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► To cite this version:

Stefano Manfredi, Mauro Tosco. The morphosyntax and prosody of topic and focus in Juba Arabic. Journal of Pidgin and Creole Languages, 2014, Arabic-based Pidgins and Creoles, 29 (2), pp.319 - 351. hal-01102718

HAL Id: hal-01102718

<https://hal.science/hal-01102718>

Submitted on 13 Jan 2015

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THE MORPHOSYNTAX AND PROSODY OF TOPIC AND FOCUS IN JUBA ARABIC

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*'Juba Arabic is a natural language that is given to
South Sudan by God to unite its people.'* (sic)

Anonymous, Juba Arabic discussion group on Facebook

1. INTRODUCTION

This article will discuss the information structure of Juba Arabic, an Arabic-based pidgincreole spoken in South Sudan. In particular, it will deal with the expression of topic and focus, showing how morphosyntactic and prosodical marking interact in order to yield a system of remarkable complexity. The notion of 'Topic' is closely linked to that of presupposition (Lambrecht 1994) or Common Ground (Krifka 2006; Féry and Krifka 2008). Following Lambrecht (1994: 127), we define a topic as the referent that the proposition is about. Topic elements are discourse referents about which a speaker asserts something relevant. Topic is complementary for us to the comment. Usually, a topic conveys given information; it is left-dislocated, prosodically deaccented, pragmatically identifiable, morphosyntactically definite (Chafe 1976; Lambrecht 1994), and within the scope of pragmatic presupposition. The aboutness relation is also due to the contextual topicality of a referent in discourse, which Lambrecht (1994: 55) defines as *'the degree to which a referent can be taken to be a centre of current interest with respect to which a proposition is interpreted as constituting relevant information.'* The topic is only one of the various elements that can constitute the left-dislocated part of an utterance, called 'Preamble' by Morel and Danon-Boileau (1998). 'Argument-topic', or topic proper, can be opposed to the 'frame setting topic' that *'sets a spatial, temporal or individual framework [...] which limits the applicability of the main predication to a certain restricted domain'* (Chafe 1976: 50).

'Focus', for its part, has still a rather vague status in linguistic theory. The only common ground among all the very different interpretations of focus seems to be that the focus is complementary to presupposition. According to Lambrecht (1994: 213), the focus of an utterance is equivalent to whatever is not part of the presupposition; as such, it is particularly prominent in the answer to context questions. Within such an analysis, the focus is a necessary ingredient of any clause, while the topic (the presupposition) may be absent. Other scholars state that focus is mainly a contrastive device: the focus selects among presupposed alternatives (cf. Büring 1997: 29), or runs counter expected ones. This approach is based upon the prominence theory of focus realization (PTF), which is the central claim of Alternative Semantics (cf. Rooth 1992) and according to which focused items are always prosodically stressed.¹ In our view, focus is a formally marked pragmatic function acting on the most salient information (cf. Dik et al. 1981) in a given communicative setting with the aim of satisfying the speaker's communicative needs (cf. Chafe 1976) and thereby channeling/modifying the addressee's understanding of the subject matter. We therefore distinguish several types of foci according to their different information scopes.

¹ According to Rooth (1992: 78) 'focus indicates the presence of alternatives that are relevant for the interpretation of linguistic expressions'.

We will show how topic- and focus-marked utterances can be formally opposed to pragmatically unmarked utterances through the use of specific morpho-syntactic and prosodic configurations showing that topic and focus are not per se part and parcel of every utterance. The following sections will expound the different particles and constructions which are responsible for the expression of topic and focus meanings in Juba Arabic.

After an overview of the main typological features of Juba Arabic as well as of the data and the methodology used for this study in section 2., section 3. will discuss the expression of discourse-unmarked sentences, dealing in separate subsections with declarative, negative sentences, and questions. The description of the syntactic and prosodic configurations of such unmarked utterances will be taken as a point of reference for the following description of structures that involve formal marking for topic and/or focus. Section 4. will tackle the expression of topic under the rubrics of definite, indefinite argument and frame setting topic. The subsections in 5. will be devoted to focus, showing how as many as three different elements can be used in focus strategies, and depicting the role of the Arabic-derived vocative particle *ya* in triggering the development of two different separate markers. The final section 6. will summarize our findings and address comparative issues and the possible role of substrate in the discourse strategies of Juba Arabic.

