

FOCUS IN LOGBA¹

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This paper describes focusing strategies in Logba, a Na-Togo Kwa language. Logba, like other Kwa languages fronts a constituent that is to be focused. In addition, the constituent is morphologically marked. In the variety spoken in Alakpeti, the commercial centre of Logba, the morphological marker for term focus constituents is **ká**. There is an equivalent construction in the Tota dialect for argument focus in which an independent pronoun comes after the fronted NP. Moreover, the position in the clause where the focused constituent occurs varies depending on the category of the constituent that is focused. Term constituents (NPs and AdvPs) have a pre-subject focus position while for predicate focus; the bare form of the verb is placed at the VP initial position, after the subject constituent. This is unlike the situation that has been reported for other languages that use verb focus. I will describe the types of constituents that can be focused and explore any consequences for clause structure that may be associated with ex-situ focus constructions.

Cet article décrit les stratégies focales en Logba, une langue Kwa, Na-Togo. Logba, comme les autres langues Kwa, positionne le constituant portant le focus obligatoire au début de la proposition. De plus, ce constituant est morphologiquement marqué. Dans la variété Alakpeti, le centre commercial de Logba, le marqueur morphologique du constituant focalisé est **ká**. Le dialecte Tota possède une construction similaire pour l'argument focalisé, où un pronom indépendant suit le syntagme nominal (NP). Par ailleurs, la position du constituant focalisé dans la phrase dépend de la catégorie de celui-ci. Les syntagmes nominaux et adverbiaux (NPs et AdvPs) focalisés sont placés avant le sujet tandis que pour le focus de prédicat, la forme nue du verbe est mise en position initiale du syntagme verbal (VP), après le constituant sujet. Ceci est tout à fait différent de la situation qui a été rapportée pour les autres langues qui emploient le focus de verbe. Je décrirai les différents types de constituants qui peuvent être focalisés puis j'explorerai les éventuelles conséquences pour les structures phrastiques pouvant être associées aux constructions focales ex-situ.

0. INTRODUCTION: SOCIO-LINGUISTIC AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF LOGBA

Logba is one of the fourteen languages concentrated in the hills of the Ghana-Togo frontier which has been referred to as the *Togorestsprachen* (Struck 1912), Togo Remnant² languages or the Central Togo Languages (Kropp Dakubu and Ford 1988). These languages are now commonly referred to as the Ghana Togo Mountain (GTM) Languages (Ring 1995).

There are still differences in opinion on the classification of GTM languages. Westermann and Bryan (1952) consider these languages as an isolated group because these languages have vocabulary items which show a relationship to Kwa and a noun class system that is similar to Bantu languages. Greenberg (1963) classifies them among the Kwa sub-group B of the Niger-Congo family. Based on a comprehensive linguistic comparison, Heine (1968) sub classified them into KA and NA.³ Stewart (1989) assigned them to two branches of Kwa: The KA group belongs to the Left Bank branch together with Gbe including Ewe and the NA group to which Logba belongs is in the Nyo branch including Tano which includes Akan and Ga-Adangbe.

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² My interactions with most native speakers who are literate and understand the meaning of this term suggest to me that they feel uncomfortable when this word is used to describe their mother tongue.

³ According to Blench (2001) the KA and NA division by Heine is based on the word for 'flesh' in these languages.

Williamson and Blench (2000) suggest that the KA and the NA sub groups branch out from Proto Kwa. Blench (2001:5, this volume) points out the difficulty in establishing the GTM languages as a group in relation to Kwa, and suggests that these languages may be given a more comprehensive analysis if they are said to be a mixture of a single-branch of languages and small clusters.

1. DEFINING FOCUS

Crystal (2003) refers to focus as a term used in sentence analysis to distinguish between information assumed by speakers and that which is at the centre of their communication interest. The information that is focused refers to what the speaker believes is different from the ideas the hearers have and therefore a focusing strategy is employed as a corrective measure. It is for this reason that it is mostly assumed that the entity that is focused is 'new information'. However, Dakubu (2005) in a paper on the syntax of focus in Ga and Akan points out that newness of information must not be taken as necessarily the introduction of something 'previously totally unknown'. According to her, it may more likely mean the assertion of a choice among conflicting possibilities.

