

FOCUS CONSTRUCTIONS IN TUWULI*

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Tuwuli has five distinct strategies of focus-marking: a verbal prefix, fronting, nominal periphrasis, in-situ pitch-accent and the cleft construction. The use of each strategy depends on a variety of grammatical and pragmatic factors including the scope and intensity of the focus, the syntactic form of the focussed constituent, the tense-aspect of the verb, and the polarity of the proposition. This paper illustrates each strategy and describes the factors that motivate its use. The paper also attempts to trace the diachronic sources of the cleft construction, giving evidence that cleft constructions have evolved independently from both relative clauses and coordinate constructions. The latter origin is particularly interesting given that one of the focus markers appears to be evolving into a simple coordinating conjunction. Hence the evolutionary path between focus constructions and coordinate constructions appears to have run in both directions simultaneously, albeit in different ways.

Tuwuli a cinq stratégies distinctes pour marquer le focus : la préfixation verbale, le positionnement en début de proposition, la périphrase nominale, le marquage par un pitch-accent in-situ et la construction clivée. L'utilisation de chaque stratégie dépend d'une série de facteurs grammaticaux et pragmatiques comprenant la portée et l'intensité du focus, la forme syntactique du constituant focalisé, le temps et l'aspect du verbe, et la polarité de la proposition. Cet article illustre chaque stratégie et décrit les facteurs qui motivent leur utilisation. J'essaye également de retrouver les sources diachroniques des constructions clivées, démontrant que celles-ci ont évolué indépendamment aussi bien des phrases relatives et que des constructions coordonnées. L'origine de ces dernières est particulièrement intéressante, car l'un des marqueurs de focus semble se transformer en une conjonction de coordination simple. Par conséquent, l'évolution entre les constructions focales et les constructions coordonnées semble s'être dirigée dans les deux directions simultanément, bien que de différente manière.

0. INTRODUCTION

Tuwuli¹ is a language spoken by about 11,000 people in the mountainous and linguistically diverse Central Volta Region of Ghana. As is the case with other Ghana-Togo Mountain (GTM) languages, it is a Kwa language whose precise classification with the Kwa group remains uncertain, although it is usually considered to be related to the so-called 'Ka-Togo' or 'Left Bank' languages such as Avatime [avn], Nyangbo [nyb], Tafi [tcd], Ikposo [kpo] and Igo [ahl]. The Tuwuli-speaking area is bordered by: Akan [aka] and Lelemi [lef]-speaking areas to the north and east, and Nkonya [nko] and Siwu [akp]-speaking areas to the south, with the Volta lake to the west.

In terms of previous research on Tuwuli, the main work is Harley (2005). The reader is referred to this document for a fuller explication of the morphological and syntactic information alluded to in this paper. Other research is largely limited to comparative wordlists or brief grammatical sketches (e.g. Westermann (1922), Höftmann (1966), Heine (1968), Ring (2001), and Ring, Casali and Nniakyire n.d. [2005]).

This paper is structured as follows. Section 1 provides a brief overview of the main typological characteristics of Tuwuli. Section 2 describes and illustrates the different strategies Tuwuli uses for marking focus, and explains the various syntactic and pragmatic factors which motivate the use of each strategy. Section 3 looks at the

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¹ The autodenominations for the language, people and traditional area are Tuwuli, Bawuli and Luwuli respectively. In the literature, Tuwuli has also been referred to as Bowiri, Bowili, Bowuri, Boviri and Tuwili. Bowiri is the general name used by non-native speakers to refer to the Tuwuli-speaking area. The ethnologue language code for Tuwuli is [bov]. Other languages referred to in this paper are followed by their ethnologue code in square brackets.

possible diachronic origins of one of the main focus-marking strategies, namely the cleft construction, and shows how both relative clauses and coordinate constructions have contributed to the deictic copula **ádé** being reanalysed as a focus marker. This section also illustrates how **ádé** is also starting to function as a simple coordinating conjunction, indicating that, in this case, the path of grammaticalisation has proceeded COP => FM => CONJ. Finally, section 4 considers how these strategies fit into the broader typological perspective and offers some concluding remarks about how Tuwuli complements our understanding of focus-marking strategies in West African languages in general.

1. TYPOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Tuwuli has a fairly typical phonemic inventory for a Kwa language, with 21 consonants and 12 vowels (seven oral, five nasal). There are two basic (lexical) tone levels, high and low, which interact to generate at least four further tones phonetically, including a word-final falling tone. As with most other West African Niger-Congo languages, tone is also used to make several grammatical distinctions, especially distinctions of tense-aspect-mood (TAM) marking and polarity. The vast majority of syllables are open, with N, V, CV or CLV structure, although CVN syllables do occur in some adverbs and ideophones, as well as in a few common loanwords. Both nouns and verbs show regressive ATR and labial harmony between root and prefix. Rather strikingly for a seven-vowel Niger-Congo language, ATR harmony applies to both high and mid vowels, rather than being restricted to just the mid vowels (cf. Williamson 2004). Such a phenomenon has rarely been documented in any West-African language.

