

Focus constructions in Kirundi

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Abstract

This study deals with sentence constructions and the pragmatic function of 'focus'. The study aims at providing an inventory of morphosyntactic focus constructions in Kirundi, a Bantu language of eastern Africa, using a classification suggested by Watters (2000). Four underlying morphosyntactic constructions are identified for Kirundi: word order, verbal marking, focus particles (words), and cleft constructions. The constructions are also discussed in terms of 'scope of focus', i.e. what part of the clause that is in focus, and their pragmatic type of "use". These two issues are addressed using the classificatory description of Dik's (1997a, b) Functional Grammar. The results show differences between constructions as to their scope and type, where some constructions (e.g. the verbal marker *-ra-*) are very limited in their range, while others have a wider distribution (e.g. cleft constructions). Conversely, some categories (e.g. 'term scope' and 'Replacing Focus') encompass many different constructions, whereas only a single construction may be used for others (e.g. 'predicate focus' and 'Rejecting Focus').

Note:

Some small corrections and adjustment have been made in the text (January 2002) / NE

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Abbreviations

1	first person
2	second person
3	third person
A	addressee
ASS	associative (connective)
CL	noun class marker
COP	copula
DO	direct object
EMPH	emphatic particle/word
FOC	focus, focus marker (affix)
IMPF	imperfective aspect
IO	indirect object
LOC	locative
NEG	negation
NPST	near past tense
O, OBJ	object
PAST	past tense
PERF	perfective aspect
PL	plural
PRES	present tense
S	subject or speaker
SG	singular
V	verb
PASS	passive
CONJ	conjunction

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Aim

This study is, as the title suggests, concerned with the description and discussion of different sentence/clause constructions and their pragmatic function. The pragmatic function of interest is one of ‘focus’. Focus, as the term is used in this essay, is concerned with the coding and identification (or interpretation) of certain information within discourse. Focus is thus not used as a grammatical or semantic category as is sometimes the case, but as a pragmatic one.

The information “in focus” is that piece of information that is inferred, asserted, confirmed, etc. by the speaker. As such, being, as it were, on a high level of abstraction, it would not be expected that there exists one single grammaticalised structure for it in a natural language, or at least a single grammaticalised focus structure would be rare. Rather, most languages would have, and do have, several ways of encoding ‘focus information’; i.e. they have an array of what will here be called ‘focus constructions’ or ‘focus construction types’, e.g. *It is Kirundi we are talking about* (a cleft construction) where ‘Kirundi’ is in focus.

The aim, quite simply, is to discuss different focus constructions in Kirundi, a Bantu language of eastern Africa (see 1.2 and 1.3, below), and the functions of these. Two underlying questions are of interest: (a) What distinct types of focus constructions are there in Kirundi (see 2.2.3 for a typological outline), and (b) Can the function or usage of these construction types be explained in terms of ‘scope of focus’ and ‘focus types’, and if so, how do these relate to one another (see 2.2.4 and 2.2.5 respectively for a closer description).

The typological presentation and categorisation of focus constructions will be done using the typological sketch presented by Watters (1979 and 2000; Thwing and Watters 1987). The theoretical framework of focus used is one developed within Functional Grammar (Dik 1978, 1997a, 1997b; Dik et al. 1981; Bolkestein 1998). However, this is first and foremost not a study of the theory of Functional Grammar, but of focus constructions in this particular language, and in some instances it is rather eclectic in its use of linguistic theories. The aim is not to assess or develop the theoretical framework of Functional Grammar in this context, but merely to use this as a tool of description, albeit an important one. Hence, the terminology is not always that found in Functional Grammar.

The hope is that such an analysis may be useful to the understanding of different structures connected with this pragmatic feature in Kirundi, and perhaps in Bantu languages in general.

1.2 Kirundi: speakers and classification

Kirundi (*Ikiruúndi*) is a Bantu language spoken by some 6 million people (Grimes 1996) in Burundi and adjacent parts of Tanzania and Congo-Kinshasa, as well as in Uganda. During recent years of turmoil in Burundi, people have moved or fled to neighbouring countries, mainly Tanzania, and so the present situation in the area, though seldom very stabile, is unclear.

Guthrie (1967) classifies Kirundi as D62, i.e. as belonging to zone D, group 60¹ together with Kinyarwanda (spoken mainly in Rwanda), Ikifuliro (spoken mainly in Congo-Kinshasa), Shubi, Kihangaza, Giha, and Kivinza (spoken mainly in Tanzania). Subsequent studies (Nurse and Philippson 1980; Schoenbrun 1997; Nurse 1999), based mainly on lexicostatistics, confirm this group with the exception of Ikifuliro. The Bantu languages of the Lake Victoria region is sometimes referred to as Great Lakes Bantu Languages (Schoenbrun 1997; Nurse and Muzale 1999), and within it the six-language group mentioned above is commonly labelled West Highlands (see Figure 1).

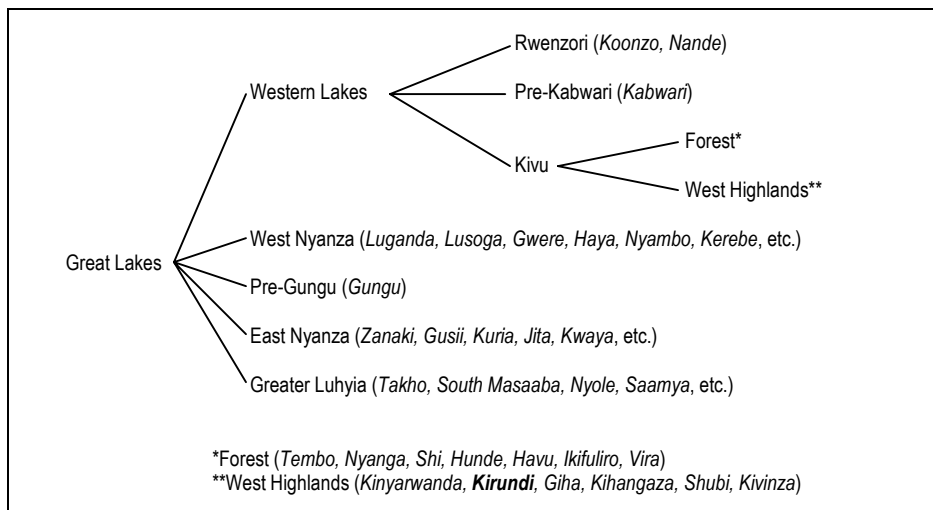


Figure 1: Outline classification of Great Lakes Bantu languages (based on Schoenbrun 1997:12-13). Individual languages are shown in parenthesis. Some language names of the source have been altered to comply with the terminology in this text.

Though the classification of West Highlands (= Guthrie's D60, excluding Ikifuliro) seems to be fairly confirmed, the internal classification of the group is less so. A lexicostatistical survey of the Bantu languages of East Africa (Nurse and Philippson 1980) shows a high lexical similarity within the West Highlands group compared with other Bantu language groups. Within West Highlands, the highest lexicostatistical correlate is between Kihangaza and

¹ The D60 group is sometimes referred to as J60.

Shubi, followed by Kihangaza and Kirundi, that is, the study shows a central trio of the languages Kirundi, Kihangaza and Shubi followed by the addition of Giha and then Kinyarwanda².

The classification of the Bantu languages, as with other language families, is, to put it mildly, the subject of some debate. This also holds true for the Great Lakes languages as presented above, though the West Highlands group seems fairly uncontroversial. Kirundi and Kinyarwanda, and sometimes Giha, are often written about as dialects of a single language but this, it seems, is not a view shared by the speakers themselves.

1.3 Kirundi: grammatical notes

As a Bantu language, Kirundi shares a number of grammatical features with languages such as Swahili, Zulu etc. In this section I will try to summarise some important grammatical points about Kirundi. Hopefully this will facilitate for readers not familiar with Bantu languages

The two most basic issues are nouns and verbs. Kirundi and other Bantu languages have rather extensive noun class systems (which more or less may be equalled with gender). The number of classes varies from language to language, but most have between ten and twenty noun classes, and Kirundi has about sixteen (it depends somewhat on how you classify them). Each noun is marked with a prefix which determines its noun class, e.g. *umugore* ‘woman’ consists of a stem *-gore* and a noun prefix *umu-*. This is the noun prefix of class 1. The nouns belonging to class 1 are singular and take their plural form from class 2 *aba-*, thus ‘women’ is *abagore*. Adjectives and numerals agree with the noun according to noun class, e.g. *ibi-tabo bi-tatu* ‘three books’. If a noun is subject of a sentence, the verb also receives an agreement prefix.

The verb consists of a verb stem and a number of affixes (predominantly prefixes). The verb stem may take a number of suffixed extensions marking passive, causative, applicative etc. In Kirundi, verb stems are often described as having two forms that differ in the aspectual distinction perfective—imperfective, e.g. the verb ‘hit’ has the forms *-kubita* (IMPF) and *-kubise* (PERF). The verb is obligatorily marked with subject and tense/aspect prefixes. Object prefixes are used ‘pronominally’, i.e. they are used when referring to an object that is not overtly expressed. If there is an object in the clause there can be no object marking on the verb. Of course, the object prefix agrees with the noun class of the object to which it refers.

The basic word order is SVO. Adverbials are either clause initial or clause final, and temporal adverbials tend to be placed initially especially if there is a locative adverbial which tend to be clause final.

² Kivinza was not included, as a 400-word list, which was used for all languages involved, was not obtained for this language. A 100-word list showed very high lexical similarity with Giha (Nurse and Philippson 1980:64).

1.4 Previous studies

On the subject of focus theory there is of course an extensive literature, too extensive to receive a thorough treatment here. For the purpose of this essay I have chosen the revised and expanded theory of Functional Grammar as presented and discussed in Dik (1997a and 1997b). Some use has also been made of Siewierska (1991). As for focus in Functional Grammar, this phenomenon has been discussed in several books and articles, which have been more or less important for this study, including Dik et al. (1981), Jong (1981), and Hannay (1983). Most of these earlier works on focus have to some extent been incorporated in Dik (1997a, b) on which the bulk of the theoretical text is founded, therefore less emphasis have been placed on these. In addition, Bolkestein (1998), which critically examines the description of the pragmatic functions of Topic and Focus in Functional Grammar, have been used to supplement Dik (1997a, b). Once again I would like to make clear that this study is not theory-dependent, but only uses some parts of Functional Grammar as a model of typological classification.

As for non-Functional Grammar treatments of focus, Lambrecht (1994), on focus theory in general, and Bearth (1999) and Watters (2000), on focus in African languages, have also been used.