1.1 FOCUSING STRATEGIES IN LOGBA AND SOME KWA LANGUAGES

In Logba, focus is marked on an argument which is new and contrasts with what is previously known. The two dialects of Logba use different focusing strategies. In the Alakpeti dialect, **ká** is the particle used to mark argument focus and follows immediately the constituent that is focused. The Tota dialect uses an independent pronoun that comes after the NP that is in focus.

The structure of Logba with respect to focalization is typical of most Kwa languages spoken in the area, especially Akan and Ewe with which it is in contact. In focus constructions in these languages, the non verbal constituents in the clause can be fronted to the left periphery in the pre subject slot and marked with a focus marker. Ewe marks such fronted constituents with an argument focus marker **ye** or its variant **é**. Akan also uses the focus marker **na** which has a variant **a** (see Saah 1988, Ameka 1992).

The Kwa languages show some variation when it comes to predicate focus. Ewe stands out as a language which has a distinct predicate focus marker **ɔe** 'pFOC' which occurs at a predication initial position after a lexical subject as shown in (1).

- (1) **Kofi ɔe wò-lɔ̃ vi-a-wó**
 Kofi pFOC 3SG-love child-DEF-PL
 Kofi does love his children.

In Logba, as I will show below, when a verb is in focus, it is fronted to the immediate pre-verb position instead of pre-cpre position as is the case in the other languages including Akan.

2. USE OF FOCUS IN INTERACTION: PRELIMINARY ILLUSTRATION

As a preliminary illustration of focus constructions in Logba, I want to recount three interational situations in which I observed the use of focus during my fieldwork in Logba. One is an overheard conversation between two women in a street market when they both saw a porter stagger and fall. The relevant part of the conversation is given in (2).

A **Má-dzí má-dzì wúu**
 1SG-stand 1SG-call 2SGOBJ
 I stand, have I called you?

B **Àbobí iyé nyí**
 Moon 3SGIND be-that
 Moon is the answer.

A **Oo**
 No

C **Vòvòlì iyé nyí**
 shadow 3SGIND be-that
Shadow is the answer.

A **Iyè nyi**
 That's it.

The exchanges presented so far show the strategies in the two main dialects of Logba, the general Alakpeti strategy of particle marking and the Tota strategy of the use of independent pronominal form. A question and answer adjacency pair is one method generally used to determine focus (see e.g. Dik 1978, Ameka 1992). The semantics of a content question shows that the constituent that is represented by the question is what is important and the answer is the information that the questioner wants. The answer fills the empty slot that is in the question. It could be in contrast or a correction of an impression which the addressee thought the speaker had. These can be inferred from the two events above.

A third illustration of the use of focus constructions in interaction involves the questioning of a daughter by a mother after the latter heard the cry of a younger sibling. The background to the exchange in (5) below is that a couple was having dinner in the living room while their three children were eating in the kitchen. The smallest of the three cried aloud and their mother, on hearing the noise wondered what might have happened to him. She suspected that the older ones might have beaten him or taken something away from him and asked what had happened. The sister replied that pepper got into his left eye when he was eating a piece of meat and she was rather helping to remove the pepper from his eye. The conversation in Logba was as below:

- (5) Mother: **me ɔ-lá-bá xe o-lo-yuedi?**
 Q 3SG-PROG-come and 3SG-PROG-cry
 What is happening and he is crying?
- Sister: **tɔŋka ka ɔ-ve fe ɔ-kpɔnyi nu.**
 pepper FOC 3SG-pass into CM-eye in
 Pepper got into his eye.
- Mother: **me a-lá-bɔ ta-é(ɛ é)**
 Q 2SG-PROG-make give-3SGOBJ
 What are you doing to him?
- Sister: **gbali n-nu-gbali ta-é(ɛ é)**
 clean 1SG-PROG-clean give-3SGOBJ
 I am CLEANING it for him.
- mo-n-nu-lá n-nu-la-é(ɛ é)**
 NEG-1SG-PROG-beat 1SG-PROG-beat-3SGOBJ
 I am not BEATING him.