Just like most other GTM languages, Tuwuli has an extensive noun class system, determined by the prefixes with which most nouns normally occur. In the case of Tuwuli, the noun class system is particularly striking in that it is the plural prefixes that form the basis of the semantically motivated system, at least with those nouns that show a singular/plural distinction. Hence nouns such as **lú-dúlí** 'knee', **kó-kpó** 'arm' and **só-tó** 'ear' are all placed in noun class 3 because they all take the same plural prefix **á-**, which is the prefix used for nouns referring to paired body parts. The motivation for the different singular prefixes within each plural class is harder to trace, although there is some evidence that this was originally semantically motivated as well (cf. Harley 2005:88-96).

For a Kwa language, Tuwuli is surprisingly agglutinative, with the verb root carrying up to six different prefixes and one suffix simultaneously (cf. Hyman 2004). The prefixes are primarily inflectional morphemes used for TAM marking, whilst the suffixes are essentially derivational, root-modifying extensions (e.g. causative and stative) in various stages of grammaticalisation.

Noun phrases are generally head-initial (except for possessor + possessum phrases), with noun-class concord agreement occurring only on ordinals and certain determiners. A few adjectives show number agreement however, either by means of special prefixes or by reduplication (or both). Referential concord agreement is much more widespread than modifier concord agreement, and hence noun-class prefixes frequently function as nominal heads referring to some aforementioned noun of the same class. There is a limited distinction between alienable and inalienable possession, with juxtaposition (possessor + possessum) being used in all cases except for some close kinship terms with first or second person singular possessors, in which case special prefixes are used instead. Reflexives and reciprocals both use the noun **akū** - 'body', with the former usually being distinguished from the latter by the use of a pronominal possessor. The number system is base ten.

The basic word order is SVO, with a strict GOAL-THEME order in double-object constructions. Several different types of predicate-argument relations can be formally identified, with monotransitive and ditransitive constructions each having at least four different sub-types. There are only two basic prepositions in the language (locative and comitative), with certain verbs carrying much of the functional load which is carried by prepositions in English. As is common in African languages, spatial relations are indicated primarily by means of postpositional nouns, some of which are anthropomorphic body-part terms.

On the surface, multiverb constructions are of two basic types: those which have subject-marking on non-initial verbs and those which have imperfective aspect-marking instead. However, it is more helpful to characterise multiverb constructions in terms of the degree of the syntactic and semantic unity which exists between the individual predicates which they contain. Such an analysis yields three distinct degrees of interclausal integration: cosubordination, subordination and coordination, where cosubordination represents the strongest type of integration and coordination the weakest.

2. FOCUS-MARKING STRATEGIES

A syntactic constituent with the pragmatic status of being ‘in focus’ may or may not receive special syntactic marking. Universally, unmarked focus is represented by the canonical topic-comment sentence type, with marked focus being signalled by some systematic alteration to the unmarked sentence type, be it by intonation, word order, formatives, nominal periphrasis or the use of cleft constructions. As is shown in this section, Tuvuli uses all five of these strategies to mark focal information.

Two types of marked focus are sometimes distinguished cross-linguistically: completive/information focus and contrastive/identificational focus. Such a distinction is not exploited by Tuvuli however, since all five focus-marking strategies can be used to signal either type of focus. Rather, a variety of grammatical and pragmatic factors determine which focus-marking strategy is used.

2.1 THE VERBAL PREFIX $I\check{V}$ -

Before illustrating the syntactic and pragmatic properties of the focus prefix $I\check{V}$ - it is worth noting a phonological one: it is clearly part of the verbal word since it is within the scope of regressive ATR and labial harmony, as shown in (1).

- | | | |
|--------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| (1) a. | Kòfí lè-yá | KOFI came |
| b. | Kòfí lè-mó fífé à | KOFI saw the rice |
| c. | Kòfí lí-yé fífé à | KOFI stole the rice |
| d. | Kòfí lù-kù | KOFI died ² |

Regarding the distributional properties of $I\check{V}$ -, several points can be made. Firstly, $I\check{V}$ - is incompatible with pronominal subject clitics, as illustrated in (2).

- | | | |
|-----|---------------------|---------------|
| (2) | *é-lí-yé | fífé à |
| | 3sg-NPSubjFoc-steal | rice ID |
| | HE stole the rice | |

Instead, the subject must be an independent noun phrase, as shown in (3).

² In the English free translations in the linguistic examples in this paper, SMALL CAPITALS are used to represent constituents which lie within the scope of marked focus.

- (3) **yè** **lì-yé** **fɔ̀fɛ̀** **à**
 he NPSubjFoc-steal rice ID
 HE stole the rice

Secondly, **IV̂-** is only used when the subject lies within the scope of focus, as illustrated in (4-6).

- (4) Q. Who ate the rice?
 A. **Kòfí** ***(lè-nyá** **fɔ̀fɛ̀** **à**
 Kofi NPSubjFoc-eat rice ID
 KOFI ate the rice (Subject alone in focus)
- (5) Q. What happened to the rice?
 A. **Kòfí** ***(lè-nyá** **fòè**
 Kofi NPSubjFoc-eat it
 KOFI ATE it (Subject + verb in focus)
- (6) Q. What happened to the rice?
 A. **Kòfí** ***(lè-nyá** **fɔ̀fɛ̀** **à**
 Kofi NPSubjFoc-eat rice ID
 KOFI ATE THE RICE (Whole sentence in focus)

Thus the focus prefix **IV̂-** can be used for both narrow (i.e. argument) focus and broad (e.g. sentence) focus. Although the answers to the questions ‘Who ate the rice?’ (example (4)) and ‘What happened?’ (example (6)) are syntactically identical, the two answers would have slightly different intonation patterns.

