Out-of-focus Encoding in Gur and Kwa[*]

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This paper investigates the structural properties of morphosyntactically marked focus constructions, focussing on the often neglected non-focal sentence part in African tone languages. Based on new empirical evidence from five Gur and Kwa languages, we claim that these focus expressions have to be analysed as biclausal constructions even though they do not represent clefts containing restrictive relative clauses. First, we relativize the partly overgeneralized assumptions about structural correspondences between the out-of-focus part and relative clauses, and second, we show that our data do in fact support the hypothesis of a clause coordinating pattern as present in clause sequences in narration. It is argued that we deal with a non-accidental, systematic feature and that grammaticalization may conceal such basic narrative structures.

Keywords: ex-situ *focus, focus marker, relative clause, conjunction, grammaticalization*

1   Introduction

This paper deals with a phenomenon concerning marked *ex-situ* focus constructions which is known from several West African languages, among them Hausa, Fulfulde and others, namely the existence of structural parallels of the out-of-focus part of these constructions with relative (and other subordinated) clauses and partly also with narrative clause types. In Hausa for example, there are two morphosyntactical codings for the perfective and the

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imperfective aspect: a canonical paradigm A and a paradigm B which is not only found in focus constructions, but also in relative clauses (henceforth RC) and – with respect to the perfective aspect – in narrative clauses (henceforth NC). This second marked paradigm is often called the "relative" form of the respective tense/aspect and its distribution has been discussed by some authors (cf. Bearth 1993, Frajzyngier 2004).

Not so well-known up to now is the fact that similar phenomena, comprising relative and/or narrative structures in pragmatically and linguistically marked sentences, do also appear in languages of the Gur and Kwa group studied by us. In these *ex-situ* focus constructions, a focused nominal constituent takes the sentence initial position.[1] We will present their structural features in relation to the language-specific relative and narrative clause types and discuss the implications of our findings from diachronic and comparative perspectives.

Our language sample consists of five Ghanaian languages which we have been investigating in the field in 2004. Its Gur part consists of the two languages Buli and Dagbani which belong to different subgroups of the Oti-Volta branch and which are spoken in the Northern area of Ghana. The three Kwa languages considered are also of different subgroups and comprise the Inland dialect of Ewe (Gbe), the Asante dialect of Akan (Potou Tano) and the Togo mountains language Lelemi (*na*-Togo). The status of the Togo remnant or Togo mountains languages as belonging to Gur or Kwa seems however still under discussion according to Rongier 1997 (cited in Blench 2001).

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[1] For reasons of space, we will use the term focus constituent here also in those cases in which only part of the clause constituent is focal and we will discuss in this paper only affirmative constructions. In-situ focus phenomena are not considered here at all.
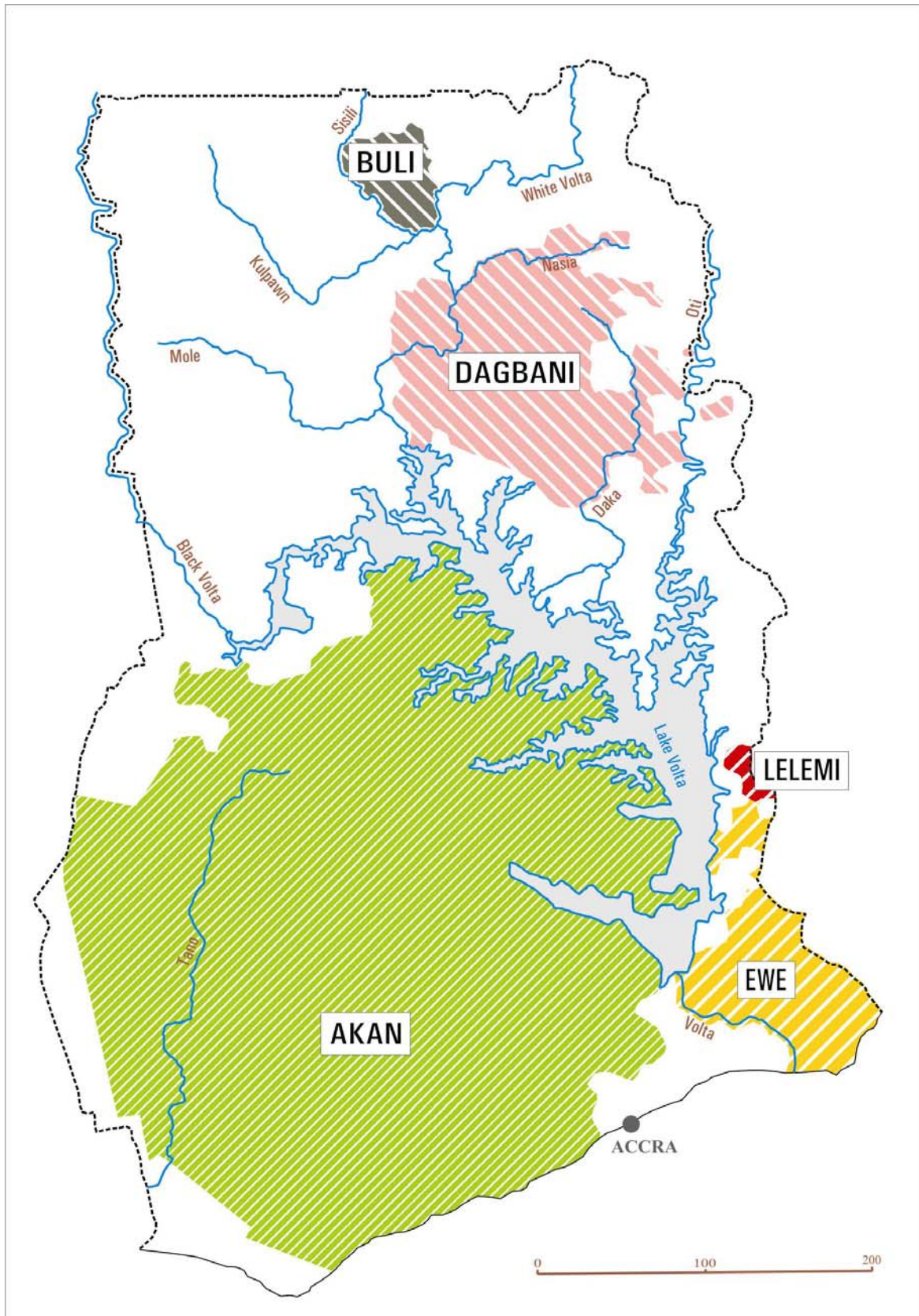
Illustration 1: Ghana Map showing our language sample