Turning to the treatment of focus in other Bantu languages, the literature is not very extensive, if we exclude general grammars (which, I suspect, probably do not treat this subject in any detail). Some examples could be mentioned: Takizala (1971) discusses focus in relation to relative constructions in Kihung'an; Maw (1974) discusses the inter-clausal relationship expressed by verb morphology in Swahili; focus and the aspect system of Makua is discussed in Stucky (1979); Heath and Heath (1994) examines prepositioning of constituents in relation to topic and focus in Makaa. There are some additional works published though I have not managed to obtain them. None of the above is central to this study, and they are not mentioned in the text. More central to this study though are Bearth (1999) and Watters (2000). These articles discuss focus in African languages in general. In their own way these articles stress the importance of the study of focus in African languages to focus theory in general, as expressed by Bearth in saying that "currently available approaches to focus phenomena owe, almost as much as current theories of vowel harmony, tonal analysis and verb serialisation, to the observation of phenomena which appear to be specific to, or at least be particularly prominent in African languages" (Bearth 1999:121). As an example of this he mentions Watters' (1979) and Thwing and Watters' (1987) importance to the development of Dik's Functional Grammar.

There are, to the best of my knowledge, no previous studies made of focus in Kirundi. Not surprisingly, it is not even mentioned in the grammars of the language. Though there is not as much written on Kirundi as on the sister-language Kinyarwanda, there are several more or less satisfactory

grammars, e.g. Meeussen (1959), Stevick (1965), Rodegem (1967), Ntahokaja (1994). None of these mention focus.

1.5 Method, materials and limitations

One of the main motivations for this study was the possibility and challenge to work with informants in a language I do not know myself. The data was collected under a number of interviews with Mr. Abedi Nyandwi during the period August 2000 to May 2001. I am greatly indebted to him for his patience and enthusiasm. Needless to say this study would not have been possible without his help and tutoring. Any faults or misinterpretations are of course my own responsibility.

There were several strategies used to collect the data, and it might be of some interest to describe these here. Often, a sentence (in Swedish) would be presented free of context for translation. Such a sentence would be an unmarked sentence (of “narrative” type), displaying a basic word order pattern, e.g. (1). The sentence was then placed in a variety of contexts, e.g. it could be used as an answer to a number of ‘Question-word questions’ (wh-questions) (2).

- (1) The woman hit the thief on the head with a hammer.
- (2) What happened?
What did the woman do?
Whom did the woman hit?
With what did the woman hit the thief? *etc.*

Such questions would be varied at length. All the time the answer was supposed to be the whole of the original sentence (i.e. containing all the constituents/arguments of the original), though this sometimes leads to rather unidiomatic, though not ungrammatical, answers. The point is that the answers are not always structured in the same way as the original one depending on context.

Another way of giving the sentence a context was to invent what we might call a ‘narrative structure’ (3). (The context will be given in square brackets throughout the text.)

- (3) [She didn’t use a frying pan.] The woman hit the thief on the head with a hammer.

In such a sentence ‘a hammer’ is in focus, whereas ‘the woman’ is in focus in:

- (4) [It wasn’t the man.] The woman hit the thief on the head with a hammer.

A third way was to suggest variations of a sentence. That is, I would take a sentence in Kirundi and make some alterations to see what happens. In this way certain features of word order were discovered or clarified, e.g. the placement of *nihoniwe* and the post-verbal word order (see below).

The data was then classified into different focus construction types (cf. 2.2.3). After that, the construction types were “cross-matched” with two other types of typological schemas in order to classify each of the constructions according to ‘scope of focus’ (cf. 2.2.4) and ‘focus type’ (2.2.5).

I have tried to limit the amount of lexical and grammatical stuff in the data so that it may be easier to compare and to get “a feel” of the material even for those of us who do not know Kirundi. While this inevitably leads to certain limitations, the rewards for a study of this size outweigh the drawbacks.

The use of existing grammars has been very limited. As already stated, they do not mention focus or indeed very little of pragmatically related information. Therefore, most of the data has been collected using the methods described above.

Concerning the theoretical discussion it is important to note that as I have borrowed from different theoretical works, the terminology of the original has not always but predominantly that found in Functional Grammar. In the examples, words or phrases in focus are written in capital letters, context for the Kirundi examples are given within square brackets in English. Overt focus markers are marked in bold.

There are, naturally, limitations to the field of study possible to include in a small study like this. Therefore a number of strategies of data collection have not been used. It is worth mentioning that text corpuses have not been used, though this would probably be very rewarding. However, such a study would be quite different than the present one.

There are also limitations as to the data collected. The data does not include many question sentences (cf. Questioning Focus in 2.2.5). Further, no great effort has been made to investigate connections of focus to tense/aspect (cf. π -operators in 2.2.4); such an enterprise will have to wait. Finally, as the basis for the data is translations of sentences, there might be instances of focus constructions that have not surfaced in the data. This does not, to my mind, have any serious implications for the validity of the data present.

Section 2 presents the theoretical background of the essay. This part includes a short general description of some fundamentals of Functional Grammar (2.1), focus as a linguistics phenomena (2.2.1), and focus description in Functional Grammar (2.2.2 - 2.2.5). Section 3 presents the focus constructions found in Kirundi and an attempt to classify these. In section 4 and 5 the focus constructions are discussed from the point of view of ‘scope of focus’ (in 4) and ‘focus type’ (in 5). A short summary follows in section 6.

2 FOCUS AND FUNCTIONAL GRAMMAR

2.1 Presentation of Functional Grammar

This section aims to explain some fundamentals about Functional Grammar, and especially its views on and description of discourse and pragmatic information. The basis of Functional Grammar was laid out in Dik (1978), but all of the material in this study unless specifically stated comes from later revised and expanded presentation (Dik 1997a, and 1997b). To a lesser extent (mainly in earlier drafts) I have also made use of Dik (1978), Hoekstra (1981) and Siewierska (1991).

Functional Grammar (or FG for short), aims to “reconstruct part of the linguistics capacities” (Dik 1997a:2) of a natural language user (NLU), and more specifically the grammatical organisation of natural languages. Language is seen first and foremost as an instrument of verbal communication in social interaction. Two types of rule systems are distinguished (Dik 1997a:3):

- i. the rules which govern the constitution of linguistic expressions (semantic, syntactic, morphological, and phonological rules)
- ii. the rules which govern the patterns of verbal interaction in which these linguistic expressions are used (pragmatic rules).

Dik (1997a:4) says “the basic requirement of the functional paradigm is that linguistic expressions should be described and explained in terms of the general framework provided by the pragmatic system of verbal interaction”. Verbal interaction is itself viewed as part of the “higher” cognitive functions of NLU.

Pragmatics is seen in FG, and in functional theory in general, as “the all-encompassing framework within which semantics and syntax must be studied...there is no room for something like an ‘autonomous’ syntax”. (Dik 1997a:8). Pragmatic information can be divided into three types (Dik 1997a:10):

- i. *general information*: long-term information concerning the world, its natural and cultural features, and other possible or imaginary worlds
- ii. *situational information*: information derived from what the participants perceive or otherwise experience in the situation in which the interaction takes place
- iii. *contextual information*: information derived from the linguistic expressions which are exchanged before or after any given point in the verbal interaction.

The primary function of verbal interaction is to accomplish changes in the pragmatic information. These may be (a) additions, which complement or provide information; (b) substitutions, which replaces earlier information; (c) reminders, which are used to “bring back” information, which were possessed before, but not active at the moment.

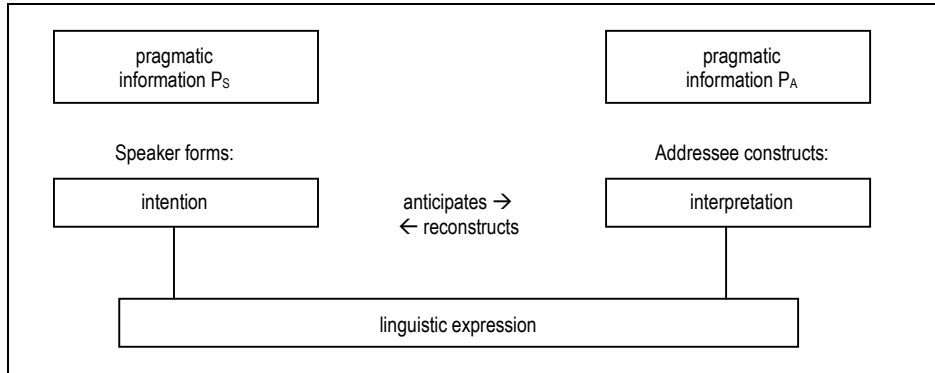


Figure 2: A model of verbal interaction (Dik 1997a:8)

P_s (Figure 2) is the pragmatic information of the speaker (S) and P_A the pragmatic information of the addressee (A). In verbal interaction, S has when speaking the intention to affect P_A. To accomplish this S must form an image of P_A, expressed as (P_A)_s, and try to anticipate A’s interpretation of the information. A’s interpretation is dependent on the current state of P_A and of A’s estimate of P_s, i.e. (P_s)_A. So “the interpretation [from the point of view of A] will only in part be based on the information which is contained in the linguistic expression as such. Equally important is the information which A already has” (Dik 1997a:9).

2.1.1 Nuclear predications: predicates and terms

In Functional Grammar the description of a linguistic expression starts with the construction of underlying or nuclear predications, although it should be emphasised that there is necessarily no linear or sequential order in the sentence production, which is expanded in different layers or levels (see 2.1.2 - 2.1.5). The nuclear predications consist of a set of predicates and a set of terms, and can be interpreted as designating a set of states of affairs (SoAs), where an SoA is something that can be said to occur, take place, or obtain in some world (Dik 1997a:51). All predicates and terms are parts of the “Fund”. The following assumptions are fundamental for the predicates:

- i. Predicates designate properties or relations.
- ii. All lexical items of a language are analysed as being predicates.

- iii. There are different categories and subcategories of predicates according to formal and functional properties, e.g. verbal (V), adjectival (A), and nominal (N) predicates.
- iv. There are both basic and derived predicates. Basic predicates may be stems, words, or combinations of words (i.e. an idiom – it cannot be semantically derived by productive rule).
- v. All basic predicates are listed in the lexicon.
- vi. Predicates are not regarded as isolated elements, to be inserted into independently generated structures, but they are considered to form part of structures called ‘predicate frames’. These predicate frames contain a “blueprint” for the predications in which they can be used. The structure of the predication is built up around the predicate frame. An example:

give [V] (x_1 :<anim>(x_1))_{Ag} (x_2)_{Go} (x_3 :<anim>(x_3))_{Rec}

Each predicate frame specifies:

the ‘form’ – here *give*

the ‘type’ – here V (verbal)

the ‘valency’ or ‘argument structure’. The argument structure of the predicate *give* is here specified as consisting of three argument positions, indicated by x_1 , x_2 , x_3 , carrying the ‘semantic functions’ of Agent (Ag), Goal (Go), and Recipient (Rec), where the first and the third argument are constrained by a ‘selection restriction’, i.e. <animate>.