If the subject is outside the scope of focus, the focus prefix is ungrammatical, as shown in (7) and (8).

- (7) Q. What did Kofi eat?
 A. **Kòfí** ***(lè-nyá** **fɔ̀fɛ̀** **à**
 Kofi NPSubjFoc-eat rice ID
 Kofi ate THE RICE (Object alone in focus)
- (8) Q. What did Kofi do?
 A. **Kòfí** ***(lè-nyá** **fɔ̀fɛ̀** **à**
 Kofi NPSubjFoc-eat rice ID
 Kofi ATE THE RICE (Unmarked predicate focus)

The sentences in (7) and (8) are morphosyntactically (but not intonationally) identical to the simple declarative statement form corresponding to ‘Kofi ate the rice’.

Thirdly, there is a clear distributional link between the focus prefix **IV̂-** and the high toned negation-marking prefix **IV̂-**. All verbs with certain TAM marking and negative polarity require the high-toned **IV̂-** prefix, irrespective of focus effects. In such cases, the **IV̂-** prefix functions simply as a grammatical marker of negation and is consequently glossed as ‘NPSubjNeg’ rather than ‘NPSubjFoc’:

NEGATIVE FUTURE:

- (9) **Kòfí** ***(lè-)l-áá-yá**
 Kofi NPSubjNeg-NEG.FUT-FUT-come
 Kofi will not come

NEGATIVE PRESENT-PROGRESSIVE:

- (10) **nò óvólí *(lé-)lá-mlà kà-yá**
 your letter NPSbjNeg-be:MANNER-with NOM-come
 Your letter is not coming

NEGATIVE PRESENT-IMPERFECTIVE:

- (11) **ówô l-á-víô mò bóè**
 river NPSbjNeg-PRES.IMPV-dry:up with stones
 A river doesn't dry up with stones.

NEGATIVE STATIVE:

- (12) **nò ówólè*(lé-)wáá yèdèdèédè nè Bàgú má ànè**
 your heart NPSbjNeg-be:lying clearly LOC God face
 Your heart is not right in God's sight.

Since the high-toned **IV̂-** prefix is simply a grammatically controlled negation marker rather than a focus marker, in order to mark the subjects of such clauses for focus, intonational focus or a cleft construction is generally used.

It is certainly possible that the focus prefix **IV̂-** and the negation-marking prefix **IV̂-** are historically related. Both prefixes are mutually exclusive, and both require the subject to be an independent noun phrase. Furthermore, all cases of negation-marking on the verbal word involve either a high or an extra-high tone being superimposed on the morpheme in question, and so it could be that clauses with the TAM marking of examples (9-12) were once considered to have inherently focussed subjects, and so required the focus prefix. The focus prefix could then have become grammaticalised as a negation-marker, with the inherent focus no longer being explicitly marked. Indeed, there is considerable pan-African evidence in support of a strong link between focus and negation, even to the extent that some authors (e.g. Marchese 1983) have claimed that negative sentences are inherently focussed. However, the **I(V̂)-** prefix in examples (9-12) is grammatically rather than pragmatically controlled, and so it is possible to mark constituents in such sentences for focus using other focus-marking strategies. In clauses with TAM marking different from that of examples (9-12), negation is marked in other ways, and the focus prefix **IV̂-** is once again pragmatically controlled, as shown by comparing (13) and (14).

- (13) **Kòfí tá-náà kùgbéní**
 Kofi NEG-go hunting
 Kofi didn't go hunting
- (14) **Kòfí lè-tá-náà kùgbéní**
 Kofi NPSbjFoc-NEG-go hunting
 KOFI didn't go hunting

The fact that the negation-marking **IV̂-** prefix does not contain any inherent focus component is verified by the fact that it is compatible with topic-marked subjects. In Tuwuli as in many other languages, a single syntactic constituent cannot be marked simultaneously for both topic and focus (cf. Lambrecht 1994), but the negation-marking prefix is perfectly compatible with the topic-marked subjects:

- (15) **Kòfí kʰ lé-l-áá-náà**
 Kofi TOP NPSbjNeg-NEG.FUT-FUT-go
 As for Kofi, he won't go.

Compare example (15) with example (16), which uses the focus prefix:

- (16) ***Kòffkǎ** **lè-náà**
 Kofi TOP NPSbjFoc-go
 As for KOFI, he went.

The deictic copula **ádé** (used in cleft constructions) frequently precedes a focussed subject, typically making the focus more intense. In such cases, the identifiability marker **à** necessarily occurs at the end of the sentence, as shown in example (17).³

- (17) (**ádé**) **Kòff** **lè-mó** **yè** (**à**)
 DC Kofi 1sg-see him ID
 KOFI saw him.

The focus prefix is also used in WH-questions, when the subject argument is being questioned (provided the relevant TAM conditions are fulfilled), as illustrated in example (18).

- (18) **òwéi** **lè-kpà** **yè** **óvólí** **à?**
 who NPSbjFoc-give him book ID
 Who gave him the book?

