkably flexible constituent structure in its

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[1]   For the sake of brevity this language, which in Namibia now is designated officially by its revived original name *Khoekhoegowab* ("*Khoekhoe* language"), is referred to here as *Khoekhoe*. The unitary name *Khoekhoegowab* avoids the undue prominence given to the

syntax. It will be argued in this paper that this is due to the fact that Khoekhoe is a discourse-oriented language, i.e. that, subject to certain grammatical constraints, in Khoekhoe it is information-packaging devices which determine surface word order, rather than the grammatical rôles of constituents. This paper will deal with some formal strategies of information coding in Khoekhoe, rather than pragmatic issues, as pragmatically distinct types of focus (e.g. presentational vs. contrastive focus) do not appear to elicit syntactic strategies that are mutually exclusive. The paper will moreover be confined to syntactic strategies of focus marking, ignoring the use of prosodic prominence, which is often applied in the post-subjectival position of syntactically unmarked sentences.

Khoekhoe is a *rheme-first* type of language. Conventionally it is viewed as an SOV language. This contention is based on pragmatically least marked sentences like (1), in which the subject and object NPs are lexically specified, i.e. consist of a lexical word category, in addition to a PGN-marker:

(1)	NP$_{subject}$	(S.TYPE)	NP$_{object}$		TAM	VERB
	Ao+b+Ø	*ge*	*tara+s+a*		*ra*	*mû*
	man+III.M.S+NOM	IND	woman+III.F.S+OBL		PR	see
	'THE/A MAN is seeing the/a woman.'[2]					

It will be maintained in this paper, though, that Khoekhoe underlyingly is an SVO language.[3] As pragmatically least marked strategy the focus allocation can vary in this canonical sentence and would be marked by stress differentiation. Depending on the pragmatic context, the subject here actually may present the thematic topic, not the focus, even though its lexical specification occupies the

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ethnolects of either the Nama or Damara, and does not exclude smaller ethnicities like the Haiǁom, who also speak the language.

[2] A list of the abbreviations used is given at the end of the paper.

[3] Comparative evidence from other Central Khoesaan languages supports this claim, as in these languages post-verbal PGN-markers cross-reference to lexically specified objects before the verb; e.g. ǁGani (data adapted from Friederike Wilkening, unpublished handout):

khoe+ ma	*khoe+ hF*	*â*	*ci*
person 3MS	person 3FS	know	3FS
'He knows her.'			

Similar examples of "object agreement" are discussed in Vossen 1985: 80-81.

In ǂĀkhoe too, a peripheral dialect of Khoekhoe, the lexically specified object can co-occur with the OM, e.g. *Khoes ge **khoe-ōreba** ge !gamme bi* (A woman married a cannibal).

initial slot (see below). The object could be secondary focus marked by stress. In its least marked reading this type of sentence is a presentational or event-reporting sentence with sentence-focus structure. Focus allocation that is more marked would resort to a syntactic permutation, as will be discussed.

1.1   *The desentential hypothesis*

An attempt to not merely describe but explain Khoekhoe syntax resorts to what I have elsewhere dubbed the "(de)sentential hypothesis"[4]. This hypothesis is amply supported by independent evidence from Khoekhoe syntax. It accounts for various phenomena in Khoekhoe syntax, some of which are, from the point of view of universal grammar, otherwise awkward to explain, e.g. the occurrence of nouns in the first and second person. The gist of this desentential hypothesis has to be repeated here before focus marking can be discussed.[5]

The minimal requirement for a Khoekhoe sentence is to have
- a subject NP consisting of a non-lexical pronominal element only, viz. a PGN-marker (conventionally often referred to as "pronominal suffix"), and
- a VP consisting of (a) tense-aspect marker(s) and a lexical element as predicate head, the verbal (which can be a verb or a member of any lexical category other than adverbs or conjunctions).

This means that, per definition, there is *one only* (possibly complex) *lexical constituent* in the so-called "**minimal sentence**", namely the verbal (i.e. any lexical word category acting as predicate head, in the case of sentence (2) an adjective):

(2)   NP$_{subject}$ S.TYPE TAM VERBAL
       *Δ___*b*   *ge*   *a*   *kai*
       PGN$_{subject}$ IND   PS   big$_{verbal}$
       ('He is big')[6]

As there exists a syntactic constraint that a sentence cannot begin with a grammatical formative (viz. PGNs, sentence type markers like the indicative main clause marker *ge*, tense markers or aspect markers), an underlying *minimal sentence* with the canonical form as in (2) must have its only lexical element, the verbal, preposed into the *initial slot* Δ, that is, the slot immediately before the

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4   See *i.a.* Haacke 1992.
5   This resumé in section 1.1 is essentially repeated from Haacke (forthc.).
6   To simplify the schematic presentations the PGN-marker *b* (he) for the III.M.S is further on simply glossed as "PGN", when opportune.

subject-PGN. The initial slot is the primary focus position, unless the subject and predicate of the sentence are "inverted" (see (10a), (11a) in section 2.1).[7] The constituent structure of (2), viz. PGN TAM VERBAL, can only surface as non-minimal sentence; that is, when an additional lexical element is inserted into the initial slot Δ via an underlying clause, to be discussed shortly ((6a)). Accordingly two surface strategies are possible for the minimal sentence:

(3) *Kai* ***b***   (*ge*) ***a***   = PREDICATIVE reading
     big **PGN** IND **PS**
     'He is big.'

(4) *Kai* *a̶* ***b*** (*ge*) > *Kai* ***b*** (*ge*) = COPULATIVE reading
     big **PS** **PGN** IND   big **PGN** IND
     'He is a big *one*.'

The difference in the readings of these two strategies is pivotal to Khoekhoe syntax:

The reading of sentence (3) is PREDICATIVE, since the representative of the *predicate*, the TAM – here the present stative *a*, still stands to the right of the *subject,* as it does also in the underlying minimal sentence (2). The subject-NP here consists of the minimally required constituent: a PGN only (***b*** = "he"). The subject-PGN is the peg around which Khoekhoe syntax is structured grammatically. Sentence (4), where the TAM *a* has been preposed to the left of the *subject* (into the initial slot Δ together with the obligatorily preposed verbal), receives a so-called COPULATIVE reading, that is, a *nominal* reading of the type "X *be **a(n)/the*** Y". This nominal reading, without the IND *ge*, in Khoekhoe forms the grammaticalised surface form of nouns in nominative/citation form, consisting of a "stem" (the **lexical specification** (LS)) and a PGN:
    #[lexical specification]+PGN#.[8]
The present stative aspect marker *a* (but no other TAM!) is, as a rule, deleted in the COP strategy (indicated by "strikeout" appearance in (4)). Hence structure (4) is the source of the surface nominal *kai.b*[9] (big one), which actually is a *pronominally used* adjective. The fact that surface nominals are not followed by

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7   Sentences where the initial slot is occupied by a conjunction or the hortative particle *A* will not be discussed here, as this topic would divert too far into pragmatic issues. In such cases, focus appears in a post-subjectival position, similar to those of the unmarked strategy of sentence (1).

8   The term "lexical specification" is used here in a non-theoretical sense. It can be a nominal stem and/or any type of qualifier.

9   A full stop is occasionally used for explicatory purposes to separate the stem of a nominal from its PGN.

a case marker is here, for the sake of expedience, occasionally expressed by stipulating a NOM zero case marker (Ø).

If the adjective that for the purpose of explication was here used as verbal (sentences (2) – (4)) is now replaced in the nominal reading with a *noun* (root/stem) (cf. equivalent sentences (2a) – (4a)), it should be apparent why Khoekhoe *surface* (!) "nouns" are said to consist of a #[stem]+**PGN**#:

(2) a. **△ b*   *ge*   *a*   *!ûi-ao*
         PGN   IND   PS   herd+man
         ('He is herdsman')

(3) a. *!Ûi-ao **b** (ge) **a** > {[!Ûi-ao]**b**}**a***   PREDICATIVE > **oblique case**
         ('He is herdsman')   herdsman+PGN+OBL

(4) a. *!Ûi-ao ɐ **b**(ge) >*   {[*!Ûi-ao*]***b***}COPULATIVE>**nominative case**
         ('He is *a/the* herdsman')   herdsman+PGN

The seemingly awkward occurrence of Khoekhoe "nouns" in the first or second person is even predictable now:

(5)   *!Ûi-ao   a,-   **ta**   (ge)   >   {[!Ûi-ao]**ta**}*
       ('I am a herdsman')   herdsman+I.S
       ('I, a herdsman')

The above two syntactic strategies occur with any of the lexical word categories (as well as some phrasal constituents like simple possessive NPs or relative clauses) when serving as *verbal*, here illustrated with the COPULATIVE strategy in which the present stative marker *a* is elided:

adjective:	***Kai** ɐ b ge*	> {[***kai***]*b*}Ø	(the/a big one)
demonstrative:	***Nē** ɐ b ge*	> {[***nē***]*b*}Ø	(this one = this)
article:	***∥Î** ɐ b ge*	> {[***∥î***]*b*}Ø	(the said/discussed one = he)
cardinal numeral:	***/Gui** ɐ b ge*	> {[***/gui***]*b*}Ø	(the one = one)
ordinal numeral:	***!Nona∥î** ɐ b ge*	> {[***!nona∥î***]*b*}Ø	(the third one = the third)
possessive:	***Ti** ɐ b ge*	> {[***ti***]*b*}Ø	(my one = mine)
	***Khoe.s di** ɐ b ge*	> {[***khoe.s di***]*b*}Ø	(the one of the/a woman = the/a woman's)

verb (rel. clause):	*Ī ra n ge*	> {[*īra*]*n*}∅	(they which happen
=			happenings)
noun (stem) (!):	*Nama ɐ b ge*	> {[*Nama*]*b*}∅	(the/a Nama one =
			the/a **Nama** (man))

If the verbal belongs to one of the lexical categories adjective, demonstrative, article, numeral or possessive (phrase), it acts as "qualifier" in the copulative strategy; if the verbal is a verb, then its TAM cannot be deleted in the copulative strategy and the phrase is a relative clause, i.e. another type of qualifier; if the verbal is a noun (root/stem), the surface construction yields a (surface) "noun" with the structure #[stem]+PGN#.

As pointed out before, in the copulative strategy we are dealing with the *pronominal usage* of these verbals, as also exemplified in (4) above. The pronominal usage of the so-called "pronoun stem" (here called an article) – is what is fallaciously considered to be the "full form" of the "pronoun".[10] The above example with the verb *ī* (happen, occur) is, per definition (see below), a pronominally used relative clause, as the present continuous aspect marker *ra* cannot be elided. In practise, however, this pronominal relative clause *īra.n* is perceived to be a (phrasal) noun.

Be reminded that a relative clause is taken to be any qualifier (for explicatory purposes included in parentheses (…) that contains a predicate. A predicate, in turn, is identified by having (a) tense-aspect marker(s) in addition to the verbal. An attributively used relative clause precedes the antecedent noun (terminated by a PGN); a pronominally used relative clause is terminated by the PGN of the (omitted) referent. Thus, in {[(*kai*) ao]b} (a big man) the qualifier consists solely of the adjective *kai*; in {[(*kai a*) ao]b} (a man who is big) the qualifier consists of a relative clause with a TAM (*a*) and an adjective serving as predicate head/verbal. According to the strategy illustrated in (4) above, a *pronominally* used relative clause (i.e. without an antecedent) thus has a COPULATIVE/(pro)nominal reading, as the TAM stands to the left of the subject-PGN: {[(*kai a*)]b} (a big one).

The PGN (called "nominal designant" in earlier writings of mine) is the true pronoun of Khoekhoe. It is not a suffix as usually claimed, albeit clitic. As pro-form it can on its own constitute a NP in a sentence. Two variants of the PGN occur: the subjectival PGN (also occurring as so-called nominal "suffix", as above) and the objectival PGN. In the objectival PGN, here called *object marker* (**OM**), a latent *-i* surfaces in the non-syllabic PGN-markers (*tsi, si, bi*)

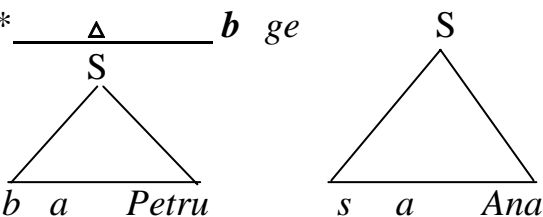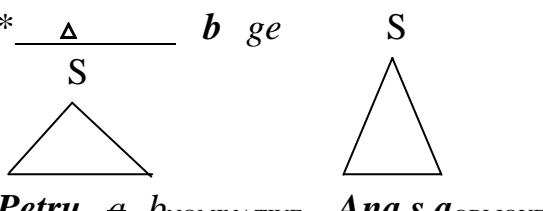
10   For further discussion see Haacke (forthc.).

and the first Person singular marker (*ta + i > te*).[11] OMs are postclitics too, but follow immediately on the verb. Minimal sentences (i.e. with one only lexeme, viz. the verbal) thus can have an objectival argument, as long as it is not lexically specified:

(6) *⟁ *b*   *(ge) go   mû   si*
     PGNsubject IND   RP   see_verb **OM**object
     'He saw her.'

If subject-NP and/or object-NP are to be *lexically specified*, this is done by embedding a (minimal) sentence that elaborates on the reference of the subject-PGN or OM of the main clause (see (6) above for glosses). Such embedded clauses surface in either nominative or oblique strategy, as depicted in (2a) – (4a):

(6) a. *_____⟁_____ *b ge*   S   *go   mû   s̶i̶*   >

        b   a   Petru   *s   a   Ana*   (Underlying SV structure; cf. (2))

        he PS Peter   she PS Anne

(6) b. *___⟁___ *b ge*   S   *go   mû   s̶i̶*   >

        Petru* ɑ̶ *b*NOMINATIVE ***Ana s aOBLIQUE   (Fronting into ⟁ of predicate and verbal respectively; cf. (4) a. and (3) a.)

(6) c. {[***Petru***]*b*}Øsubject   *ge*   {[***Ana***]*s*}*a*object   *go*   *mû*
        Peter   IND   Anne   RP   see
        'Peter saw Anne.'

In Khoekhoe, thus, the lexical specification of any NP is entered as clause underlyingly, as illustrated above:

The lexical specification of the *subject* in a *declarative* sentence is entered in the COPULATIVE/nominative strategy (NOM, with deletion of the stative aspect marker *a* and equi-deletion of the embedded PGN).[12] All other core arguments (that is, subjects of questions, deposed subjects and objects) surface in the PREDICATIVE/oblique strategy (OBL) and thus retain their sentential nature. No equi-deletion takes place, as they do not surface in the slot of the surface PGN or the OM, whichever the case may be. In the case of the object, the lexically specified NP does not appear in the postverbal slot of the OM but is preposed, usually to the position immediately before the TAM, while the OM is deleted, as evident from (6a)-(6c).

As the clitic OM (the true pronoun!) always succeeds the verb, it follows that *underlyingly* Khoekhoe is not a SOV language but SVO; cf. the matrix sentence (6).

1.2 *"Copulative" sentences*

Before focus marking can be discussed, the reader also needs to be introduced to what traditionally is known as "copulative" sentences. Two types are distinguished (all examples are confined to indicative matrix sentences):

Simplex Copulative Sentences (**SCS**) with the structure
{NP}$\emptyset$ ***ge***, e.g.

(7)   {[*!Khōdao-ao*]*b*}$\emptyset$ *ge* 'He is a/the tracker.';

cf. also sentences (4) and (5) above.

Coreferential Copulative Sentences (**CCS**) with the structure
{NP}$\emptyset$ ***ge*** **{NP}***a* , e.g.

(8)   {[*!Khōdao-ao*]*b*}$\emptyset$ *ge* {[*Nama*]*b*}*a* '?The tracker is a Nama.'.

The conventional translations of the CCSs (8) and (8a) are provisional, as their validity will be questioned below (Section 3). In both types of copulative

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[12]   In Naro, a Central Khoesaan language from Botswana, lexically specified *subject*-NPs of indicative sentences also appear in the oblique case; e.g. *Marys**a** ko nquu.ba tshao* ('Mary is building a house'). Cf. Haacke (forthc.).

sentences, the NPs can be extended with attributive or appositive qualifiers (here identified by parentheses); e.g.

(7) a. SCS:
     {[(*Xamre   ra*)   *!khōdao-ao*]***b***}*Ø*   *ge*
     lion-look-for PR   take-track-man+IIIMS+NOM   IND
     'He is a tracker looking for lion.'

(8) a. CCS:
     {[(*Xamre   ra*) *!khōdao-ao*]***b***}*Ø*   *ge* {[(*!amsa*) *Nama*]***b***}*a*
     lion-look-for PR tracker+IIIMS+NOM IND brawny   N.+IIIMS+OBL
     ?'The tracker who is looking for lion   is   a brawny Nama.'

Attributively used qualifiers stand before the noun; appositively used qualifiers follow the noun with a resumptive PGN but need not be discussed here. It should be remembered that attributive qualifiers (in parentheses (...)) form part of the lexical specification (in square brackets [...]) of a noun phrase. The reading of sentences like (7a) can be ambiguous though, as will be shown imminently (section 2.1).

Now that the structures known as "copulative" sentences have been introduced, syntactic perturbations can be examined with regard to focalisation.

2   Syntactic perturbations in Khoekhoe

Of the few constraints that pertain to Khoekhoe word order, only two concern us here:

A surface sentence cannot commence with a grammatical formative, in particular, not with PGNs or TAMs; e.g. (6) above;

A lexically specified object may not appear in front of a lexically specified subject (unless the entire predicate appears in front of the lexically specified subject, as in (11) a.), e.g.

(9) *[***Tara***]*sa*   [*ao*]***b****Ø*   *ge   ra   mû.*
     woman+III.F.S+OBL$_{object}$ man+III.M.S+NOM$_{subject}$ IND   PR   see
     'The/a man is seeing the/a woman.'

Syntactic devices are the most explicit means to mark focus in Khoekhoe; morphological markers are not employed, and stress or intonation are of secondary significance, not to be discussed here. A tonological device is employed in interrogative sentences (cf. section 4). As said before, Khoekhoe is a rheme-first language, i.e. if syntactic focus marking is resorted to, then the

salient information is foregrounded to the beginning of the sentence in one of two ways, to be discussed imminently.

As was demonstrated in sentence (1) (here elaborated on as (10)), the primary focus position normally – but not always – is in the initial slot Δ immediately in front of the subject-PGN (underscored in (10))[13]:

(10) Δ PGN$_{subject}$ (S.TYPE) NP$_{object}$ TAM VERB
      {[***Ao***]*b*}*Ø*   *ge*   {[*tara*]*s*}*a*   *ra*   *mû*
      man+III.M.S+NOM   IND   woman+III.F.S+OBL PR   see
      ('THE/A MAN is seeing the/a woman')

"Primary" focus should be understood here as position for most explicit focus marking, not necessarily as most frequently used position. Alternatively, the focus in this syntactically unmarked construction could also be on the object (by prosodic prominence), or it could be sentence-focus in an event-reporting context. This pragmatic matter is not to be pursued here. (The reader may pardon the rather unimaginative example sentence, which was chosen in order to avoid clicks.)

Two strategies of focalisation by foregrounding need to be distinguished: here called **inversion** and **fronting**. Inversion requires a lexically specified subject in the subject slot. During inversion the order of Subject and Predicate in their entirety is simply inverted to Predicate – Subject, without that the (lexically specified) subject itself is affected. During fronting, however, the focalised constituent is advanced into the focus slot immediately before the subject-PGN, which – crucially – results in the deposition of any LS of the subject, if present.

For the sake of simplicity most examples of permutations will be based on example (10), the pragmatically least marked structure.

2.1 Inversion

The inverted version of sentence (10) (here without object) is

(10) a. VERB   TAM   Δ PGN$_{subject}$ S.TYPE
        Mû   *ra*   {[*ao*]*b*}*Ø*   *ge*
        see   PR   man+III.M.S+NOM   IND
        ('The man IS SEEING/DOES SEE')   = PREDICATIVE reading

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[13] As should emerge from the further discussion, the claim in Hagman (1977: 108) that "the initial position [is] the position before *ge* in a declarative sentence" cannot be sustained.

As the sentence cannot commence with a grammatical formative, the TAM and VERB are inverted within the preposed predicative so as to comply with the said constraint. This sentence would be either a felicitous affirmative or informative response to the questions "*Does* the man see?" or "What does the man do?" respectively. In the above, predicative reading only the noun stem "*ao*", not "*Mû ra ao*", is in the initial slot ∆. In this strategy the initial slot accommodates the subject specification as theme, while the preposed predicate has been placed in focus. For this reason the initial slot should not be taken to be the sole focus position: In inverted sentences like (10a) the focalised predicate (without its S.TYPE marker) is preposed into a position preceding the initial slot.

This syntactic concatenation, however, is ambiguous as it has an alternative, copulative reading, depending on the derivational history of the constituent structure of the sentence:

(10) b. _____∆_____ PGN$_{subject}$ S.TYPE
        {[(*Mûra*) *ao*]*b*}Ø   *ge*
        ('He is a/the SEEING MAN/He is a MAN WHO SEES')
     = COPULATIVE reading

This sentence is an extended simplex copulative sentence of the type presented in (4) and (7a), "extended" with a qualifier, viz. the relative clause *mû ra* (who is seeing). If this qualifier consists of a relative clause, i.e. has a TAM as in (10b), then the reading is ambiguous. The entire lexical specification consisting of the noun stem *with* qualifier occupies the initial slot ∆ in (10b) (as underscored) and thus constitutes the focus.

While sentence (10a) has a predicate-focus structure, (10b) has an argument-focus structure on the surface.

Corresponding versions of (10a) and (10b) with object also occur:

(11) a. NP$_{object}$ TAM VERB ∆ PGN$_{subject}$ S.TYPE
        {[*Tara*]*s*}*a*   *ra*   *mû*   {[*ao*]*b*}Ø   *ge*
        woman+III.F.S+OBL   PR   see   man+III.M.S+NOM IND
        'The man IS SEEING *A/THE WOMAN*' = PREDICATIVE reading

(11) b .

NP_{object}		TAM	VERB	Δ	PGN_{subject}	S.TYPE
{[{([***Tara***]*s*}*a*		*ra*	*mû*)	*ao*]*b*}Ø		*ge*
woman+III.F.S+OBL		PR	see	man+III.M.S+NOM IND		

'He is a/the MAN WHO IS SEEING A/THE WOMAN'
= COPULATIVE reading

In the PRED reading (11a) the entire predicate (*tarasa ra mû*) is rhematic. As in (10a), the initial slot in (11a) accommodates only the subject specification (*ao*), which is thematic. In the COP reading (11b), however, the entire lexical specification (*tarasa ra mû ao*) is in focus, which – in line with the minimal sentence (4) – is the (complex) fronted predicate head.

Within a preposed predicate the word order is free again, subject to the constraint that a sentence cannot commence with a grammatical formative. This facility allows for further differentiation of salience within the predicate focus, with most emphasis on the initial element within the fronted predicate. Again, both PRED and COP readings are possible. A variant of predicative (11a) would thus be (12a), and of copulative (11b), (12b):

(12) a.

VERB	TAM	NP_{object}	Δ	PGN_{subject}	S.TYPE
Mû	*ra*	{[***tara***]*s*}*a*	{[*ao*]*b*}Ø		*ge*
see	PR	woman+III.F.S+OBL	man+III.M.S+NOM	IND	

('The man *DOES SEE* A/THE WOMAN') = PREDICATIVE reading

(12) b.

VERB	TAM	NP_{object}	Δ	PGN_{subject}	S.TYPE
{[(***Mû***	*ra*	{[***tara***]*s*}*a*)	*ao*]*b*}Ø		*ge*
see	PR	woman+III.F.S+OBL	man+III.M.S+NOM	IND	

('He is a/the MAN WHO *DOES SEE* A/THE WOMAN')
= COPULATIVE reading

To summarise: In inversion, the full predicate is preposed to a position that *precedes* the underlying initial slot and is thereby placed into focus, while the lexical specification of the subject, which is in the underlying initial slot, is only presuppositional. Inversion takes place between the subject and predicate in their entirety. Preposing of a predicate complement alone, that is, of an object or adverbial phrase to a position before the *lexically specified* subject amounts to a violation not of *inversion* but of *fronting,* as should become clear imminently.