- vii. Each basic predicate is semantically related to other predicates via ‘meaning postulates’.
- viii. Predicate frames are supposed to have no linear order. The actual linear order will only be defined at the level of the expression rules (see 2.1.6).

Term structures, which make up the other part of the Fund, follow the following assumptions:

- i. Term structures are all linguistic expressions that can be used to refer to entities in some world. Therefore a term may be a simple item such as a pronoun or a proper name, or a complex noun phrase (e.g. *a book that Jim told me nobody reads in the Western world, although it is rightly considered to be a masterpiece of Chinese literature*).
- ii. Term formation rules produce term structures conforming to the general schema:

$(\omega x_i: \varphi_1(x_i): \varphi_2(x_i): \dots: \varphi_n(x_i))$

where ω stands for one or more ‘term operators’, x_i symbolises the intended referent, and each $\varphi(x_i)$ is a predicate frame of which all positions except that occupied by x_i are filled by term structures. An example:

the big elephant that lives in the zoo
 $(d1x_i: elephant [N] (x_i)_\omega: big [A] (x_i)_\omega: live [V] (x_i)_{Pos} (d1x_j: zoo [N] (x_j)_\omega)_{Loc})$

This can be paraphrased as: “definite (d) singular (1) entity x_i , such that $(:)$ x_i has the property ‘elephant’, such that x_i has the property ‘big’, such that x_i has the property that it lives in the definite singular entity x_j , such that x_j has the property ‘zoo’”. Note that, as was the case with predicate frames, the order imposed on terms structures is not to reflect actual surface order.

A nuclear predication result when appropriate term structures are inserted into the argument slots of a predicate frame, e.g.:

(5) The hen laid an egg.
 $lay [V] (d1x_i: hen [N] (x_i)_\omega)_{Ag} (i1x_j: egg [N] (x_j)_\omega)_{Co}$

The predication describes the SoA of “definite hen laying indefinite egg” (Dik 1997a:62).

2.1.2 Core predication

Nuclear predications can be further specified or extended by grammatical ‘predicate operators’ (π_1) which specify the internal dynamics of the SoA (e.g. aspectual oppositions like perfective/imperfective), and lexical ‘predicate satellites’ (σ_1), which may say something of what kind of SoA it is (e.g. specifying Manner, Instrument, Direction). The result of these Level 1 extensions is the ‘core predication’, which can be represented as:

(6) π_1 [nuclear predication] σ_1

The assignment of Subject and Object, which in FG are used to capture different points of view, is also connected to the core predication.

2.1.3 Extended predication

At Level 2 the predication operators π_2 represent the grammatical means that locate the SoA with respect to temporal, spatial, or cognitive coordinates. The predicate satellites σ_2 represent the lexical means of the same (*yesterday, in the room, etc.*). We may represent this in the following way, where e_i symbolises the SoA involved:

(7) $\pi_2 e_1$: [core predication] σ_2

as in:

- (8) a. Past e_1 : [*lay (the hen) (an egg)*] (*in the garden*)
b. *The hen laid an egg in the garden.*

2.1.4 Proposition

The extended predication can be expanded into a proposition, which specifies a possible fact. This is at Level 3, where the predication operator π_3 captures the grammatical means and predicate satellites σ_3 capture the lexical means of the speaker's attitude towards the propositional statement (i.e. modality), e.g. *In my opinion, John is a fool.*

2.1.5 Illocutionary level, pragmatic functions and clause structure

The proposition can be extended into a full clause, and can be modified by operators π_4 and satellites σ_4 , called 'illocutionary operators', which specify the basic illocutionary force (such as Declarative, Interrogative, Imperative, etc.), and 'illocutionary satellites', which specify how the speaker wishes the speech act to be understood by the addressee.

The full clause can be assigned pragmatic functions, which, as we have already seen, specify the informational value of the different parts of the clause in relation to S's estimation of A's pragmatic information, i.e. (P_A)_S. Pragmatic functions are divided into functions related to topicality and functions related to focality.

Topicality is everything "pertaining to 'what the clause is about', given the informational setting in which it occurs" (Dik 1997a:68). Only terms may be assigned topical functions. There is a distinction made between different types of topical functions, 'New Topics', 'Given Topics', 'Sub-Topics', and 'Resumed Topics', which has consequences for the formal expression of underlying clause structures.

As for Focus, focality is "interpreted as signifying which constituents of the clause are communicatively the most important or 'salient', given the speaker's estimate of the pragmatic information of the addressee. Focal functions are attached to those constituents on which special emphasis is placed, or which are presented as being in contrast with other pieces of information which are either explicitly mentioned in the context, or are to be understood from that context" (Dik 1997a:68). In principle, the Focus function can be assigned to any part of an underlying clause structure. (A more thorough description follows in 2.2.)

2.1.6 Expression rules

After the pragmatic functions have been assigned to the underlying clause structure, expression rules are applied. Expression rules are concerned with (a) the form of constituents, (b) the order of these, and (c) the 'prosodic contours', i.e. tone, accent, and intonation. Dik (1997a:68-69) says:

Once the pragmatic functions have been assigned, we have reached the fully specified underlying clause structure which can now be input to the expression rule component. The idea is that this fully specified clause structure should contain all those elements and relations which are essential to the semantic and pragmatic interpretation of the clause on the one hand, and to the formal expression of the clause on the other.

As for the form of constituents, remember that, as far as content is concerned, underlying clause structures only contain basic and derived predicates, that is, lexical items and combinations of lexical items. All the "grammatical" elements of linguistic expressions, such as inflectional affixes, adpositions...and grammatical particles, will be spelled out by the expression rules as the result of the application of operator and (semantic, syntactic, and pragmatic) functions on these predicates.

The elements of the underlying clause structure that influences the form are treated as 'morphosyntactic operators'. In addition to the form, the order of constituents are assigned by 'placement rules', as the order of the underlying clause structure is not linear, as well as prosodic contours (tones, accent, and intonation).

2.2 Focus

2.2.1 A general account of focus

The purpose of this section is to present an introduction to the study of focus in general other than what is discussed in connection with FG (which will follow in 2.2.2). Sornicola (1999) gives three basic domains of definitions of focus commonly found in the literature:

- i. "focus refers to information nonpresent (or partially present) in linguistic or situational context (i.e. it is the contextually unbound (or partially unbound) unit or configuration of units)." (Sornicola 1999:376)
- ii. "focus (or rheme) is the part with the highest degree of communicative dynamism" (Sornicola 1999:376)
- iii. "focus is non-presupposed information" (Sornicola 1999:376)

Focus is most often associated with the concepts of 'new' versus 'given' (or 'old') information. In this view, focus marks new information. New information can be defined as information "the speaker assumes he is introducing into the addressee's consciousness by what he says" (Chafe 1976:30), where-

whereas given may be “knowledge which the speaker assumes to be in the consciousness of the addressee at the time of the utterance” (Chafe 1976:30). The association of focus with new information has been a central notion to most writers, e.g. Halliday (1967), Jackendoff (1972), Heine and Reh (1983), Givón (1984), Thwing and Watters (1987) and Lambrecht (1994).

The following examples may illustrate how new information is incorporated in discourse:

- (9) A: What did you do yesterday?
B: We WENT TO THE MOVIES.

The phrase “went to the movies” is new information, not previously known to A, and also the focus of B’s sentence. Halliday (1967) defines what he calls ‘information focus’ as

one kind of emphasis...whereby the speaker marks out a part (which may be the whole) of a message block as that which he wishes to be interpreted as informative. What is focal is “new” information; not in the sense that it cannot have been previously mentioned, although it is often the case that it has not been, but in the sense that the speaker presents it as not being recoverable from the preceding discourse. (Halliday 1967:204-5)

In the following the focus in B’s sentence is previously mentioned and recoverable from the preceding discourse:

- (10) A: We went to the movies yesterday.
B: You went to THE MOVIES?

The information A is giving contradicts B’s expectation or previous information and the focused part in B’s statement, “the movies” (marked by pitch accent), has already been mentioned. The information (i.e. “going to the movies”) may be new to B when A makes his statement, but it is not new in B’s statement. In sentence (11) ‘your father’ would represent new information though Chafe (1976:30) says it is “unlikely to assume that the addressee has no previous knowledge of his father”:

- (11) I saw YOUR FATHER yesterday.

Here ‘your father’ could perhaps be described as becoming ‘activated’ in the mind of the addressee (cf. Chafe 1976, Lambrecht 1994, Dryer 1996), as opposed to indicating ‘new’ information. But what about activation in the next example (from Lambrecht 1994:211):

- (12) A: Where did you go last night, to the movies or the restaurant?
B: We went to THE RESTAURANT.

As Lambrecht (1994:211) points out, the focused 'restaurant' in (12B) is not 'new', but 'given/old' information and, further, it does not need activation since it is already an activated argument in the discourse. A knows that B went either to the movies or the restaurant. What B does, could be described as selecting (Dik 1997a:334). Lambrecht (1994:211) uses "the somewhat vague terms 'unpredictable' and 'non-recoverable' to characterize the pragmatic relation between the focus element and the proposition. Though vague, these terms seem to capture the nature of focus relation better than the term 'new'".

Lambrecht (1994) defines focus as the element of a proposition whereby its presupposition differs from its assertion, or, in the absence of a presupposition, focus and assertion will coincide (Lambrecht 1994:213). Focus is seen as the complement of a presupposition and is often included in the assertion, and thus he "dissociates focus from the hopelessly vague 'new information', without denying the tendency of foci to evoke brand-new or inaccessible discourse referents" (Polinsky 1999:574).

A slightly different approach is the description of focus as representing the most important or salient information within a linguistic expression, as in FG. The importance of saliency has been adopted, not only within Functional Grammar (cf. Dik 1978, 1997a, 1997b, Dik et al. 1981, Jong 1981, Hannay 1983), but also in more or less related works (cf. Watters 1979, 2000, Thwing and Watters 1987, T. E. Payne 1997). It can be said that this description, in some sense, equates focus with emphasis (Watters 2000:214).

The association of emphasis and focus is also evident in some formalist descriptions (cf. Erteschik-Shir 1997:11-2). Byrne et al. (1993:ix) says that focus "represents a specific syntactic process" used to "achieve constituent focus". The question of markedness seems to be, perhaps loosely, connected to this phenomenon, as focus/emphasis usually coincide with specific marking, i.e. focus tends to be marked, but does not, in most theories, have to be (cf. Hyman and Katamba 1993, Bearth 1999:128-9).

A related issue is whether focus can generally be considered part of every clause in discourse. This is not necessarily an absolute criterion for an account of focus. A contrastive idea is that focus is a pragmatically *marked* function ('marked focus'), and so, some sentences/clauses may be described as focus-neutral (T. E. Payne 1997:268).

