



January 2021

A Typology Of Morphological Argument Focus Marking

Aidan Aannestad

Follow this and additional works at: <https://commons.und.edu/theses>

Recommended Citation

Aannestad, Aidan, "A Typology Of Morphological Argument Focus Marking" (2021). *Theses and Dissertations*. 3902.

<https://commons.und.edu/theses/3902>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Theses, Dissertations, and Senior Projects at UND Scholarly Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of UND Scholarly Commons. For more information, please contact und.common@library.und.edu.

A Typology of Morphological Argument Focus Marking

Aidan Alexander Aannestad
(Bachelor of Arts, University of Texas at Austin, 2014)

A thesis submitted to the graduate faculty of the University of North Dakota
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts

Grand Forks, North Dakota
May 2021

This thesis, submitted on the 5th of May, 2021 by Aidan Aannestad in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts from the University of North Dakota, has been read by the faculty advisory committee under whom the work has been done, and is hereby approved.

Dr. Albert Bickford

Dr. Robert Fried

Dr. Janet Allen

This thesis is being submitted by the appointed advisory committee as having met all of the requirements of the School of Graduate Studies at the University of North Dakota, and is hereby approved.

Chris Nelson
Dean of the School of Graduate Studies

Date

Permission

Title A Typology of Morphological Argument Focus Marking

Department Linguistics

Degree Master of Arts

In presenting this thesis in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a graduate degree from the University of North Dakota, I agree that the library of this university should make it freely available for inspection. I further agree that permission for extensive copying for scholarly purposes may be granted by me, or in my absence, by the chairperson of the department or the dean of the School of Graduate Studies. It is understood that any copying or publication or other use of this thesis or any part thereof for financial gain will not be allowed without my written permission. It is also understood that due recognition should be given to me and to the University of North Dakota in any scholarly use which may be made of any material in this thesis.

Aidan Aannestad

5 May 2021

Contents

1	Introduction	7
1.1	‘Morphological focus marking’	8
1.2	More than one kind of marking simultaneously	13
1.3	Focus and WH-questions	14
1.4	Excluded kinds of focus morphology	17
1.5	Terminology	19
1.6	Types of constructions and grammaticalisation pathways	20
2	Argument-associated morphological marking	23
2.1	Argument-associated focus markers versus copulas in clefts	24
2.2	Marked focus versus marked non-topic	26
2.3	Argument-associated marking only	28
2.4	Symmetrical focus systems	29
2.5	Argument-associated focus markers with additional semantics	31
2.6	Other focus uses of argument-associated morphology	32
3	Clause-level focus morphology constructions	34
3.1	Focus concord	35
3.2	Focus concord plus additional information	36
3.3	Extraction morphology	38
3.4	WH-agreement	39
4	Languages with multiple focus constructions	42
4.1	Multiple constructions with different meanings for each construction	42
4.2	Multiple constructions tied together	43
4.3	Multiple constructions as WH-agreement	44
4.4	Multiple constructions conditioned by orthogonal factors	45
4.5	Multiple constructions with no solid distinction	47
5	Final remarks	49
A	List of languages and their typologies	53

Glossary of abbreviations

ABS	absolutive	M	masculine
ABSAGR	absolutive agreement	NEG	negative
ACC	accusative	NOM	nominative
ADD	additive	NPST	non-past
AGFOC	agent focus	OBJ	object
APPL	applicative	OBJFOC	object focus
ARGFOC	argument focus	PAST	past tense
BEN	benefactive	PC	pronominal clitic
CL	noun class	PCPL	participle
CLF	classifier	PERF	perfect aspect
COMPFOC	complement focus	PFV	perfective aspect
COND	conditional	PL	plural
CONJ	conjunction	POSS	possessive
CONT	continuous aspect	POT	potential
COP	copula	PREDFOC	predicate focus
CVB	converb	PRES	present tense
DAT	dative	PROG	progressive aspect
DEF	definite	Q	interrogative
DEM	demonstrative	REAL	realis
DET	determiner	REL	relativiser
DS	different subject	SF	subject focus marker
EMPH	emphasis	SFP	sentence-final particle
ERGAGR	ergative agreement	SG	singular
EXC	exclusive	SP	specific
F	feminine	SS	same subject
FOC	focus	STAT	status suffix
FUT	future tense	SUBJ	subject
GEN	genitive	SUBJFOC	subject focus
HON	honorific	SUBORD	subordinator
IMPERS	impersonal	TOP	topic
IMPF	imperfect aspect	VFOC	verb focus
INST	instrumental	VLZ	verbaliser
IPFV	imperfective aspect	WHQ	content question
IRR	irrealis	YNQ	yes-no question
LOC	locative		

Abstract

One of the methods that languages use to indicate which argument (if any) is in focus is morphological; however, there seems to be a major gap in the literature when it comes to understanding the variety and classification of morphological argument focus marking constructions. This thesis is an attempt to fill that gap. I present here both an overview of the types of morphological focus marking constructions found in the world's languages, and a taxonomic classification of said constructions based on the grammaticalisation pathways that result in their genesis. Such constructions include not only the traditional 'particle focus' constructions, but also constructions involving clause-level morphology that signals the presence of argument focus. Additionally, this thesis provides a unified set of terms to refer to morphological focus marking constructions, in hopes of clearing up the terminological inconsistency that is currently an issue in discussions of morphological argument focus marking.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Morphological focus marking constructions have been known and well documented for many years, but there seems to be a great confusion in the literature as to what types of morphological focus marking constructions exist, how to subdivide them, and what to call the resulting distinctions. Some languages' constructions are only ever referred to by language-specific names (such as 'kakari-musubi' in Japonic); some names are used in different ways by different researchers (e.g. 'WH-agreement', which can describe both one particular type of construction and a wider category that includes that type); and many constructions, especially when merely described for the purpose of documentation, are not given any particular name. I can sympathise with Green & Reintges (2015), who list five separate alternative names that have been applied to the constructions they describe (some of which are obviously very inappropriate), and decide to simply throw up their hands and call them 'special inflection'. Wider typologies of focus marking seem to pass over these constructions; Buring (2008), for example, is otherwise an extremely useful typological overview, but morphological marking constructions are exemplified by only two languages in a very short section on 'particle focus languages'. Nonetheless, there do seem to be several distinct categories of morphological focus marking constructions that can be encountered in the world's languages, and without proper classification and terminology, we are at a severe risk of both missing important distinctions between different kinds of constructions and failing to recognise the congruence between different languages with similar constructions.

This thesis is an attempt to lay out such a classification scheme for morphological argument focus marking constructions, and to provide a definitive set of terms to describe them. It is meant as a largely theory-agnostic overview of morphological focus marking constructions, and any terminology which might have specific theoretical definitions (such as 'construction') should not be taken as implying or relying on a particular theoretical perspective.

I define a 'morphological argument focus marking construction' as 'any construction wherein marked argument focus involves some morphological change in the sentence that would not be grammatical on other grounds'. In the first section, I describe in more detail what I mean by this definition; in the next section, I give a taxonomy of constructions and discuss how these constructions come about diachronically. The main body of the

thesis is an overview of each distinct type of focus marking construction, organised into two sections: one about argument-associated focus marking, and one about clause-level morphological focus marking. I then talk about ways in which languages can use more than one construction for marking argument focus, and at the end I give some final thoughts.

1.1 ‘Morphological focus marking’

As I mentioned above, I define a ‘morphological focus marking construction’ as ‘any construction wherein marked argument focus involves some morphological change in the sentence that would not be grammatical on other grounds’. There are three parts to this definition, and I elaborate on each in turn.

Argument focus

For the purpose of this thesis, I am not particularly interested in the exact definition of ‘focus’—this is meant to be a relatively theory-agnostic overview—but in general, this thesis follows the definition in Lambrecht (1994: p. 213): ‘the semantic component of a pragmatically structured proposition whereby the assertion differs from the presupposition’. I have also made extensive use of the question-answer test for focus given in van der Wal (2016) for testing individual cases.

Lambrecht defines ‘argument focus’ as a particular type of focus construction wherein the focus is placed on a single constituent within a sentence. Argument focus is in contrast to ‘predicate focus’, where there is a topic that is not in focus while the remaining part of the sentence is in focus as a unit,¹ and ‘sentence focus’, where the entire sentence is in focus as a unit. WH questions and their replies are often treated as the clearest case of argument focus constructions, where the question word and the corresponding response constituent are in focus. Here are some English examples from de Swart & de Hoop (2000: p. 105), where the focus is indicated by a particular intonation pattern:²

- (1) a. Q: *WHAT* does Susan want to drink?
A: Susan wants *BEER*.
b. Q: *WHO* wants beer?
A: *SUSAN* wants beer.

In contrast, predicate focus is only a valid response to questions such as ‘what did [the topic] do?’ (questions with no significant semantic content outside the topic), and sentence focus is only a valid response to questions such as ‘what happened?’ (questions with little semantic content at all in the question itself). Responses to WH questions

¹This is not Lambrecht’s definition but that of Van Valin & LaPolla (1997: p. 206); Lambrecht uses the term ‘subject’, which Van Valin & LaPolla point out elsewhere is not a crosslinguistically useful category.

²Here and throughout this paper small caps and green colour are used to indicate focus domains when relevant. Most examples in this paper have small caps and green colour in their English translation to clarify the focus domain. (This notation is mostly my own addition and not present in the sources the examples come from.)

involving a single argument require argument focus³—the response sounds odd when given with a different type of focus:

- (2) a. Q: *What does Susan want?*
A: ? *Susan WANTS BEER.* (predicate focus)
b. Q: *What does Susan want?*
A: ? *SUSAN WANTS BEER.* (sentence focus)

Both in the term ‘argument focus’ and throughout this thesis, I use the word ‘argument’ to mean any constituent of a sentence that is not a verb complex—including obliques and adverbs and similar things, which might be excluded from narrow definitions of ‘argument’. I also consider WH words to qualify as ‘focussed’; for more discussion, see section 1.3. I exclude verb focus (narrow focus marking on verbs) from this thesis. While some languages handle verb focus via the same strategy they use for argument focus by this definition—treating verbs as just another kind of constituent which can be focussed—other languages do not; and this variation is not something I will discuss in this thesis. See Zimmermann & Hole (2008) for an overview of how verb focus can overlap with other kinds of focus marking.

Individual kinds of focus constructions have different meanings; see van der Wal (2016) for a breakdown of the kinds of semantic divisions present within the wider category of ‘focus’. The idea of ‘different kinds of focus’ is not universally accepted, however—Hartmann & Zimmermann (2007) argue, based on data from Hausa, that ‘focus’ as a grammatical category cannot be broken down into different focus meanings corresponding to different grammatical constructions. Hartmann & Zimmermann’s position seems difficult to reconcile with the data in van der Wal (2016), and cf. Yasavul (2013) and Shimoji (2018) for more in-depth studies on semantic differences between focus marking strategies in particular languages (K’ichee’ and the Ryuukyuan family, respectively). This suggests that Hartmann & Zimmermann’s conclusions only apply to Hausa and not to language in general. In any case, this thesis is only interested in the *forms* of focus constructions, rather than their meaning; but I discuss in section 4.1 situations where the choice of focus construction, including the choice to use or not use morphological marking, alters the particular focus meaning being expressed.

Morphological change

When I say a morphological focus marking construction involves a morphological change, I mean that it must have some sort of segmental morphology that appears in argument focus situations and not in other situations. For example, the verb in a Sinhala sentence takes a different form in argument focus sentences than it does in predicate focus sentences (examples from Slade 2018):

³This is not universally accepted—see Erteschik-Shir (1986) for a dissenting view, but also see section 1.3 below for a longer discussion.

- (3) a. *mamə ē potə kiyewwa*
 I.NOM that book read:MAIN.CLAUSE
 ‘I READ THAT BOOK’ (predicate focus)
- b. *mamə ē potə kiyewwe*
 I.NOM that book read:ARGFOC
 ‘It was THAT BOOK I read’ (argument focus)

This is in contrast to something like Norwegian, where argument focus is marked by a change in word order (and intonation):

- (4) a. *jeg si-er det*
 I say-PRES that
 ‘I’m SAYING THAT’ (unmarked predicate focus)
- b. *DET si-er jeg*
 that say-PRES I
 ‘THAT’S what I’m saying’ (marked argument focus)

Or, of course, English, where focus is often marked purely by intonation:

- (5) a. *I didn’t SAY THAT.* (predicate focus)
- b. *I didn’t say THAT.* (argument focus)

I am here using somewhat broadened definitions of the terms ‘segmental’ and ‘morphology’, in order to include phenomena that are similar but may be considered technically distinct. Within ‘segmental’ morphology I would also include such things as floating tone morphemes, since while they are not technically made of segments, they behave syntactically enough like segmental morphemes that the distinction does not matter for the purpose of this thesis.⁴ Within ‘morphology’ I include not only affixes and clitics but also particles that form their own phonological word—such particles can and do serve the same grammatical function roles as affixes or clitics in other languages, and so I am including them within a broad definition of ‘morphology’. This particular definition is additionally helpful in that in some languages it may be difficult or impossible to tell whether a given morpheme is a clitic or a separate phonological word, and I want to make it clear that the interpretation of such borderline cases has no impact on the classification scheme in this thesis.

The morphological marking found in argument focus sentences need not be directly associated with the focussed constituent. For example, Ojibwe (Lochbihler & Mathieu 2008: pp. 17, 19) has no morphological focus marking on focussed constituents, but shows a change in verb morphology in argument focus situations:

⁴I have not come across any floating-tone-only focus marking morphemes, but I would be wholly unsurprised if such morphemes exist.

- (6) a. *Mani gii-shishimik kwezhigaans-an*
 Mary PAST-steal cookie-PL
 ‘Mary **STOLE THE COOKIES**’ (unmarked predicate focus)
- b. *wegenesh gaa-shishimik nen kwezhigaans-an?*
 who ARGFOC.PAST-steal those cookie-PL
 ‘**WHO** stole those cookies?’ (argument focus on a WH word)
- c. *niizhwaak dsobboon gaa-ko-zhiweebak maanda*
 two hundred.years ARGFOC.PAST-formerly-happen this
 ‘It was **TWO HUNDRED YEARS AGO** that this happened’ (argument focus on a non-WH word)

The particular verbal morphology involved here is identical to relativisation marking; Ojibwe has repurposed its relativisation morphology to mark argument focus situations. Despite the appearance, however, this is not a biclausal cleft situation: there is no copula, and Ojibwe has and expects an overt copula in actual copular clauses. Ojibwe has a kind of construction I term *extraction morphology* (see section 3.3), which bears apparent similarities to clefting constructions because it is one possible outcome of the reanalysis of biclausal clefts as monoclausal (see section 1.6). Relativisation marking is an extremely common source of what I call ‘clause-level argument focus marking’ (see chapter 3).