2.2 Fronting

With *fronting* I refer to the preposing of a constituent other than the LS of the subject into the (underlying) initial slot ∆. Since in the least marked communicative strategy the LS of the *subject* occupies the initial slot (sentence (1)), the preposing of another constituent into the initial slot for focalisation causes the displacement of the LS to a non-focal position. This is plausible, since pragmatically two constituents cannot vie simultaneously for prime focus status. Diagnostically: fronting causes **"subject deposition"**[14]; inversion does not. Subject deposition means dislocation of the lexical specification of the subject, if present, to a position outside the initial slot (doubly underscored in (13)). Normally this subject specification is right-detached to the first slot available in the sentence, viz. to a position immediately behind the sentence type marker (S.TYPE, *ge* for the IND), which itself follows immediately on the PGN of the subject of the matrix sentence. Cf. (13), in which the object of (10) has been fronted to focus position (bolded):

(10) ∆ PGN$_{subject}$ (S.TYPE)   NP$_{object}$ TAM VERB
     {[***Ao***]*b*}*Ø*   *ge*   {[*tara*]*s*}*a*   *ra*   *mû*
     man+III.M.S+NOM IND   woman+III.F.S+OBL PR   see
     ('THE/A MAN is seeing the/a woman')

(13) ∆_____ PGN$_{subject}$ (S.TYPE) NP$_{subject}$ TAM V.
     {[***Tara***]*s*}*a*   {*b*}   *ge*   {[*ao*]*b*}*a*   *ra*   *mû*
     woman+III.F.S+OBL he   IND   man+III.M.S+OBL PR   see
     ('He – "he" is man - is seeing THE/A WOMAN' > 'THE/A WOMAN he
     - the man - is seeing')

The underlying subject *position* in the (minimal) matrix sentence thus remains unaffected and is still occupied by the PGN (*b*). The embedded sentence by which the LS is introduced (cf. (6) - (6c)) now has to be accommodated elsewhere. In order to maintain the coreference with the subject-PGN the PGN of this right-detached subject is not deleted by way of equi-NP-deletion but serves in an anaphoric function (here indicated by the bridge). As with all lexically specified arguments that occur in a position other than the unmarked subject position of a declarative sentence, the deposed subject now occurs in the oblique, that is, predicative form. The oblique, aptly called "Prädikatsform" already by Dempwolff (1934: 44) reflects the parenthetic sentential nature of

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[14]   Subject deposition is investigated in more depth in Haacke (1978).

the inserted noun phrase. As less frequent options the deposed subject may surface after the sentence as an afterthought topic ((13a), Lambrecht's "antitopic" *op. cit.* 203), or it may pragmatically introduce the sentence as cataphoric "attention catcher" ((13b)) by way of left-dislocation, dubbed *hanging topic* by Ermisch (2005: 53). As hanging topic before the sentence the subject would in Khoekhoe usually be introduced by a referential demonstrative *nē* or *ǁnā* (this/that previously mentioned). In both positions the extraneous status of the deposed subject would be expressed by comma intonation.

(13) a.   *{[Tara]s}a~{b̄}Ø ge ra mû, {[ao]b}a*
              'A/THE WOMAN he saw - the man.'

(13) b.   *{[(ǁNā) ao]b}a, {[tara]s}a~{b}Ø ge ra mû*
              'That (aforementioned) man - he saw A/THE WOMAN.'

As will be apparent in the following section, virtually any constituent of a sentence that can serve as focus can be fronted into the initial slot, with concomitant deposition of the subject specification. In the case where the entire predicate is fronted, such sentences then have a surface structure that appears to consist of two NPs and hence are perceived to be "coreferential copulative sentences" of a type "$NP_1 = NP_2$". It will now be argued that such "coreferential copulative sentences" amount to cleft sentences, rather, as the focal *predicate* has been *fronted* into the initial slot with subsequent subject deposition.

3   Clefting

It was demonstrated at some length in Haacke (1979) that the so-called co-referential copulative sentence is not a verbless sentence of the type "$NP1_{subject}$ *be* $NP2_{complement}$", as generally maintained, but "in its underlying structure is nothing but a minimal copulative sentence ('NP1') with a lexically specified subject ('NP2') that is deposed" (op.cit.: 87). If the *entire* predicate (or constituent following the sentence type marker) is fronted, the normal position of the deposed subject immediately after the sentence type marker (for IND: *ge*) in default of any other constituent turns out to be in the sentence-final position; cf. (17a). It should be remembered that both surface "NPs" underlyingly are sentences, each with its own verbal. It is for this reason that it is claimed that the CCS amounts to a cleft construction, for as part of the information packaging process, the original topic-comment sentence has been divided into two separate sections, each with its own verbal. The presence of the two *surface-*NPs has, however, by analogy to Bantu led to the wrong assumption that the

sentence-final NP, the deposed subject, is a "complement" in an "equational" sentence, sometimes called identifying copulative.

This established perception first struck me as misguided in 1975 when my late colleague and co-author of school primers, Johannes Boois translated the reply to the content question "What kind of vessels are these?" freely as

(14) {[*∥Hoe*]*di*}∅   *ge*   {[(*nē*)]*di*   [(*hoa*)]*de*}
      wooden vessel+III.F.P+NOM IND   this+III.F.P   all+III.F.P+OBL
      'They are *∥HOE*/WOODEN VESSELS, all (of) these.'

instead of providing the expected item-for-item "equational" translation:

(15) {[(*Nē*)]*di* [(*hoa*)]*di*}∅   *ge*   {[*∥hoe*]*de*}
      (*[All these]subject are ['*∥hoe*']complement)

The Khoekhoe question that had prompted this reply was

(16)   {[(*Tarē*) *xawa!nôa*]*de*}   {[(*nē*)]*de*}?
            what vessel+type+III.F.P+OBL   this+III.F.P
            ('WHAT KIND OF VESSELS are they, these?')

The "NP2" in (14) ({*nēdi hoade*}) no doubt resumes the *theme* of the question (16) ({*nēde*}) after having supplied the desired information by way of a rhematic minimal sentence (*∆ *di ge a ∥hoe*) in (the surface!) "NP1". The dislocated lexical NP2 merely clarifies the reference of the subject-pronoun (the PGN) in the so-called "NP1", the truly propositional constituent that bears the assertive focus.

The conspicuously prevalent use of so-called copulative sentences – be they simplex or coreferential – in Khoekhoe thus is motivated by pragmatic strategies of focus placement. Pragmatic requirements are also the reason why cleft sentences are used universally in in other languages, namely to identify the most salient constituent in a sentence.

The following allosentences[15] of (17), which – other than (17a) – essentially are instances of narrow focus. All derivations structurally are so-called "coreferential copulative sentences". They could be prompted either by content questions as informational or assertive focus, or by wrong assumptions in yes-no questions as corrective identificational focus. The respective pragmatic situations do not require distinct constructions. But some of the

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[15] "Allosentence" is here used in a pragmatic sense as referring to variants in focus assignment for the same basic message. It does not make a statement about the purported syntactic derivation from one underlying sentence.

strategies have to resort to complement sentences, though, as will be explained below.

In (17a) the entire predicate has been fronted into the main clause ("NP1") in the focus slot; the subordinate clause – the so-called "complement NP2" – is the thematic deposed subject.[16]

Predicative sentence, least marked for focus, often thetic:

(17) {[*Petru*]*b*}Ø   *ge* *‖ari*   *hāb* *‖kha* *!āba* *go* *!gâu*
      Peter+PGN+NOM   IND yesterday horse with river RP cross
      'Peter crossed the river on a horse yesterday.'

Entire predicate fronted into initial slot as focus:

(17) a. {[*‖Ari*   *hāb* *‖kha* *!āba* *go* *!gâu*] *b*}Ø *ge* {[*Petru*]*b*}*a*
         yesterday horse with river RP cross+PGN IND Peter+PGN+NOM
         'He, Peter that is, CROSSED THE RIVER ON A HORSE YESTERDAY'
         > 'Peter CROSSED THE RIVER ON A HORSE YESTERDAY.'

(17) b. {[***Petru go i***]*b*}Ø   *ge* {[(*‖ari*   *go* *hāb* *‖kha* *!āba*
         Peter+TAM+PGN+NOM   IND yesterday RP horse with   river

         !gâu)]*b*}*a*
         cross+PGN+OBL
         ('IT WAS PETER who crossed the river on a horse yesterday.')

The fact that sentence (17b) concludes with a surface NP in the oblique, {…}*a*, indicates that the agent is not in the ordinary unmarked subject position but has been fronted for emphasis.

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[16] A similar analysis proposed by Jackendoff (1972: 230), reiterates that in a deep structure theory "the focus is the predicate of the higher clause".

Object as focus:

(17) c.   {[*!Ā go i*]*b*}∅   *ge*   {[(*Petrub go* **//ari**   *hāb*   */kha*
           river TAM+PGN+NOM IND Peter   RP yesterday horse   with

    !gâu)]*b*}*a*
    cross+PGN+OBL
    ('IT WAS THE/A RIVER that Peter crossed on a horse yesterday.')

Adverb or adverbial phrase as focus:

(17) d.   {[**//Ari go i**]*s*}∅   *ge*   {[(*Petrub go hāb /kha*
           yesterday TAM+PGN+NOM   IND   Peter   RP horse with

    !āba !gâu)]*s*}*a*
    river cross+PGN+OBL
    'IT WAS YESTERDAY that Peter crossed the river on a horse.'

Postpositional adverbial phrase as focus:

(17) e.   {[**Hāb   /kha go i**]*s*}∅   ge   {[(*Petrub go*   **//ari**

    horse with TAM+PGN+NOM   IND   Peter   RP   yesterday

    !āba !gâu)]*s*}*a*
    river cross+PGN+OBL
    'IT WAS WITH A HORSE that Peter crossed the river yesterday.'

Nominal of a postpositional adverbial phrase as focus:

(17) f.   {[**Hā go i**]*b*}∅   *ge*   {[(*//îb /kha~b   Petruba go*
           horse TAM+PGN+NOM   IND   he with he   Peter   RP

    //ari   !āba !gâu)]*b*}*a*
    yesterday   river cross+PGN+OBL
    ('IT WAS A HORSE with which Peter crossed the river yesterday.')

Two kinds of CCSs have to be distinguished above:
  - sentences in which the deposed LS is a (pronominally used) *relative* clause governed by the PGN of the antecedent (*b*) in (17a/b/e); and

- sentences in which the deposed LS is a *complement* clause embedded by the complementiser *!khais* (affair, matter). (The lexical specification *!khai* has been deleted in the above sentences (17d) and (17e), leaving only *s*.) Such complement sentences are equivalent to *that*-sentences in English.

The surface structure of both types is similar as both, relative clauses and complement clauses stand to the left of their head (bolded below) in attributive use, e.g.

relative clause:

< (17) b. ... {[(*ǁari go hāb ǀkha !āba !gâu*) **Petru**]**b**}*a*
'Peter, who crossed the river on a horse yesterday.'

complement clause:

< (17) d. {[(*ǁAri go i*) **!khai**]**s**}*Ø ge* {[(*Petrub go hāb ǀkha !āba !gâu*) **!khai**]**s**}*a*
'"The matter" - *that* Peter crossed the river on a horse - was yesterday.'

However, the complementiser *!khais* is not a constituent of the input sentence underlying the complement clause; i.e. it is not relativised upon. In CCSs both types of subordinate clauses usually appear in pronominal usage; that is, the stem of the antecedent does not occur. Hence complement clauses in Khoekhoe are recognised by the feminine singular PGN *s* of *!khai.s* that immediately follows the deposed clause. It may be argued that CCSs with a deposed *complement* sentence are analogous to pseudo-cleft sentences, rather than cleft sentences.

To conclude, so-called "coreferential copulative sentences" are sentences in which, as a process of focus assignment, the focalised constituent has been *fronted* into the initial slot, with subsequent right-dislocation of the lexical specification of the subject. Crucially, the entire constituent occurring after the sentence type marker (for the IND, *ge*) is fronted. As a result the deposed subject follows the sentence type marker as sole constituent, which makes it look like a complement-NP in a copulative sentence. But as both surface NPs underlyingly have their own verbal with TAM – cf. the nominative and oblique strategies ((3a) and (4a), such CCS constructions amount to cleft sentences which universally serve to encode information structure.

It should moreover now be evident that the CCSs

(8)   {[*!Khōdao-ao*]*b*}*Ø ge* {[*Nama*]*b*}*a* '?The tracker is a Nama.'

and

(8) a.   {[(*Xamre ra*) *!khōdao-ao*]**b**}Ø *ge* {[(*!amsa*) *Nama*]**b**}*a*
          '?The tracker looking for lion   is   a brawny Nama.'

should respectively rather be translated as "A TRACKER HE IS, the Nama >
The Nama is A TRACKER" and as "A TRACKER LOOKING FOR LION HE
IS, the brawny Nama > The brawny Nama is A TRACKER LOOKING FOR
LION".

4   Tonal marking of focus

Space does not allow more than a brief mention that tonal marking of focus is
used in one specific case only: truth-interrogative copulative sentences. In
Haacke (1979: 89ff.) it is shown with more evidence that the *predicative*
minimal truth-interrogative sentence

(18) *Kai   b à?*
      big   he PS
      ('Is he big?')

can optionally grammaticalise into a *copulative* minimal truth-interrogative
sentence:

(19) *Kai+b+á?*
      big+he+OBL
      'Is he a big one?'

In sentence (18) the TAM *a* is pronounced as a separate word (commencing
with a glottal stop) with a low tone; in (19) -*a* is pronounced as a suffix (without
glottal stop) and a high tone. Note that the same OBL case suffix in the
corresponding declarative constructions retains its low tone.
      If the COP reading of (19) appears in a **CCS** (i.e. with deposed subject),
then only the high tone on -*a* indicates which "NP" bears the focus, as the
deposed subject can be either preposed or postposed. The "NP" with the raised
interrogative -*á* is the main clause and bears the focus:

(20) *Petrubá !nari-aobà?* or *!Nari-aobà Petrubá?*
      'Is it PETER who is the thief?' > 'Is the thief PETER?'

(21) *Petrubà !nari-aobá?* or *!Nari-aobá Petrubà?*
      'Is he who is Peter THE THIEF?' > 'Is Peter THE THIEF?'

The more natural version, though, postposes the subject specification, maintaining the rheme-theme pattern as in (20). Tonology, however, overrides syntactic deposition.

Interrogative tone raising also occurs on the OBL case suffix of lexically specified subjects in predicative sentences. Cf. the correlate of (1):

(22) *Ao+b+á*   (*kha*) *tara+s+a*   *ra*   *mû?*
      man+III.M.S+**OBL**   INT woman+III.F.S+OBL   PR   see
      'Does THE/A MAN see the/a woman?'

Space does not permit a discussion of focus assignment in content questions here. Suffice it to say that question words are fronted into the initial slot whenever they bear the primary focus, e.g.

(23) **Mati ~b**   *ao+b+a*   *tara+s+a*
      how   PGN   man+III.M.S+OBL$_{dep.subj.}$ woman+III.F.S+OBL$_{object}$
      ra   *mû?*
      PR   see
      'HOW does the/a man see the/a woman?'

5   Conclusion: Some remarks concerning typology

The remarkable flexibility of Khoekhoe word order - not all grammatical sequences have been presented here - can only be accounted for if the encoding of information structure is taken cognisance of. Existing studies are confined almost solely to the description of grammatical structure. Hence two types of sentences are recognized, predicative and verbless "copulative" sentences. The desentential hypothesis, by arguing that surface nouns are derived from an underlying minimal sentence, recognises the subject and object PGNs as prime categories (pronouns) that can singly serve in subject or object function, albeit as clitics. Recognising the PGN as pivotal subject constituent accounts for the predicative and copulative readings of minimal sentences as nominative and oblique surface nominals respectively and accounts for so-called copulative sentences as special pragmatic encodings reflecting the communicative dynamism of particular constituents.

A pragmatic investigation highlights the status of the subjectival PGN as, not a suffix but an autonomous pronoun. It is significant that the subject PGN, while being postclitic, is not obligatorily suffixed to a noun stem or a *word* for that matter, but has to follow on a *syntactic* slot: the initial slot or focus position Δ. Within this initial slot multiworded constituents can end with a variety of word categories as immediate antecedent to the PGN. The status of the PGN as

autonomous category is further enhanced by the fact that sentence type markers (e.g. IND *ge*) have to immediately follow on the subjectival PGN, irrespective of whether there is a lexical specification present for the subject.

The fact that the initial slot, being essentially a focus position, must obligatorily be filled is strong evidence that Khoekhoe is a focus-oriented language and that its word order is controlled primarily by pragmatic, not grammatical principles.[17]

Conversely, the fact that the focus position in Khoekhoe is defined as the position immediately before the subjectival PGN is indicative that the PGN *per se*, not a nominal, forms the subject NP. The same autonomous status which is assigned to the subjectival PGN must, as a matter of consistency, then be assigned to the objectival PGN or "OM". The OM appears immediately after the verb; cf. (6). (The fact that it is the same kind of pronominal word category as the subjectival PGN is the only, nevertheless decisive argument not to treat OMs as declensional suffixes of the verb.) This means that Khoekhoe at least under-lyingly is a **SVO** language, not **SOV**, as generally maintained. Hence Khoekhoe does not present counter-evidence to the view that "the primary focus position in SOV languages is immediately preverbal".[18] Presumably, thus, other Central Khoesaan languages are SVO languages as well.

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[17] According to La Polla (in Downing 1995: 14) in Chinese, like in Khoekhoe, focus structure rather than syntactic relations determine word order variation. Interestingly, this is further instantiation of typological similarity between these languages, as Khoekhoe moreover shares a considerable number of tonological traits with Chinese and other Sino-Tibetan languages. Cf. Haacke (1999).

[18] Herring & Paolillo (1995: 164)

6 Abbreviations

CCS coreferential copulative sentence

COP COPULATIVE (structure/reading)

   IND indicative main clause marker (*ge*, follows immediately after the subject-PGN and zero NOM case marker)

INT interrogative main clause marker

F   feminine

LS   lexical specification (of an NP)

M   masculine

NOM nominative case (Zero suffix: Ø)

OBL oblique case (-*a*, for core arguments that are not in the NOM)

OM object marker (= post-verbal PGN)

   PGN person-gender-number (marker). This postclitic formative is the true pronoun of Khoekhoe, referred to as "nominal designant" in some earlier writings of mine.

PL   plural

PR   (present) progressive aspect marker (*ra*)

PS   (present) stative aspect marker (*a*). It occurs without tense marker.

PRED PREDICATIVE (structure/reading)

RP   recent past tense marker (*go*)

SCS simplex copulative sentence

S   singular

   S.TYPE sentence type marker. (Khoekhoe can optionally mark matrix sentences for declarative (indicative (*ge*), accreditive (*kom ...o*)) or interrogative (*kha*) mood with a marker that follows immediately on the subject-PGN and zero NOM case marker.

TAM tense-aspect marker

I, II, III first, second, third Person respectively

[ ]   Square brackets enclose the LS of a noun phrase, followed by a PGN.

{ }   Braces enclose the all-comprising "macro-NP" (NP-bar, including appositions if present); that is, braces enclose the LS with PGN, terminated by a case marker, *i.a.* Ø NOM, *a* OBL, *di* possessive.

+   A plus sign between morphemes in text or glosses indicates that the morphemes belong to one word.

~   A tilde separates a PGN from a preceding morpheme with which it does not form a constituent.

△   initial slot (primary focus position). Its domain is indicated by the underscore.

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Focus in an active/agentive alignment system – the case of Beria (Saharan)

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Beria, a member of the Saharan language family, is one of the rare languages in Africa exhibiting both an ergative and an active/agentive alignment system of grammatical relations.[1] While the active/agentive pattern is shown by the participant reference markers, the ergative pattern is attested both in the constituent order and in the focus markers on the core constituents. In the pragmatically unmarked constituent order, the Agent constituent precedes the Patient constituent. An unmarked single constituent immediately preceding the verb may represent a Patient or a Subject argument. In this position, the Agent constituent requires the clitic GU. The focused Patient and Subject constituents are both either marked by the clitic DI or by a cleft construction.

1   Introduction

Beria, also known by the xenonym Zaghawa, is spoken by some 150.000 people in the Wadai and Darfur region on the border of Chad and Sudan. Along with the now extinct Berti language, Beria forms the eastern branch of the Saharan language family, the western branch being represented by Kanuri-Kanembu and Teda-Daza.


Generally, there are three basic grammatical relations between arguments and predicates, the Agent (A) and the Patient (P) of a transitive sentence, and the single argument or Subject (S) of an intransitive sentence. In a nominative-accusative alignment system, S patterns with A, and P differently, in an absolutive-ergative alignment system S patterns with P, and A differently. An active/agentive alignment system has both features of an accusative system (S = A, see Diagram 1) and of an ergative system (S = P, see Diagram 2). More precisely, in an active/agentive alignment system the single argument of intransitive sentences splits structurally and patterns either with the Agent (S_A = A) or with the Patient (S_P = P) of transitive sentences. (see Diagram 3).
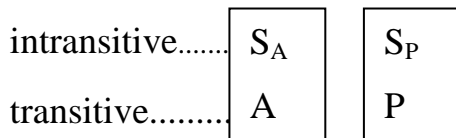
Diagram 1:   (Nominative-) Accusative system (S = A, P)

intransitive..... | S
transitive........ | A | P
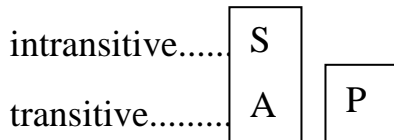
Diagram 2: (Absolutive-) Ergative system (S = P, A)

intransitive..... | S
transitive........ | P | A
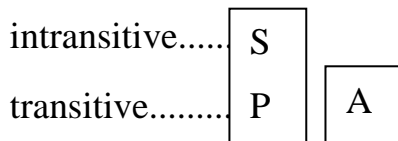
Diagram 3: Active/agentive system (S_A = A, S_P = P)

intransitive....... | S_A | S_P
transitive......... | A | P

Languages rarely exhibit solely one system of grammatical relations. German, for example, has an accusative system in which the Subject of an intransitive verb is encoded like the A argument of a transitive verb, e.g. "ich habe geschlafen", "ich habe ihn gefangen". But with a small class of *verba sentiendi*, the single participant of an intransitive sentence is encoded like a P argument of a transitive sentence: "mich friert (es)", "mich freut (es)", "mich/mir dünkt", "mir scheint", "mir träumte". The pronoun "es" here functions as a dummy subject representing an impersonal Agent.

Two systems of grammatical relations are also attested in Loma, a Mande language of Liberia. Loma exhibits an ergative pattern in its noun case system: The Subject of an intransitive verb and the Patient of a transitive verb determine

verb-initial consonant lenition. The Loma pronoun system, however, exhibits an active/agentive system. Loma has two sets of person pronouns, one set marking the subject, the other the object. When the Subject of an intransitive verb is stative, it is encoded with an object pronoun, when the Subject is active, it is encoded with a subject pronoun (Rude 1982).

Languages like Loma and Beria with an active/agentive and ergative alignment system appear to be rare in Africa. Outside of Africa these systems are attested in Amerindian languages of northern and southern America, in Caucasian languages, and in various languages of Asia and Australia (Klimov 1974, Dixon 1994).

Grammatical relations are generally distinguished by constituent order, agreement marking on the verb, and/or case marking. In the following, I will first deal with agreement marking and then with constituent order and focus marking in Beria.