2. OVERVIEW

Juba Arabic (*árabi júba*; ISO pga; hereafter JA) is a pidgincreole, that is to say an intermediary variety between pidgins and creoles which has become the native language for only a part of its speakers (Bakker 2008: 132). Developed in southern Sudan in the late 19th century as a means of inter-ethnic communication between Arab traders and mainly Nilotic-speaking populations, at the present time JA is the major vehicular language of South Sudan as well as of large diaspora communities in Sudan, Egypt, United States, Canada and Australia. JA is genetically related to the Ki-Nubi creole spoken in Uganda and Kenya (Tosco and Manfredi 2013: 513).

2.1. TYPOLOGICAL REMARKS

JA is a pitch-accent language (Manfredi and Petrollino 2013: 56).² The pitch accent has both lexical and grammatical import and it is marked here with an acute accent.

Lexical	<i>záman</i>	‘time, when’	vs	<i>zamán</i>	‘long time ago’			
	<i>tában</i>	‘obviously’	vs	<i>tabán</i>	‘tired’			
Grammatical	<i>kátulu</i>	‘kill’	vs	<i>katúlu</i>	‘kill\VN’	vs	<i>katulú</i>	‘kill\PASS’
	<i>jíbu</i>	‘bring’	vs	<i>jibú</i>	‘bring\VN, bring\PASS’			
	<i>worí</i>	‘show, show\VN, show\PASS’						

In its grammatical use, pitch accent is found on verbs, where stems are opposed to their verbal noun and passive through pitch accent on the antepenultimate, penultimate, and last syllable (as in ‘kill’); in disyllabic stems (such as ‘bring’), the two latter functions are conflated and expressed by an accent on the last syllable, thereby contrasting with the accent on the first syllable which is canonical in verbs.³ Still other (ambitransitive) verbs (such as *worí* ‘to show’ in the table above) are accented on their last syllable in the stem and do not have a morphologically separate VN and

² Nakao (2013), for his part, argues that Juba Arabic possesses a split prosodic system in which both pitch accent and tone are lexically and grammatically distinctive. As far as Ki-Nubi is concerned, Gussenhoven (2006: 218) affirms that it possesses an ‘obligatory, cumulative, metrically, bound-accent, with only a single tone being inserted in the accent locations.’

³ The morphologization of pitch contrast in Ki-Nubi is discussed in Owens’ article in this volume.

PASS. Contrary to Ki-Nubi (Miller 1993: 142), pitch is not used contrastively in nouns in order to mark number.

Although many exceptions are found, one can say that the positioning of pitch accent in JA is etymologically determined by the vowel length, with Arabic long vowels being reinterpreted as stressed (e.g. **bārid* > *bárid* ‘cold’). A word in JA can be phonetically defined as a unit bearing a single pitch accent. It may in its turn be composed of a lexical word plus an affix or a clitic, as in (1).

1. *bi=rówa* [bi'rowa]
IRR=go
‘go, will go, should go’

There are only two clitics in JA: *bi*= ‘IRR’ and *gi*=/ge= ‘PROG’ (both subject to vowel loss if the following verb begins with a vowel or a glide). Different from Ki-Nubi of Kenya and Uganda, the two preverbal markers in JA cannot combine (Tosco 1995: 433). Morphologically, JA nouns and adjectives are monomorphemic, with the exception of the optional use of two suffixes marking the plural, respectively: *-át* ‘-PL.N’ and *-ín* ‘-PL.ADJ.’⁴ A certain number of affixes (both prefixes and suffixes) are found in a youth variety of JA spoken in Juba which will not be further analysed in the present work. The following word classes can be tentatively established in JA:

- *Nouns*: an open class, it can be defined morphologically as composed of the elements which can be pluralized through the nominal plural affixes *-át* and *-ín* for nouns derived from Arabic active participles, and syntactically defined as possible head of NPs.
- *Verbs*: an open class, it can be defined morphologically as composed of the elements to which the TAM clitics join, as well as the elements which mark valence though accent shift; syntactically, they act as predicates in verbal sentences.
- *Adjectives*: an open class, it is composed by the elements which can be pluralized through the adjectival plural affix *-ín* (as well as by invariable adjectives, mostly borrowed from English); syntactically, they can act as modifiers in NPs as well as predicates.
- *Prepositions*: a closed class, possibly being made up of the following only: *ma* ‘with,’ *le* ‘to,’ *min* ‘from,’ *fí* ‘in,’ *be* ‘by, though.’
- *Adverbials*: a closed class, composed by such elements as *héni* ‘here,’ *kalás* ‘definitively,’ *bes* ‘only,’ as well as by adjectives with an adverbial use;
- *Conjunctions*: a closed class, composed by such elements as *wa* ‘and,’ *kan* ‘if,’ *wála* ‘or,’ *laánu* ‘because, that.’