Hausa (as described by Green & Reintges 2015) shows an example of a construction that possesses both focus markers associated with the focussed element and clause-level argument focus morphology.⁵

- (7) a. *Audù da Mūsā sun sàji bakar mōtā*
 Audù and Mūsā 3.PL.PERF buy black.of car
 ‘Audù and Mūsā **BOUGHT A BLACK CAR YESTERDAY**.’ (No focus marking)
- b. *dà sàndā nè sukà dōkē shi*
 with stick FOC.M 3.PL.PERF.ARGFOC beat 3.M.SG
 ‘They beat him **WITH A STICK**’. (Focus-marked constituent with extraction morphology)

Lambrecht (1994: p. 230) seems to imply that argument focus always involves at least a marked prosodic pattern, no matter what else might also be marking focus. This seems to not be the case; Buring (2008) cites Chickasaw (Munro & Willmond 1994) and Gúrúntúm (Hartmann & Zimmermann 2005) as languages where this generalisation does not seem to hold. For more about multiple focus marking strategies cooccurring, see section 1.2.

Not grammatical on other grounds

This is perhaps the thorniest part of the definition. What I mean by it is this: there are in many languages constructions where the *purpose* of the construction is to mark argument

⁵The marker glossed ‘foc’ here is under other circumstances a copula, making (7b) look even more like a cleft than the Ojibwe examples above; however, as this marker 1) is not required in this construction and 2) also appears in in-situ focus constructions as a focus marker (where it would be ungrammatical as a copula), I do not think that Hausa sentences like (7b) are clefts.

focus, but the elements used in the construction would be grammatical regardless of whether the construction had that purpose or not. English clefting is a good example:

- (8) This is what I was talking about.

The purpose of moving *this* to the front of the sentence in (8) is to mark it as argument focus, but it is not using any focus-specific grammatical machinery to do that. It is possible on other grounds to relativise a clause with *what* (e.g. *I see what you did there*), and it is possible on other grounds to treat that relative clause as the complement of a copula (e.g. *you are what you eat*). If there was no focus use to this construction, it would remain perfectly grammatical, though without such a use there would likely be no reason to phrase it this way. This is in contrast to something like Coptic (Green & Reintges 2015: p. 140), which has a focus marking construction that would be ungrammatical if it had no use as focus marking—it is not made of parts that could otherwise be put together this way.

- (9) a. *er-βek* *e=tɛn?*
 ARGFOC.2.F.SG-go to=where?
 ‘WHERE are you going?’
 b. *e=i-βek* *e=pə-topos* *ən-apa-mena* *nta-šlel*
 ARGFOC=1.SG-go to=DEF.M.SG-shrine POSS-Apa-Mena CONJ.I.SG-pray
 ‘I am going TO THE SHRINE OF APA MENA to pray.’

These sentences in fact both have main clauses that look relativised, but there is no other clause that is not subordinated that could justify the relativisation marking. This should be entirely ungrammatical, if not for the fact that in-situ argument focus constructions in Coptic explicitly require relativisation marking on the main clause. The sentences in (9) are not clefts, as clefts in Coptic require both a copula and a word order change to place the focussed element as the subject of the copula:

- (10) *nim pe* [*ənt-a=f-tɔkie* *əmmo-u əm=pei-ma*]?
 who COP.M.SG [REL-PERF=3.M.SG-plant OBJ-3.PL in=this.M.SG-place]?
 ‘WHO IS IT that planted them [the trees] here?’

Thus we see that at least the type of focus marking in (9) is fundamentally different from clefts, both as used in English and as used in Coptic. Clefts are made of preexisting structures, and thus would be grammatical even without their use as focus marking, while the types of morphological focus marking under discussion in this thesis are special constructions inseparably tied to their purpose as focus marking. Note that I do not consider it necessary for the morphology used in focus constructions to have no other purpose in the language. The Coptic examples in (9) are reusing relativisation morphology, and Coptic lacks what I might call true ‘dedicated focus morphology’. However, the sentences in (9) are ungrammatical if one considers the relativisation morphology to simply be relativisation morphology, and that is the key difference here: in its use as focus marking, this morphology is being used in ways it otherwise could not. In fact, the vast majority of focus morphology in the world’s languages is transparently derived from some other source; if I excluded it, I would have almost nothing to talk about!

In effect, clefts and similar constructions which are made of preexisting structures can be thought of as gaining their focus interpretation through a kind of Gricean inference (see e.g. Atlas & Levinson 1981). A listener hearing a sentence like (8) (*This is what I was talking about*), if they were unaware of the focus use of clefting, would be left wondering why it was not phrased more simply, as *I was talking about this*. They would assume that the odd phrasing of *This is what I was talking about* must have some purpose that could not be accomplished by *I was talking about this*, and since the most obvious difference between them is the ordering of the arguments, the listener would likely infer that there was some reason to specially place *this* at the beginning of the sentence—which naturally leads to a focus interpretation. The constructions under discussion in this thesis cannot be given their meaning by this kind of Gricean inference process—they are focus constructions because (synchronically) the language declares by fiat that they are used to mark focus, and otherwise they would be not just odd but ungrammatical.

1.2 More than one kind of marking simultaneously

There seems to be a total of four general strategies that languages can use to mark focus. These are the following:

- Prosodic marking
- Word-order-based marking
- Morphological marking
- Gricean inference-based marking (e.g. clefting)

Not everything fits quite neatly into these categories—see, for example, the Chicheŵa method of marking focus by redefining prosodic constituency boundaries (Kanerva 1991)—but they give a general picture. These strategies are not mutually exclusive, however. Not only can languages use different strategies for different purposes (as discussed more in chapter 4), languages may use multiple focus marking strategies at once. It is well known that languages can simultaneously use word order and prosody to mark focus; Buring (2008) explicitly mentions that many languages with word-order based focus marking show prosodic effects as well. However, Buring’s tentative analysis of morphological focus systems seems to assume that they do not involve any prosodic marking at all. This is true in some languages, certainly; Buring cites Chickasaw (Munro & Willmond 1994) and Gúrúntúm (Hartmann & Zimmermann 2005) as examples of languages where focus marking is accomplished only by morphology with no prosodic changes whatsoever. However, this assumption does not seem to hold for all languages that rely on morphological focus marking—Adamou, Gordon & Gries (2018) give a detailed description of the complex interaction between morphological and prosodic marking in Ixcatec, an Oto-Manguean language. Similarly, many languages included in the present study show morphological focus marking cooccurring with word order changes. K’ichee’ (Aissen 2011, Yasavul 2013) is a clear example: all argument focus sentences must involve a word order change, and certain focus meanings and focus on certain arguments additionally involve morphological marking.

It seems fair to say that except for the Gricean inference-based strategy, all three other focus marking strategies can and do coexist, and languages may make use of one, two, or all three at once in any given situation or construction. The inference-based strategy is somewhat separate, in that categorising a strategy as inference-based fundamentally implies that nothing else about the construction inherently indicates focus, though it may be difficult to distinguish whether any accompanying prosody is an effect of the construction or for focus reasons directly.

1.3 Focus and WH-questions

Throughout this thesis we see that focus marking constructions and constructions involving WH-question words pattern together frequently. Indeed, it is often assumed that WH words simply are inherently focussed. Erteschik-Shir (1986) argues directly against this assumption, but her argument is based solely on data from English, and other languages more clearly illustrate the focussed status of WH words. Often WH words appear in the same constructions as other focussed constituents—for example, in the Coptic examples in (9) above, reproduced here. Both the WH word and the focussed non-WH constituent in the response trigger Coptic’s focus concord marking.

- (11) a. *er-βek* *e=tn?*
 ARGFOC.2.F.SG-go to=where?
 ‘WHERE are you going?’
- b. *e=i-βek* *e=pa-topos* *ən-apa-mena* *nta-šlel*
 ARGFOC=1.SG-go to=DEF.M.SG-shrine POSS-Apa-Mena CONJ.I.SG-pray
 ‘I am going TO THE SHRINE OF APA MENA to pray.’

Japonic languages give further evidence for the focussed status of WH words—these languages frequently mark WH words with the same morphology that non-WH focussed constituents receive:

- (12) a. Hateruma Yaeyama, from Aso (2010: p. 210):
- i. *suno=ru* *k-ja=roo*
 yesterday=FOC come-PERF=EMPH
 ‘[I] have come YESTERDAY.’
- ii. *za=ga=ru* *or-ja=ba?*
 where=DAT=FOC go.HON-PERF=EMPH
 ‘WHERE have you gone?’
- b. Oogami Miyako, from Pellard (2010: pp. 151, 158):
- i. *tauf=fu=pa* *daizw=si=tu* *as*
 tofu=ACC=TOP.OBJ soybean=INST=FOC do
 ‘[You] make tofu WITH SOYBEANS.’
- ii. *nauripa=tu* *kuu-tatar-εε?*
 why=FOC come-PAST.NEG-Q
 ‘WHY didn’t you come?’

c. Ikema Miyako, from Hayashi (2010: p. 173):

- i. *busi=nu=du mii-rai ui na?*
 star=NOM=FOC look-POT PROG.NPST YNQ
 ‘Can you see **THE STARS**?’
- ii. *nau=nu=du mii-rai ui ga?*
 what=NOM=FOC look-POT PROG.NPST WHQ
 ‘**WHAT** can you see?’

Something similar happens in Sinhala (Slade 2018); where WH words are marked with the combined focus/interrogative marker also used in polar questions.

- (13) a. *Chitra ē potə də kiyeuwe?*
 Chitra that book **FOC.Q** read:FOC
 ‘Was it **THAT BOOK** that Chitra read?’ (non-WH interrogative with focus)
- b. *Chitra gatte monəwa də?*
 Chitra read:FOC what **FOC.Q**
 ‘**WHAT** did Chitra read? (WH focus)’

The Cushitic language Rendille (Oomen 1978: p. 49) shows a situation where WH words seem to automatically imply focus marking instead of taking overt morphological marking. In Rendille, sentences with marked argument focus take one morphological marker while predicate focus and sentence focus sentences take a different marker, resulting in a system wherein most sentences will always have some kind of focus structure-related morpheme present. In sentences with WH words, however, no such marker is present—neither the argument focus marker nor the predicate/sentence focus marker. Since the predicate/sentence focus marker is otherwise only missing in sentences with clearly marked argument focus, Oomen concludes that the WH word is in effect overriding the normal argument focus morphology due to being treated as inherently focussed.

- (14) a. *ínam á-yimi*
 boy **PREDFOC**-come:PAST
 ‘The boy **CAME**’ (predicate focus)
- b. *ínam-é yimi*
 boy-**FOC** come:PAST
 ‘It was **THE BOY** who came’ (argument focus on non-WH)
- c. **ínam yimi*
 boy come:PAST
 (ungrammatical without any focus-related morphology)
- d. *ayó yimi?*
who come:PAST
 ‘**WHO** came?’ (WH word implies focus; no need for morphology)

However, we cannot simply assert that WH words always either take focus marking or render it superfluous—Aboh (2007: p. 302) demonstrates that the relationship between

WH words and focus marking can be quite complex. For example, a variety of languages allow WH words to take or not take overt focus marking, such as the Chadic language Lele:

- (15) a. *Mè ày wéy gà?*
 2.SGF marry **who** Q
 ‘**WHO** did you marry?’ (in-situ WH with no focus morphology)
- b. *Me ba gol di gà?*
what **FOC** see 3.SGM Q
 ‘**WHAT** did he see?’ (ex-situ WH with focus morphology)

Aboh’s example of Oromo, citing Yiman (1988: p. 370), shows that in at least some of these cases this is because the focus marking is associated with a particular interpretation beyond simple ‘focus’:

- (16) a. WH question and response with no focus marking
- i. *Eeññu ðuf-e?*
 who come-3.SG.PAST
 ‘**WHO** came?’
- ii. *Túlluu ðuf-e*
 Túlluu come-3.SG.PAST
 ‘**TULLUU** came.’
- b. WH question and response with focus marking
- i. ‘Túlluu did not come.’
- ii. *Eeññu-tu ðuf-e?*
 who-**FOC** come-3.SG.PAST
 ‘**WHO WAS IT** that came?’
- iii. *Fayyisaa-tu ðuf-e*
 Fayyisaa-**FOC** come-3.SG.PAST
 ‘It was **FAYYISAA** who came.’

In the second question-response pair, we can see that the focus marking implies a contrastive reading, which differentiates it from the plain focus interpretation in the first pair. Phenomena like this are discussed more thoroughly below in section 4.1.

In other instances, the choice to use or not use focus marking may be at least in part tied to the role of the argument in focus. Aboh gives the example of Gungbe (p. 305), where subjects in focus must be marked as focussed, while objects in focus can take focus marking but do not require it. This is relatively unsurprising, as topicality and subjecthood are connected in a way that topicality and objecthood are not, and so it may be necessary to use focus marking on a subject to cancel the expectation that the subject is a topic. As there is no such expectation with objects, focus marking is not as necessary for objects as it may be for subjects.⁶

⁶This consideration may apply in statements as well, not just with WH questions.

- (17) a. With the object in focus:
- i. *été wè Kòfi d̀ù?*
what FOC Kòfi eat
 ‘**WHAT** did Kòfi eat?’
 - ii. *é d̀ù lésì*
 3.SG eat **rice**
 ‘He ate **RICE**.’
 - iii. % *ménù Kòfi dà?*
who Kòfi marry
 ‘**WHO** did Kòfi marry?’ (acceptable without marker for some speakers)
- b. With the subject in focus:
- i. *ménù wè d̀ù lésì?*
who FOC eat rice
 ‘**WHO** ate rice?’
 - ii. * *Kòfi d̀ù lésì*
Kòfi eat rice
 (not a valid response to the question)
 - iii. *Kòfi wè d̀ù lésì*
 Kòfi **FOC** eat rice
 ‘**KÒFI** ate rice.’

Aboh describes these phenomena in terms of ‘focussed’ and ‘non-focussed’ WH phrases, but his analysis is founded on the assumption that a language can only have one means of marking focus. Absent this assumption, it seems entirely reasonable to explain all of these cases by stating that WH words can appear with all of the different focus marking strategies a given language uses—including prosody-only focus marking.⁷ In any case, the data in this thesis reinforces semantic arguments for the focussed status of WH words with a significant amount of grammatical evidence for such a status.