WH-words cannot be marked by **ádé** however, since the deictic component of **ádé** is incompatible with non-assertive statements, as shown in example (19).

- (19) (***ádé**) **lítsà** **lì-pílà** **nò** (**à**)?
 DC what NPSbjFoc-burn you ID
 What burnt you?

The occurrence of the focus prefix in Tuvuli fits in with a general cross-linguistic tendency for subjects to have special marking for focus. This is not altogether surprising since, at least among languages with basic SVO word order, subjects tend to be highly topical arguments, and new information tends to be communicated by the verb and post-verbal arguments. Hence any sentence with an information structure which deviates from this default principle requires special marking. In many languages (e.g. French, Italian, Sesotho), this special marking is a cleft construction which forces focussed subjects to occur post-verbally.

2.2 FRONTING (WORD ORDER FOCUS)

Fronting or word order focus occurs when a focussed constituent is placed before the subject argument, and a gap is left in its canonical clausal position, as shown in (20).

- (20) Q. What did you put in the basket?
 A. **kópá** **à** **í-yí** **nè** **òtsètsè** **kámé** **à**
 cutlass ID 1sg-put:down LOC basket insideID
 THE CUTLASS, I put in the basket.

This type of focus is used in content questions when the questioned argument is not the subject:

³ The deictic component of **ádé** accounts for why it is virtually always accompanied by the identifiability marker **a**. In such contexts, the identifiability marker expresses an indication that the hearer should be able to identify the intended referent of the deixis, whether this be from the discourse-context or the actual speech situation.

- (21) **lítsà é-kpà nò?**
 what 3sg-give you
 What did he give you?

As with examples using the focus prefix, the deictic copula **ádé** and the identifiability marker **à** optionally surround a clause with a fronted constituent to add intensity to the focus (except in the case of WH-words):

- (22) (**ádé**) **Kòfí í-mó (à)**
 DC Kofi 1sg-see ID
 (It was) KOFI, I saw.

Gaps are not permitted within complex NPs, and so a possessor or possessum cannot appear alone in the pre-subject focus position. Instead, the whole possessive NP must be fronted:

- (23) **Kòfí kópâ é-kpà nò**
 Kofi cutlass 3sg-give you
 (i) KOFI'S cutlass, he gave me.
 (ii) Kofi's CUTLASS, he gave me.⁴

Similarly, complex complements of prepositions cannot be split up by focus-fronting; only the whole complement can be fronted. Furthermore, prepositions cannot be left stranded *in situ*, and so they are always deleted when their complements are fronted:

- (24) **lítsà kámê é-dò lédémè (*nè)?**
 what inside 3sg-put:inside salt LOC
 What did he put the salt into?

Prepositional phrases, adjectives and most adverbs cannot be focus-fronted:

- (25) (***nè**) **kòyátò à é-yà àkùbé à**
 LOC market ID 3sg-buy coconuts ID
 AT THE MARKET, he bought the coconuts.
- (26) ***ngbâ é-mó kósè**
 red 3sg-see snake
 He saw a RED snake.
- (27) ***bðè kó-tsê**
 slowly 3sg.NC-be:moving
 SLOWLY, it is moving.

Some temporal adverbs and adverbial phrases which do not naturally occur in clause-initial position can be focus-fronted:

- (28) **dàà y-á-bì yì kí y-àà-yá**
 always 3sg-PRES.IMPV-tell me COMP 3sg-FUT-come
 ALL THE TIME, he is telling me that he'll come.
- (29) **íviâ fúwúíélàlè é-kpà yì óvólí à**
 today days three 3sg-give me book ID
 THREE DAYS AGO, he gave me the book.

⁴ The two readings of this example are distinguished only by a pitch-accent on the focal constituent.

2.3 NOMINAL PERIPHRAISIS (PREDICATE FOCUS)

Tuwuli exhibits a form of predicate focus that is common to a number of West African languages (e.g. Akan and Nupe). In the predicate focus construction, a nominalised copy of the verb is fronted and the whole construction is optionally enclosed by the deictic copula **ádé** and the identifiability marker **a**, as shown by examples (30-32).

- (30) **(ádé) kà-kó, bé-kó yè (à)**
 DC NOM-die 3sg-die him ID
 They KILLED him.
- (31) **(ádé) kà-tó, ló-tó nè títé (à)**
 DC NOM-fall 3sg.NC-fall LOC ground ID
 It FELL ON THE GROUND.
- (32) **(ádé) kà-bò, Kòfí bò yè (à)**
 DC NOM-beat Kofi beat him ID
 KOFI BEAT/STRUCK him.

As examples (30-32) illustrate, the predicate focus construction can be used whenever the verb is within the scope of focus, irrespective of whether or not the scope of focus includes other clausal constituents, such as a PP, or the subject NP. However, since the focus prefix **IV-** can be used to mark focus if the subject is an independent NP within the scope of focus, an alternative way of expressing the sentence in example (32) would be:

- (33) **(ádé) Kòfí lú-bò yè (à)**
 DC Kofi NPSubjFoc-beat him ID
 KOFI BEAT/STRUCK him

Note that unmarked focus is universally represented by the canonical topic-comment sentence type. Hence, in answer to a question of the form ‘What happened to X?’, one can usually reply with a sentence of the form ‘X.....’ without using any form of marked focus. Using a predicate cleft construction in such a situation simply increases the intensity of the focus on the predicate.