2   Participant reference marking on the verb

Beria is a polysynthetic language, that is a finite verb can express a whole sentence. The participant reference markers on the verb represent the arguments of the sentence. As shown in Table 1, there are two series of participant reference markers, a series of prefixed object markers, and a series of suffixed subject markers.[2]

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[2]   In both series, identical forms are distinguished by an additional tonal morpheme in the plural. Each object prefix has two allomorphs depending on the following segment. Before a vowel, the vowelless allomorph of the prefix is selected, before a consonant the prefix is extended by an epenthetic vowel whose quality depends on the following vowel (Jakobi & Crass 2004: 41). Beria has two rhotics: [ɽ] represents an alveo-lateral flap to be distinguished from the apico-alveolar flap [r]. The distribution of the third person subject suffixes -ɽ, -n and Ø is lexicalized. The suffix -ɽ is deleted under two different conditions, i) after a consonant-final verb root, and ii) in the perfective aspect of some verbs where the deletion of -ɽ appears to be lexicalized (Jakobi & Crass 2004: 59).

Table 1: Participant reference markers on the verb

		Object markers for P and the principal argument of a medium verb	Subject markers for A and S
Sg	1	(V)-	-g
	2	n(V)-	-n
	3	Ø	-ṛ, -n, Ø
Pl	1	t(V)-	-d
	2	n(V)-	-b
	3	Ø	-ṛ, -n, Ø

Beria distinguishes between active and medium verbs. Active verbs may be further subdivided into transitive active and intransitive active verbs. Transitive active verbs have two participant reference markers: one object marker, cf. nɔ́- and έ- in examples (1) and (2), and one subject marker, cf. -g in (1) and -ṛ in (2). The object markers represent the P argument, the subject markers the A argument.[3]

(1) nɔ́-   rɔ́   -g   -ī
     OJ:2Sg   marry   SJ:1Sg   IPV
     P   A
      'I will marry you.'

(2) έ-   sέ   -ṛ   -í
     OJ:1Sg   eat   SJ:3   IPV:Pl
     P   A
      'They [the lions] will eat me.'

Intransitive active verbs have one participant referent marker which is selected from the series of subject markers, cf. -g in (3) and -ṛ in (4). The comparison of -g representing the A argument in (1) with the S argument in (3), and of -ṛ

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3   Abbreviations used in this paper: 1, 2, 3 = first, second, third person, A = agent, A_impers = impersonal Agent, ABS = absolutive, ADV = adverbializer, APPL = applicative, AUX = auxiliary, BEN = beneficient, CAUS = causative, COP = copula, FOC = focus, IPV = imperfective, MED = marker of medium verbs, O = object, OJ = object marker, P = patient, PFV = perfective, Pl = plural, POSS = Possessive, PP = person pronoun, Pred = verbless predicate, S = single argument of intransitive sentence, Sg = singular, S_A = Agent-like subject, SJ = subject marker, S_P = Patient-like subject, V = verb.

representing the A argument in (2) with the S argument in (4) reveals that S patterns with A. This pattern is characteristic of an accusative alignment system.

(3) kéî   -g   -ì
     come   SJ:1Sg   IPV
                S
     'I will come.'

(4) ká   -ṛ   -í
     come   SJ:3   PFV
                S
     'He will come.'

Medium verbs are subdivided in two groups. One group is characterized by an s- prefix glossed MED in (5) and (6). This prefix occurs in the imperfective only. Verbs of the other group do not take this prefix, cf. (8).

Although most medium verbs have one participant only, they take two participant reference markers. That is, although they are *semantically* intransitive, they have a structure comparable to a transitive active verb, compare (8) to (2).

Medium verbs are, however, clearly distinct from transitive active verbs because they invariably take the third person subject marker, -ṛ, -n, Ø. This is illustrated in (5), (6), (7), (8), and (11). As for the object marker, any morpheme may be selected, cf. ɛ́- in (5), nɔ́- in (6), Ø in (7), tɛ́- in (8). This suggests that it is the object marker that represents the *principal argument* of a medium verb.[4] The third person subject marker, however, is a dummy subject representing an impersonal Agent. Such a construction, therefore, resembles the German construction 'es freut mich', 'mich friert's'.

As the principal argument of a semantically intransitive medium verb is encoded like the Patient of a transitive sentence, this patterning exhibits an ergative alignment system, compare (5) to (2), (6) to (1).

(5) ɛ́-   s-   gɛ̄   -ṛ   -ī
     OJ:1Sg   MED   sleep   SJ:3   IPV
     P   A$_{impers}$
     'I will sleep'

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[4]   I owe the term 'principal argument' to Mark S. Ortman's paper "Teda verb classes and their morphology in light of verbal paradigms" (ms 2003).

(6) nɔ́-   s-   kʊ̀   -r̥   -ì
    OJ:2Sg   MED   get.lost   SJ:3   IPV
    P   A$_{impers}$
    'You will get lost.'

(7) Ø   áʊ́   -n   -í
    OJ:3   stop   SJ:3   PFV
    P   A$_{impers}$
    'He stopped.'

(8) tɛ́-   kɛ́dɛ̀   -r̥   -ì
    OJ:1Pl   fall   SJ:3   IPV
    P   A$_{impers}$
    'We will fall.'

In the perfective, some active transitive and intransitive verbs and some medium verbs delete the third person subject marker, cf. (9) to (11). The deletion of this morpheme is not predictable but lexicalized.

(9) Ø   kì-   nà   Ø   -í
    OJ:3   PFV:3   buy   SJ:3   PFV
    P   A
    'He has bought [it].'

(10) ká-   gà   Ø   -í
    APPL   come   SJ:3   PFV:Pl
                      S
    'They came.'

(11) nɛ́-   gɛ́   Ø   -í
    OJ:2Sg   sleep   SJ:3   PFV
    P   A$_{impers}$
    'You slept.'

As the zero encoding of A in (9) and of A$_{impers}$ in (11) is identical to the zero encoding of S in (10), the patterning of S with A or A$_{impers}$ again shows the characteristics of an accusative alignment system.

Thus, Beria has two kinds of intransitive verbs with a single participant: i) Intransitive active verbs encode the single participant with a subject morpheme. ii) Semantically intransitive medium verbs encode the single participant with an object morpheme. The different encoding of the single partipant either like an A or like a P argument exhibits the characteristic pattern of an active/agentive alignment system.

The next section, however, shows that the system of grammatical relations reflected in the constituent order and in the focus markers rather follows the ergative pattern S = P.

3 The ergative system in constituent order and focus marking

Beria is a verb-final language. The pragmatically unmarked constituent order is SOV in transitive sentences, cf. (12). That is, in a two argument sentence A precedes P, and P precedes the verb. In intransitive sentences, the basic constituent order is SV. That is, the single argument S precedes the verb, cf. (13).

(12) hírî   bîi   Ø:kí-yà-ṛ-ǐ
     cow:Pl   water   OJ:3:PFV:3-drink-SJ:3-PFV:Pl
     A   P   P   A
      'The cows have drunk water.'

(13) hírî   ká-gà-Ø-í
     cow:Pl   APPL-come-SJ:3-PFV:Pl
     S   S
      'The cows have come.'

Depending on the semantics of the verb, a single unmarked core constituent immediately preceding a verb can either be conceived of as P, as illustrated in (14) and (15), or as S, as in (13), (16) and (17).

(14) bîi   Ø:wár-g-ì
     water   OJ:3;pour.on.the.ground-SJ:1Sg-IPV
     P   P   A
      'I will pour water on the ground.'

(15) bágʊ́-ɔ́gɔ́   Ø:kú-gú-ṛ-î
     wife-POSS:3Sg   OJ:3:PFV:3-call-SJ:3-PFV
     P   P   A
     'He called his wife.'

(16) ɔ̄ɔ̄   ká-ṛ-í
     person come-SJ:3-PFV
     S   S
     'The person has come.'

(17) áī   kí   ɛ̀-g-ì
     PP:1Sg   leave   AUX-SJ:1-PFV
     S   S
     'I will leave.'

The examples (13) to (17) illustrate that the unmarked S or P constituents take the position immediately before the verb. If the A constituent shifts to this position, it requires the clitic GU,[5] as shown in (18) and (19). The P constituent, however, does not require a marker even if it precedes A, cf. (19). The fact that the A constituent takes a marker and that both the S and P constituents are unmarked reveals the characteristic ergative pattern.

      In (18) and (19) the clitic GU marks an animate and volitional Agent and in (20) and (21) an inanimate force. This suggests that GU marks the Actor rather than just the Agent. The term Actor is conceived of as a semantic macrorole comprising several semantic roles and thematic relations (Van Valin 2001: 31).

(18) bágʊ́-ɔ́gɔ́=gʊ́   Ø:kú-gú-ṛ-î
     wife-POSS:3Sg=FOC$_{ERG}$ OJ:3:PFV:3-call-SJ:3-PFV
     A   P   A
     'It's his wife who called him.'

(19) jàá:Ø   bɔ̀rū=gū   sàì   Ø:gí-n-Ø-î
     child:ABS   man=FOC$_{ERG}$ hit   OJ:3:PFV:3-AUX-SJ:3-PFV
     P   A   P   A
     'It's the man who hit the child.'

---

[5]   Depending on the [ATR] feature of the preceding vowel, the clitic GU is realized as [gʊ] or [gu] and the clitic DI as [dɪ] or [di].

(20) òrfũ=gū   kíjí   Ø:sè-ì-ṛ-í
     fever=FOC_ERG tremble   OJ:3:CAUS-AUX-SJ:3-IPV
     A   P   A
     'The fever made him tremble.'

(21) àràbíé=gū   ɔɔ̄=nìí:Ø   ɛ́gɛ́rɛ́   Ø:gí-n-Ø-í
     car=FOC_ERG   person=IDF:ABS   run.over   OJ:3:PFV:3-AUX-SJ:3-PFV
     A   P   P   A
     'The car has run over a certain person.'

The characteristic patterning of P with S, and A differently, is also attested in the focus markers employed for these constituents. As illustrated in the sentences below, the clitic DI marks both the focused P constituent, cf. (22), and the S constituent, cf. (23) to (25).

(22) náá=dî   nè-gèr-g-ì
     PP:2Sg=FOC_ABS   OJ:2-look.for-SJ:1Sg-IPV
     P   P   A
     'It's you I am looking for.'

(23) âī=dî   kí   è-g-ì
     PP:1Sg=FOC_ABS   leave   AUX-SJ:1-PFV
     S   S
     'It's me who will leave.'

(24) âī=dî   ɛ́-gɛ́dɛ́-Ø-í
     PP:1Sg=FOC_ABS   OJ:1Sg-fall-SJ:3-PFV
     P   P   A_impers
     'It's me who has fallen.'

(25) sùltǎn=dì   Ø:ní-Ø-í
     sultan=FOC_ABS   OJ:3:die-SJ:3-PFV
     P   P   A_impers
     'It's the sultan who has died.'

Example (26) illustrates that both a focused P and a focused A constituent may occur in one sentence.

(26) bìè   kî=dî   ábā égî=gú   Ø:sî-é-ṛ-î
      house this=FOC_{ABS} father my=FOC_{ERG} OJ:3:build-PFV:3-SJ:3-PFV
      P   A   P   A
      'It's this house that my father has built.'

So far, the description has shown that the distribution of GU and DI exhibits an ergative pattern. GU is solely employed as contrastive focus marker required when the A constituent immediately precedes the verb, a position which is not admitted for the unmarked A constituent. This rule is not applied, however, if the A constituent is preceded by a clefted P constituent, cf. (29) and (30) below. DI, in contrast, is used as contrastive focus marker of the P and S constituent.

      Apart from its focus marking function, DI is also employed as non-verbal predication marker, cf. (27) and (28). It is assumed that the focus marker DI and the nonverbal predication marker DI have a common origin.

(27) áī=dî
      PP:1Sg=Pred
      'It's me.'

(28) kèkkì=dî
      here=Pred
      'It's here.'

The cleft construction is another device to focus both the P and the S constituent. The clefted constituent is marked by the clitic copula I.[6] This is the third person form of the copula of identification. The rest of the sentence remains unchanged.

      If P is clefted, the A constituent does not require the clitic GU, even if it immediately precedes the verb as in (29). The cleft construction is restricted to focused single nouns, cf. (29), and question words, cf. (31) and (32). Focused person pronouns and focused complex noun phrases, however, require the marker DI. In other words, the employment of the cleft construction marking the focused P and S constituent is more restricted than the employment of DI.

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[6]   I is realized as [ɪ] or [i] depending on the [ATR] feature of the preceding vowel. In the singular I takes a mid tone, in the plural a high tone.

(29) àràbíé=î   ábā   égí:Ø   Ø:kî-nà-Ø-í

car=COP:Sg:ABS   father   my:ERG   OJ:3:PFV:3-buy-SJ:3-PFV

P   A   P   A

  'It's the car that my father has bought.'

(30) gùú=ī   íà:Ø   ɟàá-r   Ø:kɛkk-í

paste=COP:Sg:ABS mother:ERG child-ADV OJ:3:give:SJ:3-PFV

P   A   BEN   P   A

  'It's paste that the mother has given to the child.'

(31) núrá=ī   Ø:sɛ́-n-ī

what=COP:Sg:ABS   OJ:3:eat-SJ:2-PFV

P   P   A

  'What is it that you have eaten?'

(32) nánà=í   ká-gà-Ø-í

who:Pl=COP:Pl:ABS   APPL-come-SJ:3-PFV:Pl

S   S

  'Who is it who has come?'

As the cleft construction is restricted to focusing S and P, and as the A constituent is focused differently, this patterning again shows the characteristic features of an ergative system of grammatical relations.

    A few medium verbs like 'learn' and 'enter/dress' have two P constituents. This double P construction is shown in example (33) to (35) where the employment of DI and the cleft construction attest that the focused constituents represent a P argument.

(33) ɟàmâl=dî   àrmá:Ø   Ø:áwáá-r̥-î

Jamal=FOC_{ABS}   Arabic:ABS   OJ:3:learn-SJ:3-PFV

P   P   P   A_{impers}

  'It's Jamal who has learnt Arabic.'

(34) ɟàá=ī   àráp:Ø   Ø:áwáá-r̥-ĭ

child=COP:Sg:ABS   Arabic:ABS   OJ:3:learn-SJ:3-PFV:Pl

P   P   P   A_{impers}

  'It's the children who have learnt Arabic.'

(35) àráp=ī　　　　　　jáà:Ø　　　　Ø:áwáá-ṛ-ǐ

　　　Arabic=COP:Sg:ABS　child:Pl:ABS　OJ:3:learn-SJ:3-PFV:Pl

　　　P　　　　　　　　P　　　　　　P　　　　　A$_{impers}$

　　　'It's Arabic that the children have learnt.'

4　　Semantic motivation

The assignment of grammatical relations always has a semantic motivation. In Beria, the position of the participant reference markers which precede or follow the verb stem, allows to make a fine distinction between the different semantic roles played by the participants. The object markers preceding the verb stem either represent the P argument of a transitive active verb or a patientive principal argument of a semantically intransitive medium verb. The subject marker following the verb stem either represent the A argument of a transitive active verb or an agentive single argument of an intransitive active verb. An agentive single participant – one who comes and leaves – acts volitionally and is therefore encoded like an A argument. A patientive single participant – one who sleeps, dies, or falls – does not control the event but is rather affected by it. The participant in such an event plays, therefore, rather the role of an undergoer. Medium verbs, in particular, typically denote events which affect the body or mind of the participant (Kemmer 1993). In Beria, this P-like role of the principal argument is, therefore, encoded with an object prefix.

In a verb final language, the focus markers on the core constituents do not allow to make a fine distinction between agentive and patientive single participants in an intransitive sentence. The most important task of a focus marker in a verb final language is to show whether a core constituent preceding the verb plays an agentive or patientive role. The focused single participant of intransive sentences, in contrast, could theoretically either be encoded like an A or P argument. In Beria, as illustrated in (23), (24), (25), (32) the single participant is always focused like the P argument of a transitive sentence.

Interestingly, as shown in (33) to (35), a few medium verbs have two P arguments. According to Mithun (1991: 517), "it is not uncommon in agent-patient systems, where the morphology permits it, for both core arguments of a transitive clause to be classified grammatically as patients if neither participant performs/effects/instigates or controls."

5   Summary

The paper shows that Beria exhibits two systems of grammatical relations, an active/agentive and an ergative alignment system. The ergative pattern is exhibited 1) in the constituent order, 2) in the focus markers GU and DI, and 3) in the cleft construction which is restricted to the P argument, the single argument of an intransitive active verb or to the principal argument of a semantically intransitive medium verb. The participant reference markers, in contrast, show the active/agentive pattern. Accordingly, the agentive single participant of an intransitive sentence is encoded like an A argument. The patientive participant of a semantically intransitive sentence, in contrast, is encoded like a P argument.

According to typological studies, languages having an active/agentive system of grammatical relations, as shown in Diagram 3, tend to share a number of morphological and syntactic characteristics. Beria confirms several of these:

i) Beria is a polysynthetic language ("The morphological structure of the verb is often characterized in such languages by polysyntheticism", Klimov 1975: 17).

ii) The active/agentive system occurs in the participant reference markers on the verb ("Active/agentive patterns appear especially frequent in pronominal affixes within verbs", Mithun 1991: 542).

iii) The semantic motivation for the different morphosyntactic encoding of the arguments is the sensitivitiy to active/agentive versus inactive/patientive participants.

iv) There is "no opposition of transitive and intransitive verbs" (Klimov 1975: 18). In Beria, medium verbs with one participant are morphologically transitive verbs with two participant reference markers.

Moreover, in the perfective form of many verbs, the third person subject marker is deleted. This marker encodes both the third person A argument of a transitive sentence and, perhaps less important, the impersonal A argument of a semantically intransitive sentence. The deletion of the third person subject marker indicates that in the event described by the verb, the Agent – which is otherwise conceived of as an important role in a transitive sentence – is of little importance.

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Focus in Yorùbá: a semantic/pragmatic account[1]

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Semantic and pragmatic properties of the Yorùbá focus construction have not been fully examined. This paper investigates presupposition, exhaustivity effects, and felicity conditions in some of its attested forms. Yorùbá focus does not trigger existence presuppositions, it does not have any obligatory exhaustivity effects, and argument focus and predicate focus behave differently with respect to question-answer congruence. These properties are compatible Déchaine's analysis (2002) of Yorùbá focus as inverse predication, essentially a type of cleft.

1   Introduction

Focus is a grammatical means of marking the organization of information in discourse. It divides sentences into a focus and an open proposition corresponding to background information. Focus selects a value for the variable in the open proposition from a set of contextually relevant alternative propositions (Rooth, 1996). In (1a) *Ted* is the focus, (1b) shows the open proposition, and (1c) shows the set of alternatives created by replacing x with a contextually relevant individual:

(1)   a.   Bill introduced [Ted]$_F$ to Mary.   Focus on Ted
       b.   Bill introduced x to Mary   Open proposition
       c.   {Bill introduced John to Mary, Bill introduced Sue
             to Mary, Bill introduced Tim to Mary}   Set of alternatives

Focus is marked in various ways across languages: prosodically (English intonational focus), morphologically (Mandeng), or structurally (English cleft

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focus, Yorùbá). In]_F, the focus occupies the left position in the sentence, and is followed by the particle *ni*:

(2)   [XP]_F ni [….]

Examples of Yorùbá focus are in (3)-(7). When a subject is questioned or focused, a third person singular resumptive pronoun, *ó*, is obligatory (Carstens 1985):

(3)   Adé ni ó ra ìwé.
        Ade FOC² 3sg buy book
        '[Ade]_F bought a/the book.'   Focus of subject

Questioned or focused objects leave a gap in object position (Déchaine 2002):

(4)   Ìwé ni   Adé rà ___.
        book FOC A. buy
        'Adé bought [a/the book]_F.'   Focus of object

Verb/VP focus, or predicate clefting, is attested in Yorùbá. The verb or VP is nominalized via reduplication, and a copy of the verb is required in the construal site. in (5), *rà* (buy) is nominalized, and appears as *rírà* when focused:

(5)   [Rírà]_F   ni Adé ra   ìwé.
        NOM-buy FOC A.   buy book
        'Ade [bought]_F a/the book.'   Focus of verb

In VP focus, the focused verb and object are both copied in the construal site:

(6)   [Rírà ìwé]_F ni   Adé   ra   ìwé.
        NOM-buy FOC A.   buy book
        'Ade [bought a/the book.]_F'   Focus of VP

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²   I have glossed *ni* as FOC, for *focus*, in all contexts it occurs in.

CPs can be focused:

(7)   Pé   ó   ra   ìwé   ni   èmi mọ̀.
       COMP 3sg buy book FOC 1sg know
       '[That he/she bought a book]$_F$, I know.'   Focus of CP

2   Syntactic analysis of Yorùbá focus

Yusuf (1990) proposed that Yorùbá focus is a type of copula, based on the distribution of the particle *ni*. *Ni* occurs in focus contexts such as (3) through (7), above. It also functions as a copular verb in certain nominal predications. Yorùbá has two copular verbs, *ni* and *jẹ́,* each used in different discourse contexts:

(8)   a.   Kìnìún **ni**   ọba   ẹranko.
             Lion   FOC king animal
             'The lion is the king of the animals.'
             <u>Answers</u>: Which animal is king of the animals?

       b.   Kìnìún **jẹ́**   ẹranko ńlá
             Lion   be animal big
             'The lion is a big animal.'
             <u>Answers</u>: Tell me something about lions.
             (Bisang & Sonaiya 2000, p. 172)

Jẹ́ occurs in canonical copula sentences, and *ni* occurs in inverse copula sentences. In an inverse copula sentence, also called an inverse predication, the predicate precedes the subject:

(9)   a.   [$_{SUBJ}$DP $_{PRED}$XP]   Canonical nominal predication
       b.   [$_{PRED}$XP $_{SUBJ}$DP]   Inverse nominal predication

Déchaine (2002) proposed that focus constructions are also inverse predications. Her analysis treats focus more specifically as a type of cleft (henceforth called the *cleft analysis*).   Previously, Yorùbá focus has been analyzed as *focus movement*, a variety of A´-movement in which the focused XP is moved from its canonical position to the specifier of a Focus Phrase (Awóyale 1985, Bisang and Sonaiya 2000, Aboh 2003).

       This paper investigates the semantics and pragmatics of the Yorùbá focus construction, with the purpose of determining how they may inform the understanding of its syntax. First, I compare the basic claims of the cleft

analysis with the focus movement analysis (as defined by Kiss (1998)), and compare how each captures the syntactic properties of Yorùbá. The following sections then examine presupposition, exhaustivity, and question-answer congruence in some Yorùbá focus constructions. I conclude that the cleft analysis is more compatible with the presuppositions and other pragmatic properties of Yorùbá focus.

2.1   The cleft analysis (Déchaine 2002)

Clefts are a type of copula construction associated with focus (Lambrecht 2001). The association of cleft sentences with focus is not unique to Yorùbá. English has at least two different types of clefts (Higgins 1973), *it*-clefts and pseudoclefts, both of which express focus[3]:

(10)   a.   It was [a book]$_F$ that John bought.   *It*-cleft
       b.   What John bought was [a book]$_F$.   Pseudocleft
               Both answer: What did John buy?

As noted in the previous section, the particle *ni* occurs in Yorùbá in both focused sentences and inverse predications that involve focus. An example of an inverse predication is (9a). The NP in the sentence-initial position, *olópá*, has a predicational (property-denoting) interpretation. The context question shows that the predicational NP is the focus of the sentence[4]:

(11)   Olópá ni Adé.
       police officer FOC Adé
       'Ade is a police officer.'
       Answers: What is Adé?   (Davison 1986)

Because *ni* is associated with copula sentences that involve focus, Yusuf (1990) argued that focus sentences should also be treated as copulas. Based on the fact that *ni* is associated with inverse copulas, Déchaine (2002) proposed an analysis that derives Yorùbá focus via predicate raising from a small clause:

(12)   a.   [$_{SUBJ}$DP $_{PRED}$XP]
       b.   [XP]$_i$ ni [$_{SUBJ}$DP $_{PRED}$t$_i$]   Predicate raising

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[3]   See Lambrecht 2001 for additional types of clefts in English and other languages.
[4]   A test for whether an XP is the focus of a sentence is whether it provides the answer to a question (Kadmon 2001).