The structure of the paper is as follows: In part 2, we first present evidence for three structural characteristics that are recurring in the *ex-situ* focus constructions of almost all five languages, starting with the asymmetry between *ex-situ* subject und non-subject focus constructions (henceforth SF resp. NSF) (2.1), going on to relative-like features of these constructions (2.2) up to parallels with narrative clauses (2.3). In part 3, we first give an overview of the constructions' distribution (3.1) before we discuss the interpretation and the degree of grammaticalization of the narrative structures in each of the studied languages, and describe our findings comparatively in the conclusion (4.).

2   Structural Features of *ex-situ* Focus Constructions

In this chapter, we will demonstrate three observations concerning the structure of morphosyntactically marked focus constructions.[2]

2.1   SF vs. NSF Asymmetry

There is a constant structural asymmetry between SF and NSF constructions. This asymmetry shows up in several ways in the selected languages. Formally, we don't find the same degree of asymmetry in all the languages considered here. We will start with cases that are less obvious at first sight, and go on further to languages showing a full range of this asymmetry.

2.1.1   Ewe

The characteristics of *ex-situ* focus constructions in Ewe are as follows: First, the focused element can be marked by a FM (*y)é*, which is obligatory for subject focus and optional for non-subject focus. The exact constraints for the optionality are not yet clear. Second, there are special subject pronouns for 2nd

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[2]   Please note that the data are transcribed with surface tones and that versalia in the English translation indicate the respective focal part of the utterance. In examples providing restrictive RCs, the relativized head and the RC are underlined.

and 3rd singular person which are used only in NSF constructions, while in SF no pronominals are preposed to the verb.

SF

(1)   ńtsú-á-é   tsɔ́-è.
        man-DEF-YE   take-o:3sg
        'The MAN took it.' (not the woman)

NSF

(2)   èdzì(-é)   wò-   ɖù.
        top(-YE)   3sg.DEP   eat
        'He was on TOP.' (i.e., He WON the game.)

2.1.2 Akan

In Akan, the construction for both SF and NSF is characterized by two features. It obligatorily makes use of the FM *nà* and displays a so-called "link tone" (Bearth 2002; cf. Schachter 1973 as well) at the verb in the out-of-focus part.

In SF, an expletive subject pronoun for 3rd person referents (*ὲ*-) is characteristically used, although it might be replaced by the normal pronominal form.[3] In NSF on the other hand, there is no general need for an object pronoun that is coreferent with the constituent in focus, but rather the selection of the object pronoun underlies semantic criteria. Animates require a pronoun (cf. 4a), especially when human, inanimates do not allow it. In the absence of a pronominal object, the "past" transitive verb in sentence-final position carries suffix -*yɛ* (cf. 4b).

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[3] Bearth et al. (2002) describe the change of the subject pronouns as restricted to human referents. This distribution is not supported by our data.

SF

(3)   ὲ-yὲ   àbrὲwá   nó   nà   ὲ-díì   àdùá   nò.
       3sg-COP   old.woman DEF   NA   3sg-eat beans   DEF
       'It is the OLD WOMAN who ate the beans.'

       cf. the canonical sentence

       àbrὲwá   nó   dìì   àdùá   nò.
       old.woman DEF   eat   beans   DEF
       'The old woman ate the BEANS.' ~ '... woman ATE THE BEANS.'

NSF

(4) a.   nὲ   krámán   nà   pàpá   nò   súà   nò.
          3sg dog   NA   man   DEF   carry O:3sg
          'The man carried his DOG.'

     b.   nὲ   bágè   nà   ɔ̀-súà-yɛ́.
          3sg bag   NA   3sg-carry-YE
          'He carried his BAG.'

2.1.3 Lelemi

In Lelemi, the difference between subject and non-subject focus constructions lies above all in the verbal morphology. Lelemi has two sets of TMA-markers: one used in simple tenses, the other in so-called "relative" tenses (Allan 1973). Not every simple tense has a counterpart in the relative tenses.

The "relative tenses" ("relative past, relative present, relative future and relative present for verbs of state") show up in SF constructions. Unlike the simple tenses, they don't have noun class concord for the subject, and they display only one invariant form. The simple tenses, on the other hand, are used in NSF. They are formed by subject noun class concord markers, often assimilated with the following segmentally and/or tonally coded TMA morphemes, and the verb (with grammatical tone for each tense).

The morphological coding device for NSF consists of morpheme *nà* postponed to the focused constituent (cf. the homophone FM in Akan). Some of the informants treated it as obligatory, others claimed that the syntactic marking, i.e. the sentence-initial position, makes already clear that this constituent is in focus.