The predicate focus construction provides a useful test for distinguishing between different types of transitive construction. Canonical transitives partake in the predicate focus construction, since with canonical transitives it is the verb that embodies the bulk of the predicative relation. In other types of transitive construction, it is the complement that embodies the bulk of the predicative relation, and so it is the complement which is fronted for predicate focus.⁵ The resulting construction is identical to a cleft construction:

- (34) **ádé múi m̀ Kòfí wùlá à**
 DC water with Kofi pour:out ID
 Kofi URINATED
- (35) **ádé tónó m̀ é-sà à**
 DC songs with 3sg-sing ID
 He SANG.

⁵ In Ewe, all single verb clauses require explicit complements, and predicate focus can only be achieved by fronting the complement (Ameka 1992:23). Hence from a typological perspective, it may be the case that grammatical necessity of the complement (as opposed to predicativeness of the complement) is the greater factor in determining whether the verb or the complement is fronted for predicate focus.

- (36) **ádé kódá m̀ò é-wá à**
 DC dream with 3sg-lie:down ID
 He DREAMT.
- (37) **ádé ólúlù m̀ò y-à-né à**
 DC sweat with 3sg-PRES.IMPV-come:out ID
 He is SWEATING

2.4 PITCH-ACCENT (IN SITU FOCUS)

Some clausal constituents can also be marked for focus in their default clausal position by means of a pitch-accent. Indeed, in the case of subjects, if the focus prefix **IṼ-** is ungrammatical because of TAM restrictions, pitch-accenting is typically the preferred focus-marking strategy.

A pitch-accented constituent is characterised by a distinctly raised tonal contour, particularly on any high-toned syllables. The acoustic intensity of such a constituent may also be increased. In addition, the tonal contours of neighbouring constituents may be suppressed to further highlight the focussed constituent. In Figures 1 and 2, the continuous line represents the intensity trace, whilst the broken line represents the pitch trace.

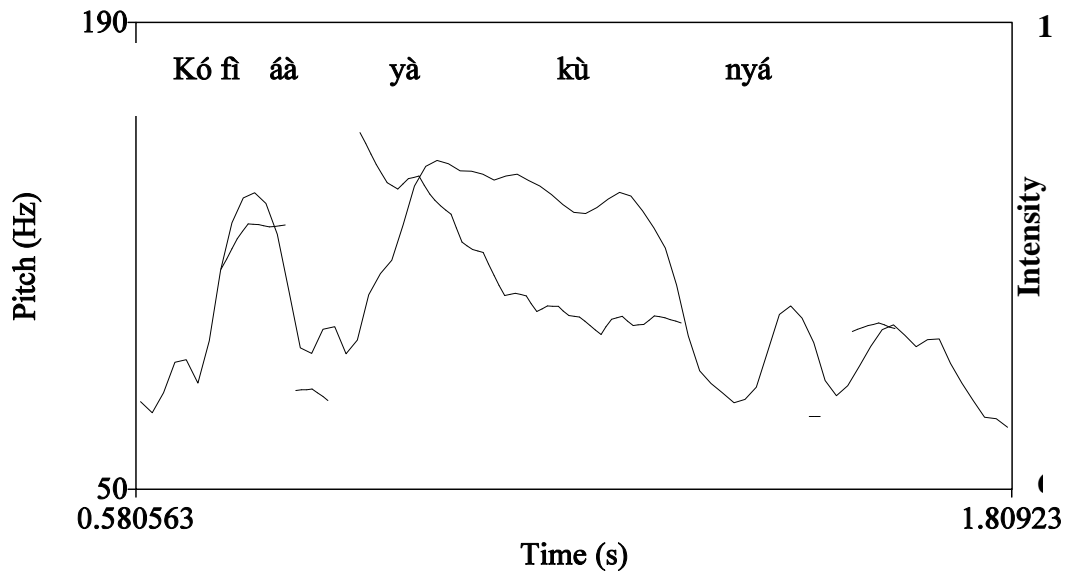


Figure 1: Pitch and intensity measurements for the phrase ‘Kofi will come tomorrow’