In a canonical copula sentence, the subject of a small clause (SC) is raised to the subject position (Spec., Infl.) of the main clause (Heycock 1991). In inverse predication, the predicate of the small clause is raised to subject position of the main clause, instead. The cleft analysis treats a Yorùbá focused XP as a raised predicate. The focused XP is followed by the copula *ni*:

(13)   a.   [ìwé $_i$]$_F$ ni   Adé rà __
            Book FOC A.   buy
            = [A book]$_F$ is what Adé bought.   Focus construction (cleft)

       b. $_{SC}$[$_{SUBJ}$ (what) Adé rà _] [$_{PRED}$ ìwé]   Small clause
       c. $_{IP}$[ìwé]$_i$ ni $_{SC}$[$_{SUBJ}$ Adé rà _] [$_{PRED}$t $_i$]   Predicate inversion

The subject of the focused sentence is the post-*ni* information, analyzed as a free relative clause headed by *pro*:

(14)   ni $_{SUBJ}$[$_{DP}$ pro$_i$ [$_{CP}$ Op$_i$ [$_{IP}$ Adé rà e$_i$]]]   Free relative subject

Under the cleft analysis, the sentence-initial position of the focused XP is attributable to predicate raising. Resumptive pronouns in subject focus (as in example (3)) are attributable to relativization. The required nominalization of V and VP focus is attributable to inverse nominal predication, which only operates on nominal expressions (Déchaine 2002: 5).

2.2   *Focus movement (Kiss 1998)*

Kiss (1998) analyzes syntactic focus in Hungarian as focus movement. Focus movement is a type of A´-movement. This analysis assumes that Universal Grammar has a dedicated structural position in the clause for focus similar to the position dedicated to *wh*-phrases:

(15)   a.   [$_{CP}$ *wh*$_1$ [$_{IP}$ … t$_1$ …]]   *Wh*-movement
       b.   [$_{FocP}$ XP$_1$ [$_{IP}$ … t$_1$ …]]   Focus-movement

Yorùbá focus has previously been analyzed as involving focus movement. This type of analysis accounts for the sentence-initial position of the focused XP and for the presence of resumptive pronouns. However, focus movement does not account for the occurrence of *ni* in both nominal predication and focus, or for the required nominalization of focused verbs and VPs. Moreover, Yorùbá focus contrasts with Hungarian focus in several ways: it is not exhaustive, it does not

trigger existence presuppositions, and it is not restricted to argument expressions.

Kiss (1998) argues that it is necessary to distinguish between at least two kinds of focus. Syntactic focus involves focus movement, and it is restricted to the expression of *identificational focus*. Identificational focus is defined (in part) as focus with obligatory exhaustivity effects. Exhaustivity means the focused element picks out *every* individual identified with the variable in the open proposition. Identificational focus is contrasted with *information focus*, which does not involve movement and has no obligatorily exhaustivity effect. Yorùbá focus does not have obligatory exhaustivity, as will be shown in section 3.

In focus movement, restrictions are placed on the constituent that can occupy the focus position (Spec., FocP). This position is restricted to referential NPs: quantificational and predicational NPs are excluded. Moreover, "*that*-clauses, infinitival clauses, VPs and predicative NPs/AdjPs must also be excluded" (Kiss 1998: 261). Yorùbá verbs, VPs, CPs, and quantificational NPs may be focused.

3   Yorùbá focus is not exhaustive

Yorùbá focus is generally judged to provide an exhaustive answer to a question. However, the dialogue in (16) shows that this is a weak, cancellable exhaustivity[5]:

(16) a.   **Speaker A:** Ta ni   ó   lọ?
           wh FOC 3sg go
           'Who went? '

b.   **Speaker B:** Akin ni ó lọ.
           Akin FOC
           'Akin went.'

c.   **Speaker A:** Ta ni   elo   miràn   ti   ó   lọ?
           wh FOC somebody else   COMP 3sg go
           'Who else went?'

d.   **Speaker B:** Adé ni.
           Ade FOC
           'Adé did.'

---

[5]   This test for exhaustivity is attributed to Bolinger (1972) by Lambrecht (2001 : p. 504).

If the focused answer in (16b) were obligatorily exhaustive, then Speaker A's second question in (16c) should be judged infelicitous, for the following reason: Speaker A would know from (16b) that nobody else went. If Speaker A then asks (16c), infelicity arises from a violation of Grice's Cooperative principle (1975). The Maxim of Quantity requires that you make your contribution as informative as possible, but (16c) would force Speaker B to give a non-informative answer ("*Nobody else went*"). The fact that the dialogue is felicitous shows that the apparent exhaustivity in (16b) is a cancellable implicature, and not obligatory. Exhaustivity effects are also absent in focus of objects:

(17) a. **Speaker A:** Kí ni   Adé rà?
              Wh FOC A.   buy
              'What did Adé buy?'

     b. **Speaker B:** ìwé ni   Adé rà.
              book FOC Adé buy
              'Ade bought a book.'

     c. **Speaker A:** Kí ni elo omíràn ó rà?
              Wh FOC something else 3sg buy
              'What else did he buy?'

     d. **Speaker B:** Àwòran ni   ó rà
              picture   FOC 3sg buy
              'He bought a picture.'

I take (16) and (17) as indications that focus does not involve obligatory exhaustivity in Yorùbá.

3.1   *Exhaustivity and the syntactic analysis*

The absence of obligatory exhaustivity in Yorùbá is not compatible with focus-movement as defined by Kiss (1998). However, there is also a contrast between Yorùbá focus and the corresponding English clefts, which are consistently judged to be exhaustive:

(18) Speaker A: Who went?
     Speaker B: It was John who went.
     Speaker A: #Who else went?

In the focus movement account, exhaustive identification is a direct consequence of A´-movement, where the focused XP moves to an operator position and binds its trace in the extraction site. This analysis consequently does not predict the absence of exhaustivity in Yorùbá focus. The cleft analysis better captures this absence, because other research shows that clefts are not uniform with respect to exhaustivity across languages.

3.2   Clefts in two Salish languages

Two languages unrelated to Yorùbá from different branches of the Salish family, Northern Straits and St'át'imcets, have clefts with only weak, cancellable exhaustivity (Davis, Matthewson, & Shank 2004). Each language has two types of cleft construction, with different syntactic structures. The first type is "nominal predicate constructions," or NPC's. These consist of a nominal predicate and a headless relative clause introduced by a determiner (p. 100):

(19) a.   la sʔn [kʷsə t´s-ət-s   kʷsə Richard]
           plate [DET break-CTR-3.SUB DET Richard
           'What Richard broke was a plate.'   NPC: Straits

      b.   qəɬməmən̓ šəɬmúɬač   [nəɬ qʷaɬqʷəl̓əl̓t-š-àn-a]
           old person   woman (PL) DET.PL speak-CAUS-1SG.ERG-DET
           'The ones I spoke to were old women.'   NPC: St'át'imcets
           (Davis, Matthewson & Shank 2004: 102)

The second type is "introduced clefts" or simply "clefts," which include an introductory, pronoun-like predicate, analyzed as a copula (Kroeber 1999):

(20) a.   niɬ kʷsə la sʔn [kʷsə t´s-ət-s   kʷsə Richard]
           niɬ DET plate [DET   break-CTR-3.SUB DET Richard]
           'It was a plate Richard broke.'   Cleft: Straits

      b.   niɬ ʔi   qəɬməmən-å̓ šəɬmúɬač   [nəɬ qʷaɬqʷəl̓əl̓t-š-àn-a]
           niɬ DET.PL old.person-DET woman(PL) [DET.PL speak-CAUS-
           1SG.ERG-DET]
           'It was the old women that I spoke to.'   Cleft: St'át'imcets
           (Davis, Matthewson & Shank 2004: 103)

In each language, neither construction triggers existence presuppositions, or gives rise to an obligatory exhaustivity effect.   (21a) and (21b) are cleft

sentences that include particles that correspond to "*also*" or "*too*" in English. The acceptability of these particles in each construction shows the absence of obligatory exhaustivity effects. The particles *also* and *too* do not co-occur with English clefts because they explicitly contradict exhaustivity:

(21) a. niɬ kʷsə s ʾəlí ʾəqɬ k̓ʷə̓y̓k̓ʷi̓ʔ, ʔiʔ kʷsə sɬənɬéni̓ʔ   ʾe
          niɬ DET child(PL) hungry   and DET woman(PL) too
          '??It's the kids that are hungry, and the ladies too. '   Cleft: Straits

      b. niɬ ʔi   šk̓ʷəmk̓ʷú k̓ʷmiʔt-a q̓ʔa̓lmən, mútaʔ ʔi
          niɬ DET.PL child(PL)-DET   eat-want and   DET.PL
          lalíl̓təm-a   ʾit
          adult-DET also
          '??It's the children who are hungry, and also the adults.'
          Cleft: St'át'imcets
          (Davis, Matthewson & Shank 2004: 110)

The translations of (21a-b) are ungrammatical, or at least odd, showing that clefts in English and clefts in Straits or St'át'imcets have different semantic properties. Both clefts and NPCs in Salish lack exhaustivity effects, and this is significant for the syntactic analysis of Yorùbá. Because the above data shows that the semantics of clefts differ across languages, the absence of exhaustivity in Yorùbá focus is not incompatible with a cleft analysis of the construction.

4   Yorùbá focus has no existence presupposition

Focus is generally considered to trigger a presupposition, but not necessarily an existential presupposition. (22a) appears to presuppose the existence of someone who likes Bill, and assert that this is Mary. However, intonational focus does not trigger existence presuppositions, because (22b) specifically asserts that there is nobody who likes Bill[6]:

(22) a.   MARY likes Bill.
      b.   NOBODY likes Bill.   (Kadmon 2001: 254)

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[6]   Jackendoff concludes that the presupposition involved in sentences like these is that the set of people who like Bill is "coherent, or well-defined, or amenable to discussion, or under discussion" in the current discourse. Rooth proposes that focuspresupposes that there is another relevant alternative proposition in the discourse (Kadmon : p. 326-328).

Yorùbá focus also does not trigger existence presuppositions. (23) asserts that nobody went, and as in (22b), the claim that someone exists who went is explicitly denied:

(23) Ẹnì-kan kò lọ̀.
  person one FOC-NEG go
  'Nobody went.'

If Yorùbá focus triggered an existence presupposition, (24a) would be expected to be odd in the same way that the corresponding English clefts in (24b) are odd. It would mean that the presupposition and the assertion of the sentence were the same. But (24a) is grammatical and asserts, not presupposes, that someone went:

(24) a. <u>Context question</u>: Who went?
    Enì kan   ni ó   lo.
    Somebody FOC 3sg. go
    'Somebody went.'

  b. <u>Context question</u>: Who went?
    *It was somebody who went.
    *Who went was somebody.

Yorùbá focus is not contrastive in the sense meant by Kiss (1998). Contrastive focus in this sense presupposes not only the existence of an individual who satisfies the predicate, but also presupposes the existence of individuals who do not satisfy the predicate. Universal quantifiers are therefore not compatible with identificational focus (focus movement), because they do not accommodate the presupposition that there exist individuals who do not satisfy the predicate. (25a) shows that Yorùbá focus does not have the presuppositions of contrastive focus. The corresponding English clefts do have these presuppositions, because the universal quantifier is ungrammatical:

(25) a. <u>Context question</u>: Who went?
    Olúkulùku ni wọn lọ.
    Everybody went.

  b. <u>Context question</u>: Who went?
    *It was everybody who went.
    *Who went was everyone.

 (23)-(25) indicate that Yorùbá focus lacks existence presuppositions.

4.1 Presupposition and the syntactic analysis

Among the expressions listed by Kiss that are excluded from identificational focus are the QPs *someone* or *something* and *everyone* or *everything*. These quantificational NPs are also excluded from English *it*-clefts, which Kiss classifies as identificational focus. The focus movement analysis does not capture the fact that quantificational NPs are fine in Yorùbá focus. However, English clefts are well known to trigger existence presuppositions (Percus 1997). If the cleft analysis of Yorùbá focus is correct, Yorùbá clefts contrast with English clefts in this respect.

4.2 Yorùbá focused XPs and definiteness

Percus (1997) proposes that the existence presupposition triggered by *it*-clefts is attributable to the fact that they contain a discontinuous definite description:

(26) a. It is [John]$_F$ that Mary saw.

b. [$_{IP}$ [$_{DP}$ **the 0** [$_{CP}$ Op$_i$ that Mary saw t$_i$]]$_j$ [$_{VP}$ t$_j$ is John]]
    Definite description is [$_{DP}$ **the 0**]

c. [[$_{IP}$ [$_{DP}$ the 0 t$_k$]$_j$ [$_{VP}$ t$_j$ is John]] [$_{CP}$ **Op$_i$ that Mary saw t$_i$**]$_k$]
    Exptraposition of relative clause

d. Spell out: [$_{DP}$ the 0 t$_k$] $\rightarrow$ **It**   (Percus 1997)

Exhaustivity and existence presupposition follow from the uniqueness requirement of this definite description, which is represented by *it* (Percus 1997: 340). A cleft of the form *It is [α]$_F$ that has property Π* requires that $\forall x$ ($\Pi(x)$ $\rightarrow$ x=α). In (26), John is identified as the unique individual who Mary saw. The cleft contains the definite description *the 0 that has property Π*: in (26), the property is "someone who Mary saw." When this property is attributed to John, then for anyone who Mary saw, they have to be identical in reference to John.

Definite and indefinite NPs are bare in Yorùbá (Ajíbóyè 2005). In order to be construed as definite (as having existence and uniqueness presuppositions), a noun must be discourse linked (D-linked, Pesetsky 1987). This means its denotation is supplied by the discourse (Pesetsky 1987: 175-179). If a Yorùbá bare noun is not D-linked, it has a default indefinite interpretation.

Yorùbá focus contrasts with English cleft focus in that although both sentence types provide the answer to a question, Yorùbá answers do not obligatorily trigger existence presuppositions. Unless it answers a D-linked

questions, the focused NP in the answer is not D-linked either. A D-linked question requires the speaker to choose their answer from a presupposed set of contextually relevant individuals. In English, D-linked questions ask *Which N?* Non D-linked questions ask *Who/What?* and do not presuppose a contextually restricted set. In Yorùbá, the focused XP in the answer to a *ta ni/kí ni?* (*who/what?*) question is not chosen from a presupposed set, and is therefore not construed as having existence or uniqueness presuppositions[7].

Because a Yorùbá focused XP is not definite unless it is D-linked, focus does not inlcude an existence presupposition. (27) is an example of how D-linking triggers existence presuppositions: *náà* presupposes a restricted set of children who can dance:

(27)   Kúnlé àti Títí náà ni ó lè jó.
         K. and T. SALIENT FOC 3sg able dance.
         'Only Kúnlé and Títí can dance.'   (Ajíbóyè 2005: 207-208)

Percus attributes the existence presupposition in English cleft focus to a covert definite description. In Yorùbá, existence presuppositions are only triggered when an NP is D-linked; therefore, the absence of presupposition in Yorùbá focus is not incompatible with the cleft analysis.

5   Focus and discourse congruence

The constituent that is focused in an utterance determines the discourse contexts it can be used in felicitously (Kadmon 2001). In Yorùbá, there is a contrast between argument and predicate focus with respect to felicity conditions, specifically, question-answer congruence. Argument focus answers a corresponding *wh*-question; however, verb focus is infelicitous in question-answer contexts.

Question-answer pairs demonstrate how the focus of a sentence determines its felicity conditions, that is to say, which question it answers. (28) shows how the constituent that is focused correlates with the *wh*-phrase in the question it answers:

(28) a.   Carl likes HERRING
             Answers: What does Carl like?
             Does not answer: Who likes herring?

---

7   It is expected that a *which N* question in Yorùbá will trigger an existence presupposition, but this remains to be tested.

    b.   CARL likes herring.
          Answers: Who likes herring?
          Does not answer: What does Carl like?   (Kadmon 2001: 253-254)

Discourse congruence between focus sentences and the questions they answer follows from semantic parallels between focus and questions:

(29) a.   A question denotes a set of propositions (Hamblin 1973).
      b.   Focus evokes a set of contextually relevant alternative propositions, created by replacing the focused element with some other contextually relevant element (Rooth 1996).

Rooth's analysis of focus explains the relationship between focus and questions. The set of alternatives evoked by focus is the "focus semantic value" or $[[S]]^f$ of the sentence. Sentences have their usual semantic value, $[[S]]^0$ plus their focus semantic value:

(30) $[[\text{John introduced } [\text{Ted}]_F \text{ to Mary}]]^f =$ {John introduced Bill to Mary, John introduced Sue to Mary, John introduced Tom to Mary}
       = The set of propositions of the form "John introduced x to Mary".

Whenever there is a focus in a sentence, there is a focusing operator, represented as ~. This operator comes with a variable argument, C, which stands for a set of propositions[8]. The variable C needs an appropriate antecedent, and one possible antecedent for C is the denotation of the question.[9]

5.1   *Argument vs verb focus in Yorùbá*

In Yorùbá, sentences with focused arguments answer the corresponding *wh-*questions:

 (31) a.   Ta ni   ó   ra ìwé?
             wh FOC 3sg buy book
             'Who bought a/the book?'   *Wh*-question about subject

---

[8]   Essentially, Rooth's proposal is that focus in a sentence triggers a presupposition that the value of C is a subset of $[[S]]^f$, which contains as its members the focused sentence, $[[S]]^0$, plus at least one other proposition.
[9]   The denotation of the question is not the only possible antecedent for C.

b.   Adé ni   ó   ra   ìwé.
        Ade FOC 3sg buy book
        '[Adé]_F bought a book..'   Answer with subject focus felicitous

(32) a.   Kí ni   Adé rà ___?
        wh FOC A.   buy
        'What did Adé buy?'   *Wh*-question about object

      b.   Ìwé ni   Adé rà ___.
        book FOC A.   buy
        'Adé bought [a/the book]_F.'   Answer with object focus felicitous

However, Yorùbá verb and VP focus does not answer the corresponding *wh*-questions[10]. (33a) and (33b) are infelicitous as answers to the context questions:

(33) a.   <u>Context question</u>: What did Adé do with the book?

        #[Rírà]_F   ni   ó   ra   ìwé.
        NOM-buy   FOC 3sg. buy book.
        'He [bought]_F the book.'   Answer with verb focus infelicitous

      b.   <u>Context question</u>: What did Ade do?

        #[Rírà ìwé]_F ni   ó   ra   ìwé.
        NOM-buy   FOC 3sg. buy book.
        'He [bought a/the book]_F.'   Answer with VP focus infelicitous

The questions in (33) can be answered by using a plain sentence with no focus:

(34) Ó   ra   ìwé.
      3sg buy book
      'He bought a/the book.'   Answer without focus felicitous

---

[10]   Kadmon (2001) characterizes the focus part of a sentence as "the answer to the question". Although question answer pairs are a diagnostic for focus, focus is felicitous in other contexts: verbs and VPs in these contexts are still considered to be focused.

Examples of Yorùbá verb focus used in context are (35) and (36):

(35) <u>Context</u>: I'm carelessly about to spill coffee all over your new book. You
      take it away from me and say:

      [Rírà]$_F$ ni   mo ra   ìwé yẹn!
      NOM-buy FOC 1sg buy book DET.
      'I paid good money for that book!'   V focus felicitous

(36) <u>Context</u>: Our friend is wearing a really ugly dress that you know used to
      belong to me. You ask , "Did you give Sandra that dress?" I laugh and
      say:

      Rárá, [títà]$_F$ ni   mo tà á fún un!
      No,   NOM-sell FOC 1sg sell it   her
      'No, I sold it to her!'   V focus felicitous

For focus of predicates, the antecedent for C (the variable introduced by focus)
is not the denotation of a question. Predicate focus does not answer questions,
so instead, the antecedent for C comes from elsewhere in the discourse.

5.2   *Required nominalization of verbs and discourse congruence*

Yorùbá predicate focus requires nominalization of the verb or VP. Predicates are
nominalized via reduplication with a high tone vowel, *í*, which turns the verb or
VP into "a gerund formed by prefixal reduplication" (Aboh 2003). There is also
a copy of the verb or VP in the construal site [11]:

(37) a.   Mo ka ìwé.
            1sg. read book
            'I read a/the book.'   Plain verb, non-focus

      b.   Kíka   ni   mo **ka** ìwé.
            Read-NOM FOC 1sg read book
            'I [read]$_F$ a/the book.'   Reduplication, focused verb

---

[11]   The requirement that there be a full copy of the focused verb or VP in the construal site is
       attributed to a PF condition (Déchaine 2002): focus is disanaphoric; consequently the
       construal site is anaphoric, and reduced in some way (Williams 1997). The verbal
       category cannot be empty, but there is no equivalent in Yorùbá to English *do/do so*;
       therefore, a full copy is the only alternative.

c.   Kíka ìwé   ni   mo **ka   ìwé**.
     Read-NOM book FOC 1sg read book
     'I [read a/the book]$_F$'   Reduplication, focused VP

The requirements of predication inversion force nominalization of focused verbs and VPs in Yorùbá (Déchaine, p. 4-6). In order to be raised to Spec., Infl., the predicate must be of a type that can occupy an argument position, specifically, a nominal.

   Predicate focus is attested in Gùngbè (another Kwa language closely related to Yorùbá). Like in Yorùbá, the focused verb is moved to the sentence-initial position, and there is a copy in-situ (Aboh):

(38) [Gbá]$_F$ [$_{IP}$ Sɛ́ná gbá   xwé   lɔ́   ná Kòfí]
      build   S.   build.PERF house DET for K.
      Sɛ́ná [built]$_F$ the house for Kofi.   Gùngbè verb focus

Gùngbè verb focus contrasts with Yorùbá in that focused verbs are not nominalized. Aboh (2003) analyzes Gùngbè focus as A´-movement. The focused verb is extracted from its base-generated site and moved to the focus position, Spec., FocP. The contrast between Yorùbá and Gùngbè focus with respect to nominalization of verbs follows if Gùngbè focus is an A´-movement construction. If it is not nominal predication, it does not require a nominalized focus:

(39) a.   Gùngbè verb focus:
            [$_{FocP}$ V$_1$]$_F$ [$_{IP}$ … t$_1$ …]]   A´-movement to Spec., FocP.

      b.   Yorùbá verb focus:
            [DP$_{SUBJ}$ Nom$_{PRED}$]   Small clause
            [Nom.] ni [DP$_{SUBJ}$ t$_{PRED}$]   Predicate inversion

Yorùbá verb focus and Gùngbè verb focus have different felicity conditions. Yorùbá verb focus does not answer *wh*-questions, as was shown in (33). Gùngbè verb focus does answer *wh*-questions. (40) is felicitous in a context where someone asks the question "What did Sena do with the bread?" while pointing at the remains of the loaf (Enoch Aboh, p.c):

(40)   Context question: What did Sena do with the bread?

    ɖùᵢ [ᵢₚ Sɛ́nà ɖùᵢ   blɛ́ɖ ì lɔ́].
    eat   S.   eat.PERF bread DET
    'Sena ATE the bread.'

I assume that the different felicity conditions of Yorùbá and Gùngbè verb focus are attributable to differences in the syntax of focus in each language. Yorùbá focus is inverse predication, and the coercion of verbs into nominalized events (gerunds) means they are not congruent to the *wh*-phrase in questions about verbs. Gùngbè focus is an A´-movement construction, which does not require nominalization.

6   Conclusions

I have examined some semantic and pragmatic properties of Yorùbá focus, and shown how they inform the understanding of its syntactic properties. Specifically, the absence of existence presuppositions and exhaustivity effects is incompatible with focus movement as defined by Kiss (1998), in which syntactic focus is restricted to the expression of identificational focus. These properties are compatible with the cleft analysis proposed by Déchaine (2002). However, Yorùbá focus differs from English cleft focus, which has both existence and exhaustivity presuppositions. Evidence from two Salish languages suggests that the properties of clefts are not uniform across languages. Comparison with Gùngbè suggests that the different felicity conditions of argument focus and predicate focus in Yorùbá is attributable to nominalization. The nominalization of focused Yorùbá verbs and VPs is cited by Déchaine as a requirement of predicate raising.