SF   cf. verb form in
                                                                           simple tense:

(5)   a.
        ɔ̀nàabì ùmwì pɛ́   mɔ̀-dì   kùtú.   ɔ̄ɔ̄-
        dì
        boy   one   only REL.PRS(dyn)-eat   orange
        'Only ONE boy is eating an orange.'

      b.   ɔ̀nàabì n̄-t̄ī   ùlòkúbì.   ū-t̄ī
           boy   REL.PRS(stat)-carry   girl
           'A BOY was carrying a girl.'

      c.   lɔ́ɔ́l̀ı ́nyɔ́   ná-sà.
                                                        lɛ́-sà
           lorry two   REL.PAST-meet
           'TWO LORRIES COLLIDED.'[4]

NSF

(6)   àkábí áwɔ̄dí (nà) ùlōkū ɔ́mɔ̀ ɔ́-dì.
      beans raw   (NA) woman DEF   3sg.PAST-eat
      'The woman ate RAW BEANS.'

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[4]   In Lelemi, SF and sentence focus are coded in the same way – a feature which is in fact characteristic for Gur languages.

2.1.4 Buli

Buli has a preposed affirmative FM *ká* (negative suppletive *dāā*) in SF as well as in NSF. The affirmative morpheme seems to be optional in both constructions. In SF, the focus constituent is always followed by the conjunction *lē*, while in NSF we typically find the conjunction *tè*.[5] In NSF, the occurrence of *lē* is less common, but not totally excluded.

Verb tone deviates from that in simple sentences in both focus constructions, although not in the same way. In fact, Buli has three paradigms distinguished by grammatical tone on dynamic perfective verbs in clause-final position: a canonical paradigm A in simple sentences, a paradigm B after conjunction *lē* (SF) and a paradigm C that shows up in clauses with the conjunction *tè* (NSF).[6] In both constructions, pronouns which are coreferent with the focused constituent do not occur in the out-of-focus part.

SF

(7)   (ká)   wá   lē   chèŋ.   Paradigm B, not: *tè*
       (FM)   3sg:DISJ CNJ   go
       'HE went.' ~ 'It is HE who went.' (not you)

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[5] Both conjunctions are sometimes provided with an initial vowel (*àlē, àtè*). This vowel occurs with other clause-inital conjunctions as well as with clause-initial serialized verbs and is always correlated with a prosodic break before the clause.

[6] Paradigm B is characterized by an "instabil rising tone" (Schwarz 2004: 38) and paradigm C by an invariable low tone. Both paradigms are constituted by the absence of subject congruent grammatical tone operating in simple clauses (Paradigm A). The neutralization in paradigm C versus A shows up only with discourse participants (1st and 2nd person), while it is not evident with 3rd persons, as in ex. 7-8.

cf.   the canonical sentence

wà   chèŋ-kà   sándēm.   Paradigm A

3sg   go-FM[7]   Sandema

'He went to SANDEMA..' ~ 'He WENT TO SANDEMA.'

NSF

(8) a. (ká) sándēm tè   wà   chèŋ.   Paradigm C, rare:
         lē

(FM) Sandema CNJ 3sg go

'It is SANDEMA where he went.' (not Navrongo)

   b. john tè   mí   fɔb.

John CNJ   1sg:DISJ   slap

'I slapped JOHN.'

2.1.5 Dagbani

Dagbani provides a strong structural asymmetry between SF and NSF. The canonical SF construction[8] contains a postponed syllabic nasal called "emphatic" by Olawsky (1999). In NSF on the other hand, the so-called FM *kà* (Olawsky 1999: 63) has to be put at the beginning of the out-of-focus part.

Similar to Buli, both focus construction types are distinguished from each other by grammatical verb tone and deviate from the verb paradigm in simple sentences. A pronominal form for a focused subject is not allowed and in general, neither focused non-subjectival verb arguments nor other focused constituents are pronominally represented in the out-of-focus part.

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[7]   Please note that in the canonical indicative sentence in which either the complement or the whole VP might be focal, FM *ká* is enclitizised to the verb (the morpheme's surface tone may change). In *ex-situ* focus constructions any postverbal position of this morpheme is completely excluded.

[8]   There is another SF construction formed with post-subjectival *léé* which is however almost restricted to questions and not considered here.

SF

(9)   páɣá   má!á   m̀   bɔ́l-ɔ̀.   Paradigm B
       woman DEF   N   call-O:3sg
       'The WOMAN called him.'

cf. the canonical sentence

       ɔ̀   bɔ̀l-lá   george.   Paradigm A
       3sg   call-FM[9] George
       'She called GEORGE.' ~ 'She CALLED GEORGE.'

NSF

(10)   george   kó-!ó   bɔ̀lì.   Paradigm C
       George   KA-3sg   call
       'She called GEORGE.'

2.2   Relative Structures

Concerning the often stated "relative" forms in *ex-situ* focus constructions, we found that relative structures, i.e. a head and a (restricting) relative clause, are not present in all of our sample languages. And if they exist in *ex-situ* focalization, they are not necessarily identical with the language specific prototypical RCs with restrictive reading, as demonstrated in the following.

2.2.1   Ewe

Ewe disposes of a general construction to express restrictive relative clauses. The overall features of this construction are: (i) the relative clause is introduced by a demonstrativum *sì* (standard-Ewe) or *yíkè* 'this' (dialectal variant for Inland Ewe) which takes over the function of a relative pronoun and (ii) it ends

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[9]   In case of complement or VP focus, suffixed FM *-lá* occurs in Dagbani indicative sentences. Like Buli FM *ká* in postverbal position, this suffix is excluded in *ex-situ* focus constructions.

generally with the determiner *lá*. If the relative clause follows the main clause, the determiner is sometimes omitted.

There is a difference among relative constructions depending on the syntactical function of the antecedent: if it is the subject of the relative clause, no pronominal form is used, if it is a non-subject then we find the already mentioned special pronouns which only show up in 2nd and 3rd person singular.

Subject RC

(11) éyé tsīītsītɔ̄   <u>sì   kɔ́ èlā̀ lā vê   lá</u>, trɔ́ dzó ...
      CNJ elder.one   DEM take fish DET come.to DET, change return
      'And the elder one, who brought the fish, returned back ....'