1.4 Excluded kinds of focus morphology

Some languages have markers that behave internally just like any other focus marking, but they have independent or additional semantics besides simply ‘argument focus’. A good example is Japanese, which has several focus markers whose translation into other languages would involve focus-sensitive operators.⁸

⁷Aboh says nothing either way about the prosodic marking of what he calls ‘non-focussed’ WH phrases; it seems reasonable to assume that much of the text-based data may hide prosodic focus marking.

⁸Modern Japanese data in this thesis is from personal knowledge.

- (18) a. *sore=koso it-te iru*
 that=FOC say-PROG
 ‘It is **EXACTLY THAT** that [I] am saying’ (basic argument focus)
- b. *sore=mo it-te iru*
 that=**also** say-PROG
 ‘[I]’m saying **THAT AS WELL.**’ (additive focus)
- c. *sore=dake it-te iru*
 that=**only** say-PROG
 ‘[I]’m **ONLY** saying **THAT.**’ (restrictive focus)

As far as Japanese is concerned, these behave like any other focus marker. However, I am excluding consideration of such marking from this thesis. This is in part because whether or not a language handles these meanings via semantically complex focus markers or via something else is not relevant to the classification system presented here, though a strategy like the Japanese examples above does require these semantically complex markers to behave like argument-associated focus markers. It is also in part because occasionally they interact in unexpected ways with the constructions presented in this thesis, and such interactions are not within the scope of this study. As an example, the Old Japanese antecedent of *mo* ‘also’ in (18b) above does not trigger focus concord marking the way other focus markers consistently do.⁹

- (19) *tati-təj wi-təj // sube=nə tadəki=mo // ima=pa*
 stand-CVB sit-CVB // method=GEN means=**even** // now=TOP
na-si
 not.exist-MAIN.CLAUSE

‘I keep getting up and sitting down, but there is nothing whatsoever that can be done [about it]’ (concord form would be *naki*; Man’yōushū poem 2881)

The above examples suggest that the type of focus marked by these markers might be somehow different from basic argument focus, but exactly what is going on here is a question for further research and not one which I deal with in this thesis.¹⁰ Similarly, Erlewine & New (2019) give an extensive discussion of how the scalar exhaustive focus marker *bma* in Burmese has different interpretations depending on the presence or absence of what at least seems like focus concord morphology; how this phenomenon fits into the typology presented in this thesis should very much be investigated,¹¹ but it deserves a deeper discussion than I wish to engage in in this thesis. Further, I leave out

⁹Old Japanese data throughout this thesis is from the Oxford-NINJAL Corpus of Old Japanese (Frellesvig et al. 2021), most of which consists of the *Man’yōushū* collection of poetry. Transcriptions are based on Miyake (2003)’s reconstruction.

¹⁰Old Japanese’s focus concord construction is traditionally conceived of as being tied directly to argument-associated focus markers rather than to the presence of argument focus in general (see section 4.2 for more discussion), so it would not be unreasonable to propose that *mo* simply does not trigger focus concord. This would be a bit odd, though, as it would be the only argument-associated focus marker that does not trigger any focus concord form. Interestingly, the ONCOJ tags *mo* as a *topic* marker, which is quite at odds with other analyses I have seen of these kinds of markers’ semantics, but agrees with my intuition.

¹¹It might turn out to not be focus concord marking at all—Erlewine & New never outright reject the label ‘focus concord’, but they give an analysis that is potentially incompatible with the definition of focus concord used in this thesis.

focus markers such as English’s repurposed reflexive pronouns (in constructions like e.g. *I myself went to the store*), as they seem to carry extremely specific semantics regarding countering social role expectations, and it is not clear whether the focus interpretation is core to these markers’ meaning. I do talk in section 2.5 about a few cases of markers with fused-in information that is apparently tangential to or unrelated to their focus meaning.

Additionally, this thesis deals with spoken language only, and leaves signed languages aside. I would be quite surprised if no signed language used morphological focus marking, but I suspect that it is much more difficult to distinguish morphological focus marking from prosodic focus marking in signed languages. I leave the study of sign language focus marking as a topic for further research.

1.5 Terminology

Below is a short summary of important terminology used throughout this thesis. These concepts will be given much further explanation and exemplification in the main body of the paper; this section is meant merely as an introduction to the terms. Note that the terms ‘WH-agreement’ and ‘extraction morphology’ are more widely used for the particular syntactic phenomena regardless of whether it is used to mark focus or not; this paper uses these terms as shorthand for the focus uses of such phenomena specifically.

Argument-associated focus morphology Argument-associated focus morphology refers to morphology that is placed directly to one side or the other of the focussed constituent. Typically it is in the form of a particle or clitic, and can be associated to nominal constituents with just about any syntactic role.¹² This is in contrast to *clause-level focus morphology*, which is associated with the clause as a whole rather than the focussed constituent in particular.

Clause-level focus morphology Clause-level focus morphology is morphology that indicates that the sentence is an argument focus sentence, but is not itself associated with the focussed argument. This is often verbal morphology, as in Sinhala or Ojibwe, but it may be something else entirely—in Coptic, it’s a clitic that attaches to a TAM particle that is syntactically independent of the verb, and in Hausa, it’s fused inside a similar TAM particle. This is in contrast to *argument-associated focus morphology*, which is associated with the focussed element directly.

Focus concord In a focus concord construction, there is clause-level marking in any argument focus sentence, whether the focussed argument is in place or moved, and whether or not it has argument-associated marking. If the clause-level marking is only present when the focussed argument is moved out of its normal place, that’s instead a case of *extraction morphology*.

¹²In some languages this marking is also used for verb focus, where it associates with verbs or verb complexes as well.

Extraction morphology Extraction morphology is clause-level morphology that signals that an argument has been *moved* to a focussed position—extraction morphology is not present when the focussed argument is left in situ. If the clause-level morphology is present whether or not the focussed argument has been moved, that’s instead a case of *focus concord*.

WH-agreement A WH-agreement construction involves morphology that signals not only that an argument has been moved, but also provides information about the relationship of that argument to the main verb—e.g. such a construction has different forms of its extraction morphology for when what is moved into a focussed position is a subject versus an object.

1.6 Types of constructions and grammaticalisation pathways

Morphological focus marking constructions can be categorised quite effectively by reference to the particular details of the process by which they were grammaticalised. Thus, rather than beginning with an overview of the types of constructions that exist, I instead begin by describing how these constructions come to be. I have mentioned above that morphological focus marking constructions come from a reanalysis of biclausal constructions like clefts into monoclausal constructions; Heine & Reh (1984: pp. 181–182) give the following four steps as a process by which this reanalysis might come about:

- Stage I: There is a cleft structure something like [NP/PP + copula] [subordinate clause]. This structure serves to foreground new, asserted information, expressed by the sentence-initial constituent, the presupposed part of the sentence being encoded in the subordinate clause.
- Stage II: The copula is desemantized to a focus marker. This structure is exploited to optionally emphasize WH-words.
- Stage III: The focus construction undergoes functional shift, i.e. it is no longer possible on synchronic grounds to derive it from the cleft construction, its source. At the same time, WH words are obligatorily marked for focus.
- Stage IV: Focus marking becomes an obligatory feature of sentence structure, i.e. any declarative sentence has to be marked for either term [argument] or predicate focus. The result is a language type whose sentence structure is dominated more by pragmatic than by syntactic or semantic functions.

Heine & Reh’s stage IV is not relevant to most of the focus constructions I discuss here; it can be thought of perhaps as a kind of further stage yet beyond just argument focus marking, and possibly has occurred in only a single language (see section 2.4). The other three stages, however, are likely part of the history of all constructions under discussion here. Slade (2018) explicitly demonstrates how this process progressed in Sinhala, where older forms of Sinhala have a clear biclausal cleft situation while modern colloquial Sinhala uses (descendants of) the same forms in a monoclausal focus concord construction. The

copula is reanalysed as a focus marker, the nominalised verb is reanalysed as a concord form, and the end result is a construction where a focussed argument can be left in place and have its focussed status signalled by an associated focus marker and a change in verb morphology.¹³

- (20) a. *Mā dan denne ovun sañdabā yæ*
 I.ACC alms give:PRES.PCPL.NOM they.ACC for COP.3SG
 ‘It is **FOR THEM** that I am giving alms.’ (classical Sinhala, cleft with copula)
- b. *mamə ē potə-y kiyewwe*
 I.NOM that book-FOC read:ARGFOC
 ‘It was **THAT BOOK** I read’ (focus concord, modern colloquial Sinhala)

While many clause-level focus markers derive from relativisers, not all do—others may derive from other kinds of subordination morphology. Evans (2007: p. 414) gives the example of Ngandi (discussed further in chapter 3), where clause-level focus morphology is clearly derived from a more general ‘background information’ subordination marker that behaves much like a converb. Old Japanese seems to have clause-level morphology both from relativisation morphology and from a similar kind of ‘background’ subordinator; for more, see Narrog (2019). Whether these sources also involve the reanalysis of a biclausal structure is less clear, though it is also unclear what an alternative source would be. This thesis makes no distinction between clause-level morphology derived from relativisers and clause-level morphology derived from other kinds of subordinators.

Heine & Reh’s overview is not meant to deal in language-specific details, but it provides a useful framework to hang those details on. By incorporating those details, we can create a taxonomy of morphological focus marking strategies. At the highest level, there is a two-way division between strategies involving a grammaticalised copula and strategies involving repurposed subordination morphology. The first type results in argument-associated focus morphology—morphology that is placed directly adjacent to the focussed argument. The second type results in clause-level focus morphology, where the morphology is associated with the clause as a whole and need not be anywhere near the focussed argument.

Within clause-level morphology, there are two parameters that together result in four distinct typological categories. The first is whether or not the repurposed subordination morphology remains restricted to appearing only in cases where the focussed argument has moved. In constructions where it is restricted in this way, in situ focus does not cooccur with clause-level focus morphology—the morphology can only be used alongside a corresponding word-order change. The second is whether or not the morphology itself indicates which argument is in focus, usually by the same mechanism used to indicate which argument has been gapped in a relative clause. The names for these categories and some example languages are given in the table below.

¹³According to Slade, *yæ* in (20a) is not actually technically a copula, it is a more general subject agreement marker; however, its use in sentences like this implies a copular interpretation, and for this purpose may be thought of as a copula.

	movement required	no movement required
no information about argument	Extraction morphology (Hausa, Ojibwe)	Focus concord (Sinhala, Coptic, Japonic)
information about argument	WH-agreement (Chamorro, Wolof, Mayan)	(Yukaghir)

Some languages have somewhat non-prototypical implementations of their focus marking strategies. For example, some Mayan languages use the presence of clause-level morphology to indicate that the agent is the focussed argument, with the absence of any clause-level morphology indicating that some other argument is focussed. Similarly, Yukaghir not only allows but requires in situ focus with its clause-level morphology. Nonetheless, these languages do clearly fall into one of the above four categories; they just may require some additional description alongside the category label.

Chapter 2

Argument-associated morphological marking

One of the two primary kinds of morphological argument focus marking constructions is constructions wherein argument focus is marked only by argument-associated focus morphology. These markers take the form of particles or clitics (depending on the details of the analysis) placed directly alongside the focussed argument. An example of this is the Japonic language Kikai (Shimoji 2018: p. 86), wherein the only change between an unmarked predicate focus sentence and a marked argument focus sentence is the presence or absence of this kind of morphology.

- (21) Q: *hun isoo tʰan=ŋa yabuta=ka?*
this chair:TOP who=NOM broke=Q
'WHO broke this chair?'
A: *uttuu=ŋa=du yabutan=doo.*
younger.brother=NOM=FOC broke=SFP
'MY YOUNGER BROTHER broke it.'

Büring (2008) calls these constructions 'particle focus'; but I find the term 'particle' here to be a bit misleading, as 1) these markers may also be clitics,¹ and 2) the core idea of the construction is not merely that the marker is a particle, but that the marker is placed *adjacent to* the focussed argument. While I know of no unambiguous examples,² a focus concord construction wherein the concord morphology is a repurposed complementiser particle (such as that hypothesised in (71) in chapter 5) seems entirely reasonable to imagine, and while such a construction would still be a situation wherein 'focus is marked by a particle', it would be fundamentally different from argument-associated focus marking.

¹Though whether that is an issue depends on how one defines 'particle' and 'clitic'; I use 'particle' to mean 'grammatical function element that is phonologically and syntactically independent' and 'clitic' to mean 'grammatical function element that is phonologically bound but syntactically independent / bound at a phrase level'.

²Paul & Whitman (2008) describe certain instances of Mandarin's *sbi...de* construction in ways that suggest a focus concord analysis, but the situation is complex and it isn't necessarily obvious that *de* is in fact a focus concord marker even some of the time.

Argument-associated focus marking frequently occurs in languages that also use clause-level focus marking. This section focuses primarily on argument-associated focus marking in general, with a small section on languages whose focus marking constructions have no other kind of morphological focus marking. One other system is mentioned here: a possibly unique system found in the Cushitic language Rendille (Oomen 1978), wherein there is argument-associated focus marking that alternates with predicate focus marking or marking that indicates the absence of argument focus in a sentence.

Languages seem to vary on how argument-associated focus marking interacts with WH question words. For more on this, see section 1.3.

2.1 Argument-associated focus markers versus copulas in clefts

As discussed in section 1.6, argument-associated focus markers often derive from copulas. They can also become copulas via constructions such as those in Māori (Pearce 1999: p. 254) and Old Chinese (Caboara 2016), languages where focus marking is the most common way of indicating a copular relationship.³ See McWhorter (1992) for a discussion of how modern Swahili’s true copula is likely descended from such a function.

- (22) a. *ko tōku kāinga tēnei whare*
FOC 1.SG.POSS home this house
 ‘This house is my home.’ (Māori)
- b. 叟 之 所 知 也
 old.gentleman POSS REL.OBJ know **FOC**
 ‘It is what you know, sir’ (Old Chinese, example from Pulleyblank 1995: p. 16)

As a result, it is necessary to distinguish true focus markers used as in (22) from copulas that can mark focus via cleft constructions. Schwarz (2007: pp. 140–143) summarises how one can tell that Kikuyu’s focus marker *ne* remains a focus marker and has not yet become a copula. In the case of Kikuyu, the situation is further muddled by the presence of a WH-agreement system, which causes argument focus sentences to look very much like clefts involving a copula and relativisation.