From the conversation, it can be seen that in the first answer given by the sister, she explained the situation to her mother. In the explanation, the sister felt pepper was the important information because it was the main cause of the boy's crying. Pepper got into his left eye when he was eating. So **ká**, an argument focus marker was used after the subject argument **tonká** 'pepper'. In the second question which was to find out what she was doing to solve the problem, she answered that she was cleaning the pepper from his (the brother's) eyes and as a follow up she said she was not beating him as his cries might have suggested to their parents. Since the actions **gbali** 'clean' and **la** 'beat' were the new information that contrast with what the parents might have thought, she focused these verbs using the predicate focusing strategy: The bare form of the verb was brought before the verb and the first singular bound subject pronoun. Where a negative structure was used, the pre verb form of the negative particle **mo** came to clause initial position.

The rest of the paper discussing these various structures is organised as follows: Section 3 deals with focus of term constituents and 4 is devoted to focus of pronominal constituents. Focussing of possessive constituents with a subsection on adpositional complements is discussed in section 5. Section 6 deals with predicate focus. Sections 3 to 6 describe the strategies used in the Alakpeti dialect. In section 7, dialectal differences with respect to focusing are discussed in which the differences in focusing strategies between the Tota dialect and the Alakpeti dialect are shown. The paper ends in section 8 with some concluding remarks.

3. FOCUS OF TERM CONSTITUENTS

Logba is an SVO language. In a basic clause, the subject is followed by the verb and in a transitive clause the verb is followed by a direct object. In a double object construction, both objects come after the verb and the Recipient comes before the Theme. The adjunct comes at the final position of the clause. The constituent to be focused is fronted and the focus marker **ká** follows the focused constituent immediately. The subject of sentence (6) is focused in (7) and the direct object is focused in (8).

- (6) **Seto ɔ-lá ebítsí-e**
 Seto 3SG-beat child-DET
 Seto beat the child.
- (7) Subject in focus
Seto ká ɔ-lá ebítsí-é
 Seto FOC 3SG-beat child-DET
 SETO beat the child.
- (8) Direct object
E-bítsí-é ká Seto ɔ-lá
 CM-child-DET FOC Seto 3SG-beat
 Seto beat THE CHILD.

In a clause with a ditransitive verb, the two post verbal arguments with Recipient and Theme roles can be focused individually. Examples (10) and (11) show the focusing of the Recipient and Theme arguments in example (9) respectively

- (9) A ditransitive clause
Ama ɔ-tá ɔ-sá-á e-feshi
 Ama 3SG-give CM-man-DET CM-sheep
 Ama gave the man sheep.

- (10) Recipient argument in focus
Ɔ-sà-a **ká** **Ama** Ɔ-tá **e-feshi**
 CM-man-DET FOC Ama 3SG-give CM-sheep
 Ama gave THE MAN sheep.
- (11) Theme argument in focus
E-feshi-é **ká** **Ama** Ɔ-tá Ɔ-sá-á
 CM-sheep-DET FOC Ama 3SG-give CM-man-DET
 Ama gave the man SHEEP.

It is only one constituent that can be focused in a clause. The two constituents (Recipient and Theme) cannot be focused in the same clause. This is illustrated in (12):

- (12) ***Ɔ-sà-a** **e-fèshì** **Ama** Ɔ-tá
 CM-man-DET CM-sheep Ama 3SG-give
 ?Ama gave THE MAN SHEEP

In adjunct focus constructions, the adjunct phrase, nominal or adverbial phrases, is fronted and marked with the focus marker **ká**. The adjunct phrase in (13) is **udántsi me** ‘this morning’ and in (15) it is **adzisiadzi** ‘always’. These are fronted and focused in (14) and (16) respectively.