Non-Subject RC

(12) a.   <u>nú   sì   wò-   gblɔ̀ ná mì lá</u>   mì wɔ̀ è.
         thing DEM 3sg.DEP say   for 2pl DET   2pl do O:3sg
         'What he tells you, do it!' (Duthie 1996: 45)[10]

     b.   ńtsùvǐ ɖé tɔ́   ɖé
         boy   IND stand reach
         <u>fí   yíkɛ̀ wó-   nɔ̀ bɔl ɸōḿ   lè   ɸé gôl mè</u>.
         place DEM 3pl   HAB ball beat. PROG be.LOC place goal in
         'A boy is standing in a goal.' (lit.: 'A boy is standing at the place where they normally shoot the ball into.')

There are only minor similarities between focus and relative constructions. These concern the use of the pronominal forms: as in SF, in Subject RC no pronoun is used, whereas in NSF as well as in Non-Subject RC the dependent subject pronouns are found. The two features of RC mentioned above are not

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[10] The interlinearization was done by the authors.

present in focus constructions, and, on the other hand, morpheme (*y)é* of focus constructions is absent in RCs.

2.2.2 Akan

Akan relative constructions are characterized by the use of (i) the so-called "relative pronoun" *â* and (ii) a clause-final determiner *nó*. Furthermore, the verb in the relative clause changes its tone pattern in adopting a H tone (cf. Schachter 1973, the so-called "link tone" in Bearth 2002).

Subject RC

(13)   <u>àbrántìè n(o)-áà ɔ-bɔ́ɔ̀ wó nó</u>, yɛ̀ m-àdámfùɔ̀.
        boy   DEF-REL 3sg-hit O:2sg DET   COP 1sg-friend
        'The boy who hit you is my friend.'

Non-Subject RC

(14)   <u>àbrántìè n(o)-áà wò-bɔ́ɔ̀ nò   nò</u>, yɛ̀ m-àdámfùɔ̀.
        boy   DEF-REL 2sg-hit O:3sg DET   COP 1sg-friend
        'The boy whom you hit is my friend.'

Hence, in relativization two additional features show up compared to focus constructions. On the other hand, post-focal morpheme *nà* is missing in RC. What both constructions share in comparison to simple sentences is only the "link tone".

2.2.3 Lelemi

Lelemi displays a subject- and non-subject asymmetry in relative constructions that resembles the dichotomy in its *ex-situ* focus constructions (cf. 2.1.3) and that is based on the syntactic function of the relativized element within the RC. Common component in both types of relative constructions is the determination of the relativized element by an identifier pronominal form that consists of a noun class concord for the preceding relativized noun and morpheme *-ní*. If the subject is relativized, a "relative" TMA form, i.e. the TMA form without subject

prefix at the verb is used (cf. the simple verb form in the initial clause of 15 with the relativized below). If a non-subject constituent is relativized, the simple TMA verb form, i.e. including subject prefix, occurs.

Subject RC

(15)   èbùò   ū-ɲè.
        animal 3sg.PRS-stand
        'There is an animal there,

        ńzù   èbùò   ó-ní   ń-ɲè   vɔ̄   ó-dì   ònáànjùé.
        but   animal 3sg-NI REL.PRS(stat)-stand there 3sg-COP cow
        but the kind of animal that is over there is a cow.'

Non-Subject RC

(16)   òklàmá óŋvɔ̀ ɔ̀ɔ̄-dù   trouzis ó-ní   ɔ̄nāābì óŋvɔ̀ ó-chà
        dog   DEM 3sg.CONT-bite trousers 3sg-NI boy   DEM 3sg.PAST-wear
        'The dog bites the trousers which the boy wears.'

Apart from the use of the "relative" versus the simple TMA-forms, *ex-situ* focus constructions and RCs with restrictive meaning are not the same. It is first of all the "identifier pronoun" (noun class pronoun *–ni*) which distinguishes the restrictive RC from focalization. A further element that is typical for NSF contrary to relativization is morpheme *nà* at the beginning of the out-of-focus part.

2.2.4 Buli

Buli disposes of two structural types of RC[11] which share the following features: (i) the relativized head is provided by an indefinite noun class pronoun[12], like

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[11] Cf. Hiraiwa 2003 for a detailed description of RCs in Buli.
[12] The indefinite pronouns refer to specific indefinite entities and are therefore translated as 'certain, some' in other contexts.

wāā(i), which can either represent the head on its own or forms a nominal compound with an initial nominal constituent, and (ii) determiner *lá* is commonly added to the end of the relative clause. This determiner is sometimes omitted in sentence-final RCs. The head internal RC type shares features with SF constructions, since it consists of preverbal conjunction *lē*. It is always used when the relativized element has subject function in the relative clause and it can be found with relativized verb objects, too[13]. The other RC is of the head-external type and not compatible with a subject as head. Structurally, this RC resembles NSF, since it contains conjunction *tè* (ex. 18b). The grammatical tone of perfective verbs deviates in both RC types from paradigm A with tonal subject agreement.[14]

Subject RC

(17)   <u>núrú-wāā</u>   <u>lē</u>   <u>chèŋ</u> <u>lā</u>   ká   mí   dɔ̄ā.
       person-IND:CL   CNJ   go   DET   COP   1sg:DISJ friend
       'The person who has left is my friend.'

Non-Subject RC

(18) a.   <u>fì</u> <u>lē</u> <u>yàlì</u> <u>nùrú-wāā</u>   <u>lá</u>   ká   mí   dɔ̄ā.
          2sg CNJ marry person-IND:CL   DET   COP 1sg:DISJ friend
          'The person you married is my friend.'

     b.   <u>núrú-wāā</u>   <u>tè</u> <u>fì</u> <u>yàlì</u> <u>lā</u>   ká   mí   dɔ̄ā.
          person-IND:CL   CNJ 2sg marry   DET   COP   1sg:DISJ friend
          'The person you married is my friend.'