³In both of these languages the marker glossed as **FOC** clearly functions as a focus marker, but also seems to have topic marking uses. I have not found, however, any in-depth study of languages where focus marking and topic marking seem to overlap.

- (23) a. *Kariokĩ á-¹tém-íré mo-té³*
 Karioki CLI.SUBJ-cut-PAST CL3-tree
 ‘Karioki **CUT A TREE**’ (predicate focus)
- b. *mo-ndo o-riã ó-tém-¹íré mo-te*
 CLI-person CLI-DEM **CLI.REL**-cut-PAST CL3-tree
 ‘The person that cut a tree’ (relative clause)
- c. *no-o o-tém-íré mo-te?*
FOC-who **CLI.ARGFOC**-cut-PAST CL3-tree
 ‘**WHO** cut a tree?’ (argument focus WH question)
- d. *né Kariokĩ ó-tém-¹íré mo-te*
FOC Karioki **CLI.ARGFOC**-cut-PAST CL3-tree
 ‘It’s **KARIOKI** that cut a tree’ (argument focus statement)

However, Kikuyu has a separate copular verb *-re*, which can cooccur with *ne* used as a verb focus marker. This copula’s third-person present agreement form is null, however, and this is why Kikuyu has co-opted focus marking as the obligatory way to mark third-person copular relations.

- (24) a. *Kamau ne mo-remi*
 Kamau **FOC** CLI-farmer
 ‘Kamau is a farmer’ (*ne* instead of the copula)
- b. *Kamau a-a-re mo-remi*
 Kamau CLI.SUBJ-PAST-**COP** CLI-farmer
 ‘Kamau was a farmer’ (inflectable copula instead of *ne*)

We can see that the actual copula *-re* and *ne* differ, in that the copula can be combined with *ne* for verb focus on the copula, while *ne* itself cannot be focussed by an additional *ne*.

- (25) a. *Kamau ne a-a-re mo-remi*
 Kamau **FOC** CLI.SUBJ-PAST-**COP** CLI-farmer
 ‘Kamau **WAS** a farmer’ (verb focus on the copula)
- b. **Kamau ne ne mo-remi*
 Kamau **FOC** **FOC** CLI-farmer
 (cannot verb-focus *ne* as it’s not a copula)

Kikuyu’s separate overt copula and use of argument-associated focus marking for verb focus as well make it relatively easy to tell that *ne* is a focus marker and not a copula. Other languages may present more difficult challenges. Languages that would otherwise lack an overt copula may provide few opportunities to distinguish between focus marking and copulas, especially if they either lack relativisation morphology or could be analysed as having clause-level focus morphology. I can imagine situations in which it may be impossible to tell the difference—if a language lacks any alternative copula, has no relativisation morphology or uses clause-level focus morphology, requires focussed arguments to be fronted, and does not also use the marker in question for verb focus, there may be no means to tell the difference between a focus marker and a copula.

2.2 Marked focus versus marked non-topic

Modern Japanese brings up a question worth discussing, in that while it clearly has morphological focus marking, it also shows a situation which is *not* morphological focus marking but may easily be misinterpreted as such. Japanese has morphological topic marking as well as focus marking, and topic marking is the default marking for subjects—topic marking overrides any core case marking that would otherwise be present, so in the unmarked case, subjects are indicated only by being marked as the topic. Any subject marked with the case marker *ga* is thus interpreted as ‘not the topic’, which is often a marked focus situation. For more on this system, see Kuroda (1972).

- (26) a. *Tadano=wa it-ta.*
 Tadano=FOC go-PAST
 ‘Tadano WENT.’ (basic predicate focus)
- b. Q: *Komi=wa it-ta no?*
 Komi=TOP go-PAST Q
 ‘Did Komi go?’
- A: *Iya, Tadano=ga it-ta kedo.*
 no, Tadano=SUBJ go-PAST but
 ‘No; TADANO went, though.’ (argument focus on the subject)

It is thus quite easy to misinterpret *ga* as a focus marker. However, further investigation shows that *ga* has other uses that are not argument focus—it is used in sentence focus situations as well, and also as plain subject marking in both embedded clauses and in cases where the subject is neither topic nor focus.⁴

- (27) a. Q: ‘What happened?’
 A: *Tadano=ga sara=o otoshi-ta n da.*
 Tadano=SUBJ plate=OBJ drop-PAST EXPLANATION
 ‘TADANO DROPPED A PLATE.’ (sentence focus)
- b. *Komi=ga mi-ta eiga=wa tanoshiku-nakat-ta.*
 Komi=SUBJ see-PAST movie=TOP enjoyable-NEG-PAST
 ‘The movie Komi saw WASN’T ENJOYABLE.’ (subject of embedded clause in predicate focus)
- c. *Hon=wa kimi=no tame=ni=koso Komi=ga kai-ta n da.*
 book=TOP you=POSS sake=DAT=FOC Komi=SUBJ write-PAST EXPLANATION
 ‘Komi wrote the book FOR YOUR SAKE.’ (subject that is neither topic nor focus)

Thus, the proper analysis of *ga* is not as a focus marker, but as a subject marker. It merely happens to be the case that, due to the fact that the default marking for subjects is as a topic, *ga* must be used when the subject is in focus.

⁴There is a possible interpretation of (27b) as argument focus on *Komi*, but this is distinguished from the predicate-focus interpretation only by prosody. In fact, it is impossible to embed *wa* inside a subordinate clause in Japanese, except under specific circumstances involving uses of *wa* that are not prototypical topic uses.

Sandawe (Eaton 2010) has a somewhat more complex marked non-topic system.⁵ In Sandawe, all constituents that are not subjects can be followed by a ‘pronominal clitic’ marker that agrees with the person and number of the subject. While on verbs its appearance marks verb focus or verum focus,⁶ on non-verbal constituents it appears any time the constituent is within some sort of focus domain. This includes not only argument focus, but predicate focus and sentence focus, and as a result more than one constituent per clause may have this marking (as shown in (28c)).⁷

- (28) a. *uswe aa miindzo=a’ baaraa*
 now CONJ:3.PL.SUBJ journey=PC.3.PL.SUBJ start:3.M.SG.OBJ
 ‘Now they **STARTED THE JOURNEY.**’ (predicate focus with PC on object; p. 10)
- b. *bpaā X’ox’ā girā*
 CONJ:3.M.SG.SUBJ Baboon:DEF jump[CONJ]
Ncwaā-⁻¹-mgoongo-ts’i=a baagkĩts’i
 Elephant:DEF-GEN-back-at=PC.3.M.SG.SUBJ sit:SG.SUBJ
 ‘But Baboon **JUMPED AND SAT ON ELEPHANT’S BACK.**’ (predicate focus with PC on oblique, p. 10)
- c. *bewe’ga=si dtelha=si*
 and.so=PC.1.SG.SUBJ completely=PC.1.SG.SUBJ
tchi-⁻¹-gkimā=si lhaa=si
 1.SG-GEN-poisonous.arrow=PC.1.SG.SUBJ well=PC.1.SG.SUBJ
cani-⁻¹-t’seeo-na=si bpee
 bow-GEN-string-to=PC.1.SG.SUBJ put:3.M.SG.OBJ
 ‘And so I **PUT MY POISONOUS ARROW COMPLETELY WELL ON THE BOWSTRING.**’
 (predicate focus with PC on every non-verb constituent, p. 13)

Objects, for example, only lack this marker when they are not part of the focus domain.

- (29) *o’-ga=si tci-⁻¹-adiisĩ dto*
 there-DECL=PC.1.SG.SUBJ 1.SG-GEN-story\SP finish
 ‘I **FINISH** my story **THERE.**’ (‘my story’ is topic, p. 14)

While this ‘pronominal clitic’ cannot appear with subjects, Sandawe also has a marker that is traditionally referred to as the ‘subject focus’ marker, which appears with subjects under the same conditions the pronominal clitic appears with non-subjects: when the constituent it attaches to is part of a focus domain, including in sentence focus situations where the whole sentence is part of the focus domain.

⁵The details of this system also depend on the realis status of the clause these markers appear in, but this does not alter the core concept behind the system.

⁶Verum focus is a particular kind of focus wherein the focus is on the positive or negative polarity of the sentence—e.g. English *I DID do the dishes!*, which asserts the positive truth value of the proposition ‘I did the dishes’. See Krifka (2008: p. 257) for more.

⁷I have altered Eaton’s glossing conventions slightly to harmonise with the rest of this thesis; as a result, I am writing Sandawe’s downstep-marked genitive construction with an IPA downstep marker rather than with the hyphen the orthography uses.

- (30) a. *swe dak'weē, gkwaa nci tchi=aa c'waa-si-gkwe*
 now donkey\SP, CONJ:3.M.SG body all=SF sore-VLZ-BEN:3.M.SG.OBJ
 'Now as for Donkey, **HIS WHOLE BODY BROKE OUT IN SORES.**' (sentence focus, p. 18)
- b. *gkwaa adiisi-gki=aa o'=a tcheegki*
 CONJ:3.M.SG story\SP-ADD=SF there=3.PC.M.SG.SUBJ be.finished
 'And **THE STORY FINISHES THERE.**' (sentence focus, p. 18)

With both of these markers, then, the contrast is about topicality versus non-topicality, not focus directly. Eaton states, 'when an object, adverb or PP is not followed by a PC [pronominal clitic] in a realis or imperative/subjunctive clause, that constituent can be analysed as a topic. Similarly, when a subject in a realis clause is not followed by the SF [subject focus] marker, it can be analysed as a topic.'

I bring up these examples to show that it is entirely possible to have a language that appears on the surface to have argument-associated focus marking, when in fact the morphology in question is tied to topicality rather than focus. I would not consider such a language to have morphological argument focus marking, unless (like in Japanese's case) it has other morphology that *is* specifically marking argument focus.

2.3 Argument-associated marking only

The Japanese examples given above are of a construction where the only morphological focus marking is argument-associated morphology—nothing else is different between an argument focus sentence and a predicate focus sentence. Chickasaw (Munro & Willmond 1994, via Buring 2008: p. 26), a Muskogean language, is another example of a focus marking construction that only uses argument-associated morphology. Indeed, Munro & Willmond claim that Chickasaw does not even have intonational focus marking, and uses argument-associated morphology as the sole sign of any kind that an argument is in focus—something that is not the case for Japanese. Chickasaw has actually fused its focus marking with grammatical relation marking, with the result that it has different focus markers for subject noun phrases versus object noun phrases:

- (31) a. *bat:ak-at koni(ā) pisa*
 man-SUBJ skunk see
 'The man **SEES THE SKUNK.**' (unmarked predicate focus)
- b. *bat:ak-akot koni(ā) pisa*
 man-FOC.SUBJ skunk see
 'The **MAN** sees the skunk.' (subject in focus)
- c. *bat:ak-at koni-akō: pisa*
 man-SUBJ skunk-FOC.OBJ see
 'The man sees the **SKUNK.**' (object in focus)

Argument-associated focus marking is quite commonly found in languages which also use clause-level focus morphology. Languages such as Chickasaw and Japanese, however,

belong to a separate category of languages where argument-associated morphology is the only morphological focus marking available.

2.4 Symmetrical focus systems

At least one language—Rendille (Oomen 1978: pp. 48–49), a Cushitic language from northern Kenya—has a system wherein argument focus is marked by the presence of an argument-associated focus marker, but predicate focus and sentence focus are marked by the presence of a clause-level marker.

- (32) a. *ínam=é y-ími*
boy=**FOC** 3.SG-come:PAST
‘The **BOY** came.’ (marked focus on subject)
- b. *ínam á-y-ími*
boy **PREDFOC**-3.SG-come:PAST
‘The boy **CAME**.’ (marked predicate focus)

In Rendille, just about every clause must have one of these two focus markers somewhere in it, and only one—either an argument is marked with *é*, or the verb is prefixed with *á-*; never both and never neither (with one exception described below). The predicate focus marking in (32b) also apparently functions as a sentence focus marker, as Oomen states that (32b) is also an appropriate answer to the question ‘what happened?’. In effect, Rendille has both argument-associated argument focus marking and clause-level morphology that indicates the *absence* of argument focus, and these alternate with each other—when one is present, the other must be absent. The one exception to this is WH questions, which as we have seen in section 1.3 tend to behave like focussed arguments. Rendille shows neither argument focus nor predicate focus morphology with WH questions, but, as discussed above, this makes sense if we assume that WH words are inherently focussed—this would render predicate focus marking impossible and argument focus marking unnecessary.

This seems to be a very rare system, and is easily confused with constructions that have both argument-associated focus marking and separate marking for verb focus. Boni (Sasse 1981: p. 271), a language closely related to Rendille, shows this possible confusion quite clearly: it has a focus marking construction that closely resembles that of Rendille, but is not part of a symmetrical focus system as I have defined it. The Boni marker that is cognate to Rendille’s predicate focus marker is instead a separate marker indicating verb focus specifically.

- (33) a. *an biyóq ajika*
 I water drink
 ‘I DRINK WATER’ (unmarked predicate focus)
- b. *an biyóq-é ajika*
 I water-FOC drink
 ‘I drink WATER’ (argument focus on ‘water’)
- c. *an biyóq á-ajika*
 I water vFOC-drink
 ‘I DRINK water’ (verb focus on ‘drink’)

Shimoji (2011: p. 120) argues for a similar analysis of Irabu Miyako, a Japonic language of the Ryukyuu Islands; however, once again we see that this system is subtly but fundamentally different. In the case of Irabu Miyako, there is a particular verbal inflection (usually *-m*) that cannot occur with marked argument focus, as shown below.

- (34) a. *ba=a kuruma=u=du vv-tar*
 I.SG=TOP car=ACC=FOC sell-PAST
 ‘I sold A CAR.’
- b. **ba=a kuruma=u=du vv-ta-m*
 I.SG=TOP car=ACC=FOC sell-PAST-REAL
 (‘I sold a car.’)

However, sentences without marked argument focus may or may not have this marker, and it has a particular meaning when used. Shimoji calls this marker the ‘realis’ marker, and describes it as indicating ‘(a) speaker’s perceived certainty, and (b) high information value’ (p. 122). This is illustrated in the following examples.