- (13) **Ɔ-zó** **suku** **u-dantsi** **me**
 3SG-go school CM-morning this
 He/She went to school this morning
- (14) Adjunct nominal phrase in focus
U-dantsi **me** **ká** Ɔ-zó **suku**
 CM-morning this FOC 3SG-go school
 He/She went to school THIS MORNING
- (15) **O-tso-lá** Ɔ-dzá **atsu** **u-boenu** **adzisiadzi**
 3SG-HAB-take CM-fire 1PLU.IND CM-farm always
 He comes to take fire from our farm always
- (16) Adverb in focus
adzisiadzi **ka** **o-tso-lá** Ɔ-dzá **atsu** **u-boenu**
 always FOC 3SG-HAB-take CM-fire 1PLU.IND CM-farm
 Always he comes to take fire from our farm always

In sum, a term constituent in any grammatical role can be fronted for focus and is marked with the form **ká** ‘FOC’. There is no marker in the position of the fronted item in the rest of the clause. The rest of the clause follows the normal SVO order.

4. FOCUSING PRONOMINAL CONSTITUENTS

In this section, I will show how pronominal constituents are focused. In Logba, there are independent and bound pronouns. Independent pronouns are used for single word responses and emphatic forms. The bound pronouns in subject position are prefixed to the verb stem while the ones referring to the object noun are suffixed to the verb stem. The table below shows the independent pronoun, the bound subject prefix and object suffix.

To focus a pronominal constituent in Logba, be it subject or object, the independent form of the pronoun is used followed by the focus marker **ká**. The examples below show subject focus involving pronouns. Example (21) is the focused counterpart of (20) involving the first person. The sentences in (22) and (23) illustrate focus structures involving **awú** 2SG.IND and **ɔlé** 3SGIND respectively.

- (20) **Ma-z(a)-iva**
1SG cook thing
I cooked.
- (21) **Amu ká ma-z(a)iva**
1SG .IND FOC 1SG-cook-thing
I cooked.
- (22) **Awu ká a-z(a)-iva**
2SG.IND FOC 2SG-cook-thing
YOU cooked.
- (23) **ɔlé ká ɔ-z(a)iva**
3SG.IND FOC 3SG-cook-thing
HE/SHE cooked.

The strategies for focusing pronominals are thus not different from those of nominals generally. When the object argument is realised as a pronominal and it is to be focussed, the independent form of the pronoun is fronted and marked with **ká** 'FOC'. A gap is left at the site where the object pronoun is extracted. The examples in (24) and (25) show the focussing of first and second person objects.

- (24) 1SG OBJ
- a. **I-vagblawò-é ɔ-lá-rín**
CM-teacher-DET 3SG-beat-1SG
The teacher beat me
- b. **Amú ká i-vagblawò-é ɔ-lá**
1SG.IND FOC CM-teacher-DET 3SG-beat
I the teacher beat
- (25) 2SGOBJ
- a. **I-vagblawò-é ɔ-lá-wú**
CM-teacher-DET 3SG-beat-2SG
The teacher beat you
- b. **Awú ká i-vagblawò-é ɔ-lá**
2SG.IND FOC CM-teacher-DET 3SG-beat
YOU the teacher beat

The same focusing strategy is used in the case of 3SGOBJ. There are three independent forms for the third person. These are: **ɔlé** and **ó** for +HUMAN nouns and **tyé** for mass nouns and other nouns in the **i**-class. The form of the 3SG.IND pronoun that is selected depends on the feature of the noun to which reference is made. In example (26) the pronoun refers to a human so the appropriate **ɔle** form is used. In (27), however, the pronoun refers to **i-gbé** 'spear' belonging to the **i**-class and hence the pronoun **tyé** is selected.