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[13]   The head-internal RC therefore has either a postnominal (relativized subject, cf. ex. 17) or a circumnominal (relativized object, cf. ex. 18a) structure.
[14]   In RC with clause-final determiner *lá* there is however no "instabil rising tone", since this paradigm B pattern is restricted to perfective verbs in clause-final position (cf. clause-final *chèŋ̄* in ex. 7 versus ex. 17).

Despite the similarities in morphology (conjunctions *lē* and *tè*) and tonal neutralization (no paradigm A for dynamic verbs in perfective), both relative clause types with restrictive reading contain components which distinguish them from the *ex-situ* focus constructions: the indefinite class pronoun and the RC-final determiner.

2.2.5 Dagbani

Similar to Buli, Dagbani has two RC types at its disposal which share the following features: (i) the head is represented by an indefinite noun class pronoun (like *so* in examples (19) and (20))[15] that forms a compound with the nominal root or is used alone, and (ii) determiner *máá* (sometimes *lá*) is added to the end of the RC.

One of the RC types is restricted to cases in which the antecedent has subject function within the RC (ex. 19). Apart from the two features mentioned above, it is formed with the help of a disjunctive pronoun in the subject slot which follows the head and fulfills here the function of a relative pronoun.[16] The other RC type occurs only with non-subjects as relativized heads and makes use of post-subjectival particle *n(i)* marking also some other subordinated clauses. In this head-internal RC type the head is either retained in its postverbal slot (cf. the circumnominal ex. 20a) or it is moved to the initial position of the relative clause (cf. the postnominal ex.20b).

Subject RC

(19) <u>dò-só</u>   ŋún   !cháŋ má!á ɲɛ́-!lá   ń   zò.
      man-IND:CL 3sg.DISJ go   DET   COP-FM 1sg friend
      'The man who has left is my friend.'

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[15] The indefinite pronoun consists of a stem *s[front vowel]* (the vowel occurs only in case of CV suffixes) which is provided with a class suffix. It corresponds functionally to the indefinite pronoun in Buli (cf. footnote 12), although the latter lacks the *SV* stem.

[16] According to Wilson (1963: 139), the indefinite pronoun is optional in subjectival relative clauses.

Non-Subject RC

(20) a.   <u>á-n(í) !ŋmé dò-só   má!á</u> ɲɛ́-!lá   ń   zò.
          2sg-CNJ hit   man-IND:CL DET   COP-FM 1sg friend
          'The man whom you have hit is my friend.'

     b.   <u>dò-só   á-n(í) !ŋmé má!á</u> ɲɛ́-!lá   ń   zò.
          man-IND:CL 2sg-CNJ hit   DET   COP-FM 1sg friend
          'The man whom you have hit is my friend.'

The comparison with the focus constructions shows no direct correspondence, but it is possible that the subordinating particle *n(i)* and the "emphatic" syllabic nasal *N* that obligatorily occurs in SF are related to each other.

2.3 Narrative Structures

Our third observation concerns the fact that there is a constant formal parallelism between *ex-situ* non-subject-focus constructions (NSF) and narrative clauses (NC), and in some of our sample languages the narrative structure is extending to SF, too. We use the term NC for clauses that encode the succession of events in realis mood and that serve to continuitively develop the main story line. Labov regards this function as follows: "Each clause … describes an event that is understood to shift reference time, i.e. it follows the event immediately preceding it, and precedes the event immediately following it." (1972, cited in Schiffrin 1994: 284).

The formal parallels show up in several ways in the selected languages and are realized by the FM, TMA morphology including tone, and special pronominal forms.

2.3.1 Ewe

Ewe shows certain structural similarities between NSF and NC, although there is no total correspondence. These are best demonstrated by the use of special subject pronouns[17] in both constructions, as can be seen in ex. (21) and (22).

Additionally, there is a similarity of the FM with a clause coordinating conjunction *éyē* 'and (then)' which is found in narrative contexts.

NSF

(21)   èdzì(-é)   wò-   ɖù.   (= ex. 2)
        top(-YE)   3sg.DEP   eat
        'He was on TOP.' (i.e., He WON the game.)

NC

(22)   And the third one .. found the way to the market …

        yá   wò-   vá   kpɔ́   tòmátós.
        CNJ[18]   3sg.DEP   come   see   tomatoes
        '… and he found tomatoes.'

2.3.2 Akan

Akan has a clausal sequential conjunction *nà* with the meaning 'and (then)' (Bearth 2002) which is identical with the FM. The verbal morphology including the "link tone" also seems to be the same in both clauses, although this is still a matter of further research.[19]

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[17] This has already been noted by Duthie (1996: 53) and Ameka (2004: 17).

[18] The form *yá* is one dialectal variant of the conjunction *éyē* in Inland Ewe.

[19] Bearth (2002) postulates the existence of a "link tone" on the verb as well as the existence of the so-called "dependent" morpheme *yɛ* only in *ex-situ* focus constructions, while our own data exhibit them in other contexts, too, including sequential events with clause-initial conjunction *nà*.

NSF

(23)   àdùá   nà   ɔ̀-díì-yɛ́.
        beans   NA   3sg-eat-YE
        'He ate BEANS.'

NC

(24)   máàmé nòáà   àdùá,   nà   n-àdámfùò   díì-yé.
        Maame cook   beans   CNJ   3sg-friend   eat-YE
        'Maame cooked beans and her friend ate them.'

2.3.3 Lelemi

In Lelemi, NSF and NC clauses show identical features: In both, the simple tenses are used. Furthermore, the FM is homophone with the narrative conjunction 'and' which coordinates two clauses and we suppose that it is the same morpheme. It is segmentally identical with the "relative past" tense morphem, too (cf. ex. 5c).