- (35) a. *kuri=a nau=ju=mai ssi-ur*
 3.SG=TOP what=ACC=even know-PROG
 ‘She knows everything.’ (unmarked, general statement)
- b. i. *kuri=a nau=mai ssa-n=pazï*
 3.SG=TOP what=even know-NEG=maybe
 ‘This [woman] doesn’t even know anything, maybe.’
- ii. *gui! kuri=a nau=ju=mai ssi-u-m!*
 no! 3.SG=TOP what=ACC=even know-PROG-REAL
 ‘No way! She knows everything!’ (with *-m*, marking the sentence as correcting an inaccurate understanding)

Shimoji describes this marker as being blocked from cooccurring with argument focus marking for pragmatic reasons, since ‘the realis form expresses new information’, which is in conflict with argument focus marking leaving the predicate as presupposed. It is not clear from his description whether this is really a predicate focus or verb focus marker with a particular set of additional semantics, or simply something only tangentially related to focus structure;⁸ but it is at least clear that this is not a symmetrical focus system.

⁸It seems to correspond somewhat to verum focus (Krifka 2008: p. 257).

2.5 Argument-associated focus markers with additional semantics

We have seen through Chickasaw in example (31) above that argument-associated markers may have additional grammatical information fused into them. In Chickasaw’s case, this is information about grammatical relations. Some languages have markers of sentence-level categories such as illocutionary force and evidentiality that attach to a focussed argument in argument-focus sentences. An example of this is the Quechua evidential suffix *-mi* (van der Wal 2016, ultimately from Sánchez 2010: p. 31), which not only follows a focussed argument, but also indicates that the action of the sentence was directly observed by the speaker.

- (36) Q: *pi-n wasita ruwarqan?*
who-MI house built?
‘WHO built the house (did you see)?’
A: *wasita-qa Pidru-m ruwarqan.*
house-TOP Pedro-MI built
‘PEDRO built the house (I saw).’

These might be considered a special case of argument-associated focus markers that are simultaneously something else. Alternatively, these could be considered purely other kinds of markers that simply happen to be placed relative to whatever the focus domain is—thus happening to serve as focus markers but not containing focus marking as part of their fundamental meaning. For example, the Quechua evidential *-mi* above does not necessarily indicate focus at all, as it appears as well in plain predicate focus sentences.

- (37) *Pilar-qa t’antata-n mikburqan*
Pilar-TOP bread-MI ate
‘Pilar ATE BREAD (and I saw it)’ (not necessarily ‘Pilar ate BREAD’)

We should, then, draw a clear conceptual distinction between argument-associated focus markers with additional semantics and clitics whose placement depends on focus structure. However, it may be difficult in a given language to tell which is which—especially given that plain argument-adjacent focus markers in Ryuukyuan languages can behave much like the Quechua clitic in (37), for which see section 2.6 below.

These fused-into argument associated markers seem to interact in various ways with clause-level morphology, including both clause-level focus morphology and interrogative morphology. Sinhala (Slade 2018) is a simple case where interrogative sentences are marked purely through the use of a combination focus-plus-interrogative marker, which also occurs with focus concord morphology on the verb.

- (38) a. *mamə ē potə-y kiyewwe*
 I.NOM that book-**FOC** read:ARGFOC
 ‘It was **THAT BOOK** I read’ (non-interrogative with argument focus)
- b. *Chitra ē potə də kiyewwe?*
 Chitra that book **FOC.Q** read:ARGFOC
 ‘Was it **THAT BOOK** that Chitra read?’ (non-WH interrogative with argument focus)
- c. *Chitra gatte monəwa də?*
 Chitra read:ARGFOC what **FOC.Q**
 ‘**WHAT** did Chitra read?’ (WH focus)

Yuwan Amami (Niinaga 2010: p. 75) has a particular focus marker for WH words, which cooccurs with special WH-specific focus concord marking. (For more about this construction, see section 4.4.)

- (39) a. *kuri=ba=du jum-ju-i*
 this=OBJ=**FOC** read-IPFV-**NPST**
 ‘(I) read **THIS.**’ (non-interrogative with argument focus)
- b. *uroo kun hon=ba=du jum-jur-ui?*
 2sg this book=OBJ=**FOC** read-IPFV-**FOC.YNQ**
 ‘Will you read **THIS BOOK?**’ (non-WH interrogative with argument focus)
- c. *uroo nuu=ba=ga jum-jur-u?*
 2sg what=OBJ=**FOC** read-IPFV-**FOC.WHQ**
 ‘**WHAT** will you read?’ (WH interrogative)

2.6 Other focus uses of argument-associated morphology

A number of languages use argument-associated focus marking morphology with other types of focus structures. Certain Ryuukyuan languages are perhaps the most striking examples of this, where plain argument-associated focus markers also attach to the objects of predicate focus sentences. In Yaeyama languages, for example, the focus marker *du* is obligatory in predicate focus sentences just as much as in argument focus sentences (data from Shimoji 2018: p. 109).⁹

⁹Shimoji in fact gives a quite interesting breakdown of how the breadth of focus marking uses varies across Ryuukyuan.

- (40) a. *manuma nuu=du numi buura?*
 now what=**FOC** drink:CVB PROG.NPST
 ‘**WHAT** are you drinking now?’ (argument focus)
- b. Q: *manama nuu=du sii uru=ja?*
 now what=**FOC** do:CVB PROG.NPST=Q
 ‘**WHAT ARE YOU DOING** now?’ (predicate focus)
- A: *manama gusi=du numi uru.*
 now sake=**FOC** drink:CVB PROG.NPST
 ‘I am **DRINKING SAKE** now.’ (predicate focus)

While this looks a good deal like the Quechua situation in (37), unlike for Quechua *-mi*, there is no reason to believe that these are anything other than focus markers. They add no further semantics to a sentence beyond ‘the element to the left is in focus somehow’. They simply seem to have additional uses beyond argument focus marking. Indeed, this is not the only way in which argument-associated focus marking may show up in other focus structures, as it can extend to verb focus marking as well—in effect simply being a marker that ‘whatever is adjacent, no matter what it is syntactically, is in focus’. An example of this is the Grasslands Bantu language Aghem (Hyman & Polinsky 2009: pp. 86–87).

- (41) a. *nì mî zì kí-bé nò né*
 1.SG PAST ate fufu **FOC** today
 ‘I ate **FUFU** today.’ (argument focus)
- b. *bvú ʼtí m̀ b́ ʼkí ź ǹ*
 dogs DET PAST fufu DET eat **FOC**
 ‘The dogs **ATE** the fufu.’ (verb focus)

In all these cases, it is likely that these markers are not associated with argument focus directly, but instead with focus structure in a more general sense (likely along the lines proposed in Buring 2008). The questions of how the argument focus use relates to other uses, and how different languages divide the resulting semantic space, are questions which deserve their own dedicated studies, and I will not explore them further in this thesis.

Chapter 3

Clause-level focus morphology constructions

Clause-level focus morphology constructions are constructions wherein the presence of argument focus is marked by morphology that is associated with the clause as a whole rather than with the focussed argument itself. This may be either instead of argument-associated marking, or in addition to it. Due to the usual historical source of this clause-level morphology as some sort of complementiser morphology (see section 1.6), it often behaves morphologically like the language's other complementisers. For example, in Coptic (Green & Reintges 2015: p. 140), focus concord marking is a reuse of relativiser marking, which appears as part of the clause-initial TAM complex.

- (42) a. *er-βek* *e=tn?*
ARGFOC.2.F.SG-go to=where?
'WHERE are you going?'
- b. *e=i-βek* *e=pə-topos* *ən-apa-mena* *nta-šlel*
ARGFOC=1.SG-go to=DEF.M.SG-shrine POSS-Apa-Mena CONJ.I.SG-pray
'I am going TO THE SHRINE OF APA MENA to pray.'

This is exactly the same place as other subordinators, such as the converb marking in (42b) above, reproduced below with different highlighting:

- (43) *e=i-βek* *e=pə-topos* *ən-apa-mena* *nta-šlel*
ARGFOC=1.SG-go to=DEF.M.SG-shrine POSS-Apa-Mena CONJ.I.SG-pray
'I am going to the shrine of Apa Mena to pray.'

Clause-level focus morphology can be considered a kind of what has been called 'in-subordination', as set out in e.g. Evans (2007)—a phenomenon whereby subordination morphology is used in main clauses rather than subordinate clauses.¹ Evans supposes that

¹With a few exceptions, where the clause-level morphology is no longer transparently related to any subordination morphology. Yuwan Amami (see section 4.4) is such a case—synchronically, its focus concord morphology and its subordination morphology have nothing to do with each other, as the diachronic source for its focus concord morphology has since been replaced elsewhere in the language.

this kind of focus marking use of subordination morphology derives from the backgrounding effect that subordination can cause. He gives an example from the Gunwinyguan language Ngandi (Heath 1985: p. 98), where the same morphology is used for ‘background information’ subordinate clauses and main verbs in argument focus sentences.

- (44) a. *gu-wolo-yuy bulkuy nar-uḍu-ni; nar-ga-ṛuḍu-ni,*
 CLF-that-ABS indeed 1.PL.EXC-go-PRES 1.PL.EXC-SUBORD-go-PRES
nar-waṇṛuḍu-ni
 1.PL.EXC-look-PRES
 ‘...then indeed we GO ALONG; going along, we TAKE A LOOK...’
- b. Q: *ba-ṛja ba-ga-ṛuḍu-ṛi?*
 PL-who 3.PL-ARGFOC-go-PAST.CONT
 ‘WHO went?’
- A: *ṛi-ḍeremu ṛi-ga-ṛuḍu-ṛi*
 M.SG-man 3.M.SG-ARGFOC-go-PAST.CONT
 ‘THE MAN went.’ / ‘It was THE MAN who went.’

In effect, the subordination morphology becomes used for main clauses due to its use marking something as being backgrounded—in subordinate clauses it backgrounds the whole clause, while in main clauses it backgrounds only the verb, which would be part of the focus domain in a predicate focus sentence. Thus, one way to conceptualise clause-level focus morphology is that it logically implies the presence of argument focus by marking the verb as backgrounded, disallowing a predicate focus interpretation and forcing an argument focus interpretation.

Focus marking is not the only possible use of insubordination, and languages which use insubordination for focus marking may also use it for other purposes. Cable (2011) gives an overview of insubordination in Tlingit, where insubordination is used not only as clause-level argument focus marking, but also for uses such as rhetorical questions, exclamations, and a type of clause-chaining-like construction.

Clause-level morphology strategies provide some of the clearest evidence of the focussed nature of WH words. Most, if not all, languages with clause-level morphology use this morphology with WH words just as much as with focussed non-WH constituents. It seems as though treating WH words as inherently focussed can be enough to obviate the need for attaching an argument-associated focus marker to them (though as the examples in section 1.3 show, this is not always the case), while the same treatment does not render clause-level marking superfluous in the same way.

3.1 Focus concord

A focus concord construction is one wherein the presence of argument focus simply somewhere in the sentence is signalled by clause-level morphology. Coptic, as shown in (42) above, has such a construction. Slade (2018) gives a description of a focus concord construction in Sinhala, which is perhaps the clearest demonstration of such a construction I’ve seen. In Sinhala, the presence of a focussed argument in a sentence triggers a form

of the verb glossed here as ‘E’; this contrasts with the form glossed as ‘A’, which appears in cases of predicate focus.²

- (45) a. *mamə ē potə kiyewwa*
 I.NOM that book read.A
 ‘I READ THAT BOOK’ (default predicate focus)
- b. *mamə ē potə kiyewe*
 I.NOM that book read.E
 ‘It was THAT BOOK I read’ (argument focus without argument-associated marker)
- c. *mamə ē potə-γ kiyewe*
 I.NOM that book-FOC read.E
 ‘It was THAT BOOK I read’ (argument focus with argument-associated marker)
- d. *Chitra ē potə də kiyewe?*
 Chitra that book FOC.Q read.E
 ‘Was it THAT BOOK that Chitra read?’ (interrogative sentence)

This is the core idea of a focus concord construction: the simple presence of a focussed argument is enough to trigger clause-level morphology (here, a verb form change), no matter where in the sentence this argument happens to be. This is in contrast to extraction morphology constructions (section 3.3), which require the focussed argument to be moved before there is any clause-level morphological change.

3.2 Focus concord plus additional information

I have come across exactly one example so far of a construction that meets the definition of focus concord but also indicates via the clause-level morphology which argument is in focus—just as WH-agreement constructions do (section 3.4). This is that of Kolyma Yukaghir, which is described by Maslova (2003: pp. 451–454). Yukaghir’s focus construction is fairly complicated. It reuses copular marking as argument-associated focus marking, but only on subjects of intransitive verbs and objects of transitive verbs; and while the focussed element not only can but must be left in-situ (thus making it very like a focus concord construction), the concord morphology itself also indicates which argument is in focus.

²I have split one of Slade’s examples in two to more clearly show the optionality of the focus marker. Slade doesn’t discuss what happens in Sinhala in sentence focus situations.

- (46) a. *aḡi-nu-t tā mēmē-le kudede-ḡā*
 shoot-IPFV-SS:IPFV there bear-INST kill-PFV-3.PL.SUBJ
 ‘They **SHOT AND KILLED A BEAR THERE.**’ (predicate focus)
- b. Q: ‘Who will go make new places on Middle Earth?’
 A: *met-ek qon-te-l*
 I.SG-FOC go-FUT-SUBJFOC
 ‘I will go.’ (subject focus)
- c. Q: ‘What are you afraid of?’
 A: *met legul-ek iḡi-me*
 I.SG food-FOC be.afraid-I.SG.SUBJ.OBJFOC
 ‘I am afraid of **FOOD**’ (object focus)

Additionally, the concord forms marking focus on the object agree in person and number with their subject the way other main clause verbs do.

- (47) a. *medīlu-ge met-ek orn’e-rī-ḡile*
 listen:PAST-DS I.SG-FOC shout-APPL-3.PL.SUBJ.OBJFOC
 ‘I listened, and it was **ME** that they were shouting at.’ (object focus with 3rd person plural subject agreement)
- b. *tamun-ge, tintay pulut ejmunde-gi tadī-mele*
 that-LOC, that old.man half-glsposs give-3.SG.SUBJ.OBJFOC
 ‘In response, the old man gave (her) **A HALF OF IT.**’ (object focus with 3rd person singular subject agreement)

Interestingly, Yukaghir uses this focus marking also as a way of indicating sentence focus, though only in discourse-medial sentences. Maslova describes this construction as only being available for focusing core arguments; it is not clear from her description what happens to obliques and other kinds of constituents. Since I define WH-agreement here as akin to extraction morphology, which the Yukaghir construction is very clearly not, I would not describe Yukaghir as having a WH-agreement construction. Instead, it is perhaps the only example of a language with its particular combination of the parameters listed in section 1.6: its morphology does not require the focussed argument to move, but does provide information about which argument is focussed.³

³Yukaghir focus has the additional oddity in that sometimes focus clauses are preceded by a demonstrative pronoun with no clear syntactic relation to the verb:

- (i) a. *aduon tet-ek aḡči-ḡile*
this you-FOC search-3.PL.SUBJ.OBJFOC
 ‘It is **YOU** that they are searching for.’