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Intervention and focus in Asante Twi

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This paper concerns the distribution of wh-words in Asante Twi, which has both a focus fronting strategy and an in-situ strategy. We show that the focusing and the in-situ constructions are not simply equally available options. On the contrary, there are several cases where the focusing strategy must be used and the in-situ strategy is ungrammatical. We show that the cases in Asante Twi are "intervention effects", which are attested in other languages, like German, Korean, and French. We identify a core set of intervening elements that all of these languages have and discuss their properties.

1   Introduction

This paper presents an initial distributional analysis of focused and in-situ wh-items in Asante Twi, a Kwa language of Ghana.[1] The basic paradigm given in (1) shows that there are two ways of forming simple wh-questions:

(1)   a. Kofi bɔɔ   ama[2]
            kofi hit.past ama
            'kofi hit ama'

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[1]   We heap great thanks on our consultant Selassie Ahorlu for his patience and insight in answering our many questions. Thanks also to David Adu Amankwah for comparative judgements on some of the data we present. Unless otherwise specified, all Asante Twi data that we present comes from elicitations with our consultant.

[2]   Although Asante twi is a tone language, tone is not indicated in Asante Twi orthography (nor for any of the Akan dialects). In trying to keep as close as possible to that orthography, we   have not marked tones, except in the examples in (2) to show that tone plays a grammatical as well as lexical function. Tone does not seem to be specifically relevant to the phenomena we discuss here.

b. kofi bɔɔ **hena**   in-situ wh
  kofi hit.past who
  'who did kofi hit?'

c. **hena** na kofi bɔɔ (no)   focused wh
  who *na* kofi hit.past 3sg
  'who is it that kofi hit?'

Although Asante Twi has an in-situ construction (1b) and a focus construction (1c), they are not equally available. Specifically, we look at a range of cases in which the wh-in-situ is unavailable and the wh-phrase must be focused, as in 1c. There are two main goals in this paper. The first goal is a Twi-specific one of gaining an understanding of the factors that play a role in determining whether a wh-word must be focused. The second goal is to place Asante Twi in a cross-linguistic context and see if similar phenomena are attested in other languages.

Section 2 presents background information on Asante Twi necessary for the following sections. Section 3 introduces the basics of wh-constructions in the language and looks at the properties of the focused and in-situ constructions. Section 4 presents cases in which a wh-word must be focused. Section 5 introduces phenomena similar to what is observed in Asante Twi, but in genetically unrelated languages. In Section 6, we highlight some of the differences between the Asante Twi data and how this fits in with the typology. The final section summarizes the results.

2　Background

Asante Twi is SVO with generally head-initial characteristics (e.g. postnominal relative clauses; N precedes determiners, adjectives, and numerals; adverbial modifiers follow adjectives, etc).

Before looking at focus clauses, it will be useful to consider the derivation of simple matrix clauses:

(2) a. kòfí bɔ̀ɔ̀   àmà $\sqrt{}_V = $ bɔ̀
    kofi hit.past ama
    'kofi hit ama'

  b. kòfí hùù   àmà $\sqrt{}_V = $ hù
    kofi see.past ama
    'kofi saw ama'

c. kòfì ámbɔ́ àmà
   kofi past.neg.hit ama
   'kofi did not hit ama'

There is no single segmental spellout of the past tense morpheme. Instead, past tense consists of a short vowel template (-*V*) whose segmental content is supplied by the vowel in the verb root. This can be seen by comparing the past tense forms of verbs whose root vowels differ. In the two past affirmative clauses, 3a-b, past tense is realized as lengthening of the final vowel of the verb *bɔ̀* "hit" and *hù* "see".[3] We therefore take past tense to be suffix on the verb. In the negative, 3c, the verb carries an *a*-prefix, whose meaning is unclear, and the negative prefix *n*- (which assimilates in place to the following consonant).[4] Note also that the tone of the verb differs in the affirmative and negative. That past tense occurs as a suffix on V follows from V-to-T raising:

(3)   AgrSP   (=3a)

       kofi$_k$

              ∅   TP

                    bɔ$_j$-T^0 VP

                              t$_j$ DP

                                        ama
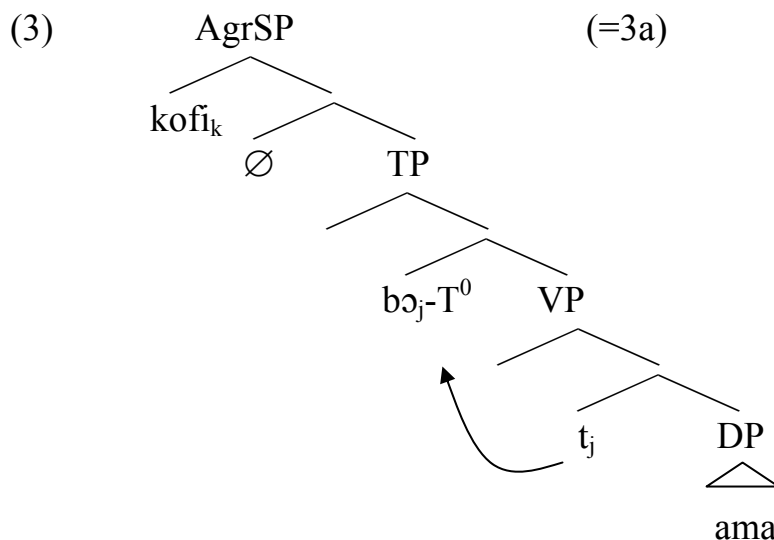
The spellout of *bɔ̀-T^0* is *bɔ̀ɔ̀*[5].

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[3]   Dolphyne 1988 provides a detailed description of the segmental phonology and tonology of Asante Twi verb forms.

[4]   We call *a*- and *n*- "prefixes" on the verb because the *a-n-V* string is a domain of vowel harmony.

[5]   We have written the derivation as head movement of V to T for the sake of concreteness, although it could be XP movement. It is not relevant for our purposes here.

Consider next the negative in (3c):

(4)   AgrSP   (=3c)

```
                AgrSP
              /       \
        kofi_k          \
                 ∅        NegP
                        /      \
                   T_i-N-        TP
                               /    \
                             t_i     VP
                                    /   \
            á-m-bɔ́                 bɔ     DP
                                          △
                                         ama
```
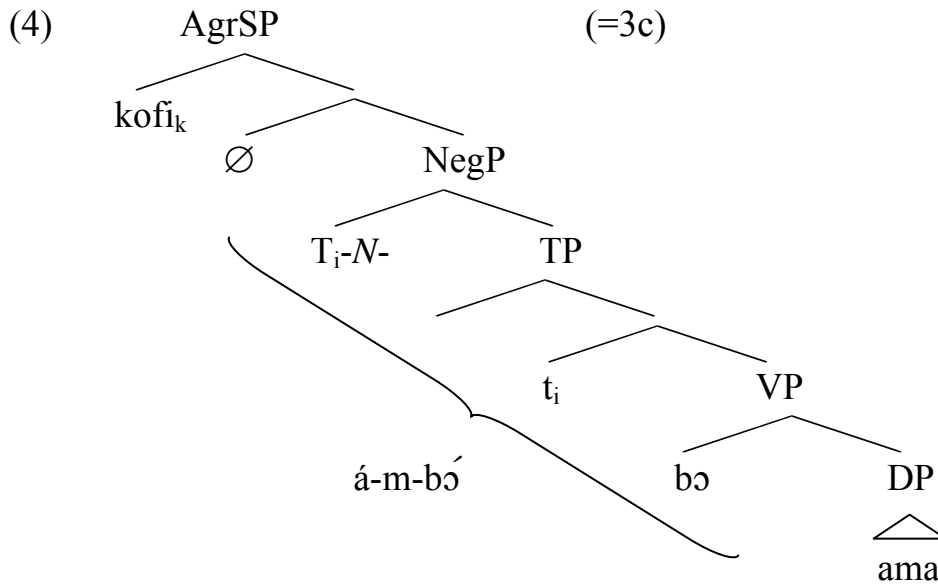
The spellout of T_{past} -NegP and V is *á-m-bɔ́*. Negation is realized as a homorganic nasal, written as *N* in the tree in (4). Thus, in (2c)/(4), negation is pronounced as [m] when it precedes the initial [b-] of *bɔ* "hit". It is important to note that the direct object, *ama*, in (2c) is in the c-command domain of the negative *n-*. That this is so can be seen from the fact that sensitive negative polarity items are licensed in the direct object position (Kobele and Torrence 2004):

(5)   kofi   a-*(**m**)-bɔ   **hwee**
         kofi   *a*-neg-hit   anything
         'kofi did not hit anything'

Focus is morphosyntactically marked by the presence of *na* in the left periphery of CP. As (6) shows, the *na* focus marker immediately follows the XP in focus:

(6)   a. (ɛ-yɛ) kofi   **na**   *(o)-bɔɔ   ama   (no)   subject focus
           it-is   kofi   *na*   3sg-hit.past   ama   det
           'it's kofi who hit ama'

       b. (ɛ-yɛ) ama   **na**   kofi   bɔɔ   (no) (no)   direct object focus
           it-is   ama   *na*   kofi   hit.past   3sg   det
           'it's ama who kofi hit'

   c. (ɛ-yɛ) bo **na** kofi bɔɔ ama   predicate focus
      it-is hit *na* kofi hit.past ama   (predicate cleft)
      'hit is what kofi did to ama'

   d. (ɛ-yɛ) ɛnnra **na** kofi bɔɔ ama   adverb in focus[6]
      it-is yesterday *na* kofi hit.past ama
      'it's yesterday that kofi hit ama'

   e. ɛ-yɛ me
      it-is me
      'it's me'

Optionally, *ɛ-yɛ* 'it is' may precede the focused XP, indicating that these are cleft constructions. This conclusion is reinforced by the appearance of *ɛ-yɛ* in presentational copular clauses like (6e). Note that Asante Twi allows for predicate clefting (6c). An optional right peripheral determiner-like element, *no*, may also occur in clefts.[7]

Templatically, focus clauses can be represented as:

(7)   (ɛ-yɛ) [Focused XP] **na** [$_{AgrSP}$ S V O] (no)

3   Wh-questions in Asante Twi

Asante Twi allows both in-situ and focus clefted wh-words, as shown earlier:[8]

(8)   a. kofi bɔɔ **hena**   in-situ wh
       kofi hit.past who
       'who did kofi hit?'

---

[6] There are restrictions on which adverbs can be focused in Asante Twi. See also, (Saah 2004).

[7] The presence of the right peripheral *no* seems to add some type of "emphasis". This element is homophonous with the definite determiner and exhibits cooccurrence restrictions with various tenses/aspects. Thus, it looks somewhat similar to the "clausal" or "event" determiners found in other Kwa languages like Fongbe and in Haitian Creole (Lefebvre 1998). In Asante Twi, this element only seems to occur when a +human DP undergoes A'-extraction.

[8] Saah (1988) notes that both in-situ and focused wh-words are possible. His data is from "Akan", but we do not know which dialect (Asante, Fante, Akuapem, etc.).

    b. **hena** na kofi bɔɔ   (no)   focused wh
       who *na* kofi hit.past 3sg
       'who is it that kofi hit?'

While a direct object wh can remain in situ (8a), Saah 1988 observes that a wh-subject cannot be in-situ:

(9)   a. ***hena** bɔɔ   ama   *subject wh in-situ
        who hit.past ama
        'who hit ama?'

    b. **hena** na o-bɔɔ   ama   ✓focused subject wh
       who *na* 3sg-hit.past ama
       'who is it that hit ama?'

The descriptive generalization is that a subject wh-word cannot be in situ, but a direct object wh may be in-situ or focused into the left periphery. Because it is non-subjects that make use of both the focus and in-situ strategies, from this point onward, we concentrate on non-subjects.

4   Obligatory focusing of wh-phrases

We will be concerned below with cases in which modifications elsewhere in the sentence render an in-situ wh-phrase ungrammatical. In Section 3 it was shown that, in the simple case, Asante Twi has two strategies for constructing wh-questions. However, as we show, the focusing and in-situ strategies are not created equally. This is because there are several contexts in which a non-subject wh-word must be focused. The first of these contexts involves negation:

(10)   a. kofi bɔɔ   **hena**
        kofi hit.past who
        'who did kofi hit?'

    b. *kofi a-**m**-bɔ   **hena**   *neg...wh
       kofi past-neg-hit who
       'who didn't kofi hit?'

    c. **hena** na kofi a-**m**-bɔ   (no)   ✓wh...neg
       who *na* kofi past-neg-hit   3sg
       'who is it that kofi didn't hit?'
       (i.e. 'which person is such that kofi did not hit that person?')

(10a) presents the base case with the wh-word in situ. Comparing (10b) to (10c), it can be seen that when negation is present on the verb, a direct object wh-word must be focused.

Structurally, the ungrammatical (10b) is represented as:

(11) *AgrSP   (=10b)
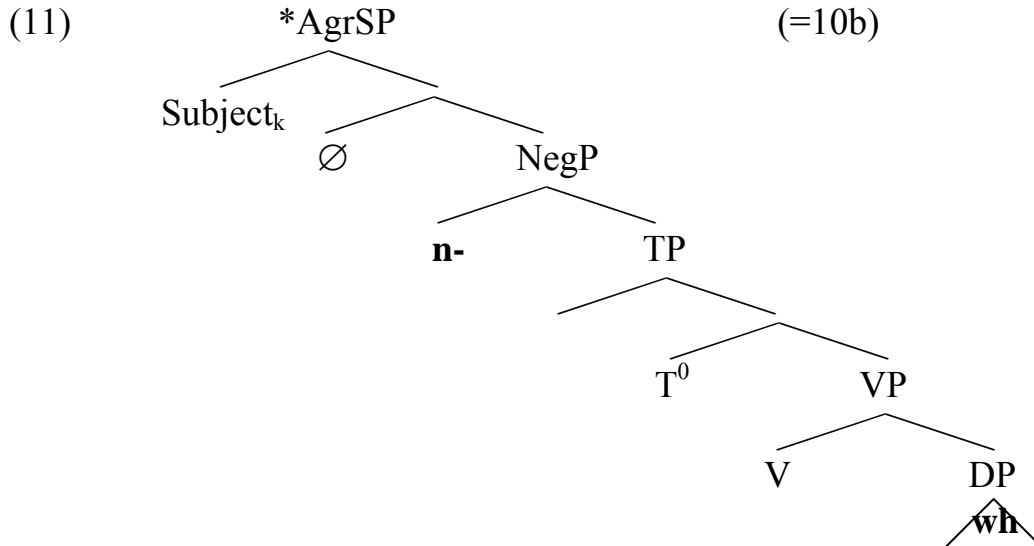
The same pattern holds with "only" phrases[9]:

(12)   a.   *kofi **nko-ara**   bɔɔ   **hena**
            kofi only-emph hit.past who
            'who did only kofi hit?'

       b.   **hena** na kofi **nko-ara**   bɔɔ   (no)
            who *na* kofi only-emph hit.past 3sg
            'who is it that only kofi hit?'

As with negation, when the wh-word follows the focus-sensitive particle *nko-ara* "only" (12a), the result is ungrammatical. In the grammatical construction in

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[9]   Saah (1994) discusses cases such as the following, where modification of the wh-phrase itself (for example, with *nko ara* `only') leads to obligatory focusing of that phrase:
      (i) *wo-huu   hena nko-ara
           2sg-see.past who only-emph
      (ii) hena nko-ara   na wo-huu   no
           who only-emph   *na* 2sg-see.past 3sg
           'only who did you see'
   (who is such that you saw only him)

(12b), the wh-word has been focused into the left periphery so that it precedes the focus-sensitive particle.

Consider next another focus-sensitive particle, *mpo* "even":

(13) a. *kofi **mpo** bɔɔ   **hena**
         kofi even hit.past who
         'who did even kofi hit?'

      b. **hena** na kofi **mpo** bɔɔ   (no)
         who *na* kofi even hit.past 3sg
         'who is it that even kofi hit?'

Comparing the data in (12) and (13), it can be seen that the focus-sensitive particles pattern alike with respect to their ordering in wh-clauses. Simply put, the focus-sensitive particles cannot c-command the wh-word, but they may c-command the trace of the wh:
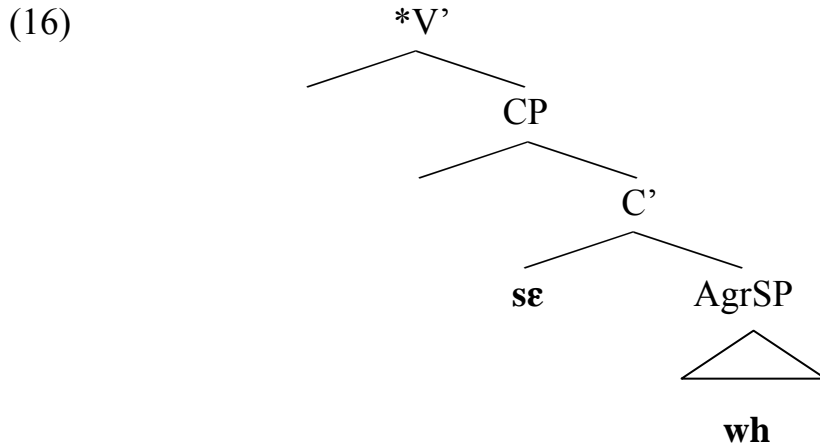
(14)
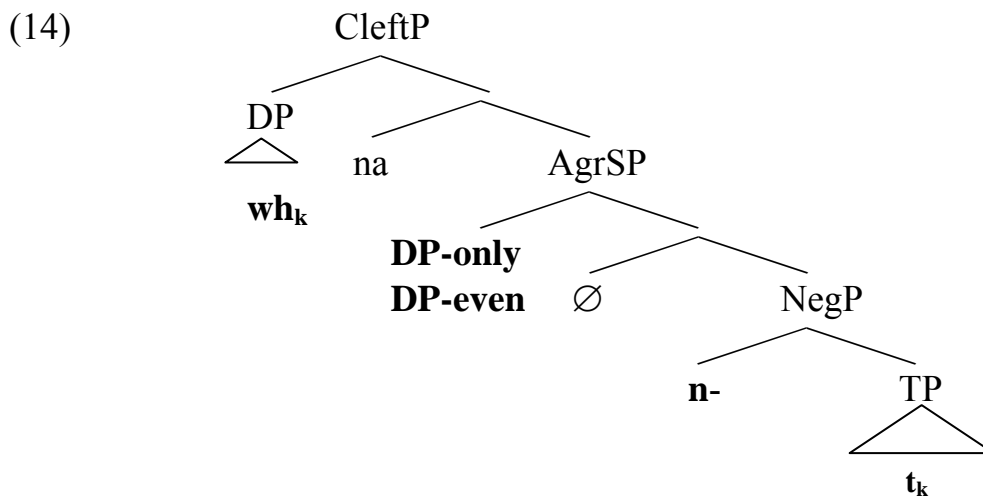
In addition, certain kinds of embedded clauses do not allow for an in-situ wh-word:
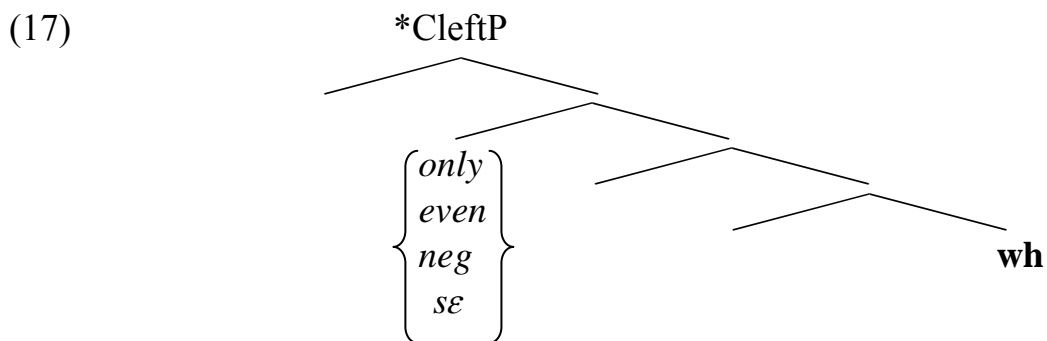
(15) a. *wo dwene [CP (**sɛ**) kofi bɔɔ   **hena**]
         you think   C kofi hit.past who
         'who do you think that kofi hit?'

      b. *wo   dwene [CP (**sɛ**) **hena** na kofi bɔɔ   (no)]
         you think   C who *na* kofi hit.past 3sg
         'who do you think that it is that kofi hit?'

c. **hena** na wo dwene [CP **sɛ** kofi bɔɔ   (no)]
    who *na* you think   C   kofi hit.past 3sg
    'who is it that you think that kofi hit?'

These can be represented as:

(16)   *V'
                    /   \
                         CP
                      /   \
                            C'
                        /   \
                    sɛ   AgrSP
                              /\
                             / \
   /____\
                             wh

Putting the data in this section together, we see that there are four conditions under which a wh-phrase must be focused. In the first condition, the wh-phrase must be focused if it occurs to the right of negation *n-*. In the second and third conditions, the wh-phrase must be focused if its in-situ position occurs to the right of focus sensitive particles like the Asante Twi equivalents of *even* or *only*. Finally, it was shown that a wh-phrase cannot occur in-situ in an embedded clause. In all of the ungrammatical cases, some element intervenes between the in-situ wh-position and the clefted position where a focused wh appears:

(17)   *CleftP
                    /   \
                  /   /   \
            ⎧ *only* ⎫   /   \
            ⎪ *even* ⎪ /   \
            ⎨ *neg* ⎬   **wh**
            ⎩ *sɛ*   ⎭

In all of the grammatical cases, the intervening elements c-command only the trace of the wh-word on the surface.[10]

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[10] Saah (1989) indicates that reflexives, subject to Principle A of the Binding Theory, can be clefted. This suggests that clefts in Asante Twi are indeed derived by movement of the clefted constituent. This fits in with the typological conclusions in (Aboh 2004), namely that focus constructions in Kwa involve either head movement or XP movement.

The descriptive generalization concerning the grammatical cases can be roughly represented as:

(18)
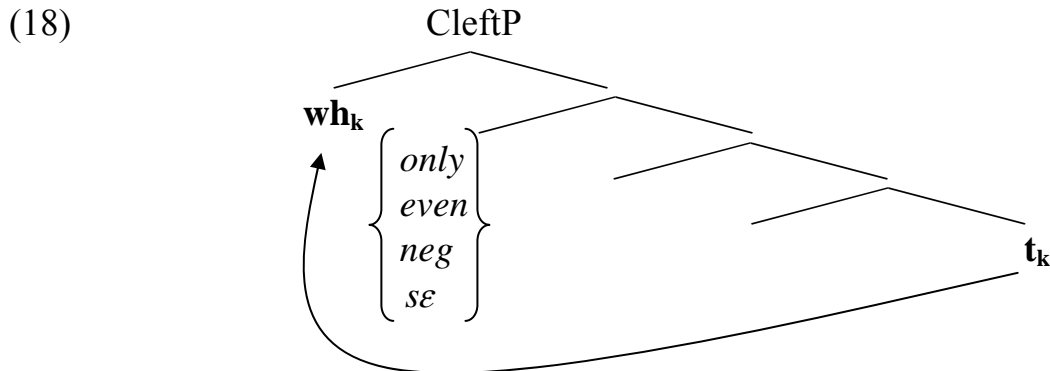
The patterns given above for Twi are strikingly similar to those found in other languages, where so called "intervention effects" have been studied.