NSF

(25)   àkábí áwɔ̄dí   (nà)   ùlōkū ɔ́mɔ̀   ɔ́-dì.   (= ex. 6)
        beans raw   (NA)   woman DEF   3sg.PAST-eat
        'The woman ate RAW BEANS.'

NC

(26)   'The youngest child went …'

        nà   ú-tī   ùlū   gɛ̀ɛ̃̀   ɔ́mɔ̀.
        CNJ   3sg.PAST-take   road   right   DEF
        'and he took the right road.'

2.3.4 Buli

Buli, too, displays a striking parallel between NSF and NC. First, the clause initial element *tè* of the out-of-focus part of NSF and the clausal conjunction *tè*

'and' in NC[20] are completely identical. Second, the identity pattern stretches onto the verb: it bears the same grammatical tone (paradigm C) after *tè* in both functions and it differs thus from (i) the canonical paradigm A, and (ii) the paradigm B that is found after marker *lē* (i.e. mainly with SF, cf. 2.1.4.). This is true only for the group of dynamic verbs in perfective aspect as shown in the following examples. Dynamic verbs in the imperfective as well as stative verbs do not participate in paradigm C, but return to paradigm A where they are most often – although not throughout – marked as irrealis, i.e. the non-perfective verb forms tend to occur in subjunctive in focus constructions.

NSF

(27) (ká) sándēm   tè   wà   chèŋ.   (= ex. 8a)
      (FM) Sandema   CNJ 3sg   go
      'It is SANDEMA where he went.' (not Navrongo)

NC

(28) and his mother was happy with him

      tè   bà   dìg   jèntàŋā ...
      CNJ 3pl cook soup.DEF
      'and they cooked the soup ...'

2.3.5 Dagbani

Finally, Dagbani also affirms the parallel pattern between NSF and NC convincingly. Morpheme *kà* which is following the focused constituent in NSF constructions has a clausal conjunction counterpart *kà* 'and' in narrative contexts. Furthermore, the grammatical tone of dynamic verbs in such clauses differs in the same way from the subject congruent verb tone in simple clauses,

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[20] At the beginning of subjunctive clauses (irrealis), the conjunction is also consecutively used.

irrespective whether we deal with a real narrative context or with a focus construction.

The coding of the second clause in ex. (30b) demonstrates Olawskys (1999: 44) observation that, if the subject of the clause introduced by *kà* is coreferent with the subject of the preceding clause, it has to be elided.

NSF

(29) yílə́ má!á nì kó-!ó dì.
       house DEF in KA-3sg eat
       'In the house she ate.'

NC

(30) a. and the mother sent the youngest child

         kà   bíí   má!á chàŋ ...
         CNJ child DEF   go
         'and the child went ...'

     b. páɣá má!á dáá-!lá peter ká !ŋmé-ò.
         woman DEF   push-FM   Peter CNJ hit-O:3sg
         'The woman pushed and hit Peter.'

                          not: ... ka *o ŋme-o.

2.4 Diversity and Distribution of Forms

Summarizing our observations concerning the structural features of affirmative *ex-situ* focus constructions, relative clauses and narrative clauses, we have to state that the *ex-situ* focus constructions minus the focus constituent itself (F) resemble relative clauses only to a certain extent while the structural features of narrative clauses are matched much closer. Table 1 gives an overview on the differences and parallels as they have emerged in our investigation:

Table 1

	Kwa Languages			Gur Languages	
	Ewe	**Akan**	**Lelemi**	**Buli**	**Dagbani**
SF	F *(y)é*	*(ɛ̀yɛ̀)* F *nà* expl. *ɛ̀* link tone	F rel. tense	*(ká)* F *lē* tone B	F *N* tone B
RC₁	*sì~(yí)kɛ̀* DET *lá*	*â* link tone DET *nó*	CL-*ni* rel. tense	IND:CL *lē* DET *lá*	IND:CL *n(i)* DET *la~máá*
RC₂	*sì~(yí)kɛ̀* DEP pron. DET *lá*	--	CL-*ni* simple tense	IND:CL *tè* DET *lá*	IND:CL DISJ pron. DET *la~máá*
NSF	F *(y)é* DEP pron.	*(ɛ̀yɛ̀)* F *nà* link tone	F *nà* simple tense	*(ká)* F *tè* tone C	F *kà* tone C
NC	... *éyē* DEP pron.	... *nà* link tone	... *nà* simple tense	... *tè* tone C	... *kà* tone C

With respect to RCs, we face considerable heterogeneity among our sample since the two Gur languages provide especially strongly divergent RC types. This is due to the additional head-internal relative clause type in these two languages which is represented by RC₁ in table 1 and which seems structurally related with the SF constructions in both languages (cf. preverbal morpheme and grammatical tone paradigm). The head-external RC type among these languages is represented in the table by RC₂, but only in Buli it also displays evident formal parallels with a focus construction, namely with NSF. Considering the relation between RCs and the non-focal part of *ex-situ* focus constructions in the Kwa languages, we again note only partial correspondences: in Ewe, dependent pronouns occur in RCs when a non-subject is antecedent as well as in NSF; in Akan, tonal changes ("link tone") pertain in RC as well as in SF and NSF; and in Lelemi, the selection of the tense form in RC and focus constructions is due to the syntactic function of the preceding relativized respectively focused element as subject or non-subject. Absent in focus constructions are however those morphological means which are characteristic for almost all restrictive RCs

throughout our language sample, i.e. the respective (relative / identifying / indefinite) pronominal forms accompanying the head and, with the exception of Lelemi, the RC-final determiners.