- (26) 3SG OBJ (Human)
- a. **I-vagblawò-é** **ɔ-lá-ε (ɔ-lε-ε)**
 CM-teacher-DET 3SG-beat-3SG
 The teacher beat him/her.
- b. **ɔle** **ká** **i-vagblawò-é** **ɔ-lá**
 3SG.IND FOC CM-teacher-DET 3SG-beat
 HIM/HER the teacher beat.
- (27) 3SGOBJ (i-class noun referent)
- Iyé** **ká** **i-vanuvo** **mí** **bá** **dzata**
 3SG.IND FOC CM-hunter take kill lion
 IT the hunter used to kill lion

5. FOCUS IN POSSESSIVE CONSTRUCTIONS AND ADPOSITIONAL PHRASES

In this section, I will discuss the focusing of possessive constructions as well as adpositional phrases and their constituents. Possession is expressed by the juxtaposition of the possessor and the possessed noun phrase without any overt marker. Adpositional phrases are of two types: prepositional and postpositional phrases.

5.1. FOCUSING POSSESSIVE PHRASES

When a possessive phrase bears a subject or object relation, it is focused in the same way as a non-possessive NP, as described above. In example (28a) the possessive phrase **Esi afútàa** ‘Esi’s dress’ has the subject role and it is unmarked for focus. In (28b), however, the same possessive phrase token is the subject and it is marked for focus with **ká**.

- (28) a. **Esi a-futa-a** **a-bò** **u-tsa-a** **nu**
 Esi CM-cloth-DET AM-stay CM-room-DET in
 Esi’s cloth is in the room.
- b. **Esi a-futa-a** **ká** **a-bò** **u-tsa-a** **nu**
 Esi CM-cloth-DET FOC AM-be CM-room-DET in
 Esi’s cloth is in the room.

Similarly, (29a) shows a possessive phrase functioning as object and occurring in its unmarked position in the clause. (29b), on the other hand, illustrates the focusing of a possessive phrase with object function.

- (29) a. **Ma-mé** **Esi** **a-fúta-á**
 1SG sew Esi CM-cloth-DET
 I sewed Esi’s cloth
- b. **Esi** **a-fúta-á** **ká** **ma-mé**
 Esi CM-cloth-DET FOC 1SG-sew
 Esi’s cloth (no other cloth) I sewed

However, neither the possessor nor the possessum of the same possessive phrase can be extracted and focused individually. Sentence (30) demonstrates the extraction of the possessor **Esi** and in (31) the possessum, **afúta** ‘cloth’, is extracted and focused. The resulting sentences are however ungrammatical.

- (30) * **Esi ká ma-me a-fúta**
 Esi FOC 1SG-sew CM-cloth
 Esi I sew (her) cloth
- (31) ***A-fúta ká ma-me Esi**
 CM-cloth FOC 1SG-sew Esi
 Cloth I sew Esi's

In context, where a possessive phrase is in focus, the scope of the focus can be either over the whole phrase or it may be over one of the constituent phrases, i.e. over only the possessor or over only the possessum.

5.2 FOCUSING PREPOSITIONAL COMPLEMENTS

The preposition **kpe** is used to mark comitative and instrumental NPs in a clause. The complement of this preposition can be focused but depending on its role, slightly different strategies are employed. If the complement NP has a comitative role as in (32), it is fronted and marked with the focus particle **ká** 'FOC'. The preposition is left stranded with no marker in the place of the fronted complement, as shown in (32b).

- (32) a. **atsi-lá bɔl kpe suku ebít-wɔ a-mɔ**
 1PLU-beat ball with school child-PLU AM-that
 We played football with those school children.
- b. Focusing a comitative prepositional complement
suku ebít-wɔ a-mɔ ka atsi-lá bɔl kpe
 school child-PLU AM-that FOC 1PLU-beat ball with
Those school children, we played football with.

When an instrumental NP marked by the preposition **kpe** 'with', as in (33a), is focused, a different strategy is used. In this case, the clause is restructured as a manipulative serial verb construction (SVC) and the instrumental NP, bearing an object role of the manipulative verb, is fronted and marked by the focus particle **ká**. It is thus focused as any direct object, as shown in (33b).