Maslova mentions that this might just be due to Russian influence, which uses demonstratives as a way to indicate focus, but it seems from her examples that this may be a way to specify an exhaustive focus reading—all of her examples with a demonstrative are translated by clefts in English, and all of her examples without one are translated with other devices. If this is in fact the case, these demonstratives would essentially just be particles marking that the focussed element is being used as exhaustive focus—comparable to the K’ichee’ examples in section 4.1.

3.3 Extraction morphology

Extraction morphology is a term for situations wherein clause-level morphology is used to signal the presence of argument focus in a sentence, but *only if the focussed argument has moved*. Hausa (Green & Reintges 2015) has a very clean and simple extraction morphology construction. With fronted focussed arguments (including WH-words), the TAM particle appears in a relativised form.⁴

- (48) a. *Audù da Mūsā sun sàji bakar mōtā*
 Audù and Mūsā **3.PL.PERF** buy black.of car
 ‘Audù and Mūsā **BOUGHT A BLACK CAR YESTERDAY.**’ (No focus marking, p. 130)
- b. *mè sukà sàjà à kàsuwā?*
 what **3.PL.PERF.ARGFOC** buy at market?
 ‘**WHAT** did they buy at the market?’ (Moved WH word with relativisation marking, p. 134)
- c. *dà sàndā nè sukà dōkē sbi*
 with stick **FOC.M 3.PL.PERF.ARGFOC** beat **3.M.SG**
 ‘They beat him **WITH A STICK.**’ (Moved non-WH focussed constituent with relativisation marking, p. 136)

However, Hausa does *not* use the relativised forms of the TAM particle when the focussed element remains in situ.⁵

- (49) a. *sunā inā yànzū?*
3.PL.IMPF where now?
 ‘**WHERE** are they now?’ (WH-in-situ with no relativisation marking: relativised would be **sukè*; p. 137)
- b. *ā`ā, nā aikā dà littāfīn nē, bā takārdār ba*
 no, **1.SG.PERF** send with book.DEF **FOC.M**, NEG paper.DEF NEG
 ‘No, I sent the **BOOK**, not the paper.’ (In-situ focus with no relativisation marking: relativised would be **na*; p. 138)

This is the core difference between extraction morphology constructions and focus concord constructions: focus concord morphology directly indicates the presence of argument focus, while extraction morphology only indicates that something has *moved* out of its normal position, which may be focus reasons, but often may not be. Extraction morphology focus marking constructions seem to be universally extensions of relative clause marking constructions, and the use of this morphology in both relative clauses and focus movement situations can be considered a unified phenomenon.

In some languages it may be difficult to tell when a subject has ‘moved’ due to being the focussed argument—if the subject is normally the first element in a sentence, and the

⁴Hausa’s focus marker and copula share a form, and sentences such as (48c) could be interpreted as clefts. However, since 1) this focus marker appears in in-situ focus constructions such as (49b) where a copula would be ungrammatical, and 2) it is not obligatory in Hausa’s ex-situ extraction morphology construction, I am quite content to claim that sentences such as (48c) truly are monoclausal.

⁵For more discussion on Hausa’s use of multiple focus constructions, see section 4.5.

position for focussed arguments is the left edge of the sentence, moving the subject from one leftmost position to another leftmost position results in no visible change on the surface. In these cases it's necessary to either observe the behaviour of other arguments that come elsewhere when not focussed, or find elements that can precede non-focussed subjects but cannot precede focussed subjects. These situations are a further reason to consider extraction morphology a kind of morphological focus marking—in languages where a subject can be ‘moved’ to exactly where it was anyway, the extraction morphology may be the only indication that the subject is in focus.⁶ For a case where this phenomenon combines with the restricted use of a focus construction and renders it impossible to determine whether a construction is extraction morphology or focus concord, see the Lelemi examples in (58) and below in section 4.3.

3.4 WH-agreement

Extraction morphology constructions, like focus concord constructions, are usually the result of reanalysing a cleft construction involving relativisation as a monoclausal focus construction (see section 1.6 for more discussion). As a result, they may bring features of the source relativisation construction along with them. If an extraction morphology construction is an extension of a relativisation construction wherein specific morphology marks which argument has been relativised, the extraction morphology construction will likely continue to use that morphology to indicate which argument has been moved. This is called a WH-agreement construction,⁷ and the canonical example of such a construction is Chamorro (Chung 1982: pp. 48–53). Chamorro requires WH words to be sentence-initial, and marks WH-agreement via a mix of special infixes and implied nominalisation via possession marking.

- (50) a. Q: *Hayi f<um>a'gasi i kareta?*
 who <um>wash DEF car?
 ‘Who washed the car?’ (WH subject plus infix <um>)
 A: *Ha-fa'gasi si Juan i kareta*
 3.SG-wash DEF Juan DEF car
 ‘Juan washed the car.’ (non-WH subject)
- b. Q: *Hafa f<in>aban-ña si Maria gi tenda?*
 what <in>buy-POSS DEF Maria LOC store?
 ‘What did Maria buy at the store?’ (WH object plus infix <in> and implied nominalisation)
 A: *Ha-faban si Maria i sanbilo'-ña gi tenda*
 3.SG-buy DEF Maria DEF blouse-POSS LOC store
 ‘Maria bought her blouse at the store.’ (non-WH object)

⁶See Robert (2016) for an example of such a situation in Wolof. Wolof has a WH-agreement construction rather than a plain extraction morphology construction, but the same considerations apply.

⁷The term ‘WH-agreement’ is usually used to refer to this type of moved-role indication construction in all of its uses, focus or not. I am using the term in this paper as something of a shorthand for what might properly be called ‘clause-level focus marking with WH-agreement’.

There are clear parallels between WH-agreement and voice: both are used to indicate or alter which argument has a particular syntactic status. Indeed, the line between them is not entirely clear; Donohue & Machlachlan (1999), for example, argue that the above Chamorro phenomenon is merely a voice system that has been lost in non-extraction situations. This thesis assumes they are distinct phenomena, but it is worth mentioning the alternative option to treat WH-agreement as simply a fusion of subordination/extraction and voice. In any case, WH-agreement constructions are apparently more common than extraction morphology constructions that clearly have nothing to do with voice, and thus are worth treating as a major typological category.

Often the WH-agreement morphology replaces or blocks normal agreement morphology; this is sometimes called ‘anti-agreement’. Baier (2018: pp. 10–11) gives the example of Maasai, where the subject agreement prefix in basic sentences is replaced with a relativiser prefix that retains plurality agreement but replaces person agreement with gender agreement.

- (51) a. *á-tú-úrór-i*
 1.SG.SUBJ-PFV-fall-PAST
 ‘I FELL’ (predicate focus with main-clause morphology)
- b. *nanu na-tareto*
 1.SG SG.F.ARGFOC-help:PAST
 ‘It is I (FEM.) who helped [them]’ (argument focus with WH agreement)

Baier (2018) is a good source for a much broader overview of the variety of anti-agreement patterns shown in the world’s languages.

Mayan languages (exemplified by the Kaqchikel data in Erlewine 2016: p. 434) have a system wherein WH-agreement is indicated simply by the presence or absence of one particular marker—its presence indicates that what has moved is the agent,⁸ and its absence indicates that whatever has moved is not the agent.

- (52) a. *ja ri xta Maria x-Ø-tz’et-ö* *r-te’* *ri a Juan*
 FOC DET:María PERF-3.SG.ABSAGR-see-AGFOC 3.SG.POSS-mother Juan
 ‘It was MARIA who saw Juan’s mother.’ (what’s moved is the agent)
- b. *ja ri xta Maria x-Ø-u-tz’et* *r-te’*
 FOC DET:María PERF-3.SG.ABSAGR-3.SG.ERGAGR-see 3.SG.POSS-mother
ri a Juan
 Juan
 ‘It was MARIA who Juan’s mother saw.’ (what’s moved is not the agent)

This agent-gap WH-agreement marker also has an anti-agreement aspect, in that it blocks agent agreement marking on its verb;⁹ but that anti-agreement is tied to the agent

⁸Mayan languages have a predominantly ergative-absolutive patterning, and this construction only occurs when the agent of a transitive verb is involved, not simply the ‘subject’.

⁹Kaqchikel’s agent focus marker also seems to behave like an antipassive in that it converts the absolutive argument agreement marker into a non-ergative *subject* agreement marker, but this is not true for Mayan in general—other Mayan languages’ agent focus markers may have other kinds of effects on argument structure. See Stiebels (2006) for more about this kind of focus marking across Mayan.

focus marker and is not an independent feature of focus-related movement in Kaqchikel—verbs without the agent-gap marker look perfectly normal, even though an argument has been moved for focus reasons. In effect, which argument is in focus is indicated not by an alternation between different morphemes in a single construction, but by an alternation between constructions themselves. For more discussion on constructions like this, where the use or not of a focus construction is relevant for WH-agreement, see section 4.3. The exact behaviour of this so-called ‘agent focus’ marker is different among Mayan languages, and the marker has different voice-like effects; see Stiebels (2006) for a discussion of cross-family variation.

Chapter 4

Languages with multiple focus constructions

While in many cases a given focus marking construction is a language's primary method or only method of marking argument focus, there are clear cases of languages that use different focus marking constructions under different situations. This is not that surprising; English is such a language—it uses in-situ focus marked by intonation alone for most kinds of argument focus, but uses clefting for exhaustive focus (Vallduví & Vilkkuna 1998: p. 79). There are several different factors that seem to influence what focus strategy a language uses; these are discussed below.

4.1 Multiple constructions with different meanings for each construction

Shimoji (2018: p. 87) somewhat off-handedly proposes what amounts to a hierarchy of focus marking meanings, wherein meanings that are towards the 'more marked' end of the hierarchy are more likely to both receive focus marking at all and receive linguistically 'heavier' focus marking. Yes-no question/answer focus is the 'least marked' end of the scale, and contrastive focus is the 'most marked' end of the scale. By 'heavier', I mean such things as e.g. more of the strategies mentioned in section 1.2, or morphological marking involving larger forms, or both clause-level and argument-associated morphology instead of just one or the other, and so on. Shimoji proposes this hierarchy merely as a way of explaining the interaction between focus marking and core case marking in Ryukyuan languages, but the concept seems to me much more widely applicable. An exploration of this hierarchy and its effect on focus marking choice deserves its own separate paper, but I will note that several languages mentioned in this thesis seem to exhibit this behaviour (e.g. Oromo in section 1.3).

As a specific example, K'ichee' (Yasavul 2013) handles different kinds of focus meanings with different focus marking strategies. Argument focus constructions in K'ichee'

have a WH-agreement system like that described for Kaqchikel in section 3.4 above;¹ but K'ichee' additionally has an argument-associated focus marker *aree* which can precede the focussed constituent. The presence of *aree* results in a different interpretation than in similar sentences where it is absent.

- (53) a. Q: 'Who slept?'
 A: *A Raul x-Ø-war-ik.*
 CLF Raul PERF-3.SG.ABSAGR-sleep-STAT
 'RAUL slept.' (focus marking through word order only)
- b. *Aree a Raul x-Ø-war-ik.*
 FOC CLF Raul PERF-3.SG.ABSAGR-sleep-STAT
 'It was RAUL who slept.' (focus marked with *aree*)

According to Yasavul, *aree* implies that the focussed constituent is already present in the common ground of the discourse, while the construction without *aree* has no such implication. *Aree* also implies that the focussed constituent describes all possible referents the proposition could be true for:

- (54) Q: 'Who got 100% [on the test]?'
 A1: *A Juan r-icbb'il al Maria.*
 CLF Juan 3.SG.ERGAGR-companion CLF Maria
 'Juan and Maria.' ('I don't know if anyone else did.' / 'Juana did too.')
- A2: *Aree a Juan r-icbb'il al Maria.*
 FOC CLF Juan 3.SG.ERGAGR-companion CLF Maria
 'Juan and Maria.' ('#I don't know if anyone else did.' / '#Juana did too.')

(A2) is problematic when someone other than Juan and Maria may have also gotten 100% on the test, as the use of *aree* implies that only Juan and Maria were the ones who got 100% on the test. (A1), which lacks *aree*, has no such implication.

4.2 Multiple constructions tied together

The traditional description of Old Japanese focus concord is that the concord forms are triggered not by the presence of argument focus at all, but by the presence of specific argument-associated focus markers. Further weight is lent to this theory by the fact that one particular marker (*kəsə*) appears with a different concord form than the other markers.

- (55) a. *kami=ni=sə wa=ga nəm-u*
 god=DAT=FOC me=GEN pray.to-ARGFOC₁
 'I pray TO THE GODS' (Man'yōshū poem 3288)
- b. *əsə paya=mo // na=wo=kəsə mat-am-əj*
 late early=even // you=OBJ=FOC wait-IRR-ARGFOC₂
 'Whether it is early or late, it is FOR YOU that I will wait' (MYS 3493)

¹Yasavul doesn't mention it, but Aissen (2011) does.

Sentences with apparent focus concord morphology and no argument-associated marker do occur; but these have traditionally been analysed as a kind of exclamatory construction (called *kantai-ku*).²

- (56) *puru-ki mijako=wo // mirəj-ba kanasi-ki*
 old-REL capital=OBJ // see-COND sad-**ARGFOC**
 ‘How sad I am when I see the old capital!’ (MYS 32)

Since the vast majority of the Old Japanese corpus is poetry, it is difficult to confirm or deny this traditional analysis; as far as I am aware, there are no clear examples of constructions that must be focus concord with no argument-associated marker. It is entirely possible, then, that Old Japanese focus marking is a situation where both argument-associated focus marking and focus concord must be present simultaneously, and lacking either part is ungrammatical. I have not been able to confirm the existence of similar situations in other languages, but it has been suggested to me by a native Tamil speaker that colloquial Tamil may do something similar.