5   Intervention effects cross-linguistically

Having established the basic wh-in-situ versus focused wh- paradigm in Asante Twi, we now turn to other languages, where similar phenomena have been observed. In Beck 1996, it was observed that in German, a scrambling language, the ordering of wh-words and negation is not free:[11]
German

(19)   a. ??wen   hat **niemand**   **wo**   gesehen   *neg…wh
          who.acc has nobody.nom where seen
          'who did nobody see where?'

        b. wen   hat **wo**   **niemand**   gesehen   ✓wh…neg
          who.acc has where nobody.nom seen
          'who did nobody see where?'

As the examples in (19) show, when a wh-word follows a negative quantifier (19a), near ungrammaticality results. However, when the wh-word precedes the negative quantifier, the result is fine (19b). In other words, a wh-word cannot surface in the c-command domain of negation (in the German-specific case a

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[11]   Throughout, the sources for the data are:
       German: (Beck 1996), (Beck and Kim 1996), (Beck and Kim 1997), (Chen and Rooryck 2000), (Sauerland and Heck 2003).
       French: (Matthieu 1999), (Zubizarreta n.d.)
       Korean: (Beck and Kim 1996), (Beck and Kim 1997), (Kim 2002), (Kim 2003)

negative quantifier). Making the comparison to Asante Twi explicit, in German a wh-word cannot occur in-situ when negation c-commands it (19a). When the wh-word is fronted so that the negation c-commands only the wh-trace, the clause is grammatical (19b). When a negative element occurs between the in-situ position of a wh-word and the focused (fronted) position of a wh-word, ungrammaticality results. Thus, negation can be thought of as an intervening element occurring in the pathway of (LF) wh-movement. More generally, an "intervention effect" arises when the presence of a word or phrase (the intervener) in a sentence rules out otherwise available surface positions of another word or phrase. In the cases studied here, the intervener is usually a scope-taking element (negation, a quantifier, etc.), and its presence in a sentence rules out wh-words appearing within its c-command domain on the surface. Strikingly, similar effects have been observed with negation for other languages aside from Asante Twi and German, witness Korean and French:

Korean (Beck and Kim 1996, 1997)

(20)   a.   *?**amuto** muôs-ûl sa-chi   anh-ass-ni   *?neg...wh
                anyone   what-acc buy-*chi* not.do-past-Q
                'what did no one buy?'

          b.   muôs-ûl **amuto**   sa-chi   anh-ass-ni   ✓wh…neg
                what-acc anyone   buy-*chi* not.do-past-Q
                'what did no one buy?'

French (Bošković 1998, Matthieu 1999, Zubizarreta n.d.)

(21)   a.   jean a   mangé **quoi**
                jean has   eaten   what
                'what did jean eat?'

          b.   **qu**'est-ce que jean a   mangé
                what is-it   that jean has eaten
                'what is it that jean ate?'

          c.   *jean n'a   pas mangé **quoi**   *neg...wh
                jean   neg-has neg eaten   what
                'what did jean not eat?'

d. **qu**'est-ce que jean n'a   pas mangé   ✓wh…neg
what is-it that jean neg-has neg eaten
'what did jean not eat?'

The data in (20a-b) very closely match that of (10a-b) (Asante Twi) and (21c-d) (German). The pattern similarity between the Asante Twi data and that of other languages is not limited to negation, however. German, Korean, and French pattern like Asante Twi with respect to the ordering relation between wh-words and "only" phrases:

German

(22)   a.   ??wen   hat **nur karl wo**   getroffen   ??only…wh
who.acc has only karl where met
'who did only karl meet where?'

    b.   wen   hat **wo**   **nur**   **karl** getroffen   ✓wh…only
who.acc has where only karl met
'who did only karl meet where?'

Korean

(23)   a.   *? **minsu-man nuku-lûl** manna-ss-ni   *only...wh
minsu-only who-acc   meet-past-Q
'who did only minsu meet?'

    b.   **nuku-lûl minsu-man** manna-ss-ni   ✓wh…only
who-acc minsu-only meet-past-Q
'who did only minsu meet?'

French

(24)   a.   ***seulement** jean   arrive à faire **quoi**   *only…wh
only   jean   arrives to do   what
'what does only jean manage to do?'

    b.   **qu**'est-ce que **seulement** jean arrive à fair   ✓wh…only
what is-it that only   jean arrives to do
'what does only jean manage to do?'

Just as in Asante Twi, wh-phrases cannot occur to the right of a focus-sensitive particle like *only* in (22a), (23a), and (24a) (See Appendix 1 for other focus-sensitive particles in French, German, and Korean that pattern like Asante Twi.)

To summarize, in this section we have shown that negation and focus sensitive particles have similar effects on the availability of wh in-situ crosslinguistically. That is, we first established a set of items in Asante Twi that cannot intervene between the surface position of a wh-word and its LF scope position. It turns out that this same set of items triggers intervention effects in genetically unrelated languages like German and Korean.

6   Asante Twi in the cross-linguistic context

While there is a core set of cross-linguistic interveners (negation and focus sensitive particles), Asante Twi displays several differences from other languages in which intervention effects have been studied. In this section we introduce some of these and discuss the implications for the understanding of intervention effects in general. It should be noted at the outset that Asante Twi wh-words are not used as indefinites. This is unlike the distribution of wh-words in languages like Korean, German, Chinese, and French. In addition, like most Kwa languages, the word order is relatively fixed. In other words, Asante Twi does not display scrambling phenomena, unlike German and Korean. The fact that Asante Twi differs in these ways from other languages with intervention effects suggests that the scrambling property, for instance, does not play a direct role in the presence of intervention effects.

When the paradigm of interveners is expanded, it turns out that not all of the interveners in other languages act as interveners in Asante Twi. This can be seen by comparing the behavior of universal quantifiers, in Asante Twi and German (see Appendix 2 for data from Korean and French):

Asante Twi

(25)   a.   **osuani bi-ara**   bɔɔ   **hena**
            student some-emph hit.past who
            'who did every student hit?'

        b.   **hena** na **osuani bi-ara**   bɔɔ   (no)
            who   *na* student some-emph hit.past   3sg
            'who is it that every student hit?'

German

(26)   a.   ??wen   hat **fast**   **jeder**   **wo**   getroffen
              who.acc has almost everyone where met
              'who did almost everyone meet where?'

        b.   wen   hat **wo**   **fast**   **jeder**   getroffen
              who.acc has where almost everyone met
              'who did almost everyone meet where?'

Looking at the Asante Twi and German in (25a) and (26a), it is seen that the universal quantifier does not act as an intervener in Asante Twi. However, a universal does act as an intervener in German (0b versus 0b). It is not clear what to make of this difference because it is not obvious whether the difference in grammaticality is due to a property of wh-words in the languages or a property of universal quantifiers in the languages (or both).

        In comparing Asante Twi to German, another difference in intervention effects obtains concerning stranding. In German, if the restriction on a wh-phrase is stranded under a negative quantifier, the result is ungrammatical:

German

(27)   a.   ***wen**   hat <u>keine studentin</u> **von den musikern** getroffen
            who.acc has no   student of   the musicians met
            'which of the musicians has no student met?'

        b.   **wen**   **von den musikern** hat <u>keine studentin</u> getroffen
            who.acc of   the musicians has no   student   met
            'which of the musicians has no student met?'

        c.   **wen**   hat johannes **von den musikern** getroffen
            who.acc has johannes of   the   musicians met
            'which of the musicians has Johannes met?'

The relevant contrast is between (27a) (stranding under negation) and (27b) (pied piping of the restriction). (27c) shows that stranding of the restriction is otherwise possible.

However, similar cases in Asante Twi do not show this effect:

(28)　　a.　**den**　na　kofi　a-**n**-di　　　　**no　nyinaa**　　　✓stranding
　　　　　　　what　*na*　kofi　past-neg-eat　3sg　all
　　　　　　　'what all did kofi not eat?'
　　　　　　　('what are all of the things that have the property that
　　　　　　　　　kofi did not eat them?')

　　　　　b.　**den　nyinaa**　na　kofi　a-**n**-di　　　　　　✓pied piping
　　　　　　　what　all　　　*na*　kofi　past-neg-eat
　　　　　　　'what all did kofi not eat?'
　　　　　　　('what are all of the things that have the property that
　　　　　　　　　kofi did not eat them?')

One potentially relevant difference between Asante Twi and German is that in Asante Twi, the stranded quantifier contains a resumptive-like element *no* "3sg", while the German does not. In addition, the universal quantifier in (28a) obligatorily takes wide scope with respect to negation, even though it follows it. Thus, (28a) does not mean, "what thing is such that you did not eat all of it?". In other words, the quantifier somehow is able to outscope negation, even when it occurs in object position. (Recall that sensitive negative polarity items are licensed in object position (5)). Thus, the grammaticality of (28a) may be related to the ability of the quantifier *nyinaa* to obligatorily take scope over negation.

　　　The final difference to be discussed here involves the availability of in-situ wh-words in embedded clauses. Recall the data introduced earlier:[12]

(29)　　a.　*wo　dwene [CP (**sɛ**) kofi　bɔɔ　　**hena**]　　　　(=(15a))
　　　　　　　you　think　　　C　kofi　hit.past　who
　　　　　　　'who do you think that kofi hit?'

　　　　　b.　*wo　dwene [CP (**sɛ**) **hena** na　kofi　bɔɔ　　(no)]　　(= (15b))
　　　　　　　you　think　　　C　who　*na*　kofi　hit.past　3sg
　　　　　　　'who do you think that it is that kofi hit?'

　　　　　c.　**hena**　na　wo　dwene [CP **sɛ** kofi　bɔɔ　　(no)]　　(=(15c))
　　　　　　　who　*na*　you　think　　　C　kofi　hit.past　3sg
　　　　　　　'who is it that you think that kofi hit?'

---

[12]　Kobele and Torrence (2004) discuss some properties of embedded clauses in Asante Twi.

We take the data in (15) as showing that a wh-word cannot occur in an embedded clause. Note that the complementizer in (29) is *sɛ*. Surprisingly, in some cases, where the complementizer is *ma* (which introduces factive clauses), an embedded wh-phrase is fine:

(30) a. yɛ-hyee   kofi [CP **ma** ne   nuaa   **den**][13]
          we-force.past kofi   C   3sg cook.past what
          'what did we force kofi to cook?'

        b. **den** na yɛ-hyee   kofi [CP **ma** ne   nuaae   ]
          what *na* we-force.past kofi   C   3sg cook.past
          'what is it that we forced kofi to cook?'

(31) a. wu bisaa   kofi [CP **ma** ne   nuaa   **den**]
          you ask.past kofi   C   3sg cook.past what
          'what did you ask kofi to cook (that he did in fact cook)?'

        b. **den** na wu bisaa   kofi [CP **ma** ne   nuaae]
          what *na* you ask.past kofi   C   3sg cook.past
          'what is it that you asked kofi to cook (that he did in fact cook?)'

(30a) and (31a) contrast with (29a-b) in that the wh-words in the embedded clause are fine as long as the complementizer is *ma* and not *sɛ*. Note that *ma* introduces tensed embedded clauses, just like *sɛ*. The fact that one complementizer acts as an intervener while another does not may fall out purely from the syntax of successive-cyclic wh-movement. In that case, the question is why a wh-word can not move through the specifier of *sɛ* at LF. A similar the pattern obtains in French:

French

(32) a. *pierre pense [CP **que** jean a   mangé **quoi**]
           pierre think   that jean has eaten what
           'what does Pierre think that jean ate?'

        b. **qu**'est-ce [CP **que** pierre pense que jean a   mangé]
           what is-it   that pierre thinks that jean has eaten
           'what is it that Pierre thinks that jean ate?'

---

[13] The complementizer *ma* also occurs with genitive or nominative case subjects in the embedded clause in some not-well-understood instances.

(32a-b) show that a wh-word cannot appear in-situ in an embedded clause introduced by *que*. Consider the pattern of wh in-situ in non-finite embedded clauses introduced by *de* or a null complementizer:

French

(33)   a.   *jean a   décidé [_{CP} **de** faire **quoi**]   *C = de*

jean has decided   C to.do what

'what has jean decided to do?'

        b.   **qu**'est-ce que jean a   décidé [_{CP} **de** faire t_k]   *C = de*

what is-it that jean has decided   C to.do

'what is it that jean has decided to do?'

        c.   jean a   pensé   [_{CP}   faire **quoi**] $C = \varnothing$

jean has thought   to.do what

'what did jean think about doing?'

(33a-b) show that in French a wh-word is not licensed in an embedded clause introduced by the non-finite complementizer *de*. However, the null complementizer has no such effect. Thus, it is not merely the property of being in an embedded clause that is responsible for the intervention effect in Asante Twi or French. Like Asante Twi, the French pattern may have to do with the structural composition of the left periphery of the clause

Having discussed some of the variables that impinge on intervention effects cross-linguistically, we point out here that in Asante Twi, the ban on wh-words following negation, for example, is not absolute:

(34)   **hena₁** na o-a-**m**-bɔ   **hena₂**

who   *na* 3sg-past-neg-hit who

'who is it that did not hit who?'

Surprisingly, in the multiple wh-question in (34), the direct object wh, *hena₂*, appears in the c-command domain of negation, but the sentence is good.[14] Beck 1996 attempts to reduce intervention effects to the question of why particular elements act as barriers to movement under the assumption that the wh-phrases move at LF, and that the ungrammaticality arises when this movement is

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[14]   The fact that a negative polarity item would be licensed in the same position as *hena₂* indicates that it is in the scope of negation.

blocked. The Asante Twi data suggests that it is not necessarily a property of the wh-words that is the source of the problem in the ungrammatical cases.

Interestingly, it appears that the presence of the +wh-(focused)subject is critical for the grammaticality of (34):[15]

(35)   ***kofi** na o-**m**-bɔ   **hena**
       kofi *na* 3sg-neg-hit who
       'it's kofi that did not hit who?'

The alleviating effect of the "extra" wh-word is strongly reminiscent of the effect that a third wh-word has on Superiority in English:

(36)   a.   who bought what?
       b.   *what did who buy?
       c.   ?what did who buy where?

(36a-b) show a canonical Superiority paradigm. (36c) shows that the addition of another wh-phrase greatly improves the grammaticality. Again, in (34), the lower wh-word should still be blocked from raising at LF because of the presence of the intervening negation. It is not clear why the presence of a wh-word higher than negation should have this alleviating effect.

7   Summary and conclusions

Asante Twi has been described as a language with both movement and in-situ options for wh-questions. However, these strategies are not equally available. We have given a descriptive refinement of the conditions under which the in-situ strategy is permitted, and pointed to similar effects which obtain in a number of unrelated (genealogically as well as typologically) languages. We end with a preliminary summary table comparing the Asante Twi data to that from other languages. A more complete typology and understanding how cross-linguistic variation in intervention effects arise await future research.[16]

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[15]   Multiple wh-constructions in Twi exhibit different behavior than their presumably related single wh counterparts with respect to the availability of in-situ constructions. Saah (1994) gives the following multiple wh pair below, in which (ii) contains an otherwise ungrammatical in-situ wh subject:
(i) hena na o-huu   den
     who *na* 3sg-see.past what
(ii) den   na hena hui
     what *na* who see.past
     'who saw what'

[16]   Appendix 3 presents other interveners not discussed here.

Table 1. A typology of interveners for wh-phrases

	Asante Twi	Korean	French	German
word order	SVO	SOV	SVO	SOV, V2
wh = indefinite	no	yes	yes	yes
scrambling	no	yes	no	yes
Interveners				
negation	yes	yes	yes	yes
"only"	yes	yes	yes	yes
"even"	yes	yes	yes	yes
"every/all"	no	maybe	yes	yes
"always"	no	no	yes	no data
"often"	no	no	yes	no data

Appendix 1   Focus-sensitive particles

German "exactly" Phrases[17]

(37)   a. *?fritz ratterte runter wer gestern **genau wann** angekommen ist
          fritz rattled off   who yesterday exactly when arrived   is
          'fritz rattled off exactly when who arrived'

        b. fritz ratterte runter wer gestern **wann genau** angekommen ist
          fritze rattled off   who yesterday when exactly arrived   is
          'fritz rattled off exactly when who arrived'

Korean "too" Phrases

(38)   a. *?minsu-to   nuku-lûl manna-ss-ni
          minsu-also who-acc   meet-past-Q
          'who did minsu too, meet?'

        b. **nuku-lûl minsu-to**   manna-ss-ni
          who-acc   minsu-also meet-past-Q
          'who did minsu too, meet?'

French "even" Phrases

(39)   a. ***même** jean arrive à faire **quoi**
          even jean arrives to do what
          'what does even jean manage to do?'

        b. **qu**'est-ce que **même** jean arrive à faire
          what is-it that even jean arrives to do
          'what does even jean manage to do?'

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[17]   The examples in (37)a-b are adapted from Sauerland and Heck (2003).

Appendix 2   Universal quantifiers

French

(40)   a.   tous les étudiants ont rencontré qui
             all   the students   have met   who
             'who have all of the students met?'
             (* wh > ∀, ✔ ∀ > wh)

        b.   **qui** est-ce que **tous les étudiants** ont   rencontré
             who is-it   that all   the students   have met
             'who is it that all of the students have met?'
             (wh > ∀, ✔ ∀ > wh)

(41)   a.   pierre a   acheté plusieurs livres
             pierre has bought several   books

        b.   il   a   envoyé **chacun de livres** à   **qui**
             he has sent   each   of books   to   who
             'who did he send each of the books to?'

Korean

(42)   a.   ?(?) **nukuna-ka**   **ônû**   **kyosu-lûl**   chonkyôngha-ni
             everyone-nom which professor-acc respect-Q
              'which professor does everyone respect?'

        b.   **ônû**   **kyosu-lûl**   **nukuna-ka**   chonkyôngha-ni
             which professor-acc everyone-nom respect-Q
             'which professor does everyone respect?'

Appendix 3   Other interveners

Korean "most" Phrases

(43)   **taeupun-ûl hansaeng-tûl-i nuku-lûl** hoichang-ûlo ch'uch'ônha-ôss-ni
       most-gen   student-pl-nom who-acc president-as   recommend-past-Q
       'who did most students recommend as president?'

Korean "always" and "only" Phrases

(44)   minsu-n**û**n **hangsang**/**chachu nuku- lûl** p'at'i-e   telikoka-ss-ni
            minsu-TOP always/often   who-acc   party-to take-past-Q
            'who did minsu always/often take to the party?'

French "often" Phrases

(45)   a.   *il mange **souvent quoi**
               he eats   often   what
               'what does he often eat?'

         b.   **qu**'est-ce que   il   mange **souvent**
               what is-it   that he eats   often
               'what is it that he often eats?'

French "always" Phrases

(46)   a.   *il visite **toujours qui**
               he visits always   who
                'who does he always visit?'

         b.   **qui** est-ce que   il visite **toujours**
               who is-it   that he visits always
               'who does he always visit?'

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Encoding focus in Kanuri verbal morphology: Predication focus and the "Kanuri focus shift"[1]

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Focus on verbal operators such as aspect or tense ("predication focus", lucidly described by Hyman & Watters (1984) under the label "auxiliary focus") has been noticed to exist in African languages of Afroasiatic and Niger-Congo affiliation, but not so far in Saharan. The Saharan language Kanuri is assumed to have substantially reorganized its TAM system, particularly in the perfective aspect domain (Cyffer [2006] dates major changes between the years 1820 and 1900). The paper discusses, for the first time in Kanuri scholarship, the existence of a neat subsystem of predication focus marking by suffix in the perfective aspect which is made up of a total of six conjugational paradigms that uniformly encode predication focus by suffix {-ò}. Kanuri dialects differ in strategies and scope of focus marking encoded in verb morphology. In the light of data from the Yerwa (Nigeria) and Manga (Niger) dialects the paper discusses some "anomalies" with regard to general focus theory which we account for by describing the "Kanuri Focus Shift" as a diachronic process which is responsible for leftward displacement of scope of focus.

1   Introduction

Focus on verbal operators such as aspect or tense was noticed to exist in African languages of Afroasiatic (Chadic) and Niger-Congo (Atlantic, [New] Benue-Congo, [New] Kwa) genealogical affiliation for quite some time. The syntacto-semantic and morphological properties involved had been described under rather non-consistent terminology in more traditional descriptions, such as "absolute"

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vs. "relative" aspects or tenses. The first unifying account was given under the notion of "auxiliary focus" in the seminal paper by Hyman & Watters (1984). More recently, some Chadic languages (including Hausa, cf. Wolff 2006 and Malgwa, cf. Löhr, in press), have been subjected to reanalyses of their verbal inflexional systems, following up on the pioneer approach by Hyman & Watters (1984), identifying predication focus (synonymous with Hyman & Watters' "auxiliary focus") as an important non-canonical inflexional category. In particular, the relevance of notions such as "inherent focus" and "focus control" were discussed for several Chadic languages (Wolff 2003, 2006), and also the intriguing interface with polarity (Wolff, in press). In the light of this work on the Chadic languages spoken in the Chadic-Saharan contact area of North-Eastern Nigeria, the authors set out to explore the hypothesis of potential typological convergence in Kanuri, which is a Saharan language of Nilosaharan genealogical affiliation, and some Chadic languages, which are of ultimately of Afroasiatic genealogical affiliation, in what can be roughly identified as their geographic contact area to the west of Lake Chad. A detailed discussion of whether and how the Kanuri grammatical system testifies to interference from Chadic substrata (and/or vice versa) will, however, be provided elsewhere (cf. Wolff and Löhr, in prep).

2 Theoretical and methodological preliminaries

The Kanuri system of TAM marking has intrigued scholars for more than 150 years. The competing terminologies and various functional labels that have been used in the descriptions are indicative of the morphological, syntactic and semantic challenges that the Kanuri verbal inflexion system pose for analysis. In particular, labels such as *predicative*, *relational*, *verb emphasis past* vs. *noun emphasis past* etc. are quite suspicious of involving focus categories that would be worth revisiting in terms of more recent insights into the study of information structure in (West) African languages. Following up on Hyman & Watters (1984) who had not considered Kanuri nor any other Chadic language apart from Hausa, the question the authors set out to answer was the following: Can the notion of predication focus (= Hyman & Watters' "auxiliary focus") and some of the current cross-linguistic generalisations regarding focus be used to shed more light on the semanto-syntactic and morphological intricacies of verbal inflexion in Kanuri? In the light of the long history and in-depth nature of the available descriptions of the various conjugational paradigms provided by expert writers on the language, the starting point was to revisit their detailed descriptions and relate these to more recent typological and theoretical insights with regard to encoding information structure. Occasionally, Kanuri data were checked or newly elicited with a native speaker.

The paper will not discuss the notion of focus per se as a category that is generally accepted to highlight new or salient information within the clause (and beyond the clause), but is exclusively concerned with focus marking, in particular with morphological marking on the verb. Given the intricate relationship with the likewise morphologically marked categories of aspect and tense, marking focus on the verb will be treated as part of verbal inflexional morphology. For clarity and ease of reference in the description of Kanuri, therefore, we suggest drawing a distinction between canonical inflexional categories (such as *aspect*, *tense*, *mood*) and non-canonical inflexional categories (such as *focus* and, possibly, *theticity*, as well as *syntactic dependency*) which are all marked by inflexional morphology, at least in Kanuri.

Guided by our previous experience with the analysis, description, and typological comparison of grammatical systems that encode focus in verbal morphology (cf. Wolff 1983, 2003, 2006, in press; Löhr, in press), we start off by the following theoretical and methodological assumptions:[2]

- Taking the clause to provide the syntactic frame to start with, we accept that clauses may be internally structured in terms of salience or novelty of information (referred to as information structure (= IS), in different schools of thought referred to as *topic* vs. *comment*, *theme* vs. *rheme*, *new information* vs. *old information*, *functional sentence perspective* etc.), but also that they may not.[3] Accordingly, we consider clauses to be either marked for [+IS] (usually by default) or not, i.e. allow for special cases of [-IS] clauses (this will be referred to as theticity).
- We follow general focus theory by taking focus to be an IS category that specifically relates to salience or novelty of information in [+IS] clauses

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[2] Cf. Wolff (2003) for a more detailed presentation of the underlying theory on focus which is largely based on Hyman and Watters (1984) and also acknowledges Güldemann (1996). Much of the theoretical and methodological groundwork was laid under a generous grant (1995-98) by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (in the *Schwerpunktprogramm 'Sprachtypologie'*) which is gratefully acknowledged by H. E. Wolff.