- (33) a. **ma-fli peya kpe u-he ɔ-mɔ**
 1SG-cut pear with CM-knife AM-that
 I cut pear with that knife.
- b. Focusing instrumental NP in an SVC
u-he ɔ-mɔ ka ma-mi fli peya
 CM-knife AM-that FOC 1SG-take cut pear
That knife, I take cut pear.

It appears that the existence of the alternative SVC for coding instrumental situations preempts the focusing of oblique instrumental NPs in a clause involving the preposition.

5.3 FOCUSING POSTPOSITIONAL PHRASES

A postpositional phrase can be focused in the Alakpeti dialect. The scope of the focus marker is over the whole phrase. **ká**, the focus marker, is placed after the postpositional phrase. The postpositional phrases in (34) and (36) with an object function are focused like any other object as shown in (35) and (37) respectively.

- (34) **Adzo ɔ-zo u-ti-e wá**
 Adzo 3SG-go CM-father-DET side
 Adzo has gone to the father's place.
- (35) **U-ti-e wa ká Adzo ɔ-zo**
 CM-father-DET side FOC Adzo 3SG-go
 Adzo has gone to *the father's place*.
- (36) **O-bú i-lá-a etsí**
 3SG-ask CM-word-DET under
 He asked about the information.
- (37) **I-lá-a etsi ká o-bú**
 CM-word-DET under FOC 3SG-ask
The information he asked about.

Like the possessive phrase, neither the dependent NP nor the postpositional head can be extracted and focused individually.

6. PREDICATE FOCUS

There are different strategies employed in the Kwa languages for predicate focus (see Ameka 2010 for details). Some of the languages use a verb copy strategy with a copy of the verb placed in pre-core clause position like the focused term constituents. In some of such language the focused verb is marked with the same focus marker as for the term focus constituents. This is the strategy employed in Akan and in Fongbe, as shown in (38), from Lefebvre and Brousseau (2002:407). In (38b) the first verb in the SVC is focused and marked by the focus particle **wè**.

- (38) Fongbe (Kwa, Niger-Congo)
- a. **Kòkú sọ àsón ọ̀ yì àxì m̀è**
 Kòku take crab DEF go market in
 Koku brought the crab to the market.
- b. Verb focus in SVC
Sọ ẁè Kòkú sọ àsón ọ̀ yì àxì m̀è
 take it.is Koku take crab DEF go market in
 It is bringing the crab to the market that Koku did

In many of the Kwa languages, e.g. some varieties of Ewe, an alternative strategy is to nominalise the verb and focus it like any other nominal. A further device used for predicate focus in Ewe involves the use of a dedicated predicate focus marker in predication initial position after any lexical subject expression. What is striking is that predicate focus marking in Logba is similar in one important respect to the predicate focusing by predication initial particle marking strategy used in the inland dialects of Ewe. The focusing of the verb in Logba is done by placing the bare form of a copy of the verb before the verb complex (or predication) and after the lexical subject. The finite verb occurs with its markers such as the subject marking pronoun in its normal clause medial position. The b. sentences in (39) and (40) are the counterparts of the a. sentences containing predicate focus. The sentences in (41) are examples of polar questions in which the verb is focused.

- (39) a. **Tumpa o-blí u-tsá nù**
 Bottle 3SG-break CM-room in
 The bottle breaks in the room
- b. Verb focus
Tumpa blí o-blí u-tsá nú
 bottle break 3SG-break CM-room in
 The bottle *break* in the room
- (40) a. **A-kpakpla o-kú**
 CM-frog 3SG-die
 The frog died
- b. Verb focus (intransitive verb)
A-kpakpla kú o-kú
 CM-frog die 3SG-die
 The frog *died*.
- (41) a. Verb focus (transitive verb)
`I-na ɔkpe bá ɔ-bá a-fa-nú?
 CM-Person one come 3SG-come CM-house-in
 Did someone *come* to the house?
- b. Verb focus (intransitive verb with oblique argument)
A-gbé vɛ ɔ-vɛ fɛ u-tsá nú?
 CM-dog leave 3SG-leave into CM-room in
 Did dog *enter* the room?