By integrating NCs into our considerations, it becomes evident that part of the so-called "relative" features in focus constructions are not just exclusively "relative", if at all, but should rather be analysed as structural reflections between coordinated "narrative" clauses. Contrary to the complex picture with regard to the RC pattern in focus constructions, all five Ghanaian Gur and Kwa languages considered here display in fact a very close correspondence between (N)SF and NC. With the exception of Ewe and some need for verification in Akan, we can even postulate a complete structural identy for both. We therefore conclude that the parallelism between the out-of-focus part of morpho-syntactically marked (N)SF and narrative clauses (NC) is no coincidence, but is due to a systematic "narrative" basis of the respective focus constructions.

3   Narrative Hypothesis

From the structural distribution above it is evident that the parallelism between (N)SF and NC is a systematic pattern. We propose that in fact a narrative clause constitutes the non-focal part of such *ex-situ* focus constructions and that its grammaticalization can conceal their biclausal structure. We therefore don't follow the movement hypothesis as for example suggested by Aboh (2004) and Green (1997) for Gbe and Hausa respectively. Like in the cleft hypothesis assumed for various languages (Givón 1990/2001, Schachter 1973, Heine/Reh 1984, Lambrecht 2001), our proposal considers the constructions as biclausal and adds a diachronic perspective to their synchronic analysis. Unlike in the prototypical cleft hypothesis however, we here assume a NC rather than a RC as source for the potential or the already undergone grammaticalization processes. In the following, we will argue for the validity of the narrative hypothesis for each language separately.

3.1 Ewe

Ewe focus constructions can be regarded as derived from two coordinated clauses, where the second clause is provided by an original narrative clause while the first clause is commonly represented by an NP alone. A copula form is only needed in the latter, if the focused constituent is negated, a fact which holds for all the languages considered here.

The synchronic FM *yé* shows structural similarities to the conjunction *éyē* (which is underlying /*éyé*/ [21]) 'and, and then', although it is not identical. The meaning of the conjunction's prefix *é-* hasn't been explained convincingly up to now. We assume that the FM has developed out of the conjunction. Following this grammaticalization path, one has to claim a divergent development of the synchronic conjunction and FM. The latter is in normal speech usually eroded to vowel *-é* and suffixed to the preceding NP, that is, it has become part of the initial clause.

Synchronically, Ewe displays a homophone morpheme *yé* occurring in nominal predication like 'It is a pen.' – *pên yé*. Here, its function is comparable to a copula verb.

A further structural feature supporting the narrative hypothesis in Ewe is the use of the special subject pronouns in NSF and NC. Westermann (1930: 61) mentions that they are used "in the continuation of a sentence, or closely to connect one sentence with a preceding one." It is only in subject focus constructions, where they are not required and even ungrammatical. If we assume a narrative construction underlying both, SF and NSF, then we have to state that in SF the structure of the original source is extensively eroded due to a phenomenon we will call here the "double-subject" constraint, i.e. the focused constituent cannot be followed by a coreferential pronominal subject in SF.

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[21] Cf. Clements (1977: 172) for the tone rules changing the two phonological high tones of the conjunction.

3.2 Akan

The first hint for the validity of the narrative hypothesis in Akan is the identity of FM and narrative conjunction. Our informants treated *nà* in FC still as conjunction so that, if there is a certain degree of grammaticalization at all, as suggested by its description as FM by some authors, this could be only by a functional split in the very inceptive stage.

The first clause of the biclausal focus construction is often only represented by an NP. Alternatively, the initial clause starts with *èyè*, i.e. an expletive pronoun plus copula verb 'to be' (cf. ex. 3).

Different from Ewe, in Akan, the biclausal status of the subject focus construction is still well maintained, since the out-of-focus clause obligatorily requires a subject pronoun, which might be an expletive one (cf. 2.1.2.). The "double subject" constraint is thus not operating in this language.

3.3 Lelemi

In Lelemi, the narrative clause as part of an *ex-situ* focus construction is evident on first sight only for NSF. As shown above, the non-focal clause of NSF and the narrative clause are formally totally identical, i.e. any probably assumed grammaticalization of the narrative clause is restricted to the functional level and has no effects on the structural level. Accordingly, morpheme *nà* is in both functions considered as conjunction by us.

In SF, the conjunction is missing and "relative" tense forms are used instead of the simple tense forms. Nevertheless, we can assume such grammaticalization source in one of the relative tenses/aspects. The TMA morpheme for the "relative past" tense is high toned *ná*. We analyse it as a conglomeration of the conjunction *nà* (with inherent Low tone) plus a High tone which is born by the subject pronoun in simple past. The slot for the pronoun is not filled due to the "double subject" constraint. The high tone it bears in simple past is however retained with the former conjunction.

3.4 Buli

In Buli, the narrative hypothesis is valid for the prototypical NSF construction which is formed with conjunction *tè* and tone paradigm C. Since these features are shared by sequential clauses in narrative contexts, too, a narrative clause can be regarded as representing the non-focal part in NSF. The lack of tone paradigm C with stative verbs as well as the frequent modal change of dynamic verbs in the imperfective (cf. 2.3.4.) supports the proposed narrative status of the respective clause.

The SF construction on the other hand requires conjunction *lē* which cannot be related to the narrative conjunction as such, but is rather segmentally identical with the NP coordinating conjunction *lè* 'and, with'. This structural similarity among the two "*le*-type" junctors and the very strict "double subject" constraint in SF might be an indication for a semantico-syntactically closer conceptualization of this construction as one single information structural unit compared to the evidently biclausal NSF organization with *tè*.

3.5 Dagbani

Like in Buli, the grammaticalization of the NC clause is restricted to NSF in Dagbani. The so-called "focus marker" *kà* is in fact just a conjunction at the beginning of a NC clause which requires verb tone paradigm C (for dynamic verbs). In NSF, a subject constituent must always follow the morpheme *kà* while coreferent subjects in two sequential clauses via clause junction *kà* are ungrammatical (cf. 2.3.5.). Since there are no constitutive structural differences between the non-focal part in NSF construction and the basic NC clause, *kà* is in both contexts still analyzed as conjunction by us, though it has some potential for grammaticalization into FM.