[3] Properties of information structure beyond the clause will not be considered here since we are mainly concerned with morphological marking of (assertive) predication focus whose domain we presently assume to be the clause. – The following abbreviations will be used: 1/2/3 = first/second/third person, aff. = affirmative, AG = agent, APPL = applied, AUX = auxiliary verb root, CO = coordinator, CPTP = counter-presuppositional thetic perfect, dep. = dependent, DET = determiner, DFUT = dependent future, DIR = direction, DO = direct object, DPRET = dependent preterite, ex./exx = example(s), F/FOC= focus, fut./FUT = future, GEN = genitive, IFP = in-focus perfect, IMPERF = imperfect, IO = indirect object, IS = information structure, LOC = locative, neg./NEG = negative, p.c. = personal communication, PERF = perfect, PF = predication focus, P/pl. = plural, POSS = possessive, pret./PRET = preterite, S/sg. = singular, SP = subject pronoun, TF = term focus.

in the sense of highlighting the particular information component that the speaker assumes not be shared with the addressee. [+F] would indicate "new" or "salient" information components (in-focus components) and the expectation is that these information components are overtly marked in some way (prosodic, morphological, syntactic); [-F] would refer to those that are not highlighted (out-of-focus components).

- Clauses that can or must be assumed to be [-IS], could be interpreted in at least two different ways: They are either automatically devoid of any type of IS and focus (i.e. thetic), or one could argue that focus is on the whole clause (and hence speak of clause focus). For Kanuri we tentatively follow the thetic interpretation.[4]

- For focus we will distinguish two basic functional types: assertive focus (with the function of highlighting an information component that is overtly expressed in the clause) and contrastive focus (with the function of relating the highlighted information component to extra-clausal context).[5]

- For focus, we will further distinguish different scopes of the feature [+F]: Predication focus has scope on predicative operators, such as aspect,

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[4] Hence we make use of the somewhat awkward label *counter-presuppositional thetic perfect* reflecting the information available from the rich literature that is still somewhat inconclusive as to the true nature of this category (Cyffer and others refer to this category as *verb emphasis past*). It is not surprising that this category has only emerged in recent times through shift of function: Cyffer (2006: 115, 124) reports the accelerating marginalization of this TAM category from what used to be the *general perfective* towards a highly specialized function over the last 200 years. Previously theticity has not been described to play a role in the Kanuri system, apart from a short remark by Hutchison (2000: 583) who also states the constitutive absence of focus with this particular category. Ellison (1937) had already observed that "emphasis", i.e. focus, cannot be on other constituents outside the verbal predicate, therefore he speaks of the "predicative force" of this category, supporting Lukas' (1937) "predicative emphasis", and his label *predicative*. Clearly, the category in question is part of the PERFECTIVE set, being widely described as "completive" (Hutchison 2000), indicating "achievement" and "accomplishment" (Lukas 1937), or signalling the "factualness of perfective action" (Jarrett 1980). However, there is much more involved than "perfective" aspectual readings, namely that the accomplishment was "unexpected or in spite of difficulty, doubt, initial failure" (Ellison 1937), or is used to "deny existing false expectations or wrong assumptions, whether […] explicitly stated or not" (Jarrett 1980), or when the action of the verb was achieved "surprisingly, suddenly or recently" (Cyffer 1991). We take all these observations and functional descriptions to be likely circumscriptions of both counter-presuppositionality and theticity.

[5] Given our present insights, assertive focus appears to govern the encoding of focus in verbal inflexional morphology, whereas contrastive focus is encoded syntactically (but cf. our discussion of the "Kanuri Focus Anomaly" further below).

tense, polarity; term focus has scope on subject, object, adjunct, adverb, etc.[6]

- In Kanuri (and in neighbouring Chadic languages, for that matter), there are certain conjugational paradigms available for verbs that encode predication focus with scope on particular operators (aspect, tense), i.e. that have inherent focus, hence we speak of "in-focus" forms; characteristically these "in-focus forms" (often referred to as "absolute" aspects/tenses in traditional terminology) may contrast with "out-of-focus forms" ("relative" aspects/tenses) with whom they share the same verbal aspect (in Kanuri, this would be the PERFECTIVE aspect only). The same could be said for the domain of polarity with "negative" operators automatically attracting [+F] (cf. Table 1 below).

The rich TAM category inventory of Kanuri contains 15 conjugational paradigms, organized in terms of categories such as aspect, tense, and mood, but also categories such as predication focus, counter-presuppositional theticity, syntactic dependency, and polarity. The available grammatical descriptions provide a plethora of competing functional-descriptive labels for the various conjugational paradigms of the verb, for instance, in the descriptions of Koelle (1854), Müller (1877), von Duisburg (1913), Noël (1923), Lukas (1937), Schubert (1970/71), Hutchison (1976), Jarrett (1980), Cyffer (1991, 1998, 2006). Out of these, six paradigms/categories make up the domain of predication focus marking on the verb in the perfective aspect.[7]

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[6] Note that the theoretically possible category of verb focus (i.e. contrastive focus on the "meaning" of the verbal lexeme) has not been found to be operative in Kanuri. However, for the non-initiated reader there is a source for confusion here: One TAM category is traditionally labelled *emphatic, verb emphasis past* (but also *predicative*). The use of the descriptive label "emphasis" may lead one to – falsely – assuming that focus is involved. The label *verb emphasis past*, however, must be construed within a paired terminology as opposed to *noun emphasis past*; i.e. it only tells us that it is not a noun or noun phrase that is highlighted in the clause. The label *predicative* for the same TAM category – rightly – indicates that it is not the verb meaning as such that is under "emphasis". The reader is referred to the rich literature on Kanuri grammar. Despite misleading descriptive terminology and inconclusive translations of examples quoted in isolation, therefore, we are not dealing with (contrastive) verb focus.

[7] The *imperfect* does not have inherent focus in the affirmative; predication focus can, however, be assumed to be operative in the *negative imperfect* on cross-linguistic if not universal grounds, assuming that negation is a predication operator that always attracts focus.

Table: Non-dependent indicative verb forms in Kanuri

Received labels[8]	aspect		tense		[+PF]	dep.	polarity	
	PERF.	IMPERF.	*pret.*	*fut.*			aff.	neg.
Noun Emphasis Past [in-focus-perfect], Aorist, Imperfektum I, parfait, relative past, relative perfect, unspecified punctiliar, noun emphasis completive	+ [+F]	-	-	-	+	-	+	-
Past [preterite in-focus-perfect], Imperfektum, Perfektum II, passé indéfini, past punctiliar, Historicus	+	-	+ [+F]	-	+	-	+	-
Dependent past [dependent preterite in-focus perfect] past tense of the conjunctional mood, dep. mood past	+	-	+ [+F]	-	+	+	+	-
Potential/(Vague) Future [future in-focus-perfect], Futur, Eventualis, future punctiliar,	+	-	-	+ [+F]	+	-	+	-
Negative Completive [negative in-focus perfect], negative past, Negativus, Negativ	+	-	-	-	+	-	-	+ [+F]
Negative Potential, Future [negative future], negative indicative, negative Eventualis, future negative	+	-	-	+	+	-	-	+ [+F]
Negative Imperfect, Negative Indicative, Negative Continuous	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	+ [+F]

In the INDICATIVE mood, the salient functional division is one of aspect: Two marked aspectual categories, IMPERFECTIVE and PERFECTIVE, contrast through choice of suffixes. In the IMPERFECTIVE aspect, predication focus is not operational. The PERFECTIVE aspect allows choice of three different suffixes: {-nà ~ -ò ~ -í}. The choice of suffix is governed by interaction with predication focus and counter-presuppositional theticity: {-í} is used to mark counter-presuppositional theticity, {-nà} is used to mark [-PF] perfect, and {-ò} is used to mark [+PF] perfect. This distinction in terms of suffix function and categorical semantics as reflected in the functional labels that we propose is novel in Kanuri linguistics, but reflect a synthesis of insights that have long been

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8   Most recent labels from Cyffer [1998, 2006] in *italics,* our suggested labels added in [ ] when different.

held about these TAM categories without, however, recognizing the governing principle behind it.

The PERFECTIVE aspect constitutes the heart of the Kanuri verbal inflexional system (see figure 2 below). It interacts with the non-canonical categories of counter-presuppositional theticity, predication focus, and syntactic dependency, and with polarity. The PERFECTIVE is further open to overt marking of tense by prefixing. However, tense marking in the PERFECTIVE is already subject to interaction from the category of predication focus. Compare the following five parallel clause formations:[9]

(1) Affirmative categories in the PERFECTIVE aspect (Hutchison 1981: 125):

a.   *out-of-focus perfect* (*perfect* in Hutchison 1981)
    hàwâr   **mâi-bè**   **fà-n-gɔ́-nà**
    news   king-GEN   hear-AUX-1S-PERF
    'I have heard news of the king'

b.   *in-focus perfect*[10] (*noun emphasis completive* in Hutchison 1981)
    hàwâr   **mâi-bè$_{[+TF]}$**   **fà-n-g-ô**
    news   king-GEN   hear-AUX-1S-IFP
    = **hàwâr mâibèmá$_{[+TF]}$ fàngô**
    'I heard <u>news of the king</u>'

c.   *preterite in-focus perfect*[11] (*past* in Hutchison 1981)
    hàwâr   **mâi-bè**   **fà-n-gó-k-ò$_{[+PF]}$**
    news   king-GEN   hear-AUX-PRET-1S-IFP
    '<u>I heard</u> news of the king'

d.   *counter-presuppositional thetic perfect* (*verb emphasis completive* in Hutchison 1981)
    hàwâr   **mâi-bè**   **fà-n-g-í**
    news   king-GEN   hear-AUX-1S-CPTP
    'I just heard some news about the king' / 'Have I got some news about the king' / 'Did I ever hear some news about the king'.

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[9]   All tones (high, low and falling) are marked. Morphologically complex forms which are difficult to parse within limited space are indicated by a forward slash.

[10] The answer to the question why the "in-focus perfect" as an instantiation of predication focus should mark term focus on the preceding NP will be discussed in detail in section 5 under the notion of the "Kanuri Focus Anomaly".
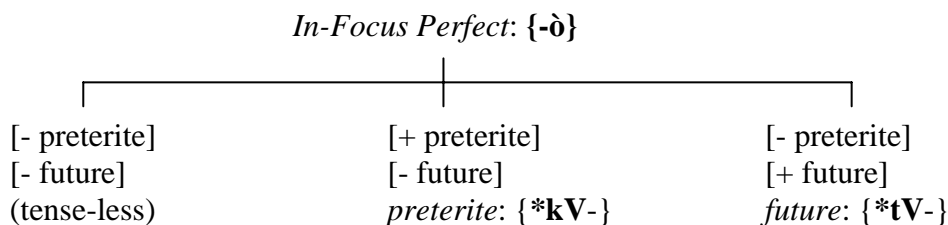
[11] We prefer "preterite" over "past" because in Kanuri literature the term "past" has been indiscriminately used for quite different conjugational paradigms, both for aspect and tense categories.

3 Predication focus

Predication focus has become a focal point of interest in African linguistics since Hyman & Watters' seminal paper of 1984 that refers to this category as "auxiliary focus". This category accounts for the observation that, in some languages and for at least some constructions, the speaker is free to chose between constructions or verb forms marked for predication focus ([+PF]) and those that are not ([-PF]) – here we speak of pragmatic control of focus. In other languages or other constructions within the same language, the speaker has no choice, here grammar enforces the choice between marked [+PF] or [-PF] constructions or verb forms – here we speak of grammatical control of focus. Languages that encode predication focus in their verbal inflexional morphology, therefore, tend to display a subsystem of parallel forms for certain aspectual categories, traditionally referred to as "absolute" vs. "relative" aspect/tense paradigms (for a well-known Chadic language of this type cf. Hausa as discussed in Hyman & Watters [1984] and again in Wolff [2006]). This leads us to distinguish between (i) in-focus forms, and (ii) out-of-focus forms for at least some of the aspectual and temporal categories. In-focus forms are those marked for [+PF], out-of-focus forms, on the other hand, are those forms that are used when none of the verbal operators is under predication focus (i.e. default [-PF]), irrespective of whether any other clause constituent carries (term) focus or not. In our theoretical approach towards predication focus and following Hyman & Waters (1984), the in-focus forms of the verbal predicate are said to carry intrinsic focus.

Within the set of *in-focus perfect* forms, Kanuri makes use of a further subsystem of tense marking through prefixing, thereby allowing for a tripartite system: a tense-less form stands opposed to two morphologically marked tenses, which can be conveniently labelled *preterite* and *future*. The latter is, however, according to Hutchison (1981: 118) "the least commonly occurring of the aspects of the language".

In-Focus Perfect: **{-ò}**

[- preterite]	[+ preterite]	[- preterite]
[- future]	[- future]	[+ future]
(tense-less)	*preterite*: {***kV**-}	*future*: {***tV**-}

Figure 1: The subsystem of tense marking in Kanuri

All three conjugational paradigms of the tense subsystem carry the *in-focus perfect* suffix {-ò}. The *preterite* is additionally marked by a prefix internally reconstructed as {*kV-}, the *future* is marked by a prefix {*tV-}; both prefixes undergo considerable morphophonological changes in terms of phonetic output and occupy different positions in the morpheme string of the verbal complex depending on verb class. With the exception of the tense-less *in-focus perfect* (where we note that the noun or noun phrase preceding the verbal predicate can, very often is, and sometimes must be overtly marked for term focus - this will be discussed in detail further below as part of the "Kanuri Focus Anomaly"), [+PF] is clearly on the tense markers in the *preterite* and the *future*:

(2)   a. Tense-free *in-focus perfect* (= *noun emphasis past* in Cyffer 1991: 77)

     shí-də̀-má[+TF]   **rú-k-ò**
     3S.SP-DET-FOC   see-1S-IFP
                           'I saw <u>him</u>'

    b.

     Ádə̀-găi   **lárdə̀-də́** **Fàránsà-yè** **cú-nót-ò**   **nánkàrò.**
     DEM-like   land-DET   French-AG 3S-send-IFP because.of
     'That's it, because one sent <u>the French</u> to (rule) the land.' (Löhr in press)

(3)   a. *Preterite in-focus perfect* (= *past* in Cyffer 1991: 87)

     bískà   **Músà**   **Kánò-rò**   **lè-wó-n-ò**[+PF]
     yesterday Musa   Kano-DIR   go-PRET-AUX-IFP
     'Musa [he] <u>travelled</u> to Kano yesterday'

    b.

     Háttà   **kû-rò**   **ká-dé-ò**[+PF]
     until   today-ADV   PRET-come/3S-IPF
     'He used to <u>come</u> until today (and will continue to do so).'
     (Löhr in press)

(4)   *Future in-focus perfect* (= *future* in Cyffer 1991: 149)

     dúlì-nə́m   **máárántí-rò** **yìkkə̀-m-íyà,**
     children-POSS   school-DIR   put/APPL-2S-DFUT

     kə̀rà-à   **rúwò-à**   **cá-l-ò**[+PF]
     read-CO   write-CO   3P/FUT-learn-IFP
     'When you put your children into school, they <u>may learn</u> reading and
     writing'

In the PERFECTIVE aspect, negation is possible with *in-focus perfect* forms only, i.e. the *in-focus perfect* suffix {-ò} can be assumed to always precede the *in-focus perfect* negation marker {-nyí}. Additional tense marking is allowed, but is restricted to the *future*. For no practical but purely theoretical reasons, we therefore assume focus to have shifted its scope from aspect to polarity in these examples, thereby avoiding double [+PF] marking, i.e. on both aspect and polarity.

(5) *Negative in-focus perfect* (= *negative completive* in Cyffer 1991: 107)

    sáwà-nyí   **ís-ə̀-nyí**[+PF]
    friend-POSS   3S/come-IFP-NEG
    'My friend [he] <u>did not</u> come'

(6) *Negative future in-focus perfect* (= *negative future* in Cyffer 1991: 150f.)

    cì-làdə́-k-ə̀-nyí[+PF]
    FUT-sell-1S-IFP-NEG
    'I <u>shall not</u> sell (it)'

For reasons of space, the subsystem of syntactic dependency as morphologically marked non-canonical inflexional category cannot be treated in any detail in this paper. Two conjugational paradigms specialise on the use in dependent clauses, traditionally known as *dependent past* and *dependent future*. Suffice it to say that they appear to be available only in the PERFECTIVE aspect; this analysis is based on the identification of the marking devices which are assumed to contain the markers of both the *in-focus perfect* and of the *counter-presuppositional thetic perfect* (cf. Jarrett [1980], Schubert [1971/72]).

    The *dependent preterite in-focus perfect* is derived from the tense-less *in-focus perfect* by an additional suffix {-nyâ}, which is added to the *in-focus perfect* suffix {-ò}.[12]

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[12] The *in-focus perfect* suffix {-ò} tends to become deleted on systematic morphophonological grounds in most forms of the paradigm; its underlying presence must be postulated for systemic reasons. It shows up, however, in 3rd pers. forms such as *càdônyâ* 'when they did', and *lèwónònyâ* 'when he/she went' (Cyffer 1991: 158, 159). Intriguingly, the previously so-called *dependent future* appears not to be derived from the *in-focus perfect* as is the case with the *dependent preterite in-focus perfect*. As has already been suggested by Jarrett (1980) and Schubert (1971/72), the derivative base appears to be what is now labelled the *counter-presuppositional thetic perfect*. This analysis would be based on the identification of the suffix {-í} as preceding the dependency suffix {-[y]à}. We, therefore, suggest renaming this paradigm the *dependent counter-presuppositional thetic perfect*. The apparent contradiction between the two labels (*dependent future* vs.

(7) *Dependent preterite in-focus perfect* (= *dependent past* in Cyffer 1991: 159)

búltù kə̀mówùn <u>cú-r-û-nyâ,</u>   káráà-rò cì-yàs-ô</u>
hyena elephant   3S/PRET-see-IFP-DPRET bush-DIR 3S/PRET-run-IFP
'<u>When</u> the hyena <u>[he] had seen</u> the elephant, he ran into the bush'

(8) *Dependent counter-presuppositional thetic perfect* (= *dependent future* in Cyffer 1991: 141)

kúngə́nà   <u>fàndə̀-k-íyà,</u>   Íngə̀là-rò   lè-n-g-în
money   find-1S-DFUT   England-DIR   go-AUX-1S-IMPERF
'<u>When I get/will have got</u> money, I will travel to England'

The clear hierarchy of categories of verb inflexion in Kanuri, as far as the INDICATIVE mood is concerned, is graphically represented in Figure 2. The figure shows how the subsystem of marking predication focus (highlighted in bold characters) within the PERFECTIVE aspect domain is embedded in the overall structure of the Kanuri TAM system. It shows further that predication focus in Kanuri is operational only in the INDICATIVE mood in the PERFECTIVE aspect and in non-thetic clauses; scope encompasses overt verbal operators that relate to aspect, tense and polarity. The overt [+PF] inflexional marker is the suffix {-ò} that is shared by 6 verbal conjugational paradigms: 3 affirmative for non-dependent clauses (tense-less *IFP, preterite IFP, future IFP*), 1 affirmative for dependent clauses (*dependent preterite IFP*), and 2 negative (*negative IFP, negative future IFP*). Predication focus, therefore, cannot occur in thetic clauses, neither with the aspect-less *sequential*, nor in the SUBJUNCTIVE mood. It occurs, however, in both independent and dependent clauses.

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dependent [counter-presuppositional thetic] perfect) is explainable in terms of anteriority: a situation or action is set as given and bounded (achieved/accomplished/completed = PERFECTIVE aspect) before another situation or action can/will occur (= *future* tense).
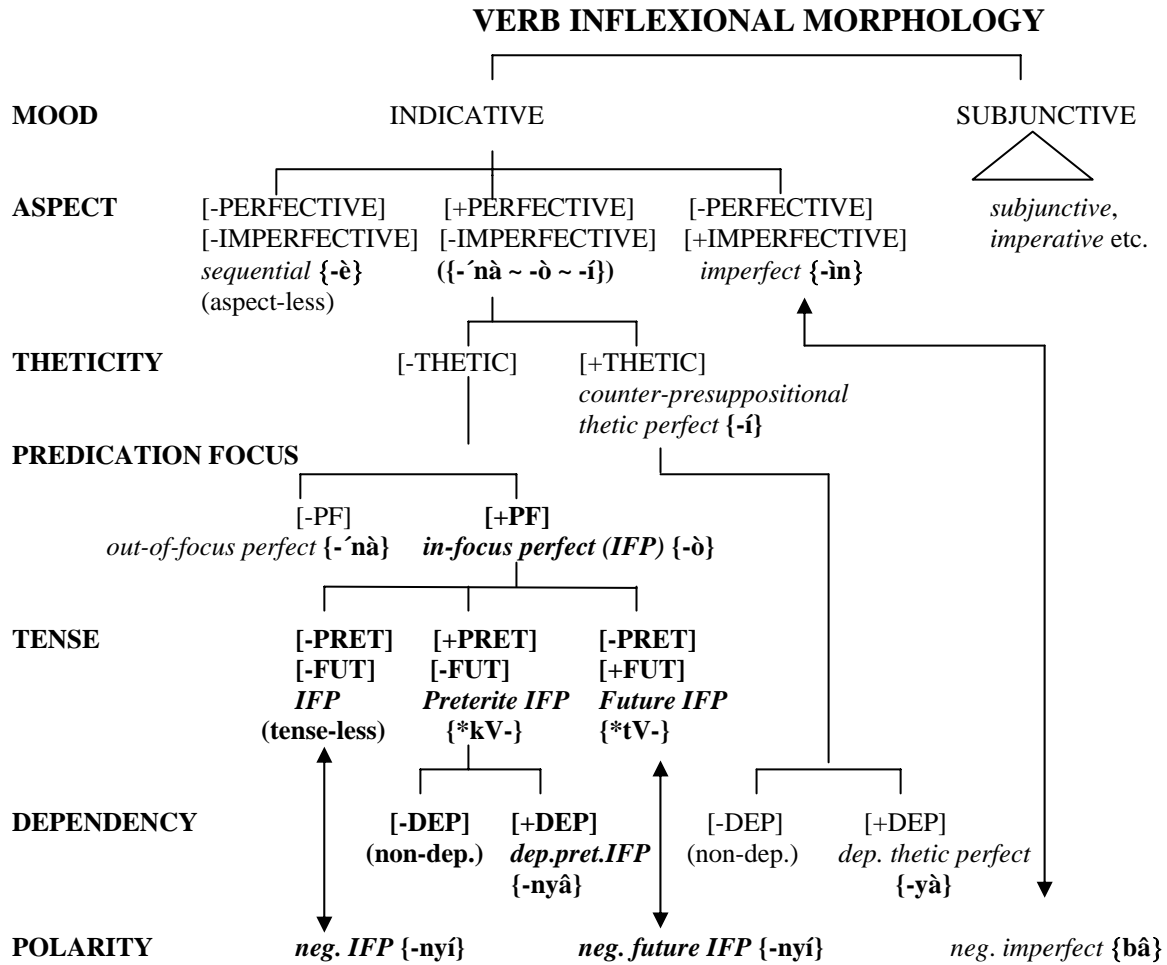
VERB INFLEXIONAL MORPHOLOGY

MOOD   INDICATIVE   SUBJUNCTIVE

ASPECT

[-PERFECTIVE] [-IMPERFECTIVE] *sequential* **{-è}** (aspect-less)

[+PERFECTIVE] [-IMPERFECTIVE] (**{-´nà ~ -ò ~ -í}**)

[-PERFECTIVE] [+IMPERFECTIVE] *imperfect* **{-ìn}**

subjunctive, imperative etc.