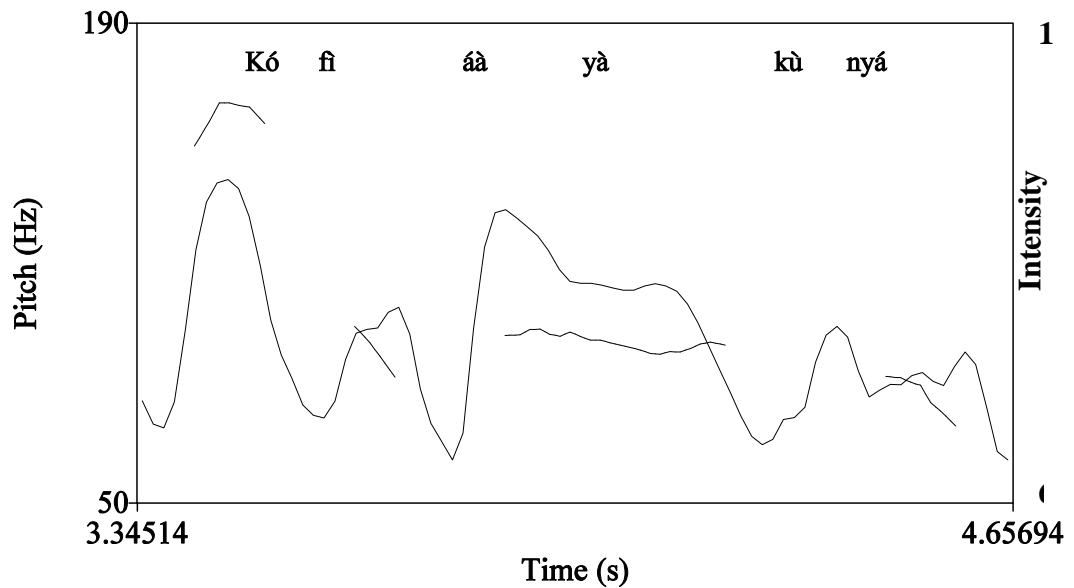


Figure 2: Pitch and intensity measurements for the phrase ‘KOFI will come tomorrow’

The measurements for the *in situ* focus sentence (Figure 2) differ from those from the non-focal sentence (Figure 1) in three distinct ways. Firstly, the high tone on the first syllable of **Kó-fi**⁶ is significantly higher in the focal sentence, and the low tone on the second syllable is also slightly raised. This is the main characteristic of a pitch-accent. Secondly, the falling tonal contour of the future-tense marker **áà** is heavily suppressed in the focal sentence, so that only the slightest fall in pitch is detectable. Thirdly, the acoustic intensity of both syllables of **Kófi** are noticeably greater in focal form.

Any given instance of *in situ* focus may not exhibit all three of these characteristics, but most examples would have at least the first one. The exceptions to this tend to be when the focal constituent is sentence-final, since downdrift makes tonal distinctions much harder to notice towards the end of the sentence.

2.5 CLEFT CONSTRUCTIONS

Cleft constructions are formally similar to intensified focus-fronting constructions which involve the deictic copula **ádé**. The only difference between the two constructions is that cleft constructions have a complementiser (either **kí** or **mɔ̀**) between the clefted constituent and the subject argument, as shown by examples (38) and (39).

⁶ In Twuli, as in most Ghanaian languages, the name ‘Kofi’ is usually pronounced with a low-high tone pattern. However, in many cases, tones on day names such as Kofi, Kɔmla, Kɔku and Kɔzo can have variable tone patterns, with some people preferring to use one tone pattern and others another. My main language assistant in Ghana assures me that he knows people in his village who are known as (and consistently called) either Kòfi or Kófi. The high-low tone pattern on such names may be due to what Ameka (p.c.) calls ‘Europeanisation’, although sociolinguistic factors such as wanting to sound ‘more chic’ may also play a part. Initial investigations suggest the same characteristics of pitch-accent focus apply whatever the tone pattern of the word in question, although this is still an area where further research is needed.

FRONTING:

- (38) **(ádé) óvólí é-kpà yĩ (à)**
 DC book 3sg-give me ID
 (It's) A BOOK, he gave me.

CLEFT:

- (39) **ádé óvólí kǐ/mò é-kpà yĩ à**
 DC book COMP/with 3sg-give me ID
 It's a BOOK that he gave me.

Such evidence supports the widely reported hypothesis that (at least some) focus constructions derive historically from cleft constructions (Bearth 1999a:124-5, Givón 1990:722, Heine and Reh 1983:34).

Clefted subjects are only marginally acceptable (example (40)), since the preferred strategy of focussing a subject is to use the focus prefix.

- (40) % **ádé yè mò é-kpà yĩ óvólí à**
 DC him with 3sg-give me book ID
 It's HIM that gave me a book.

However, if the subject is clefted out of an embedded complement clause (example (41)), then the sentence is perfectly acceptable.

- (41) **ádé yè mò ní-lé kǐ é-kpà yĩ óvólí à**
 DC him with 1sg-say COMP 3sg-give me book ID
 It's HIM that I said gave me a book.

However, extraction out of an embedded relative clause (example (42)) is not permitted.⁷

- (42) ***ádé óvólí à nà mò ní-mó ónyólé à**
 DC book ID that with 1sg-see man ID
kǐ é-kpà yĩ à
 COMP 3sg-give me ID
 It's THAT BOOK that I saw the man who gave me (it).

Only nominal constituents can be clefted. Clefted adjectives, adverbs and PPs are ungrammatical, as shown by example (43-45).

- (43) ***ádé ñgbà mò é-mó kǒè**
 DC red with 3sg-see snake
 It is a RED snake he saw.
- (44) ***ádé bðèè mò kǒ-tsè**
 DC slowly with 3sg.NC-be:moving
 It is SLOWLY that it is moving.
- (45) ***ádé nè kòyátò à mò é-yà àkùbé à**
 DC LOC market ID with 3sg-buy coconuts ID
 It is AT THE MARKET that he bought the coconuts.