2.2.2 Focus in FG

This description of focus in FG is based on Dik (1997a and 1997b), and some of the suggested extensions and alterations made in Bolkestein (1998).

Pragmatic functions are understood as "functions which specify the informational status of the constituents in relation to the wider communicative setting in which they are used" (Dik 1997a:310). In 2.1.5 the basic dual distinction of topicality and focality was made. When a language gives a dis-

tinct encoding of a topical or focal element, they are assigned a pragmatic function connected with Topic or Focus respectively. We should point out though that Topic and Focus should not be seen as mutually exclusive, i.e. it is possible for these pragmatic functions to coincide (Sornicola 1999:380-381; cf. Parallel Focus in 2.2.5).

In 2.1, a description was given of the status of the pragmatic information of S and A in which S's linguistic expressions are organised according to his estimate of A's pragmatic information at the moment of speaking. Typically, S's linguistic expression will contain information presumed by S to be a part of P_A (A's pragmatic information), thus in a way "given" information, and some information that is "new" to A in the sense that it not part of S's estimate of A's pragmatic information, (P_A)_s. This "new" information is meant to affect P_A, modelled after (P_A)_s.

Partially corresponding to the given / new distinction, we may distinguish the dimensions of *topicality* and *focality*. Topicality concerns the status of those entities "about" which information is to be provided or requested in the discourse. The topicality dimension concerns the participants in the event structure of the discourse, the "players" in the play staged in the communicative interaction. Focality attaches to those pieces of information which are the most important or salient with respect to the modifications which S wishes to effect in P_A, and with respect to the further development of the discourse. The focality dimension concerns the "action" of the play. (Dik 1997a:312)

The two have, in Dik's description, a certain area of overlap as certain topical elements may be focal, such as in (from Dik 1997a:313):

- (13) A: Do you have any further news about John and Peter?
B: Well, JOHN seems to be all right, but PETER is really in deep trouble.

Here, 'John' and 'Peter' are already established as topical, but at the same time they are focal as signalling contrast. When some focal constituents are given "special treatment", they are assigned the pragmatic function of Focus (Dik 1997a:313). "Special treatments" (cf. 2.2.3) include:

- i. the constituent gets a special form
- ii. the constituent gets a special marker
- iii. the constituent gets a special position
- iv. the constituent gets a special prosodic contour
- v. otherwise leads to a selection of a special construction type.

As stated above, focal information is concerned with S's intention to affect P_A. This is not only done by adding "new" information, but also by "deleting" or "replacing" information which S assumes is not correct (or the like). Also, S may focus on information assumed already known by A, with the

purpose of putting special emphasis on the piece of information, e.g. (Dik 1997a:326):

- (14) A: I've just bought a Peugeot.
B: Did you buy a PEUGEOT?

2.2.3 Focus marking

This section has to do with how Focus is marked in the clause. The typological sketch or outline presented here and used in the study is based mainly on that suggested by Watters (2000:214-5) for the African languages. The description of focus constructions in Kirundi (in section 3) follows this typology in general. In this typology there are five basic 'headings' though it should be stressed that two or more may combine in one sentence:

- i. Prosodic marking: intonation, accent, tone ('prosodic prominence' in FG; "stress or tone placement, or duration" Heine and Reh 1983:7)
- ii. Word order: 'special constituent order' (FG), i.e. changes in basic word order
- iii. Verbal marking: changes in main verb forms, use of auxiliary verb forms, etc. (not distinguished as an independent category in Dik 1997a,b)
- iv. Special (focus) particles/words ('special Focus markers' in FG)
- v. Special focus constructions: cleft-type constructions ("subordination involving copula main clauses" Heine and Reh 1983:7-8)

Prosodic marking ('prosodic prominence' in Dik 1997a,b) is a rather wide field of marking strategies encompassing e.g. intonation and tone marking. Watters (2000:214) says "[s]ome African languages sometimes use intonation". This is perhaps an understatement. Most languages (all?), I am sure, use some kind of intonation pattern. This is not to say that it functions in the same way as in e.g. English or Swedish, on the contrary, languages prefer different strategies of focus marking, as in the case of Kirundi. It could be that this form of focus marking has been neglected in many studies of African languages, whereas other constructions have received more attention. Prosodic marking will receive minimal attention here too in connection with Kirundi (see 3.1 for some minor remarks).

Word order, or variations on the basic word order, will be discussed for Kirundi below. "Many languages in Africa use changes in the basic word order to mark focus" says Watters (2000:216), giving Turkana (Nilotic) as an example. Turkana is a VSO language, but a noun phrase may be focused by placing it before the verb, i.e. giving SVO or OVS word order.

In verbal marking the verb receives an additional marking (or change) which shows presence of a marked constituent, etc. Ejagham, a Bantoid language, exhibits this type (Watters 2000:215).

- (15) à-nâm bì-yù
 2SG.PERF-buy CL8-yam
 'She bought yams.'
- (16) à-nàm-é'' jě̃n
 3SG.PERF-buy-FOC what
 'WHAT did she buy?'
- (17) à-nàm-é'' bì-yù
 3SG.PERF-buy-FOC CL8-yam
 'She bought YAMS.'

The use of special particles or words ('Focus markers' in Dik 1997a) is not uncommon. Watters (2000) give an example from Aghem (a Grassfields Bantu language) where the use of the focus particle *nô* places focal emphasis on the phrase preceding it.

- (18) fú ki m̄ nyìŋ á kî'-bé
 rat it PAST run in CL7-compound
 'The rat ran in the compound'
- (19) fú ki m̄ nyìŋ **nô** á kî'-bé
 rat it PAST run FOC in CL7-compound
 'The rat RAN in the compound' (it did not walk)

The focus particle *nô* need not only be used on the predicate, but on terms as well. Cleft-type construction, i.e. cleft constructions or similar constructions, are very common in natural languages. Watters (2000:216) claims that probably all African languages have such constructions and some seems to have only this type. In FG, two types of cleft-type constructions are normally distinguished: cleft (20a) and pseudo-cleft (20b) constructions, which "appear in different forms, and may be used in different pragmatic and textual functions" (Dik 1997b:291).

- (20) a. It was John's watch that Peter found in the garden.
 b. What Peter found in the garden was John's watch.

This terminology is according to Dik (1997b:292-3) rather unfortunate for a number of reasons:

- i. The term 'Cleft' suggests that a sentence like (20a) should be considered as derived from a non-Cleft construction: *Peter found John's watch in the garden*. In FG, though, there is no such direct derivational con-

nection. The Cleft construction is viewed as having an underlying structure of its own.

- ii. The term 'Pseudo-cleft' suggests that (20b) is considered as secondary to or derived from (20a). In FG the Pseudo-cleft is treated as more prototypical than the Cleft construction in the sense of "more faithfully expressing the underlying structure which [is] postulated for both the Cleft and Pseudocleft construction" (Dik 1997b:292). Typologically, Pseudo-cleft constructions, or Pseudo-cleft-like constructions, are more common in natural languages than Cleft constructions (Dik 1997b:292).

In FG the term 'Cleft construction' is used for both (20a) and (20b)³. Other prototypical Cleft constructions could be:

- (21)
 - a. The thing that Peter found in the garden was John's watch.
 - b. That which Peter found in the garden was John's watch.
 - c. What Peter found in the garden was John's watch.
- (22)
 - a. John's watch was the thing that Peter found in the garden.
 - b. John's watch was that which Peter found in the garden.
 - c. John's watch was what Peter found in the garden.

The following characteristics are given for Cleft constructions (from Dik 1997b:293-4):

- i. A Cleft is an identifying construction, in which some entity, described by means of expressions such as *the thing the Peter found in the garden* is identified as being nothing else than another entity, described by such expressions as *John's watch*.
- ii. As is required for identifying constructions, the identifying expression (in this case: *John's watch*) is, in the prototypical case, definite rather than indefinite (cf. the case for Kirundi in 3.5).
- iii. The identifying expression (*John's watch*) constitutes the Focus of the Cleft predication; the other term (*what Peter found in the garden*) is the Given Topic of the construction.

2.2.4 Scope of focus

It seems clear that focality, in a typical example, does not apply to a full clause or sentence. Rather, it would seem more common that only a single constituent or a part of the clause would be in focus. This is referred to as 'scope of focus'. In FG the Focus function may be applied to any part of an underlying clause structure.

³ To distinguish the two, Dik (1997b) sometimes use the term 'Dummy-Cleft' for constructions like (20a).

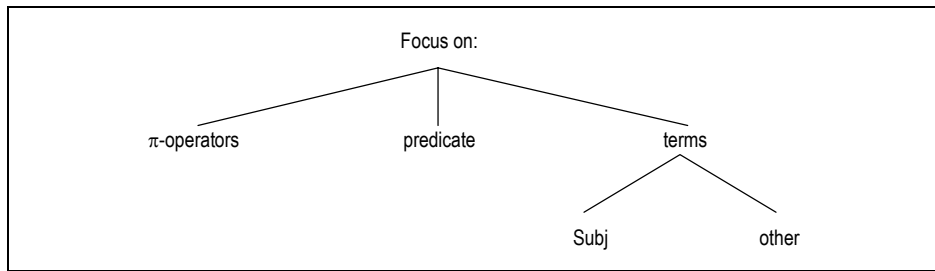


Figure 3: Scope of focus (Dik 1997a:331).

Figure 3 shows differences in scope which “may lead to different focusing strategies” (Dik 1997a:331). Focus may be placed on π -operators, e.g. on Tense, Mood, Aspect, Polarity operators, or on Number as in (23):

(23) I should like to have TWO cars. (Dik 1997a:330)

I may also be placed on the predicate (i.e. the verb) or part of the predicate:

(24) I didn’t PAINT the house, I REpainted it.

Focus may be placed on a term (which refers to an entity in some world) as in (25), or restrictors (26).

(25) I want a GREEN CAR.

(26) I want a GREEN car.

S tells A that he wants something, which we can manifest as x_i . A may identify x_i such that x_i has the property ‘car’ and the property ‘green’. These “clues” help A by restricting the set of potential referents of the term. Further distinctions in Figure 3 are made as “there may be a difference in strategy between focusing on the subject or on other terms” (Dik 1997a:331).

2.2.5 Focus types or communicative point

By ‘focus types’ I mean the different types of pragmatic uses that focus may have. The term is not wildly used in the literature, but seems to adequately describe its intended meaning. Dik (1997a,b) uses the label ‘differences in communicative point’.