Interesting is the parallel to Buli found in Dagbani, insofar as here the "emphatic" marker *N* in SF resembles the NP coordinating conjunction *nì~ǹ* 'with, and'. It seems that Dagbani has a similar tendency towards a closer and
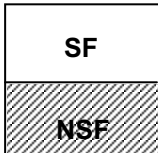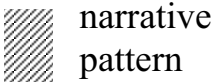
more intraclausal organization of SF compared to NSF and hence does not make use of the narrative pattern with biclausal coordination in SF.

4   Comparative Summary

As we have shown, there are striking similarities on the morphosyntactic level between the non-focal part of focus constructions and NCs, although the relevant structural parameters diverge even in our small language sample due to typological subtraits. Hence, in some of the languages – namely Akan, Buli, and Dagbani – grammatical verb tone must be taken into account in order to identify the non-focal part of focus constructions as NC. All of the languages make use of special morphological means. Apart from clausal conjunctions this also concerns suppletive pronouns. Not surprisingly it is Ewe, a language known for its pronominal specialization including logophoric forms, that provides the NC and the focus construction based on it with more than just one "dependent" pronominal form.

A typologically interesting picture in our small language sample is displayed by the distribution of the narrative structures as such in *ex-situ* focus constructions, as shown in table 2.

Table 2

Akan, Ewe	**Lelemi**	**Buli, Dagbani**	
SF / NSF	SF / NSF	SF / NSF	narrative pattern

On the one hand, in the Kwa languages studied, including Lelemi, the narrative pattern is more or less overtly extending into SF constructions. In the two Gur languages studied here on the other hand, SF constructions do not participate in the narrative pattern. Schwarz (in preparation) shows that in languages of this group SF rather tend to be represented by a syntactically more hierarchical (head

internal) relative construction and that the distribution of the two *ex-situ* focus constructions can be accounted for on discourse organizational grounds taking the notion of topic into account.

Having concentrated here on a deeper insight into the narrative structures that have emerged in (N)SF throughout our sample, we claim that a clausal conjunction as used to coordinate sequentials in narration does also function as device to link together focus constituent and non-focal part in a non-hierarchically way. Such focus constructions are consequently to be considered as basically biclausal, even if the clausal status of the initial clause with the focused constituent is not reflected throughout. In some of the languages, the inceptive stages of grammaticalization processes of the clause-initial conjunction into FM can be perceived, a grammaticalization chain that may even stretch further into a copula-like predicative morpheme as noticed by Stassen (1997: 85). The actual stage of such grammaticalization chain in our sample languages is shown in table 3:

Table 3

	CNJ →	FM →	COP
Ewe	*éyē*	*yé, -é*	*yé*
Akan	*nà*	*(nà)*	--
Lelemi	*nà*	*(nà)*	--
Buli	*tè*	--	--
Dagbani	*kà*	*(kà)*	--

As can be seen in the table, Akan and Lelemi exhibit homophone morphemes which could be a result of borrowing from Akan to Lelemi since loans from Akan are common in the Togo mountain area.

Three of the languages, namely Akan, Lelemi and Dagbani display the same pattern insofar as they have a conjunction which has been interpreted by some authors (Boadi 1974, Ameka 1992, Olawsky 1999) as a right-adjacent FM. According to us, the respective morphemes do have the potential for such a

functional split, but that stage has probably not yet been reached, since we could not notice any relevant categorial or structural changes of the conjunction towards a FM.

As for the Buli conjunction, there are no indications at all that it might take the grammaticalization path into a focus or predicative marker in the near future. Responsible for that is first its restriction to NSF, a fact that the Buli conjunction shares with the respective Dagbani conjunction. Second, the Buli clause conjunction is in affirmative focal contexts relatively often counter-balanced by the predicative marker respectively FM *ká* left to the focus constituent, while such an affirmative counterpart is missing in Dagbani. If the focused constituent is negated, all five languages make however use of negative copula forms. We conclude that the rarer the copula forms in affirmation are, the higher are the chances for reanalysis of the clausal conjunction as FM.

Contrary to the rather inceptive stage of grammaticalization if existent at all in most of the languages, there seems to have been a longer development in Ewe. Here, the original conjunction already shows signs of erosion when functioning as FM and it is even often suffixed to the constituent in focus.

As noted in 3.3., in Lelemi the conjunction *nà* has taken a special direction in grammaticalization. Together with the high tone born by the subject prefix in other syntagmata, it has become a "relative past" tense marker in SF. Such development from a conjunction denoting the accomplishment of actions to a past marker was also shown by Hopper (1979) for Malay, an Austronesian language.

Table 4

	CNJ	$\rightarrow$	**"Relative Past"**
Lelemi	*nà*		*ná* ($\leftarrow$ *nà* + ´)

Our aim here was to defend the existence of a steady narrative pattern in *ex-situ* focus constructions and to outline the diachronic implications of the narrative hypothesis as an alternative to cleft and movement approaches. It has been

shown that not only the linguistic expression of the in-focus part, but also that of the out-of-focus part is important for an adequate analysis of *ex-situ* focus constructions and that the functional load verb morphology including tone has in African languages in this respect should not be underestimated.

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Abbreviations

CNJ	conjunction
COP	copula
DEF	definite (marker)
DEM	demonstrative (pronoun)
DEP	dependent (pronoun)
DISJ	disjunctive (pronoun)
dyn	dynamic (verb)
F	focus constituent
FM	focus marker
IND	indefinite (marker)
NC	narrative clause
NSF	non-subject focus (construction)
PROG	progressive marker
PRS	present (tense)

RC   RC

REL   relative (tense)

SF   subject focus (construction)

stat   stative (verb)

TMA   tense-mood-aspect

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