One of the strategies for predicate focus in Logba is that of verb copy. The difference between Logba and some of the other Kwa languages is that the verb copy is placed at predicate initial position rather than at pre-core clause position. In the next subsection the focusing of predicates involving a verb and an obligatory complement is described.

6.1 FOCUSING OF OBLIGATORY COMPLEMENT PREDICATES

Logba has a number of classes of obligatory taking complement verbs. One class of these are labelled light verbs. The verbs belonging to this class have very little semantic content and they obligatorily take a specific object which contributes greatly to their meaning. Examples are **mí utrome** 'take work' **zɔ́ ikú** 'move song'. The meaning of the verbs **mí** 'take' and **zɔ́** 'move' are partial to the overall meaning of the verb expression which is 'work' and 'sing' respectively. Another group of obligatory complement taking verbs are verbs that have the generic object **iva** 'thing' when a general activity is expressed without any particular activity being referred to. Examples are **kpe iva** 'eat thing' **ɖu iva** 'sow thing' However, for specificity **iva** 'thing' can be replaced by complements that can collocate with these verbs. Examples are **kpe imbi** 'eat rice' **ɖu idzɔ́** 'plant yam'. Focusing of these verbs seems to involve the nominalization of the verb and its complement by permutation and fronting it before the verb complex. In addition a marker is left in the place of the complement as illustrated in (42b) and (43b).

- (42) a. **ɔ-mí u-trɔme kpe intsé**
 3SG-take CM-work with strength
 He worked with strength.

- b. Predicate focus in light verb construction
u-trɔme mí ɔ-mí é kpe intsé
 CM-work take 3SG-take marker with strength
 He *worked* with strength.
- (43) a. **ɔ-kpe imbi=é petæ**
 3SG-eat rice=DET all
 He ate all the rice.
- b. Predicate focus of obligatory generic complement verb.
Imbi=é kpe ɔ-kpi é petæ
 rice=DET eat 3SG-eat marker all
Eat rice he ate all.

An effect of the permutation of the order of the verb and object is that the resulting structure looks superficially like the verb copy focus structure where the verb form appears immediately before the verb complex. However, what this confirms is that for predicate focus the immediate pre-verb complex position is the site for the focused element.

6.2 FOCUSING VERBS IN SERIAL VERB CONSTRUCTIONS

A Serial Verb Construction (SVC) involves two or more verbs which are without an overt conjunction and share at least one core argument, the subject. Some share in addition an object also. The verbs share the same tense and may be marked for compatible aspectual categories. In Logba, the subject is cross-referenced on the initial verb as a grammatical requirement in the form of either a vowel or nasal prefix.

It is possible to focus the initial verb in a Serial Verb Construction. However, neither the non-initial verb alone nor all the verbs in the SVC can be focused together. The focusing of the initial verb is done by placing the bare form of a copy of the initial verb at predicate initial position. The initial verb in the series occurs with the pronoun prefixed to it in its proper place followed by the second verb. The initial verb of (44) below is focused in (45).

- (44) **O-tení zó ɔ-gbá yó**
 3SG-escape go CM-road skin
 He rushed to the road side
- (45) Initial verb in SVC in focus
Teni o-tení zó ɔ-gbá yó
 escape 3SG-escape go CM-road skin
 It is rushing to the road side that he did

Logba thus allows the focusing of verbs in SVCs but only the initial ones and uses the same strategy for verb focus as in monoverbal clauses. Up to this point we have concentrated on the Alakpeti dialect strategies for focus. This is the majority dialect. In the next section we look at the differences between Alakpeti and the Tota dialects.