⁷ This incompatibility may be due an inherent focus component in restrictive relative clauses. Several West African languages (e.g. Hausa) require that verbs in restrictive relative clauses appear in their focal forms. Bearth (1999b:127) explains this phenomenon as follows: 'focus designates the domain for which a pre-established predication...is being validated' and 'the (restrictive!) relative construction designates the referential domain for which the superordinate predication containing the antecedent is being validated'.

3. DIACHRONIC ANALYSIS OF THE CLEFT-INTRODUCER **ádé**

3.1 FROM COPULA TO FOCUS MARKER

In Tuwuli, as in many West African Languages, the focus-marking particle which characterises cleft constructions also occurs in identificational sentences, as shown by example (46).

- (46) **ádé óvólí à**
 DC book ID
 This/that is a book.

The sentence in example (46) could also be interpreted as a truncated cleft structure (e.g. ‘it was a BOOK (that he gave me)’). Moreover, since the complementiser **kí** also functions as a relativiser, cleft structures can sometimes be interpreted as identificational sentences with embedded relative clauses, as shown by example (47).

- (47) **ádé óvólí kí é-kpà yĩ à**
 DC book COMP 3sg-give me ID
 (i) It’s A BOOK that he gave me.
 (ii) This is a book that he gave me.

Such an ambiguity may have motivated the use of **m̀** instead of **kí** in cleft constructions, since the presence of **m̀** removes the ambiguity, as shown by example (48).

- (48) **ádé óvólí m̀ é-kpà yĩ à**
 DC book with 3sg-give me ID
 (i) It’s A BOOK that he gave me.
 (ii) *This is a book that he gave me.

The fact that the non-focal part of cleft constructions often resembles a relative clause supports Givón’s (1990:717-720) view that cleft structures are derived using embedded relative clauses. Other authors (e.g. Bearth 1999a:127, Heine and Reh 1983:35-36) have pointed out significant differences between the two constructions in several languages, but in the case of Tuwuli, the ambiguity of sentences like that in example (47) does seem to corroborate Givón’s hypothesis.

However, the fact that the complementiser **m̀** is not used in relative clauses suggests that cleft constructions have a second possible derivation. Indeed it may be no coincidence that the complementiser **m̀** is identical to the comitative preposition **m̀** - ‘with/and’. Cleft constructions in Akan are transparently derived using the sentence connective **nà** - ‘and’, as shown in example (49) (from Bearth 1999b).

- (49) **èyè káà nà ò-dé báàè**
 it-is car and he-take come-PST
 It is the car which (lit.: and he) took and came.

By comparing examples (48) and (49), it can be seen that Akan and Tuwuli have very similar cleft constructions, but the synchronic derivations that are evident in each language are quite different. In Akan, the deletion of the expletive **èyè** has led to the reanalysis of the sentence connective **nà** as a focus marker, whereas in Tuwuli, the deletion of the preposition **m̀** (or the complementiser **kí**) has led to the identificational copula **ádé** being reanalysed as a focus marker.

3.2 FROM FOCUS MARKER TO CONJUNCTION

ádé also appears to have a discourse-inferential function. Like the link between focus constructions and identificational sentences, the link between focus constructions and discourse-inferentiality is also a widely attested phenomenon (Bearth 1997, 1999b). The key to understanding this widespread syntactic isomorphism is what Bearth describes as the ‘inferential gap condition’. According to this hypothesis, since focus markers typically highlight a constituent as being prominent within the discourse context, sentences which fill a perceived inferential gap in discourse processing are frequently marked as focal constituents. Speakers will always try to minimise speaker-hearer asymmetries in inference processing for the sake of discourse coherence, and so sentences which specifically function to reduce or eliminate such asymmetries receive special syntactic marking. In the case of Tuwuli, this inferential gap repair mechanism is basically a cleft construction of the form **ádé (kè (m̀)).....à**, where **kè** is an expletive pronoun. Some examples (together with their discourse contexts) are given in examples (50-52).

(50) CONTEXT: I didn’t know what I could say about it so that they wouldn’t laugh at me, but I couldn’t hide it...

ádé (kè (m̀)) r̀n-b̀ì b̀è fléé létsà kí lé-yá a
 DC it:EXPL with 1sg-tell them all thing COMP 3sg.NC-come ID
 and so I told them all what had happened.

(51) CONTEXT: I didn’t want anyone to use it...

ádé (kè (m̀)) r̀n-b̀óé f̀òè r̀-d̀ò nè òtsètsè kámê à
 DC it:EXPL with 1sg-take it 1sg-put:inside LOC basket inside ID
 and so I took it and put it in a basket.

(52) CONTEXT: I went to see him, but he wasn’t in...

ádé (kè (m̀)) r̀-dzákù à
 DC it:EXPL with 1sg-leave ID
 and so I left.

A statement introduced by **ádé (kè (m̀))** thus helps to maximise the coherence of the immediately preceding section of discourse. This explains why such statements are frequently used to present the concluding or final state of affairs in narratives:

(53) **kí-tò nè lúwúà àkù,**
 3sg.EXPL-be:from LOC day ID on

ádé kè Dzàkpá àkù kénà f̀stàlè-f̀stàlè à
 DC it:EXPL leopard body do spots-spots ID
 From that day on, leopard’s body was spotty.

(54) **ádé kè l̀ùkpóà ménà nè áwâ à**
 DC it:EXPL seat ID become:attached LOC there ID
 And so the stool became stuck there.