Within FG, Dik presents focus strategies that “are distinguished according to communicative point” (Dik 1997a:331) and attempts to describe “what pragmatic reasons underlie the assignment of Focus to the relevant part of the underlying clause structure” (Dik 1997a:330). This will be elaborated on

here, as they will be used in the study of focus in Kirundi below. The following schema is presented in Dik (1997a:331ff), and is developed from Dik et al. (1981):

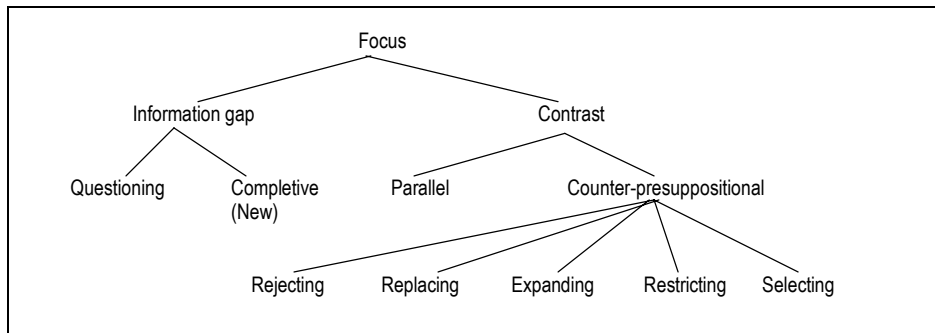


Figure 4: Focus types. Focus strategies according to communicative point (Dik 1997a:331).

According to this schema, the use of focus is either to fill an information gap or to express some kind of contrast. The focus types concerned with information gap are called Questioning and Completive Focus. In **Questioning Focus** the speaker (S) has an information gap and will ask the addressee (A), which he presumes has this information, a yes/no or a ‘question-word’ question. (All the following examples are from Dik 1997a.)

(27) What have you done with my money?

Completive Focus is in a way the opposite of Questioning Focus, in (28) B has a specific piece of information that (he assumes) A lacks, i.e. A has an information gap.

(28) A: [What have you done with my money?]
B: I SPENT it.

Apart from these two information gap functions, “all other Focus types... involve some kind of contrast between the Focus constituent and alternative pieces of information which may be explicitly presented or presupposed” (Dik 1997a:332). **Parallel Focus** is denotes “corresponding constituents in parallel constructions” (Dik 1997a:332) as in (29).

(29) John and Bill came to see me. JOHN was NICE, but BILL was rather BORING.

Even though John and Bill have already been introduced, and have the function of topic, they are focused here “due to the contrast between the two parallel statements” (Dik 1997a:327).

In the other contrastive focus functions the information is presented opposed to other information that S presupposes to be known by A. These types are in Functional Grammar called counter-presuppositional. In **Rejecting Focus** S assumes that A has information X for which S has the information not-X. As can be seen in these two examples, the scope of focus can vary independently of function.

- (30) A: John bought apples.
B: No, he didn't buy APPLES.
- (31) A: John grows potatoes.
B: No, he doesn't GROW them

Alternatively, the information is not only rejected but replaced, i.e. **Replacing Focus**:

- (32) A: John bought apples.
B: No, he bought BANANAS.
- (33) A: John grows potatoes.
B: No, he SELLS them.

Rejecting and Replacing Focus are quite similar and they are often combined.

- (34) A: John bought apples.
B: No, he didn't buy APPLES, he bought BANANAS. / No, he bought BANANAS, not APPLES.

Expanding Focus has the function of adding to a piece of information that is correct but not complete.

- (35) A: John bought apples.
B: John not only bough APPLES, he also bought BANANAS. / Yes, but he also bought BANANAS.

The opposite of Expanding is **Restricting Focus**, where a part of the information is correct but another part is not.

- (36) A: John bought apples and bananas.
B: No, he didn't buy BANANAS, he only bought APPLES. / No, he only bought APPLES.

Finally, in **Selecting Focus** S presumes that A has the information X and Y, one of which is correct but does not know which one. Such an example has already been given above in (12), but another example is given here.

- (37) A: Would you like coffee or tea?
B: COFFEE, please.

There are, of course, many different descriptions and labels used elsewhere. Some of these seem more central to the discussion here than others do. There seems little point in discussing the relevance of each of these, the labelling or the exclusion or inclusion of these or other types in this sort of study. The aim is not to test the validity of the focus description in Functional Grammar, but to use this tool in the description of focus in Kirundi. As D. Payne (1992) states:

Though Dik et al. [1981] intend that these Focus subtypes should have formal status in the theory of Functional Grammar, their classification is perhaps most helpfully viewed as an etic starting point in exploring focus phenomena in any specific language, given that different languages may treat some portion of the characterized situations as if they are the "same", while some other portion may be treated as "different". (D. L. Payne 1992:212)

We will be returning to this point in section 5, below.

3 FOCUS CONSTRUCTIONS IN KIRUNDI

In this section an attempt to describe the focus marking constructions in Kirundi will be made. It should be noted from the onset that a language does not necessarily have a well-defined number of focus constructions. Rather, this type of pragmatic process is probably rather productive, that is to say, these marking systems are generally not highly grammaticalised. The answer to the question 'Where did you go, the movies or the restaurant?' need not be limited to a small number of possible constructions. The answer may be 'It was the restaurant we went to' but perhaps most would just say 'We went to the restaurant' or simply 'The restaurant'. Thus, even if this had been a much larger study, it may not necessarily have exhausted all possible focus constructions.

The focus construction will be discussed under a small number of 'headlines', following Watters' typological sketch presented above (in 2.2.3). Variations of these constructions are discussed within the proper context.

Typically, all focus marking in Kirundi, with the exception of prosodic marking, could be categorised as consisting of either additional morphological marking or segment movement (or placement), or a combination of both. The morphological marking almost exclusively includes the copula *ni*. The *-ra-* verbal prefix already mentioned is most probably a late development as

a focus marker. Syntactically, two positions are important for focus marking purposes: the sentence initial position and the initial post-verbal position.

3.1 Prosody

As stated before, prosodic means of focus marking will not be dealt with in any detail in the study. However, some minor remarks will be given here, since it is an often-discussed feature of focus constructions in many languages. It should be stressed that the findings are preliminary and rather sketchy. The presentation is not intended to be exhaustive in any way.

3.1.1 Intonation

The intonation patterns using ‘pitch accent’, or ‘emphatic accent’, are often treated as major focus marking strategy. These play a role in focus constructions in Kirundi as well, in at least two ways. Generally, pitch accent is a property of all (most?) sentences, and seems to coincide with what Bolinger (1954:152, quoted in Lambrecht 1994:207) describes as “the ‘point’ of the sentence, where there is the greatest concentration of information”, which in the least marked case would equal the sentence or predicate (see below for a discussion of focus and basic word order). I use ‘least marked’ in stead of ‘unmarked’ to stress the important distinction that of course some type of prosodic or syntactic marking is always present, and it can some times be variations to this least marked construction that gives emphasis. The other use could be described as such a deviation from the basic/least marked pattern, either in a movement of the ‘peak’ of the pitch accent or an emphatic (‘exaggerated’) accent; e.g. in the following, where the focus in the basic sentence meaning ‘I bought a white car’ is change using pitch accent change/markings. The basic sentence (38) is followed by focally marked (39). (Mark: context is given in English within square brackets.)

(38) Naguze umuduga wera.
 1SG.NPST.buy.PERF car white
 ‘I bought a white car.’

(39) [What kind of car did you buy?]
 Naguze umuduga WERA.
 1SG.NPST.buy.PERF car white
 ‘I bought a WHITE car.’

In the first example (38), focus may be the whole sentence, e.g. as answer to “What happened?” or “What did you do?”, or the term *umuduga wera*, e.g. as answer to “What did you buy?” (cf. unmarked clauses, below). In the second example (39), the restrictor *wera* is in focus and the accent is the focus marker.

3.1.2 Tone

The second type of prosodic focus marking worth mentioning here is tone. It is discussed in a number of articles on Bantu languages, e.g. Takizala (1972), Hyman (1999). The basic underlying principle of tone marking the expectation that tone in tone languages such as Bantu languages equals stress in languages like English. Hyman (1999:152) says:

Such an expectation is fulfilled in many of the Eastern Bantu languages. In these languages there is an underlying opposition between marked H(igh) tone-bearing units vs. unmarked toneless ones. Whether these H tones come to the surface appears to depend in part on focus.

This is also attributable to Kirundi, being an Eastern Bantu language. However, Hyman continues:

The semantics of focus does not directly affect tone in Bantu. Instead there is always mediation by the grammatical system such that tone-focus correlations are imperfect at best. There are unmistakable [sic] correlation such that focus may be associated with a syntactic position (or construction), a morphological spell-out, or a phonological process. (Hyman 1999:152)

One such instance will be mentioned here. In Kirundi a verbal prefix *-ra-* (see below) has a focus marking function. When this form, which Meeussen (1959) calls 'disjoint', is used there is a high tone (or the 'lexical tone' (Dimmendaal 2000:164)) on the verb stem. When the *-ra-* is not used ('conjoint' in Meeussen 1959), the tone of the verb stem is low.

(40) nààmùrà ìntòrè
 1SG.PRES.pick.IMPF prune
 'Je cueille la prune.' (Meeussen 1959:119)

(41) n-d-ààmùrà ìntòrè
 1SG.PRES-FOC-pick.IMPF prune
 'Je cueille des prunes.' (Meeussen 1959:119)

(Mark: *-ra-* becomes *-da-* after /n/, the vowel is assimilated.)

The *-ra-* morpheme will be discussed separately and more extensively below. However, the question of tone will not be further discussed. There is nothing in the literature or in my own findings to suggest that tone has any direct focus function in Kirundi, but it seems, as Hyman argues, that it is dependent of morphosyntax rather than pragmatics.

3.2 Unmarked clauses and word order permutations

There are two especially interesting features concerning word order and focus worth discussing. That is, two types of constructions where word order plays a most important part. Naturally, word order also plays a role in e.g. cleft-type constructions, however these will be treated separately. The first concerns focus encoding in unmarked clauses with basic word order. The second is concerned with word order in ditransitive sentences and the like.

3.2.1 Unmarked clauses

In FG, as often is the case elsewhere as well, focus and focus constructions are treated as marked, emphatic constructions. In the present context however, it seems natural to address the subject of focus encoding in unmarked clause/sentence constructions. Let us look at a hypothetical dialogue example:

- (42) A: What did you do with the car?
B: I sold it.

Given the focus definition above, it cannot be said that B's answer does not contain a constituent with the pragmatic function of focus. At the same time it cannot be view as emphatic or marked in any way. On the contrary, it seems that a marked constructions would be ungrammatical.

- (43) A: What did you do with the car?
B: *I SOLD it.

In Kirundi it is sometimes the case that there are (at least) two optional answers, one unmarked of basic word order-type, and another more emphatic, both with the same pragmatic function.