The traditional term for Old Japanese’s focus concord construction, ‘*kakari-musubi*’, has been applied to constructions in other Japonic languages, which may lack Old Japanese’s apparent tie between focus concord and argument-associated marking. Ikema Miyako (Takubo & Hayashi 2010: p. 19), for example, shows a situation much like that of Sinhala in section 3.1.³

- (57) a. *kama=n=na burana=a ari*
 there=LOC=TOP pond=TOP **exist**
 ‘The pond is there’ (default predicate focus)
- b. *kama=n=na burana=nu=du ai*
 there=LOC=TOP pond=SUBJ=**FOC** exist.**ARGFOC**
 ‘There’s **A POND** there’ (morphologically marked argument focus)
- c. *kama=n=na burana=nu ai*
 there=LOC=TOP pond=SUBJ exist.**ARGFOC**
 ‘There’s **A POND** there’ (argument focus with no morphological marker)

4.3 Multiple constructions as WH-agreement

The Mayan WH-agreement system mentioned above in section 3.4 is also arguably a system with a special focus marking construction only used under certain circumstances—it involves clause-level morphology only when agents are moved, and has no corresponding morphology when anything else is moved. Unlike in the other languages with different constructions mentioned here, though, the presence or absence of clause-level focus

²For more on these constructions and their relation to focus concord, see Narrog (2019).

³Takubo and Hayashi note that the vast majority of verbs in Ikema Miyako do not show focus concord alternations; but this is because their relativised forms and normal main clause forms are identical, and so any such alternations would be invisible. *Ari* ‘exist’ has distinct main-clause and relativised forms, and thus shows focus concord behaviour.

marking is relevant *within* the WH-agreement mechanism: the construction with clause-level focus marking indicates that the agent has been moved, and the construction without it indicates that if anything has moved, it is not the agent. As a result, while there are multiple focus constructions involved, they function together as a single system.

Lelemi (Schwartz & Fiedler 2006: p. 69), an Atlantic language from Ghana, has a similar system. Like Mayan, Lelemi uses relativisation marking when subjects are in focus, but not when non-subjects are in focus.⁴

- (58) a. *ɔ́má ná-dī àkābí ámɔ̀?*
 who ARGFOC.PERF-eat beans DEM
 ‘WHO ate the beans?’ (subject in focus)
- b. *bí nà ùlòkú ɔ́mɔ̀ ɔ́-dī?*
 what CONJ woman DEM 3.SG.PERF-eat
 ‘WHAT did the woman eat?’ (non-subject in focus)

Within the full context of Lelemi focus marking, this relativisation construction serves a WH-agreement-like purpose by indicating which argument is in focus, but it itself is not clearly a WH-agreement construction—it is not clear whether the relativisation marking is triggered by moving the subject, or simply by argument focus at all on the subject. Since (unlike Mayan) the pre-verbal position is where subjects come anyway in Lelemi, it may be impossible to tell whether this relativisation construction on its own is a focus concord construction that does not require movement, or an extraction morphology construction where the movement is invisible. Sentence-initial adverbial material might help decide the analysis, but Schwartz & Fiedler do not discuss how this affects the situation, and it is conceivable that such adverbial material might precede both non-focussed subjects and the position focussed elements move to. In such a situation, it would be impossible to definitively classify this construction—all that would be possible would be a tentative classification based on inferences from other constructions. I would thus tentatively classify it as an extraction morphology construction, since 1) Lelemi is an Atlantic language and extraction morphology (especially WH-agreement) is common among Atlantic languages (see Robert 2010), and 2) Lelemi seems to (optionally) use a particle *nà* as extraction morphology with non-subject focus. However, this is not classifying the construction on its own merits; it is only a classification inferred by comparison with other constructions in the same language and related languages.

4.4 Multiple constructions conditioned by orthogonal factors

Languages with multiple focus constructions may choose which to use based on considerations that are otherwise not directly related to focus marking. Niinaga (2010: p. 75) describes Yuwan Amami, a Japonic language, as having a focus concord construction only in interrogative sentences. Declarative sentences lack focus concord entirely:

⁴The marker *ná* there is glossed as a conjunction as it seems to be a reuse of a conjunction, but apparently this reuse is (optional) extraction morphology for focus on non-subjects.

- (59) a. *warabi=nu un=nanti app-ju-i*
 child=SUBJ sea=LOC play-IPFV-NPST
 ‘A child **PLAYS IN THE SEA.**’ (statement with predicate focus)
- b. *kuri=ba=du jum-ju-i*
 this=OBJ=FOC read-IPFV-NPST
 ‘(I) read **THIS.**’ (statement with marked argument focus)

Interrogative sentences, on the other hand, have verb morphology which fuses focus concord marking and interrogative marking: there is one suffix for yes-no questions and one for content questions. The main verb of an interrogative sentence without argument focus takes a third, different marker.⁵

- (60) a. *uroo kun hon=ba=du jum-jur-ui?*
 2sg this book=OBJ=FOC read-IPFV-FOC.YNQ
 ‘Will you read **THIS BOOK?**’ (yes-no question)
- b. *uroo nuu=ba=ga jum-jur-u?*
 2sg what=OBJ=FOC read-IPFV-FOC.WHQ
 ‘**WHAT** will you read?’ (content question)
- c. *kuri=ba tu-ju-mi?*
 this=ACC take-IPFV-YNQ
 ‘Will you **TAKE THIS?**’ (no argument focus)
- d. * *kuri=ba=du tu-ju-mi?*
 this=ACC=FOC take-IPFV-YNQ
 [‘Is it **THIS** you’ll take?’] (*-mi* invalid with argument focus)

The use or non-use of argument-associated focus marking may depend in part on the grammatical properties of the argument the focus morphology is associated with. In Northern Ryukyuan languages, the presence or absence of the focus marker =*du* is affected by the subject-marking animacy hierarchy present in these languages. For example, in this data from Setouchi Amami (Shimoji 2018: p. 95), =*du* overrides the lower-animacy subject marker =*nu*, but does not even appear with the higher-animacy subject marker =*ga*.⁶

⁵I have split one of Niinaga’s examples in two to show the contrast more clearly.

⁶The subject marking animacy hierarchy in Japonic languages does not divide animate nouns from inanimate nouns, but rather *more* animate nouns from *less* animate nouns, and the division between those categories leaves some human nouns on the less animate side. ‘Younger brother’ here is not being treated as *inanimate*, merely *less* animate.

(61) Q: ‘Who broke the chair?’

A: i. *ʔakɪ:ra=ga k'jo:tfi:*

Akira=**NOM** broke

‘**AKIRA** broke it.’ (no focus marker with =*ga*-marked NP)

ii. *ʔutu:tu=du k'jo:tfi:*

younger.brother=**FOC** broke

‘**MY YOUNGER BROTHER** broke it.’ (focus marker replaces what would be =*nu*)

Conditions affecting the use of a focus construction may be structural as well. The Kaqchikel WH-agreement construction mentioned in sections 3.4 and 4.3 only appears under a somewhat peculiar set of circumstances: the morphology signals that the agent has been moved, but it only appears when the agent is not moved any farther than the immediate preverbal position. If there is any material intervening between the moved agent and the verb, the sentence appears without any WH-agreement morphology.

(62) a. *achike x-Ø-tj-ö ri wäy?*

who PERF-3.SG.ABSAGR-eat-**AGFOC** the tortilla?

‘**WHO** ate the tortilla?’ (argument focus on agent)

b. *achike kanqtzij x-Ø-u-těj ri wäy?*

who **actually** PERF-3.SG.ABSAGR-3.SG.ERGAGR-eat the tortilla

‘**WHO** actually ate the tortilla?’ (argument focus still on agent, but agent too far away to trigger WH-agreement)

For a much fuller discussion, and a theoretical treatment of this odd restriction from a generative perspective, see Erlewine (2016).

4.5 Multiple constructions with no solid distinction

Hartmann & Zimmermann (2007) argue that Hausa is a language with two focus constructions whose uses fully overlap. Hausa’s ex-situ extraction morphology construction and its in-situ construction that lacks clause-level morphology can both be used with any kind of focus.⁷ Both can be used for the answer to a WH-question:

(63) a. Q: ‘What is Kandè cooking?’

A: *kiifi nèè Kandè ta-kèè dafaawaa.*

fish FOC Kandè 3.SG-**ARGFOC**.IPFV cook

‘Kandè is cooking **FISH**.’ (ex-situ focus with extraction morphology)

b. Q: ‘From which city do you come?’

A: *naa taboo dàgà Bìrnin K’wànni.*

I.SG.IPFV come from **Bìrnin K’wànni**

‘I come **FROM BÌRNIN K’WÀNNI**.’ (in-situ focus without extraction morphology)

⁷Both of these focus constructions can appear with or without the argument-associated focus marker *nee~cee*, which similarly seems to lack a particular associated use.

Both can be used for corrective focus:

- (64) a. Q: ‘Was it his mother who died?’
 A: *aa’aa, màataĩ-sa cèe ta mutu.*
 no, **wife.POSS-3.SG.M FOC** 3.SG.ARGFOC.PERF die
 ‘No, it was **HIS WIFE** who died.’ (ex-situ focus)
- b. Q: ‘Is it twenty naira that you will pay if he makes it for you?’
 A: *a’a, zân biyaa shâ biyaĩ nèe.*
 no, **1.SG.FUT** pay **fifteen FOC**
 ‘No, I will pay **FIFTEEN**.’ (in-situ focus)

Both can be used for contrastive focus:

- (65) a. *koo hiiĩra baa àa yí, sai dai cí kawàì*
 and chatting IMPERS.SG.IPFV.NEG do, CONJ **eating** only
a-kèe ta yí.
 IMPERS.SG-**ARGFOC**.IPFV keep.on do
 ‘And no one is chatting; it is only **EATING** that they keep on doing.’ (ex-situ focus)
- b. A: ‘If a man is praying, you shouldn’t pass in front of him.’
 B: *tô, zân iyà bí ta baayan-sà?*
 alright, **1.SG.FUT** can follow in **behind-3.SG.M**
 ‘Alright, but can I pass **BEHIND** him?’ (in-situ focus)

Hartmann & Zimmermann give several additional situations where both ex-situ and in-situ focus constructions can be used, and claim that there are no cases where one is valid and the other is not. As a result, it is impossible to say that either of Hausa’s focus constructions has a specific meaning—both can be used for any kind of focus. Hartmann & Zimmermann do, however, point out a statistical difference: in-situ focus is significantly more likely to be used as the answer to a question, and ex-situ focus is significantly more likely to be used in other situations. So while we cannot say that each construction has a specific use, we can say that they are still *associated* with specific uses, though this association is loose and can be ignored. Hartmann & Zimmermann use this data to argue that there are no systems of the type I described above in section 4.1, and that ‘focus’ is a unitary grammatical category that lacks any subdivisions for focus constructions to selectively apply to, but this assertion does not seem to be crosslinguistically valid.

Chapter 5

Final remarks

We have seen through this thesis that within morphological argument focus constructions, there is a great deal of diversity, but also several clear typological categories. These categories contain unrelated and distantly-separated languages, which shows that they are more than simply artifacts of shared inheritance or areal influence. However, this thesis is merely a start down the path of characterising morphological focus marking constructions. I imagine this is not the last word that can be said even about morphological argument focus marking, and much more needs to be done regarding morphological marking of other types of focus and how they interact with argument focus morphology. I have mentioned these interactions when relevant in this thesis, to the degree I have information about them, but they deserve much more study than I can give them here.

One particular area in need of further investigation is how the typological categories set up in this thesis interact with non-focus-related typological features. This thesis is not a statistical study, and I have not attempted to measure anything about the statistical relationships between focus marking constructions and the overall typology of the languages they occur in. However, it seems on first glance that there is no *necessary* correlation between any of these types of focus marking constructions and the wider typology of the languages they occur in. To demonstrate this, I will give three examples of different focus marking constructions found in the same overall linguistic setting, and two examples of the same focus marking construction in very different linguistic contexts (plus a third hypothetical case).

Coptic and Hausa (Green & Reintges 2015) and Wolof (Robert 2016) all share a similar general typology when it comes to verbal inflection—all three mark TAM and subordination via a particle or complex that is syntactically separate from the verb it supplies information about. Hausa and Wolof additionally mark person agreement on this complex and have wholly uninflected verb roots; Coptic sometimes inflects its verb roots for person agreement (though it does not in this example).

- (66) a. *a te-f-sne de ɔl ən=ne-f-kees*
PERF DEF.F.SG-POSS.3.M.SG-sister then gather OBJ=DEF.PL-POSS.3.M.SG-bone
 ‘His sister then gathered his bones’ (Coptic)
- b. *Audù da Mūsā sun sàyi bak’ar̃ mōtā̀*
 Audù and Musa **3.PL.PERF** buy black.of car
 ‘Audù and Mūsā bought a black car’ (Hausa)
- c. *Moodu lekk na*
 Moodu eat **3.SG.PERF**
 ‘Moodu has eaten’ (Wolof)

However, they all have significantly different focus marking constructions. Coptic has a focus concord construction, where the presence of a focussed argument in situ triggers clause-level focus morphology (here a reuse of relativisation marking):¹

- (67) a. *er-βek e=tn?*
ARGFOC.2.F.SG-go to=where?
 ‘**WHERE** are you going?’
- b. *e=i-βek e=pə-topos ən-apa-mena nta-šlel*
ARGFOC=1.SG-go to=DEF.M.SG-shrine POSS-Apa-Mena CONJ.I.SG-pray
 ‘I am going **TO THE SHRINE OF APA MENA** to pray.’

Hausa has an extraction morphology construction. Only focussed arguments that are moved trigger clause-level morphology—in-situ focus does not:

- (68) a. *dà sàndā nè sukà dōkē sbi*
 with stick **FOC.M 3.PL.PERF.ARGFOC** beat 3.M.SG
 ‘They beat him **WITH A STICK**. (Moved focussed constituent with clause-level marking)
- b. *ā’ā, nā aikà dà littāfīn nē, bā takàrdār ba*
 no, **1.SG.PERF** send with book.DEF **FOC.M, NEG** paper.DEF NEG
 ‘No, I sent the **BOOK**, not the paper.’ (In-situ focus with no clause-level marking: with marking it would be **na* instead of *nā*)

Wolof has a WH-agreement construction, where the morphology is only triggered when the focussed argument is moved,² but that morphology also indicates what relation that argument has to the verb:

¹Unlike in some other languages with focus concord constructions, moved focussed arguments in Coptic do not trigger clause-level morphology; I argue in section 4.1 that Coptic has two separate focus constructions, where one involves in-situ focus and concord and the other involves ex-situ focus and no morphology at all.

²In the case of subjects, though, the surface position of the subject isn’t distinguishable from where it would be if it had not moved.