If a portion of discourse ends without any special concluding state of affairs seeming appropriate to the speaker, (s)he can still conclude satisfactorily by using one of the following idiomatic **ádé** constructions:

(55) **ádé f̀òè à**
 DC it ID
 That’s all.

- (56) **ádé kè à**
 DC it:EXPL ID
 That's the end of it.

Since **ádé** is an extremely common clause-linking device in discourse, there is some evidence that it is beginning to widen its function beyond that of repairing an inferential gap, to simply being a clausal or sentential conjunction:

- (57) **é-nò fù-sì ádé kè m̀n̄ é-yà f̀b̀-̀b̀è̀f̀l̀é à**
 3sg-sell yams CONJ it:EXPL with 3sg-buy pawpaws ID
 She sold yams and then she bought pawpaws.

One repercussion of this is that the identifiability marker **à** is sometimes no longer required at the end of the sentence:

- (58) **Ádé nè l̀òk̀s̀ à nà kámê ní, bátí p̀ì**
 CONJ LOC time ID that insideANTIC people many
yá bí-dzì nè Kyirìàhí
 come 3pl-sit LOC Kyiriahi
 And during that time, many people came and lived in Kyiriahi.

Another repercussion is that there are no longer any restrictions on what types of constituents can follow **ádé**. Hence constituents which are strictly incompatible with focal **ádé** (e.g. PPs and content question words) are perfectly compatible with conjoining **ádé**, as shown in example (59).

- (59) **Ádé òwéì l̀è-kpà ǹn̄ óvólí?**
 CONJ who NPSbjFoc-give you book
 And who gave you a book?

Further evidence that conjoining **ádé** does not possess any inherent focus component is seen by the fact that it is compatible with constituents that are marked as topics (example 60), since, as mentioned earlier, single syntactic constituents cannot be marked simultaneously for both topic and focus.

- (60) **Ádé f̀nyáìk̀s̀ b̀-à-wé k̀í b̀s̀- dzákù**
 CONJ now TOP 3pl-PRES.IMPV-want COMP 1pl.SUBJ-leave
 And now, they want us to leave.

4. CONCLUSION

This paper has shown that Tuwuli has five distinct ways of marking focal constituents: a verbal prefix, fronting, nominal periphrasis, pitch-accent and the cleft construction. Fronting and the cleft construction are universally attested focus-marking strategies, whilst nominal periphrasis is a special type of fronting which, although common in Africa (particularly West Africa) is relatively uncommon elsewhere. Use of a verbal prefix seems to be even more restricted, and in this respect it is interesting to note that many of the GTM languages (e.g. Lelemi [lef], Siwu [akp] and Sekpele [lip]) appear to have focus prefixes analogous to **IŃ-** in Tuwuli. The fifth strategy, use of a pitch-accent, has rarely been documented in any tone language.

The various focus-marking strategies in Tuwuli fit in with a general cross-linguistic tendency for subjects to have special marking for focus. Subjects are typically focussed using either the verbal prefix or a pitch-accent, whilst non-subjects use one of the three fronting-based strategies. The verbal prefix also fits a less

widespread typological trend in that it is used to mark both subject focus and sentence focus (cf. Fiedler and Schwarz 2005:117).

Finally, the synchronic analysis of cleft constructions in Tuwuli reveals some interesting possibilities with respect to processes of grammaticalisation. Cross-linguistically, cleft constructions are often thought to have been derived from either identificational sentences with embedded relative clauses (Givón 1990:717-720) or coordinate structures with sentence connectives (Beirth 1999b). Tuwuli is unusual in that it shows evidence of both sources. The cleft-introducer **ádé** illustrates a further twist to the link between focus or identificational constructions and consecutive or narrative clauses (cf. Beirth 1999b, Fiedler and Schwarz 2004, 2005) in that it is beginning to extend its use from a copula/focus marker to a coordinating conjunction. Thus although coordinate structures may have been one of the historical sources of cleft constructions in Tuwuli, there is also good evidence for a path of grammaticalisation which has proceeded along the lines: COP => FM => CONJ. Similar paths have been reported in other languages (cf. Heine and Kuteva 2002), although other authors (e.g. Fiedler and Schwarz 2005:137, Stassen 1997:85) have proposed precisely the opposite path. It seems likely that the directionality of the path of grammaticalisation is determined primarily by various grammatical and pragmatic factors which vary from language to language, and which are not at present fully understood.

ABBREVIATIONS

ANTIC	anticipational marker	NPSubjNeg	noun phrase subject negative
COMP.....	complementiser	pl	plural
CONJ	conjunction	PRES	present tense
COP	copula	PST	past tense
DC	deictic copula	sg	singular
EXPL	expletive	TOP	topic marker
FM	focus marker	1, 2, 3	person
FUT	future tense	ˊ	extrahigh tone
ID	identifiability marker	ˋ	high tone
IMPV	imperfective aspect	ˋ	low tone
LOC	locative	ˆ	falling tone
NC	noun class concord marker	()	optional
NEG	negative	*	unacceptable
NOM	nominaliser	(*X)	unacceptable with X
NPSubjFoc	noun phrase subject focus	*(X)	unacceptable without X
		%	marginally acceptable

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