THETICITY

[-THETIC]

[+THETIC] *counter-presuppositional thetic perfect* **{-í}**

PREDICATION FOCUS

[-PF] *out-of-focus perfect* **{-´nà}**

[+PF] *in-focus perfect (IFP)* **{-ò}**

TENSE

[-PRET] [-FUT] *IFP* **(tense-less)**

[+PRET] [-FUT] *Preterite IFP* **{*kV-}**

[-PRET] [+FUT] *Future IFP* **{*tV-}**

DEPENDENCY

[-DEP] (non-dep.)

[+DEP] *dep.pret.IFP* **{-nyâ}**

[-DEP] (non-dep.)

[+DEP] *dep. thetic perfect* **{-yà}**

POLARITY

neg. IFP **{-nyí}**

neg. future IFP **{-nyí}**

neg. imperfect **{bâ}**

Figure 2: Hierarchy of categories of verbal inflexional morphology

4   Predication focus and other types of focus

The question whether different focus types can co-occur in one and the same clause in Kanuri cannot be answered in a straightforward manner. The answer invokes issues of dialectology and diachronic changes. Two "simple focus" patterns occur and raise no question as long as only one information component is marked for [+F]:

TERM$_{[+TF]}$ + PREDICATE$_{[-PF]}$

TERM$_{[-TF]}$ + PREDICATE$_{[+PF]}$

Term focus ([+TF]) is usually marked by clitic {má} following the term. We can priori expect a verbal predicate not to be marked for [+F] at the same time.

(9) Term focus + *out-of-focus perfect* (Hutchison 1976: 241)

 bə̀là **ádə̀-mâ-n[+TF]** **shí-gà** **rú-kə́-nà**
 town this-FOC-LOC 3S.SP-DO see-1S-PERF
 'I have seen him even/<u>right in this town</u>'

 Álì-má[+TF] **lè-zə́-nà**
 Ali-FOC go-3S-PERF
 '<u>Ali, too,</u> has gone' ~ '<u>Even Ali</u> has gone'

Term focus can also be expressed by changes of word order (leftward shifting).
If so, then the term focus marker {má} usually not occurs. Again, we can
supposedly expect a verbal predicate not to be marked for [+F] at the same time.

(10) Term focus on direct and indirect object + *imperfect* (cf. Cyffer 1991: 281)

 Álì **kákkádə̀[+TF]** **Kánò-làn** **Músà-rò** **c-ín**
 Ali book Kano-LOC Musa-IO 3S/give-IMPERF
 'Ali will give Musa <u>a book</u> in Kano'

 Álì **Músà-rò[+TF]** **Kánò-làn** **kákkádə̀** **c-ín**
 Ali Musa-IO Kano-LOC book 3S/give -IMPERF
 'Ali will give <u>Musa</u> a book in Kano'

 Compare this to the unmarked word order (and no focus marking):
 Álì **Kánò-làn** **Músà-rò** **kákkádə̀** **c-ín**
 Ali Kano-LOC Musa-IO book 3S/give -IMPERF
 'Ali will give Musa a book in Kano'

Interestingly, our sources testify to the existence of a third strategy to encode
term focus, at least and only for subject and direct object noun phrases preceding
the verbal predicate. This strategy, and quite surprisingly so, appears to use
morphological focus marking on the verb to instantiate term focus on the
preceding noun or noun phrase; the verb form being used to achieve this is,
appropriate to this function, traditionally labelled *noun emphasis past* (also
known as *relative perfect* or *relative past*, which corresponds to our *in-focus
perfect*).

> "There is an inter-relationship in Kanuri between the semantics of focus constructions
> and the morpho-syntax of the aspect of the verb. Among the completive aspects, the
> Relative Perfect is reserved uniquely for focusing or emphasizing a subject or a direct
> object noun phrase." (Hutchison 1976: 241)

The following examples illustrate that and how term focus appears to be encoded through the verbal paradigm of the tense-less *in-focus perfect*, irrespective of presence or absence of the overt term focus marker {má}. The verb form obviously no longer carries the [+F] feature as is to be expected on a priori grounds.

(11) a. Noun subject and object focus in the *in-focus perfect*

Álì[+TF]   **lè-z-ô**

Álì   **-má**[+TF]   **lè-z-ô**

Ali   -FOC   go-3S-IFP

'<u>Ali</u> left (surprisingly, others didn't)'

hàwâr **mâi-bè**[+TF]   **fà-n-g-ô**
hàwâr **mâi-bè**   **-má**[+TF **fà-n-g-ô**
news   king-GEN -FOC   hear-AUX-1S-IFP
'I heard <u>news of the king</u>'

The data and descriptions in the sources conflict with the analysis proposed in this paper according to which the verb form labelled *in-focus perfect* carries [+PF] marking (hence the new label that we propose). What one would expect is given in (11b), i.e. a contrast between one and two instances of focus in the same clause, provided that we can assume Kanuri to allow both term focus and predication focus to co-occur in the same clause (cf. below).

b.   [+PF] only: ****Álì lèzô**[+PF]   'Ali <u>left (surprisingly, others didn't)</u>'
       [+PF, +TF]: ****Álìmá**[+TF] **lèzô**[+PF]   '<u>Ali</u> <u>left (surprisingly, others didn't)</u>'

Either our reanalysis of the traditional *noun emphasis past/relative perfect* is wrong, or the synchronic situation in Kanuri is more complex than will appear on first sight. We take the latter to be the case and will provide a diachronic explanation of this "anomaly" under the heading of "The Kanuri Focus Shift" in section 5.

Interestingly, the "anomaly" does not affect the *in-focus perfect* paradigms that are overtly marked for tense, as in (12). Presence of the term focus marker here is necessary in order to indicate term focus, and obviously [+TF] and [+PF] are allowed to co-occur in the same clause with each marker operating in its proper scope: {má} for [+TF] and {-ò} for [+PF].

(12) Noun subject in the *preterite in-focus perfect*

Álì lè-wó-n-ò[+PF]   no TF, [+PF] on *preterite* operator of verb
Ali   go-PRET-AUX-IFP
'Ali <u>left</u>'

Álì-má[+TF]   **lè-wó-n-ò**[+PF]   [+TF] marker {má} for noun subject, plus
Ali-FOC   go-PRET-AUXIFP   [+PF] marked for *preterite* operator of verb
'<u>Ali</u> <u>left</u>'

5   The Kanuri focus anomaly and the "Kanuri focus shift"

What we refer to as the "Kanuri Focus Anomaly" is the apparent mismatch of focus **marking** and focus **semantics** in certain clauses. This anomaly affects not only interrogative clauses but also clauses that show overt [+F] marking on the (tense-less) verb (= [+PF]) and the semantics that require us to construe the clause in terms of [+F] on the overtly unmarked preceding noun phrase (= [+TF]). This anomaly is illustrated once more in (13):

(13)   Noun subject and object focus in the *in-focus perfect* (Yerwa)

focus marking	focus semantics	gloss
Álì lèzô[+F]	**Álì**[+F] **lèzô**	'<u>Ali</u> left (surprisingly, others didn't)'
hàwâr mâibè fàngô[+F]	**hàwâr mâibè**[+F] **fàngô**	'I heard <u>news of the king.</u>'

Informant work on the Manga dialect of Kanuri in Niger revealed some remarkable differences between dialects regarding the scope of focus with the *in-focus perfect*. In Manga, all *in-focus perfect* forms, whether marked for tense or not, clearly signal predication focus, and only that, i.e. Manga shows not sign of an anomaly here.

(14) Manga subsystem of the *in-focus perfect*

tense-less in-focus perfect   preterite/ future in-focus perfect[13]
wú   rú-k-ò[+PF]   **wú   kí-rú-k-ò**[+PF]
1S.SP   see-1S-IFP   1S.SP   PRET-see-1S-IFP
'I <u>saw</u>'   'I <u>saw/will see</u>'

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[13]   Note that in Manga the prefixes of the *preterite* and *future* tend to be no longer formally distinct and can/must be jointly represented as {*ki-*}.

Álì-gà   rú-k-ò[+PF]   **Álì-gà   kí-rú-k-ò**[+PF]
Ali-DO   see-1S-IFP   Ali-DO   PRET-see-1S-IFP
'I <u>saw</u> Ali'   'I <u>saw/will see</u> Ali'

neg.   in-focus perfect   neg. pret./fut.   in-focus perfect
wú   rú-k-ə̀-nì[+PF]   **wú**   **kí-rú-k-ə̀-nì**[+PF]
1S.SP   see-1S-IFP-NEG   1S.SP   PRET-see-1S-IFP-NEG
'I <u>didn't see</u>'   'I didn't/won't see'

Álì-gà   rú-k-ə̀-nì[+PF]   **Álì-gà   kí-rú-k-ə̀-nì**[+PF]
Ali-DO   see-1S-IFP-NEG   Ali-DO   PRET-see-1S-IFP-NEG
'I <u>didn't see</u> Ali'   'I <u>didn't/won't see</u> Ali'

Compare the Manga situation to Yerwa where, as we saw in (13), the tense-less *in-focus perfect* form clearly signals focus on the preceding noun phrase. Note that Cyffer (1991), for the Yerwa dialect, always gives the (pronominal) subject of the tense-less *in-focus perfect* with the term focus marker {má} (forms without it would be considered non-grammatical in Yerwa), but does not do so for the *preterite* (his *past*) and *future*; the examples in (15) are from Cyffer (1991: 287, 288).[14] This again is part of what we call the "Kanuri Focus Anomaly".

(15)
tense-less *in-focus perfect*   **wú-má**[+TF]   **rú-k-ò**   '<u>I</u> saw (it)'
                 1S.SP-FOC   see-1S-IFP

Preterite in-focus perfect   **wú**   **cú-rú-k-ò**[+PF]   'I <u>saw</u> (it)'
                 1S.SP   PRET-see-1S-IFP

Future in-focus perfect   **wú**   **cú-rú-k-ò**[+PF]   'I <u>will see</u> (it)'
                 1S.SP   FUT-see-1S-IFP

Manga allows additional marking of term focus with all the *in-focus perfect* paradigms, as illustrated in (16). According to our native speaker consultant, the resulting forms have double focus in the *preterite/future* forms, i.e. [+TF] +

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[14]   The *preterite* and *future* forms of the *in-focus perfect* may occasionally turn out homophone in Yerwa like in these examples; in Manga these forms tend to be no longer formally distinct at all.

[+PF], but only one instantiation of [+F] in the tense-less *in-focus perfect*, and this is [+TF]. Here the "Kanuri Focus Anomaly" surfaces also in Manga.

(16) Manga *in-focus perfect* with TF on pronominal subject or noun object
      (with object marker -gà)

tense-less in-focus perfect	*preterite/future in-focus perfect*
= only term focus	= double focus
wúmá[+TF] **rúkò**	**wúmá**[+TF] **kírúkò**[+PF]
'I saw'	'I saw/will see'
Álìmá[+TF] **gà rúkò**	**Álìmá**[+TF] **gà kírúkò**[+PF]
'I saw Álì'	'I saw/will see Ali'

In both dialects it is clearly the tense category that is in the highly localized scope of predication focus when tense is overtly marked.[15] Note that the positional slot for the overt tense marker varies according to verb class. Examples in (17) are from the Manga dialect.

(17)

verb class 1	Preterite	**Álì**	**cí**[+PF]**-nót-ò**	'Ali sent'
			PRET/3S-send-IFP	
	Future	**Álì**	**cí**[+PF]**-nót-ò**	'Ali will send'
			FUT/3S-send-IFP	
verb class 2	Preterite	**Álì**	**lè-wó**[+PF]**-n-ò**	'Ali went'
			go-PRET-AUX-IFP	
	Future	**Álì**	**lè-jó**[+PF]**-n-ò**	'Ali will go'
			go-FUT-AUX-IFP	

In the tense-less *in-focus perfect*, however and in both dialects, the situation is different. Quite against expectations for the use of interrogatives, for instance, the clause predicate must occur in the *in-focus perfect*. Also, the answer to interrogatives requires the *in-focus perfect*, as shown in the Manga example in (18a), but not the term focus marker {má}. In the light of cross-linguistic if not universal patterns where focus is generally assumed to be on the interrogative

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[15] With certain verbs, overt distinction between *preterite* and *future* remains possible. In the following examples under (17), we indicate the presumed exact focus location by [+PF] following the tense slot in the morphological structure of the verb.

and on the interrogated noun in the answer to the question we notice another instance of the "Kanuri Focus Anomaly", as in (18b). Based on theory-guided expectation, we are now forced to assume the "anomalous" situation given in (18c). This anomaly again will be accounted for by the "Kanuri Focus Shift" discussed further below.

(18)   a.   **Q: wùndú lèjô[+F]?**   'Who left?'
             (Not acceptable: *out-of-focus perfect* ****wùndú lèzə́nà?**)
             A: Álì lèjô[+F]   'Ali left'

       b.   **Q: wùndú[+F] lèjô?**   'Who[+F] left?'
             A: Álì[+F] lèjô   'Ali[+F] left'

       c.   **Q: wùndú lèjô[+F]?**   'Who[+F] left?'
             A: Álì lèjô[+F]   'Ali[+F] left'

Still in Manga: When uttered in isolation, or in answer to the question "what has happened?", the interpretation of the appropriate answer **Álì lèjô** 'Ali left' in terms of focalised elements poses considerable problems for the speaker, who after lengthy contemplation and phonetic contrast with similar forms and constructions settles (and does so consistently on different occasions) on a double focus marking analysis as presented in (19), particularly in comparison to (20) where term focus is overtly marked and the speaker clearly identifies the noun subject (and only the noun subject!), to be in focus. Again, the "Kanuri Focus Anomaly" is at work: it extends [+F] from the verb onto the preceding noun in (19), and it removes [+F] from the verbal operator in (20) where [+TF] is overtly marked by {má}:

(19)   **Álì[+F] lèjô[+F]**   'Ali left'

(20)   **Álìmá[+F] lèjô**   'Ali left'

In the Yerwa dialect, the tense-less *in-focus perfect* clearly signals term focus on the preceding noun or noun phrase (subject or direct object) even in the absence of overt [+TF] marking by {má} as in (21), hence its traditional label as "noun emphasis past". The verbal predicate, however, loses its original [+F] properties.

(21) Yerwa: [+TF] on preceding noun phrase in tense-less *in-focus perfect*

           Álì [+TF] lèzô   'Ali left'
           hàwâr mâibè[+TF] fàngô   'I heard news of the king', cf. (1b)

In the Manga dialect, at least with our language consultant, the situation is not quite as clear-cut as in Yerwa because [+F] appears to remain semantically active on the predicate despite being extended in scope to the subject that is otherwise unmarked for [+TF], so (19) is acceptable, even if (20) may be preferred for its lack of ambiguity.

Looking at the "Kanuri Focus Anomaly" in Manga and Yerwa, we arrive at a picture that reminds one of "floating tones" in autosegmental phonology. Borrrowing autosegmental terminology, we could say that in the Kanuri tense-less *in-focus perfect*, the scope of focus is "associated" with the PERFECTIVE aspect operator, i.e. the verbal suffix {-ò}. With tense being overtly marked somewhere to the left of the verbal suffix {-ò}, the scope of [+PF] becomes "disassociated" from the suffix in order to be "re-associated" with the tense marker further to the left. And here is where we assume diachronic processes to come into play: Once this leftward shifting strategy is established, the tense-less *in-focus perfect* undergoes re-analysis. Since focus on ZERO is counter-intuitive, to say the least, it would not be surprising for the language to shift the scope of focus still further and again in leftward direction. This means that in the absence of an overt tense marker to the left of the suffix, the scope of focus "jumps" not only the empty tense marking slot but also the left word boundary of the verbal complex – and ends up on the noun phrase immediately preceding the verb. This can be represented as in (22); the examples also show the different position of the tense marker slot.[16]

(22) Double leftward shifting of scope of focus with tense-less *in-focus perfect*

verb class	[+F] associated with /localized on			gloss
	aspect suffix	tense marker	preverbal NP	
	→	→	→	
verb class 1	*Ali sú-nót-ò[+F]	*Ali sú-Ø[+F]-nót-ò	Ali[+F] súnótò	Ali sent
verb class 2	*Ali lè-z-´-ò[+F]	*Ali lè-z-Ø[+F]-´-ò	Ali[+F] lèzô	Ali went

The three diachronic stages of this leftward "Focus Shift" can be illustrated from the two dialects, cf. Figure 3. At the final stage (represented by the Yerwa situation), we can state that the original predication focus that was localized originally on the aspect operator (the PERFECTIVE suffix {-ò}) has shifted both

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[16]   This slot has different positions in the verbal complex depending on verb class: it is a prefix to the verb root in verb class 1, but follows the so-called "meaning carrier" morpheme and precedes the "conjugational base" *-n- in verb class 2. The *-n- may, however, be deleted on systematic grounds; it could be said to leave a trace in the shape of the polar tone that is realised as part of a falling contour on the final syllable: **lèzô**.

position, i.e. leftward from verb suffix to preverbal noun or noun phrase, and type, i.e. from [+PF] to [+TF], also involving shift from assertive focus to contrastive focus.

1	Manga	**wú rúkò**[+PF]	I <u>saw</u>]
		Álì lèjô[+PF]	<u>Ali</u> went (answer to question: "Who went?")
2	Manga	**Álì**[+TF] **lèjô**[+PF]	<u>Ali</u> left (in isolation, answer to question "What happened?")
3	Yerwa	**Álì**[+TF] **lèzô**	<u>Ali</u> left

Figure 3: Graphic representation of the "Yerwa Focus Shift"

The observation that Manga represents a more archaic stage and Yerwa the most advanced stage of this grammatical change supports Cyffer's (2006) claim that the northern varieties (like Manga) are changing at a slower pace than the central varieties (to which Yerwa belongs). The "Kanuri Focus Shift" accounts for statements in the literature as the following which relate to the verb form that we call the tense-less *in-focus perfect* and which is used to indicate "… semantic prominence for one of the major constituent noun phrases, i.e. either the subject or the object noun phrase" (Hutchison 1981: 126f.):

> "This past tense gives prominence to some particular word in the sentence which is distinct from the idea contained in the verb. The emphasis is never on the verb itself."
> (Ellison 1937: 87 on his "Relative Past")

> "With this paradigm, the focus is shifted away from the event described by the verb to a nominal phrase within the same clause. Thus the Unspecified Punctiliar can never stand alone as a complete sentence; there must always be a stressed nominal phrase with it. This prefixless paradigm is the basic, neutral form of the Punctiliar, thus allowing all possible attention to be focussed on the nominal phrase." (Jarrett 1980: 8)

Once we have accepted the idea of a diachronic leftward dislocation process that shifted scope of focus from the verb to the preceding noun phrase, we still need to account for the shift of focus type from assertive [+PF] to contrastive [+TF]. A straightforward answer would be to say that this follows automatically from the leftward dislocation: once focus ends up on the "term" represented by that noun phrase, "TF" interpretation would be the only plausible and natural consequence, and TF in Kanuri always means contrastive focus. In a more formalistic manner, one could argue that we are dealing with some kind of "focus overload" that calls for "focus overload reduction". The starting point of the "Kanuri Focus Shift" would be the situation that we still find in both Manga and Yerwa, namely the combined marking of predication focus and term focus, cf. examples of the *preterite in-focus perfect* in (23). The scope of the [+PF] marker {-ò} is on the overt tense marker of the *preterite*, and {má} marks [+TF] on the preceding noun phrase. (cf. ex. (12) and (1c))

(23)   Manga: **Álìmá**[+TF] **lèyénò**[+PF]   'Ali left'
       Yerwa: **hàwâr mâibè-má**[+TF] **fàngókò**[+PF] 'I heard news of the king'

In the case of the tense-less *in-focus perfect* in combination with term focus on the preceding noun phrase, however, we have argued that the scope of the [+PF] marker remains somewhat "floating" over the verb form since it cannot localize due to the absence of an overt tense marker, so it becomes dislocated even further to the left and across the next left word boundary. This would lead to some kind of "focus overload" on the NP preceding the verbal predicate when the NP is already overtly marked for [+TF], as illustrated in (24) for Manga.

(24)   ***Álìmá**[+TF] **lèjô**[+PF] > ****Álìmá**[+TF][+PF] **lèjô**   > **Álìmá**[+TF] **lèjô**

      *Ali left   > 'Ali left'

The intermediate cumulative effect (resulting, theoretically, in the combination of the features [+TF] plus [+PF] on a preverbal noun phrase) may have triggered the reduction of the semantically improbable double and heterogeneous focus properties of the NP to the more natural and semantically plausible simple [+TF] property. Consequently, the tense-less *in-focus perfect* (= an instantiation of predication focus) thereby looses its intrinsic [+PF] property in this particular environment by a language-internal re-analysis as "noun emphasis past" (= an instantiation of term focus) in traditional Kanuri grammar terminology. By generalization of this grammatical change, the tense-less *in-focus perfect* may now co-occur with preceding NPs that are unmarked by the [+TF] marker {má}, and still the clause is interpreted to contain term focus on the NP – simply by collocation with the tense-less *in-focus perfect*, as illustrated again in (25).

(25) ***Álì lèzô**[+PF]   >   **Álì**[+TF] **lèzô**   'Ali left'

The tense-less *in-focus perfect* still likes to co-occur with term focus marking devices, in Yerwa Kanuri possibly to a much greater extent than in Manga Kanuri. This is reflected, for instance, in the following grammatical description for Yerwa (Cyffer 1991: 77):

> "The noun emphasis past is used, when (a) the action is completed or has started, and (b) a major constituent noun phrase – subject or direct object – is focussed.
> Focus is often expressed by the emphatic suffix **–má**, e.g.
> **málàmndémá Màidùgùrírò lèzô**   our teacher went to Maiduguri

sàndímá shígà sórò	<u>they</u> saw him
shídə̀má rúkò	I saw <u>him</u>"

It is the "Kanuri Focus Shift" that also accounts for the "anomaly" already illustrated from Manga in (18) above, namely the counter-intuitive co-occurrence of the (tense-less) *in-focus perfect* with generally [+F] marked interrogatives (and answers to interrogatives). Since the same situation prevails in Yerwa, relevant Kanuri grammars give functional descriptions like the following (Cyffer 1991: 77):

> "Interrogatives in the subject and direct object position are considered in Kanuri as focus constructions. Therefore the noun emphasis past is used in completed actions.

Ndú ísò?	Who came?
ndú rûm?	Whom did you see?
àbí sə̀dô?	What did he/she do?
kàkkàdə̀bí ràâm?	Which book do you like?"

It is the "anomalies" stemming from the diachronic "Kanuri Focus Shift" (which itself may well be part of the considerable grammatical change affecting the Kanuri TAM system in general and the PERFECTIVE aspect domain in particular, cf. Cyffer 2006) that has until now prevented linguists to (a) identify one (and only one) common function for the verb inflexional suffix {-ò}, and (b) recognize the existence of a neat subsystem of innovative predication focus marking in Kanuri.[17]

6   Summary and conclusion

The rich inflexional morphology of the Kanuri verb was reviewed in terms of its potential to encode information structural properties, and the relevant descriptive literature and discourse material was scrutinized along these lines. This has led us, among other things, to identify the clear-cut distinction between in-focus and out-of-focus forms in the PERFECTIVE aspect domain where [+PF] is morphologically marked by the suffix {-ò}. On the level of clause syntax, we were able to analyse and explain certain "anomalies" in the behaviour of focus in Kanuri in terms of grammatical changes that we refer to as the "Kanuri Focus

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[17]   The unique function of the suffix {-ò} was also veiled behind inconclusive terminology in the labelling of the inflexional categories, see table 1. Who would have assumed that there was a common functional category being marked behind apparently heterogeneous TAM category labels in the affirmative, plus two negatives and one syntactically dependent form, and that the uniting morphological and semantic element was predication focus?

Shift". Whether and how the development of encoding predication focus in Kanuri grammar is the result of language contact, in particular with surrounding Chadic languages, remains to be discussed and presented at another occasion (cf. Wolff & Löhr, in prep.).

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