- (44) a. [It wasn't in the mountains.]
umuhizi yishe imfyisi mw'ishamba
hunter 3SG..NPST.kill.PERF hyena LOC.forest
'The hunter killed a hyena in the forest.
- b. [It wasn't in the mountains.]
ni mw'ishamba niho umuhizi yishe imfyisi
COP LOC.forest EMPH hunter 3SG.NPST.kill.PERF hyena
'It was IN THE FOREST the hunter killed a hyena.'

Both (44a) and (44b) are taken from similar contexts and basically have the same pragmatic function, the main difference being the point of empha-

sis. This is just to show why basic word order may also encode focus. Of course, the sentences are not absolutely equivalent in focus use. Whereas in (44b) ‘in the forest’ is focused, in (44a) the focus is placed on the verb and the following constituents, or on the post-verbal constituents, i.e. ‘killed a hyena in the forest’ or ‘a hyena in the forest’.

The view of basic word order as a focus construction is perhaps not obvious. Sornicola (1999:375) supports this in saying “across natural languages there is a high tendency in unmarked sentences to map the contextually bound stretch of the sentence on to the subject and the contextually unbound stretch on to the predicate”.

Kirundi, as other Bantu languages, is an SVO language. Adverbials (satellites) usually follow the nuclear clause, i.e. S-V-O-Adv. If there are more than one adverbial, a time adverbial will be clause initial, e.g. Time.Adv-S-V-O -Loc.Adv, or else a time adverbial may be clause initial even if it is the only satellite.

3.2.2 Post-verbal constituent order

The position after the verb has special importance for the encoding of focus, e.g. in the unmarked case where the constituents bearing the focal information will follow the predicate. Further, it seems that, at least in some ditransitive constructions, the first position after the verb (predicate) is the most important information-wise. We may illustrate this by the following examples.

- (45) Yohani yahaye Maria igitabo
 Yohani 3SG.NPST.give.PERF Maria book
 ‘Yohani gave Maria a book.’

This is an example of the basic word order: S-V-IO-DO. It cannot perhaps be said that the indirect object *Maria* is more important than the direct object *igitabo*, but in the following the connection of focus and post-verbal constituent order is clearer.

- (46) Yohani yahaye igitabo Maria
 Yohani 3SG.NPST.give.PERF book Maria
 ‘Yohani gave Maria A BOOK.’

This is an emphatic construction, “violating” the basic word order pattern. The emphasis/focus is placed on the first constituent after the verb, in this case *igitabo*. If we want to put special emphasis on *Maria*, we will have to use another focus construction, e.g. a cleft construction (see 3.5). It is not only ‘proper objects’ that function in this way, however.

- (47) umugore yakibise inyundo igisuma k'umutwe
 woman 3SG.NPST.hit.PERF hammer thief LOC.head
 'The woman hit a/the thief on the head with a hammer.'

In this unmarked clause, both *inyundo* 'hammer' and *igisuma* 'thief' seem to function as some kind of indirect and direct objects, respectively. (The instrumental satellite *inyundo* is not introduced by a 'with' or the like, and it has the first position after the verb). Apart from these, the clause also has a location satellite *k'umutwe* 'on a/the head', which occupies the clause final position. If we call the position held by the IO in (47) as 'primary', as it holds the important first post-verbal position, each of the 'secondary' may take this position, and thus receive Focus marking.

- (48) umugore yakibise igisuma inyundo k'umutwe
 woman 3SG.NPST.hit.PERF thief hammer LOC.head
 'The woman hit A/THE THIEF on the head with a hammer.'

- (49) umugore yakibise k'umutwe inyundo igisuma
 woman 3SG.NPST.hit.PERF LOC.head hammer thief
 'The woman hit a/the thief ON THE HEAD with a hammer.'

A hierarchic structure appears when it is clear when that the focused constituent always appears in the 'primary' position post-verbally. The last logically possible orderings of the post-verbal constituents are ungrammatical.

- (50) *umugore yakibise inyundo k'umutwe igisuma
 woman 3SG.NPST.hit.PERF hammer LOC.head thief
- (51) *umugore yakibise igisuma k'umutwe inyundo
 woman 3SG.NPST.hit.PERF thief LOC.head hammer
- (52) *umugore yakibise k'umutwe igisuma inyundo
 woman 3SG.NPST.hit.PERF LOC.head thief hammer

Thus, a tentative hierarchy of the linear order of post-verbal constituents can be formulated:

- (53) (V): focused constituent > IO > DO > oblique

So, if there is no focused constituent, the indirect object will follow the verb. If the DO is focused the IO and any oblique constituent will follow in that order.

It could be argued that the phenomenon described here in a way reflects the fact that the non-focused constituents (probably) are viewed as already known to A, and that they are in some redundant. It would then follow that these constituents are not necessarily expressed, thus (54) (repeated from above) would in this way equal (55).

- (54) umugore yakibise igisuma inyundo k'umutwe
 woman 3SG.NPST.hit.PERF thief hammer LOC.head
 'The woman hit A/THE THIEF on the head with a hammer.'
- (55) ?umugore yakibise igisuma
 woman 3SG.NPST.hit.PERF thief
 'The woman hit A/THE THIEF.'

The reordering of post-verbal constituents is not always possible, rather it seems that it is almost only possible in ditransitive constructions (if we include e.g. *-kubita* 'hit' as a verb taking three arguments). Thus a transitive sentence with an oblique constituent cannot undergo the focusing strategy described above.

- (56) umuhizi yishe imfyisi mw'ishamba
 hunter 3SG.NPST.kill.PERF hyena LOC.forest
 'The hunter killed a hyena in the forest.'
- (57) *umuhizi yishe mw'ishamba imfyisi
 hunter 3SG.NPST.kill.PERF LOC.forest hyena

An oblique object may precede a 'full' object, but it does not result in any emphasis being placed on any constituent in the clause.

- (58) Yohani yarungitse ikete kwa Maria
 Yohani 3SG.NPST.send.PERF letter to Maria
 'Yohani sent a letter to Maria.'
- (59) Yohani yarungitse kwa Maria ikete
 Yohani 3SG.NPST.send.PERF to Maria letter
 'Yohani sent a letter to Maria.'

The oblique object *Maria* is introduced by the preposition-like *kwa* (cf. 45 above for the absence of any marking with indirect objects). The full object *ikete* 'letter' does not take such a particle. The sentences, at least from the point of focus and emphasis, are equivalent.

3.3 Verbal marking

The *-ra-* verbal morpheme has already been mentioned above in connection with tone and focus. The historic development of this morpheme is not clear to me (cf. Botne 1989/90, Nurse and Muzale 1999), but it has developed from some kind of temporal prefix into what might be called a focus marker, although it may have other functions as well.

In some contexts at least, it clearly has a focus marking function (Kimenyi 1989:9). Nurse and Muzale (1999:536) share this view in saying “in W[est] Highlands *-ra-* distinguishes verbal from postverbal focus forms”. However, they add that whereas post-verbal focus forms “require the explicit presence of a complement (Object, Adverbial, etc)...‘verbal focus’ forms stand by themselves” (Nurse and Muzale 1999:536n). The first part of this statement is of course by definition correct, but what about the other part. As can be in the example below (61), this is not an absolute requirement. It seems to me that it may be statistically correct to some extent but this is not governed by any morphosyntactic restrictions. Meeussen (1959) says more or less the same thing as Nurse and Muzale, but gives examples of *-ra-* constructions both with and without complements.

In my data as well, the focus use of *-ra-* seems restricted to verbal or predicate focus only. This means that the *-ra-* morpheme is only used when the scope of focus equals the verb/predicate. (In the examples I have glossed *-ra-* as FOC for want of better.)

(60) ejo yanyonze ukuboko kw’umwana
yesterday 3SG.NPST.break.PERF arm GEN.child
‘He broke the child’s arm yesterday.’

(61) [He didn’t hit (it).]
ya-**ra**-nyonze ukuboko kw’umwana ejo
3SG.NPST-**FOC**-break.PERF arm GEN.child yesterday
‘He **BROKE** the child’s arm yesterday.’

The reason for the tendency of verbal focus to stand by itself, and not as in (61), is that what follows, ‘the child’s arm’ in the example, is most often already known to A. Thus one would say ‘He didn’t hit, he broke (it)’. It is not correct to say that nothing follows the verbal focus construction, even if this usually (which is not statistically proven in any of the sources as far as I know) is the case.

3.4 Focus particles/words

In Kirundi there is one type of focus word (or particle), an emphatic marker (EMPH) which may be analysed as copula + relative (the construction is common in Bantu languages). However, this word has some syntactical

characteristics, which differentiates this word/particle from those discussed above (2.2.3) and which may lead one to regard this as a variant of the cleft-type constructions. This is for two reasons, (a) it seem to be predominately used in cleft constructions, though cleft constructions function without it, and (b) when it stands alone (not part of a cleft construction) it can only take the initial position (or rather, following an initial constituent), in fact, it can only stand together with a constituent that has the initial position in a basic word order sentence, e.g. a temporal adverbial.

(62) ejo umuhizi yishe imfyisi mw'ishamba
 yesterday hunter 3SG.NPST.kill.PERF hyena LOC.forest
 'The hunter killed a hyena in the forest yesterday.' / 'Yesterday, the
 hunter killed a hyena in the forest.'

(63) ejo **niho** umuhizi yishe imfyisi mw'ishamba
 yesterday **EMPH** hunter 3SG.NPST.kill.PERF hyena LOC.forest
 'The hunter killed a hyena in the forest YESTERDAY.' /
 'YESTERDAY, the hunter killed a hyena in the forest.'

In the first 'unmarked' sentence (62), *ejo* 'yesterday' has a sentence initial position, which is the usual position for temporal satellites (whereas location satellites tend to have sentence final position). In the second sentence (63), the emphatic particle *niho* (copula + locative relative) follows the temporal satellite *ejo*, placing emphasis on the preceding constituent. Thus, in this example it could not be used to place emphasis on any other constituent.

(64) *ejo umuhizi yishe imfyisi **niho** mw'ishamba
 yesterday hunter 3SG.NPST.kill.PERF hyena **EMPH** LOC.forest

A constituent cannot be moved to the initial position, unless it occupies this position in basic word order sentence (i.e. a Subject or a temporal satellite), except in a cleft construction. Therefore, it could be argued that this emphatic word/particle does not form a category of its own.

3.5 Cleft constructions

Cleft constructions commonly found in Kirundi are of the 'dummy-cleft' type, in the terminology of Dik. This means that the focused term is preceded by a copula *ni* and this construction occupies the clause-initial position. A typical cleft construction in Kirundi is found in (65).

(65) n'ukuboko kw'umwana yanyonze ejo
 COP.arm ASS.child 3SG.NPST.break.PERF yesterday
 'It was THE CHILD'S ARM he broke yesterday.'