7. DIALECTAL DIFFERENCES IN RESPECT TO FOCUSING

Out of the eight Logba settlements, the variety of the Logba language spoken in Tota, a settlement which is on top of Aya mountain, stands out and is distinct from the rest. The difference can be seen mainly in the phonology, and also in the strategy for focusing. We discuss the latter difference here.

7.1 TOTA DIALECT

7.1.1 Focus on Subject and Object

The term focus marker, **ká** is not used for term focus in the Tota dialect. There is an equivalent construction that is used to express focus. The prominent NP is fronted and is recapitulated by an independent form of the pronoun followed by the rest of the clause. Sentence (46) illustrates subject focus and in (47) the direct object is focused.

(46) Subject Focus in Tota dialect

Seto olé ɔ-lá e-bitsí-é
 Seto 3SG.IND 3SG-beat CM-child-DET
 Seto beat the child

(47) Object Focus in the Tota dialect

E-bitsí=é olé Seto ɔ-lá
 CM-child=DET 3SG.IND Seto 3SG-beat
 Seto beat *the child*.

The pronoun refers to the preposed NP and agrees with it in number. For example, in (48) below, the focused NP is plural hence the Plural form of the third person independent pronoun **alé** '3PLU.IND' is used. Similarly, in sentence (49) **iyé** the independent third person pronoun form for mass nouns is used as the focus constituent indicator as it refers to **imbi** 'rice', a mass noun.

(48) **e-bit-wɔ=ɔ alé Seto ɔ-lá**
 CM-child-PLU=DET {PLU.IND Seto 3SG-beat
 Seto beat *the children*.

(49) **i-mbi-é iyé ɔ-kpé**
 CM-rice-DET 3SG.IND 3SG-eat
 He/She eats *rice*.

The arguments in the sentence in the Tota dialect behave in similar ways in terms of extraction and focusability but postpositional phrases behave in a slightly different way.

7.1.2 Focusing postpositional phrase

We have seen that in the Alakpeti dialect the focus marker occurs after the postpositional phrase even if its semantics scope is over only the NP. In the Tota dialect, however, the focus indicating independent pronoun occurs inside the postpositional phrase after the NP and the scope of focus may be over the whole postpositional phrase, or just over the NP. The postpositional phrases in (50) and (52) are focused in (51) and (53).

(50) **Adzo ɔ-zɔ u-ti=é wá**
 Adzo 3SG-go CM-father=DET side
 Adzo has gone to the father's place.

(51) Postpositional phrase in focus

U-ti=é iyé wá Adzo ɔ-zɔ
 CM-father=DET 3SGIND side Adzo 3SG-go
 Adzo has gone to *the father's place*.

- (52) **O-bú** **i-ló = a** **etsí**
 3SG-ask CM-word=DET under
 He asked about the information.
- (53) Dependent NP of postpositional phrase in focus
i-ló = á **iyé** **etsi** **o-bú**
 CM-word-DET 3SGIND under 3SG-ask
The information he asked about.

8. CONCLUSION

The paper discusses focus construction in Logba showing how it operates in the two distinct dialects. In the Alakpeti dialect **ká**, is the focus marker but in the Tota dialect, term focus is marked, one could say by an independent pronoun that refers to an NP in focus. The focus marker, **ká**, in the Alakpeti dialect is placed after the postpositional phrase in focus. In the Tota dialect, the independent pronoun comes in between the NP and the postposition. There is no difference in predicate focus in both Alakpeti and Tota dialects: the bare form of the verb is placed at the VP initial position, after the lexical subject constituent, if expressed.

ABBREVIATIONS

AM	Agreement marker	CM	Class Marker
COMPL	Complementizer	COND	Conditional
CFP	Clause Final Particle	DET	Determiner
FOC	Focus	FUT	Future
NEG	Negative	OBJ	Object
PRESPROG	Present Progressive	Q	Question
SUBJ	Subject	1SG	1 Singular
3PLU.IND	3 Plural independent	3SG.IND	3 Singular independent
2SG.IND	2 Singular independent		

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