- (69) a. *Moodu moo ko lekk*
 Moodu 3.SG.SUBJFOC 3.SG.OBJ eat
 ‘It was MOODU who ate it.’ (subject in focus)
- b. *Mburu la lekk*
 bread 3.SG.COMPFOC eat
 ‘It was BREAD that he ate.’ (non-subject in focus)

Thus we see that languages that have the same kind of overall typology can show very different kinds of actual focus marking constructions. The inverse is also true—languages with very different overall typology can still have fundamentally similar focus marking constructions. As shown above in (67), Coptic has a focus concord construction involving relativisation morphology attached to the verbal TAM marker, quite separate from the verb. Old Japanese has its focus concord morphology directly bound to the verb.³

- (70) a. *yuki siro-si*
 snow white-MAIN.CLAUSE
 ‘Snow IS WHITE.’ (predicate focus)
- b. *yuki=zo siro-ki*
 snow=FOC white-ARGFOC
 ‘SNOW is white.’ (argument focus)

I have found at this time no clear examples of focus concord where the marker is simply a free particle. Paul & Whitman (2008)’s description of Mandarin’s *shi...de* focus construction suggests that *de* may function as a free particle focus concord marker in at least some cases, but the construction is complex and fairly variable, and more research is needed to clarify how its various permutations fit into this typology. Whether or not this is the case in Mandarin, the grammaticalisation pathway proposed by Heine & Reh (given in section 1.6) suggests that such constructions should be entirely unsurprising—for example, English could hypothetically reanalyse its cleft constructions as monoclausal while retaining the complementiser *that*:

- (71) a. *It’s bread that I ate.* (current English biclausal cleft)
- b. *‘S=bread that I ate.* (reanalysis and grammaticalisation of the copula as a focus marker, still hard to differentiate from clefting)
- c. *That I ate ‘s=bread.* (shift to allowing in-situ focus, creating a focus concord construction)
- d. *That I ate bread.* (optionality or loss of argument-associated focus marking)

(71c) is analogous to the situation in Old Japanese, and (71d) is analogous to the situation in Coptic, but with a very different form of the subordination morphology that becomes reanalysed.

Another area needing major work is the characterisation of individual languages within this classification scheme. Descriptions of focus marking in individual grammars can vary

³Data in this case from Hendriks (1998: pp. 156–157).

widely in depth and quality (and often are simply missing entirely), and may use terminology that non-specialists in the particular language or family may not be familiar with. The situation seems to have improved greatly in the last twenty years or so, but there is still much improvement that can be made, especially as regards clause-level focus morphology. Much of my purpose in writing this thesis is to provide a clear and crosslinguistically useful set of terms to better facilitate comparison of different languages and research on the nature of these phenomena themselves.

Appendix A

List of languages and their typologies

language	argument-associated morphology?	clause-level morphology?
Afro-Asiatic		
Coptic (Egyptian)	no?	focus concord
Hausa (Chadic)	yes	extraction morphology
Lele (Chadic)	yes	no
Oromo (Cushitic)	yes	no
Rendille (Cushitic)	yes	absence of PREDFOC
Niger-Congo		
Gungbe (Volta-Niger)	yes	no
Lelemi (Atlantic)	no	different per argument
Japonic		
Modern Japanese	yes	no
Old Japanese	yes	focus concord
Amami	yes	focus concord in questions only
Kikai	yes	no
Miyako	yes	Ikema variety: focus concord with one verb
Yaeyama	yes	no
Mayan		
Kaqchikel	yes	presence/absence WH-agreement
K'ichee'	yes	presence/absence WH-agreement

language	argument- associated morphology?	clause-level morphology?
Other		
Sinhala (Indo-European)	yes	focus concord
Chamorro (Austronesian)	no	WH-agreement
Maasai (Nilotic)	no?	WH-agreement
Ojibwe (Algonquian)	no	extraction morphology
Chickasaw (Muskogean)	yes	no
Ngandi (Gunwinyguan)	no	yes, of some kind
Kolyma Yukaghir (Yukaghir)	yes	focus concord with argument information
Tlingit (Na-Dené)	yes	yes, of some kind
Quechua (Quechuan)	no	no
Sandawe (isolate)	no	no

References

- Aboh, Enoch O. 2007. Focused versus non-focused wh-phrases. *Focus strategies in African languages: The interaction of focus and grammar in Niger-Congo and Afro-Asiatic* 191–287–314.
- Adamou, Evangelia, Matthew Gordon & Stefan Th Gries. 2018. Prosodic and morphological focus marking in Ixcatec (Otomanguean). *Information Structure in Lesser-described Languages: Studies in Prosody and Syntax*. 51–83.
- Aissen, Judith. 2011. On the syntax of agent focus in K'ichee'. *Proceedings of FAMILI*.
- Aso Reiko. 2010. Hateruma (Yaeyama Ryukyuan). In Shimoji Michinori & Thomas Pellard (eds.), *An Introduction to Ryukyuan Languages*, 189–227.
- Atlas, Jay David & Stephen C Levinson. 1981. It-clefts, informativeness and logical form: radical pragmatics (revised standard version). In *Radical pragmatics*, 1–62. Academic Press.
- Baier, Nicholas. 2018. *Anti-agreement*. University of California, Berkeley dissertation.
- Büring, Daniel. 2008. Towards a typology of focus realization. *Information structure*. 177–205.
- Cable, Seth. 2011. Insubordination in Tlingit: an areal effect. *Northwest Journal of Linguistics* 5(1). 1–38.
- Caboara, Marco. 2016. From Discourse to Grammar, but not all the way: Grammaticalization and redundancy of the Classical Chinese function word *也* in pre-Qin texts, with special attention to the Guodian bamboo manuscripts. In 漢語研究的新貌：方言、語法與文獻—獻給余羈芹教授, 447–460. 香港中文大學.
- Chung, Sandra. 1982. Unbounded dependencies in Chamorro grammar. *Linguistic Inquiry* 13(1). 39–77.
- de Swart, Henriëtte & Helen de Hoop. 2000. Topic and Focus. In Lisa Cheng & Rint Sybesma (eds.), *The First Glot International State-of-the-Article Book*. De Gruyter Mouton.
- Donohue, Mark & Anna Machlachlan. 1999. What agreement in Chamorro? *Toronto Working Papers in Linguistics* 16(2). <https://twpl.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/twpl/article/view/6283>.
- Eaton, Helen. 2010. Information structure marking in Sandawe texts. *The expression of information structure: A documentation of its diversity across Africa* 136.
- Erlewine, Michael Yoshitaka. 2016. Anti-locality and optimality in Kaqchikel agent focus. *Natural Language & Linguistic Theory* 34(2). 429–479.
- Erlewine, Michael Yoshitaka & Keely Zuo-Qi New. 2019. A variably exhaustive and scalar focus particle and prag-matic focus concord in Burmese. *Unpublished manuscript*.

- <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/b5e2/cad75737faa055a82ccf864eda9c55bc654f.pdf>.
- Erteschik-Shir, Nomi. 1986. Wh-questions and focus. *Linguistics and Philosophy* 9(2). 117–149.
- Evans, Nicholas. 2007. Insubordination and its uses. In *Finiteness: theoretical and empirical foundations*. Oxford University Press.
- Frellesvig, Bjarke et al. 2021. *The Oxford-NINJAL Corpus of Old Japanese*. <https://oncoj.ninjal.ac.jp> (11 February, 2021).
- Green, Melanie & Chris H. Reintges. 2015. Syntactic conditions on special inflection: Evidence from Hausa and Coptic Egyptian. *Lingua* 166. 127–154. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lingua.2015.07.002>.
- Hartmann, Katharina & Malte Zimmermann. 2005. Morphological focus marking in Gurruntum (Western Chadic). *Manuscript, Humboldt-University Berlin*.
- Hartmann, Katharina & Malte Zimmermann. 2007. In place–out of place: focus in Hausa. *On Information Structure, Meaning and Form: Generalizing Across Languages. Benjamins, Amsterdam*. 365–403.
- Hayashi Yūka. 2010. Ikema (Miyako Ryukyuan). In Shimoji Michinori & Thomas Pellard (eds.), *An Introduction to Ryukyuan Languages*, 167–188.
- Heath, Jeffrey. 1985. Discourse in the field: clause structure in Ngandi. In Johanna Nichols & Anthony Woodbury (eds.), *Grammar inside and outside the clause*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Heine, Bernd & Mechthild Reh. 1984. *Grammaticalization and reanalysis in African languages*. Hamburg: Helmut Buske.
- Hendriks, Peter. 1998. Kakari particles and the merger of the predicative and attributive forms in Old Japanese. In *Historical linguistics 1995: selected papers from the 12th international conference on historical linguistics, Manchester, August 1995*, vol. 161, 155.
- Hyman, Larry & Maria Polinsky. 2009. Focus in Aghem. *Information Structure: Theoretical, Typological, And Experimental Perspectives*. 206–233.
- Kanerva, Jonni M. 1991. Focusing on Phonological Phrases in Chicheŵa. In Sharon Inkelas & Draga Zec (eds.), *The Phonology-Syntax Connection*, 145–161. University of Chicago Press.
- Krifka, Manfred. 2008. Basic notions of information structure. *Acta Linguistica Hungarica* 55(3-4). 243–276. <https://doi.org/10.1556/aling.55.2008.3-4.2>.
- Kuroda Sige-Yuki. 1972. The categorial and thethetic judgment: evidence from Japanese syntax. *Foundations of Language* 9(2). 153–185. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25000656>.
- Lambrecht, Knud. 1994. *Information structure and sentence form*. Cambridge University Press. 408 pp.
- Lochbihler, Bethany & Eric Mathieu. 2008. Wh-agreement in Ojibwe: consequences for feature inheritance and the categorial status of tense. *University of British Columbia Working Papers in Linguistics, Proceedings of WSCLA, 13 and 14 Workshop on Structure and Constituency in Languages of the Americas*.
- Maslova, Elena. 2003. *A grammar of Kolyma Yukaghir*. De Gruyter Mouton. 628 pp. https://www.ebook.de/de/product/7734165/elena_maslova_a_grammar_of_kolyma_yukaghir.html.

- McWhorter, John. 1992. Ni and the copula system in Swahili. *Diachronica* 9(1). 15–46. <https://doi.org/10.1075/dia.9.1.03mcw>.
- Miyake, Marc. 2003. *Old Japanese: a phonetic reconstruction*. London: RoutledgeCurzon.
- Munro, Pamela & Catherine Willmond. 1994. *Chickasaw: an analytical dictionary*.
- Narrog, Heiko. 2019. Origin and structure of focus concord constructions in Old Japanese—a synthesis. *Glossa: a journal of general linguistics* 4(1). <https://doi.org/10.5334/gjgl.629>.
- Niinaga Yūto. 2010. Yuwan (Amami Ryukyuan). In Shimoji Michinori & Thomas Pellard (eds.), *An Introduction to Ryukyuan Languages*.
- Oomen, Antoinette. 1978. Focus in the Rendille clause. *Studies in Afroasiatic Linguistics* 9(1). 35–65.
- Paul, Waltraud & John Whitman. 2008. *Sbi ... de* focus clefts in Mandarin Chinese. *The Linguistic Review* 25(3–4). 413–451. <https://doi.org/10.1515/tlir.2008.012>.
- Pearce, Elizabeth. 1999. Topic and focus in a head-initial language: Maori. *Toronto Working Papers in Linguistics* 16(2).
- Pellard, Thomas. 2010. Ogami (Miyako Ryukyuan). In Shimoji Michinori & Thomas Pellard (eds.), *An Introduction to Ryukyuan Languages*, 189–227.
- Pulleyblank, Edwin G. 1995. *Outline of classical chinese grammar*. UBC Press.
- Robert, Stéphane. 2010. Focus in Atlantic languages. In *The expression of information structure. A documentation of its diversity across Africa*, 233–260. John Benjamins Amsterdam.
- Robert, Stéphane. 2016. Tense and aspect in the verbal system of Wolof. In Zlatka Guentchéva (ed.), *Aspectuality and Temporality: Descriptive and Theoretical Issues*. John Benjamins.
- Sánchez, Liliana. 2010. *The morphology and syntax of topic and focus: minimalist inquiries into the Quechua periphery* (Linguistik Aktuell). John Benjamins.
- Sasse, H. J. 1981. Basic word order and functional sentence perspective in Boni. *Folia Linguistica* 15(3–4). <https://doi.org/10.1515/flin.1981.15.3-4.253>.
- Schwartz, Anne & Ines Fiedler. 2006. Focal aspects in the Lelemi verb system. In *Workshop on the description and documentation of the Ghana-Togo-Mountain languages*.
- Schwarz, Florian. 2007. Ex-situ focus in Kikuyu. *Focus strategies in African languages: The interaction of focus and grammar in Niger-Congo and Afro-Asiatic*. 139–159.
- Shimoji Michinori. 2011. Quasi-kakarimusubi in Irabu. *Japanese/Korean Linguistics* 18. 114–125.
- Shimoji Michinori. 2018. Information structure, focus, and focus-marking hierarchies in Ryukyuan languages. *Gengo Kenkyu* 154. 85–121. https://doi.org/10.11435/gengo.154.0_85.
- Slade, Benjamin. 2018. History of focus-concord constructions and focus-associated particles in Sinhala, with comparison to Dravidian and Japanese. *Glossa: a Journal of General Linguistics* 3(1). <https://doi.org/10.5334/gjgl.241>.
- Stiebels, Barbara. 2006. Agent focus in Mayan languages. *Natural Language & Linguistic Theory* 24(2). 501–570. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11049-005-0539-9>.
- Takubo Yukinori and Hayashi Yūka. 2010. Kakarimusubi in Ikema Ryukyuan. <https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.15583.10409>.
- Vallduví, Enric & Maria Vilkuna. 1998. On rheme and kontrast. In *The limits of syntax*, 79–108. Brill.

- van der Wal, Jenneke. 2016. Diagnosing focus. *Studies in Language* 40(2). 259–301. <https://doi.org/10.1075/sl.40.2.01van>.
- Van Valin, Robert D. & Randy J. LaPolla. 1997. *Syntax: structure, meaning and function*. Cambridge University Press. 744 pp.
- Yasavul, Murat. 2013. Two kinds of focus constructions in K'iche'. *Semantics and Linguistic Theory* 23. 611. <https://doi.org/10.3765/salt.v23i0.3161>.
- Yiman, Baye. 1988. Focus in Oromo. *Studies in African Linguistics* 19. 365–384.
- Zimmermann, Malte & Daniel Hole. 2008. Predicate focus, verum focus, verb focus: similarities and difference. In *Workshop on predicate focus, uni potsdam & sfb 632*.