2. 2. DATA, INFORMANTS AND METHODOLOGY

Our data were collected by Stefano Manfredi in Khartoum and Omdurman in November - December 2007.⁵ The main informants were three adult males, and for all of them JA was the primary (i.e. the usual and most frequently used) language.

	Age	Born in	Ethnic affiliation	In Khartoum since	Other spoken languages
<i>inf.1</i>	29	Juba	Bari	1995	Bari Sudanese Arabic Swahili

⁴ Although these are the main values of these affixes, a number of exceptions are found.

⁵ Fieldwork in South Sudan was at the time of the collection of data technically almost impossible (due to the difficult political situation).

<i>inf.2</i>	21	Juba	Lopit	1997	Lopit English Sudanese Arabic
<i>inf.3</i>	39	Juba	Pojulu	1999	Bari English Sudanese Arabic

Data were obtained in a region in which Sudanese Arabic is the main interethnic language. It is doubtful whether in the case of JA and its Arabic superstrate we can speak of a continuum: in the case of our informants, knowledge of Sudanese Arabic correlates with awareness of separateness and ability to keep it apart from JA - better for informants 1 and 2 than for informant 3.

The following study is based on recordings of spontaneous and semi-spontaneous speech and it does not include any elicited material. The informants provided consistent data in the form of conversations among themselves and narratives. The total duration of the material used for this study amounts to approximately 45 minutes (9500 words). The material has further been transcribed and prosodically segmented in PRAAT so as to be then annotated in ELAN-CorPA as part of the spoken material of the CorpAfroAs corpus (Manfredi 2013). The prosodic analysis presented in the following paragraphs has been also done in PRAAT. Some of the following examples are coupled with a figure displaying their fundamental frequency and a broad phonetic transcription showing phenomena that are relevant to syllable segmentation (assimilation, elision, gemination/degemination, etc.). Furthermore, examples also display the segmentation of the discourse flow into intonation units. The boundaries of intonation units are detected by one or more of the following: (1) final lengthening; (2) initial rush (anacrusis); (3) pitch reset; (4) pause. We distinguish between units with a minor (i.e. non-terminal) break (signaled by a single slash /) and units with a major (i.e. terminal) break (signaled by a double slash //).

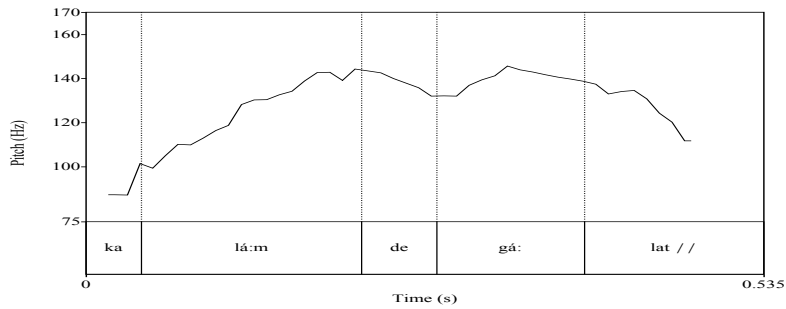
3. 'NEUTRAL' UTTERANCES

In this section we briefly survey the syntactic and prosodic configurations of 'neutral' utterances in JA. As a general remark, we can state that the occurrence of a given utterance (i.e. the basic unit of spoken language) is always pragmatically induced; therefore, it is hard, possibly unachievable, to isolate such a thing as an absolute 'neutral' utterance in natural discourse. In our view, a 'neutral' utterance can only be defined in negative terms as a unit of speech that does not contain any formal marking for topicalization and/or focalization; it is therefore unmarked. It follows that scope relations in 'neutral' utterances are different than in topicalized and focused utterances: 'neutral' utterances are prototypically associated with canonical configurations, both syntactically and prosodically.

3.1. DECLARATIVE NOMINAL UTTERANCES

In JA, a declarative nominal utterance is made up of an NP (minimally a noun, with its modifiers following) and a predicate, which can consist of a noun, an adjective or a demonstrative or possessive pronoun. Nothing intervenes between the NP and the following predicate, which means that no copula-like element is found (here JA follows its Arabic lexifier). In syntactic terms, this corresponds to a nominal copular-like sentence. In prosodic terms, declarative nominal utterances are composed of a single intonation unit (hereafter IU) displaying a rising-falling intonation contour, superimposed on the single lexical pitch accents. The highest pitch accent, or sentence accent, falls on the nominal predicate and is followed by a gradual fall of the intonation curve.