The copula *n'* (= *ni*: the /i/ is deleted before a vowel) is followed by the term *ukuboko kw'umwana* 'the child's arm' which is then followed by the verb complex / predicate. In such constructions the term found in this preverbal position is in focus. The (adverbial) satellite *ejo* 'yesterday' can only appear in clause final position.

- (66) **ejo* **n'**ukuboko kw'umwana yanyonze
 yesterday COP.arm ASS.child 3SG.NPST.break.PERF
- (67) ***n'**ukuboko kw'umwana *ejo* yanyonze
 COP.arm ASS.child yesterday 3SG.NPST.break.PERF

In (65) we should analyse the phrase *ukuboko kw'umwana* as a single term (or a single NP) where *kw'umwana* is the genitive restrictor of *ukuboko*. It is possible to exclude this restrictor from the term in focus, and by doing so add extra emphasis to *ukuboko*.

- (68) **n'**ukuboko yanyonze (*ejo*) kw'umwana (*ejo*)
 COP.arm 3SG.NPST.break.PERF (y'day) ASS.child (y'day)
 'It was THE ARM of the child he broke (yesterday).'

This is a rather curious construction, as the term/NP seems 'split'. However, if we view the restrictor (cf. 2.2.4) as providing non-focal information, in that it acts as an identifier of the constituent which is the "main" focus of the clause, we could say that there is an option of placing the full term in focus or excluding the restrictor(s) from focus. Also, it seems that, in focus constructions, the ordering of satellites/restrictors is of less importance, as *ejo* 'yesterday' and *kw'umwana* 'the child's' in (68) may follow the verb in any order. This holds true for the other focus constructions as well (see 3.6).

The emphatic particle discussed in 3.4 seems to be frequently used in cleft constructions. From my data it seems that this is in fact its principal use. When it combines with the cleft, it follows the focused constituent(s).

- (69) **ni** mw'ishamba **niho** umuhizi yishe imfyisi
 COP LOC.forest EMPH hunter 3SG.NPST.kill.PERF hyena
 'It was IN THE FOREST the hunter killed the hyena.'

As was shown in 3.4, the emphatic particle is only used with a focused constituent in sentence initial position, as is also the case of the focus constituent in the cleft constructions.

3.6 Summary of focus constructions

Following the data presented in section 3, I suggest the following inventory of morphosyntactic focus (marking) constructions/strategies for Kirundi:

- i. word order patterns:
 - a.) unmarked clauses (incl. basic word order)
 - b.) post-verbal constituent reordering
- ii. verbal prefix *-ra-*
- iii. emphatic word/particle
- iv. focus constructions:
 - a.) cleft construction
 - b.) cleft construction with emphatic particle

The status of the emphatic word within this outline could be questioned. Here it is given a category of its own which seems more in line with Watters' typology. An overall observation worth mentioning is the validity of the term 'focus constructions', as the constructions presented above display an internally fixed structure. By this I mean that, whereas parts of the constructions out of focus allow for a certain amount of variation, the focused parts do not: the post-verbal focusing constructions are fixed in the linearity of constituents, the emphatic particle will only appear clause initially, etc. Only the verbal marker *-ra-* involves some kind of morphological change, the others use additional words and/or a fixed word order pattern.

4 SCOPE OF FOCUS IN KIRUNDI

Not all constructions can be used to put any part of the sentence in focus, but there are ways of singling out any part through some construction. Of the types of scope discussed in 2.2.4, I have, as already mentioned, not studied what in FG is called π -operators. The types discussed here are 'Predicate Focus', and the two types of 'Term Focus'.

4.1 Predicate Focus

In FG, Predicate Focus is restricted to the predicate/verbal part of the clause, e.g. focus on "predication and predicate operators" (Dik 1997a:330), as in (70), and focus on "the predicate [or] part of the predicate" (Dik 1997a:330), as in (71).

(70) John HASn't painted the house, he IS painting it right now.

(71) I didn't PAINT the house, I REpainted it.

This section discusses focus on the predicate/verb as in (71). In addition, focus constructions in which the predicate takes part is also included though focus "on the whole predication should not be confused with the whole predication being in focus" (Siewierska 1991:174). A schematic presentation of these two types is given in (72), where (72a) corresponds to the Predicate

Focus as discussed above, and (72b) to a scope of focus including the predicate and satellite terms.

(72) a. Predicate focus 1 (predicate/verbal):

S_{FOC}[V] O

b. Predicate focus 2 (predicate + term(s)):

S_{FOC}[V O]

It appears that scope of focus differentiating only the predicate/verb can only be coded by means of the verbal marker *-ra-*, as in example (61) and (73).

(73) A: [The hunter killed a hyena.]

B: (oya) **nti**-yayishe, ya-**ra**-ifashe
 (no) NEG-3SG.NPST.3SG:OBJ -kill.PERF 3SG.NPST-FOC-3SG:OBJ.catch.PERF
 'No, he didn't KILL it, he CAUGHT it.'

Predicate + term focus scope (72b) is coded as unmarked constructions. In (74), the focused part is the verb and the post-verbal constituents.

(74) A: [What did the woman do?]

B: umugore yakibise inyundo igisuma k'umutwe
 woman 1SG.NPST.hit.PERF hammer thief LOC.head
 'The woman HIT A THIEF ON THE HEAD WITH A HAMMER.'

The basic word order type may also be used when the entire sentence is in focus, thus B's answer in (74) may also be used as answer to a question like 'What happened?' in which case the scope of focus equals the whole sentence.

4.2 Term Focus

4.2.1 Focus on Subject

When the scope of focus is restricted to the subject, only cleft constructions or emphatic words are used. However, from the data it seems that the emphatic particle in such functions may not be used with the cleft.

(75) A: [Who bought three books?]

B: **ni** jewe nabiguze
 COP 1SG.PERSPRON 1SG.NPST.CL8:OBJ.buy.PERF
 'It was I (who/that) bought them.'

- (76) A: [Who hit the thief on the head with a hammer?]
 B: n'umugore yamukubise
 COP.woman 3SG.NPST.3SG:OBJ.hit.PERF
 'It was the woman (who) hit him.'
- (77) A: [Who hit the thief on the head with a hammer?]
 B: umugore niwe yamukubise
 woman EMPH 3SG.NPST.3SG:OBJ.hit.PERF
 'THE WOMAN hit him.'

4.2.2 Focus on other terms

Focus placement on terms other than the subject seems by far the most common type, and this is reflected in the available constructions. In Kirundi, all of the focus constructions presented here may be used, except for the verbal marker *-ra-*. In one way or another, examples of all of these have been presented above, and it will suffice to give some additional examples here.

- (78) Basic word order:
 A: [What did you buy?]
 B: naguze ibitabo (bitatu)
 1SG.NPST.buy.PERF PL.book (PL.three)
 'I bought (three) BOOKS.'
- (79) Post-verbal constituent order:
 yakoresheje ku nzu igiti⁴
 3SG.NPST.use.PERF LOC house wood
 'He used wood FOR THE HOUSE.' [but not for the wall, etc.]
- (80) Emphatic particle⁵:
 [It wasn't today.]
 ejo niho umuhizi yishe imfyisi
 yesterday EMPH hunter 3SG.NPST.KILL.perf hyena
 n'icumu mw'ishamba
 with.spear LOC.forest
 'The hunter killed a/the hyena in the forest with a spear
 YESTERDAY.'

⁴ The unmarked sentence would be *Yakoresheje igiti ku nzu* 'He used wood for the house'.

⁵ The interpretation of (temporal) satellites as being terms is not unquestionable. Dik (1997a:87) says: "We assume that both arguments and satellites are terms...In many cases this is rather straightforward: the satellite *in the garden* clearly contains a term referring to a particular garden...In other cases the term status of satellites may be less clear."

(81) Cleft construction:
 [It wasn't last week.]
 n'ejo yanyonze ukuboko kw'umwana
 COP.yesterday 3SG.NPST.break.PERF arm ASS.child
 'It was YESTERDAY (that) he broke the child's arm.'

(82) Cleft + EMPH:
 n'ejo niho yanyonze ukuboko kw'umwana
 COP.yesterday EMPH 3SG.NPST.break.PERF arm ASS.child
 'It was YESTERDAY he broke the child's arm.'

4.3 Summary of scope

The cleft construction is with respect to scope the most versatile, as it may be used to focus on any term of the clause. Five of the six construction types can be used to focus a non-subject term, whereas the *-ra-* marker is the most specialised in its use. The use of the emphatic word in terms of scope is not all that clear from the data, but it seems that its use differ from cleft constructions, with or without the inclusion of the emphatic word, in terms of scope. This is significant since it shows that the difference between these constructions is not merely a question of additional emphasis.

Table 1 Scope of focus in Kirundi. Types of focus constructions corresponding to scope of focus. (+ indicates correspondence, - indicates no correspondence, and ? indicates uncertain or inadequate data.)

	predicate	predicate + term(s)	terms	
			subj	other
unmarked clause	-	+	-	+
post-verbal reordering	-	-	n/a	+
verbal prefix <i>-ra-</i>	+	-	-	-
EMPH particle	-	-	+	+
cleft construction	-	-	+	+
cleft + EMPH part.	-	-	-	+

5 FOCUS TYPES IN KIRUNDI

Because of the nature of the data collected for this study, not all aspects of focus suggested in FG have been studied (cf. 1.4 and 4). As far as focus types or 'communicative point' is concerned, Questioning Focus and Parallel Focus have been left out (cf. 2.2.5). This is not a serious omission, however. Both Questioning and Parallel Focus differ in a way from other forms of Focus discussed here. Questioning Focus could be seen as a strategy for the retrieval of information rather than a strategy for the presentation / coding of information. The constructions of questions are deemed a outside of the

limits of this study. This subtype was not originally included in FG (cf. Dik et al. 1981:60).

Parallel Focus, e.g. (29) above, displays some characteristics more like Topic than Focus. De Vries (1995, quoted in Bolkestein 1998:202f) found that in four of five investigated Papuan languages, Parallel Focus received the same marking as Topic functions.

These two subtypes have thus been left out of the study. The following section will try to answer questions like What effect does the use of the focus types have on the focus marking types? Are there any patterns that link form to use?

5.1 Completive Focus

The term Completive Focus was introduced as a strategy of “filling in a gap” in the pragmatic information of A. This focus type is of course very common in discourse and Kirundi displays several constructions used for coding Completive Focus. First and foremost, unmarked constructions seem frequent.

- (83) A: [Where did you go yesterday?]
 B: twagiye kuri Bujumbura
 2PL.NPST.go.PERF LOC.be Bujumbura
 ‘We went to Bujumbura.’

As a kind of variant of unmarked constructions, post-verbal constituent reordering can also be used in a similar way in expressing Completive Focus, e.g. in example (84) which has previously been discussed.

- (84) A: [Where did the woman hit/strike the thief (with the hammer)?]⁶
 a) B: umugore yakibise k’umutwe inyundo igisuma
 woman 3SG.NPST.hit.PERF LOC.head hammer thief
 ‘The woman hit the thief ON THE HEAD with a hammer.’
 b) B: umugore yakubise k’umutwe w’igisuma
 woman 3SG.NPST.hit.PERF LOC.head ASS.thief
 ‘The woman hit the thief ON THE HEAD / ON THE HEAD of the thief.’

It could be argued that (84b) does not constitute an example of post-verbal constituent reordering, as the satellite *w’igisuma* ‘of the thief’ seems to have an oblique status not corresponding to other examples of this construc-

⁶ Perhaps the most common answer to such a question would simply be: *K’umutwe* ‘On the head’. While this is enlightening as to pinpointing the constituent in focus, it does not in this study constitute a ‘construction’ in the sense used here. If it would, it might be considered a sub-category of basic word order constructions.

tion type. It does, however, display the same linearity of constituents as (84a), and therefore it seems to accentuate the pattern discussed in 3.2.2.

Cleft constructions may also be used in some cases. The only examples in the data are constructions where the Subject is in focus.

- (85) A: [Who is sleeping?]
 B: n'umwana araryamye
 COP.child 3SG.PRES.PROG.sleep.PERF
 'It is the child (who/that) is sleeping.'

Interestingly, I have no examples of constructions with the emphatic particle or the combinatory construction of cleft + EMPH in Completive Focus use. In terms of emphasis then, it seems that constructions used for Completive Focus are those which may be thought of as 'less emphatic', whereas those which seem to carry more emphasis are not used.

5.2 Rejecting Focus

The predominant construction used in Rejecting Focus is the unmarked construction. In fact, no other construction was found in the data either for term or predicate focus.

- (86) A: [The hunter killed a hyena.]
 B: (oya) umuhizi nti-yishe imfyisi
 (no) hunter NEG-3SG.NPST.kill.PERF hyena
 'No, the hunter did not kill A HYENA.'
- (87) A: [The hunter killed a hyena in the forest.]
 B: (oya) umuhizi nti-yishe imfyisi mw'ishamba
 (no) hunter NEG-3SG.NPST.kill.PERF hyena LOC.forest
 'No, the hunter did not kill a hyena IN THE FOREST.'
- (88) A: [The hunter killed a hyena.]
 B: (oya) nti-yishe
 (no) NEG-3SG.NPST.kill.PERF
 'No, he did not kill it.'

5.3 Replacing Focus

Replacing Focus, whereby S has information which contradicts and replaces the information assumed available to A, can be expressed by unmarked constructions (89)⁷, post-verbal constituent permutation (90), verbal marking

⁷ Repeated from 3.2.1.

(91)⁸, emphatic word (92), cleft (93) and cleft + emphatic particle (94) constructions.

- (89) [It wasn't in the mountains.]
 umuhizi yishe imfyisi mw'ishamba
 hunter 3SG.NPST.kill.PERF hyena LOC.forest
 'The hunter killed a hyena in the forest.'
- (90) A: [The woman hit the thief on the head with a polo mallet.]
 B: oya, (umugore) yakubise inyundo (igisuma k'umutwe)
 NEG (woman) 3SG.NPST.hit.PERF hammer (thief LOC.head)
 'No, she (the woman) hit (the thief on the head) with A
 HAMMER.'
- (91) A: [He hit/stroke the child's arm yesterday.]
 B: [He didn't hit (it).]
 ya-ra-nyonze ukuboko kw'umwana (ejo)
 3SG.NPST-FOC-break.PERF arm ASS.child (yesterday)
 'He BROKE the child's arm (yesterday).'
- (92) [It wasn't to Peter]
 Maria niwe yarungikiwe ikete ejo na Yohani
 Maria EMPH 3SG.NPST.send.PASS.PERF letter yesterday to Yohani
 'MARIA was sent a letter (to) yesterday by Yohani.'
- (93) A: [Yohani writes poetry.]
 B: oya, ni Maria yanditse ibicuba
 NEG COP Maria 3SG.PRES.write.PERF poetry
 'No, it is MARIA (who/that) writes poetry.'
- (94) A: [It wasn't last week.]
 B: n'ejo niho yanyonze ukuboko kw'umwana
 COP.yesterday EMPH 3SG.NPST.break.PERF arm ASS.child
 'It was YESTERDAY he broke the child's arm.'

5.4 Expanding Focus

The constructions used in Expanding Focus types for term focus must here be considered to belong to the unmarked construction type. There is an addition of words roughly meaning 'only' in some cases⁹, both with term (95b) and predicate focus (96).

⁸ Repeated from 3.3.

⁹ The relationship of these words and focus types is not examined more closely here, though 'only' is often discussed in conjunction with focus in the literature.

(95) a) A: [The hunter killed a hyena.]
 B: (oya) yishe imfyisi n'inzovu
 (no) 3SG.NPST.kill.PERF hyena CONJ.elephant
 '(No), he killed a hyena AND AN ELEPHANT.'

b) A: [The hunter killed a hyena.]
 B: (oya) **nti**-yishe imfyisi **yo nyene**
 (no) NEG-3SG.NPST.kill.PERF hyena **only**
 yishe n'inzovu
 3SG.NPST.kill.PERF CONJ.elephant
 '(No), he didn't only kill a hyena, he also killed AN
 ELEPHANT.'

(96) A: [The hunter caught a hyena in the forest.]
 B: **nti**-yayifashe **gusa** ya-**ra**-yishe
 NEG-3SG.NPST.3SG:OBJ-catch-PERF **only** 3SG.NPST-FOC-3SG:OBJ.kill.PERF
 'He didn't only catch it, he also KILLED it.'

5.5 Restricting Focus

The only occurrence of Restricting Focus in the data were represented by the unmarked construction, again with the addition of a word corresponding to 'only'. The use of the verbal marker *-ra-* has not been established, though its use here might seem probable.

(97) A: [The hunter killed a hyena and an elephant.]
 B: (oya) umuhizi yishe imfyisi **yo nene**
 (no) hunter 3SG.NPST.kill.PERF hyena **only**
 '(No), the hunter only killed A HYENA.'

5.6 Selecting Focus

As would be expected, Selecting Focus need not be particularly emphatic as it is easily understood which constituent is selected and in focus. Thus, unmarked constructions (98a) seem predominant in this use, although cleft constructions with (98c) or without (98b) the emphatic word can also be used, depending on the degree of emphasis placed on the focused constituents.

(98) A: [Where did you go, to the cinema or the restaurant?]
 a) B: twagiye kuri restaurant
 2PL.NPST.go.PERF LOC.be restaurant
 'We went to the restaurant.'

- b) B: **ni** kuri restaurant twagiye
 COP LOC.be restaurant 2PL.NPST.go.PERF
 'It was THE RESTAURANT we went to.'
- c) B: **ni** kuri restaurant **niho** twagiye
 COP LOC.be restaurant EMPH 2PL.NPST.go.PERF
 'It was THE RESTAURANT we went to.'

5.7 Summary of types

In this section, the correspondence between six types of focus types and the focus constructions presented above was investigated. Replacing and to a lesser extent Completive Focus proved to be the most versatile as to the sheer number of constructions possible in the functions. It would be interesting to examine if these types are more frequent and if it is this phenomenon that is reflected in the data. Of construction type, the unmarked was the most frequent strategy among the focus types. This is not surprising as focus is often completely deducible from context and it might be thought that only certain situations call for additional clarification. It might also reflect a choice of emphasis where more than one construction type is possible. The use of post-verbal constituent permutation and the emphatic word seem restricted to only a few focus types. Again, the result suggest a division between cleft and cleft + emphatic word constructions.

Perhaps the most striking observation from Table 2 is that no two focus types share the same set of construction types (with the possible exception of Expanding and Restricting Focus).

Table 2 Focus encoding in Kirundi. Types of focus constructions corresponding to focus use. (+ indicates correspondence, - indicates no correspondence, and ? indicates uncertain or inadequate data.)

	Information gap	Contrast				
	Completive	Rejecting	Replacing	Expanding	Restricting	Selecting
unmarked clause	+	+	+	+	+	+
post-verbal reordering	+	-	+	-	-	-
verbal prefix -ra-	-	-	+	+	- (?)	-
EMPH particle	-	-	+	-	-	-
cleft construction	+	-	+	-	-	+
cleft + EMPH part.	-	-	+	-	-	+

6 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This study has been concerned with sentence constructions and the pragmatic function of focus in Kirundi. In section 3, the morphosyntactic focus constructions in this language were identified and classified using a typological sketch presented in Watters (2000). Four basic construction types were identified: (1) constructions using word order marking only (the unmarked case is included here), (2) verbal marking, (3) focus words/particles, and (4) cleft-type constructions. Word order patterns both the unmarked clause type and the post-verbal reordering of constituents. Verbal marking includes only the verbal prefix *-ra-*, which is the only purely morphological focus marking devise. The combination of focus words and cleft constructions was also discussed under the heading of cleft constructions.

The established construction types were compared with 'scope of focus' and 'focus types' (or 'communicative point') as presented and developed by Simon C. Dik within the theoretical framework of Functional Grammar (Dik 1997a, 1997b). The scope of focus is concerned with what part of a clause/sentence is presented as being 'in focus'. While any part of a sentence may be focused, most constructions in Kirundi are used to focus terms, subject or other terms, while the verbal prefix *-ra-* is the only possibility for the expression of predicate focus. While there is a strictness in the connection between scope and the construction types (cf. Table 1) this is not the case for focus types (cf. Table 2). As can be seen in the table, Replacing Focus may be expressed using any construction type, whereas others have only been attested for on or a few construction types. The unmarked construction is in this sense dominant as it may be applied to any focus type. While it is sometimes the case that some constructions may be used to add (more) emphasis (e.g. in 5.6), the results show, e.g. in the case of clefts and emphatic words, that there are also other parameters involved, i.e. the use of a cleft and the use of cleft + emphatic word is not always optional (e.g. in 4.2.1 and 5.1).

Though Kirundi is perhaps not extravagant in its set of focus constructions, there are some interesting features worth drawing attention to again. Firstly, the verbal prefix, which seems to be a rather late development and is most 'specialised' in its use in predicate focus only. Secondly, the use of post-verbal constituent reordering is interesting, whilst not unique for Kirundi (e.g. Swahili has similar ways of focus/emphasis marking), it would be interesting to enlarge the study of this phenomenon. Lastly, the use of emphatic words (again common in other Bantu languages as well) seems partly to form a category of its own, whilst partly coinciding with cleft construction types.

While it has never been suggested that these results exhaust the possibilities of focus constructions, scope and focus types in Kirundi, it is hoped that

a foundation of focus study has been laid and that the general picture presented here is valid in this respect. It is also the hope of the author that the data analysed here may be useful in comparative work involving other Bantu languages.

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