Fig. 1 The prosodic contour of a declarative nominal utterance



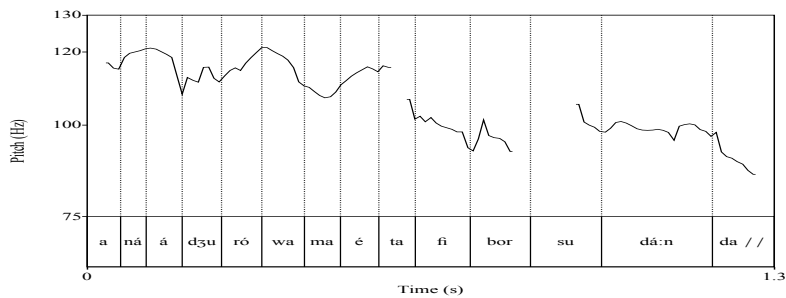
2. *kalám de gálat //*
discourse PROX.SG mistake
'This discourse is wrong' (inf.1)

In fig. 1, the sentence accent is attracted onto the lexically accented first syllable of the attribute *gálat* 'mistake' at 143 Hz which is then followed by declination in the fundamental frequency. The bottom the predicate pitch range is instead represented by the first unaccented syllable of the nominal head *kalám* 'discourse' at 83 Hz.

3.2. DECLARATIVE VERBAL UTTERANCES

The basic word order of declarative verbal utterances is SV(O). As in many other languages (Caron et al. forth.), 'neutral' verbal utterances make up a single IU whose unmarked status is signalled by a global declination of the intonation curve. In JA, sentence accent typically falls on the accented syllable of the main verb and the bottom of the intonation curve corresponds to the final syllable of the utterance.

Fig. 2 The prosodic contour of a declarative verbal utterance



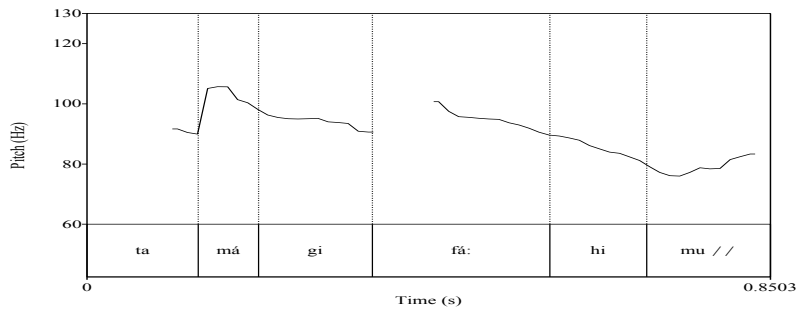
3. *ána ázu rówa ma íta fi bor sudán de //*
1SG want go with 2SG in Port_Sudan PROX.SG
'I want to come with you to Port Sudan' (inf.1)

In fig. 2, sentence accent falls on the first accented syllable of the main verb *rówa* ['rowa] 'go' at 123 Hz, while the lowest pitch corresponds to the demonstrative pronoun *de* ['da] at 82 Hz.

3.3. NEGATIVE DECLARATIVE UTTERANCES

Both nominal and verbal negative declarative utterances are marked by the negative operator *ma*. Verbal negative utterances too show a global declining pattern. However, different from verbal positive declarative utterances, sentence accent systematically coincides with the pitch accent of the negative operator *ma*.

Fig. 3 The prosodic contour of a negative verbal utterance



4. *íta ma gi=fáhimu //*
 2SG NEG PROG=understand
 ‘You don’t understand’ (inf.1)

Fig. 3 shows a negative verbal utterance in which *ma* [‘ma] bears the sentence accent and reaches 105 Hz,⁶ while the bottom of the intonation curve corresponds to the last syllable of the verb *fáhimu* [‘fa:himu] ‘understand.’

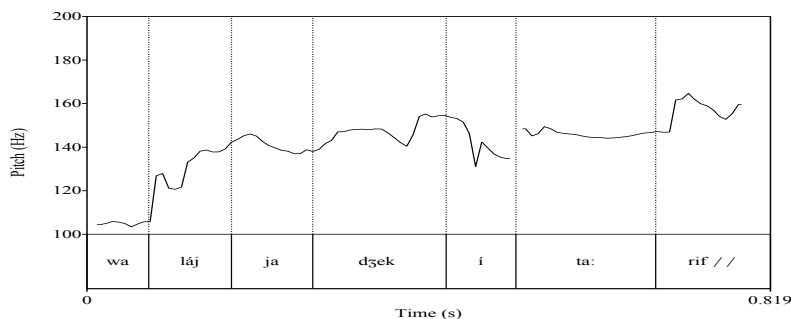
3.4. QUESTIONS

Polar interrogative utterances have the same SV(O) order as declarative verbal utterances and they can be optionally introduced by the sentence initial interrogative particle *hal* ‘Q’ as in the following example.

5. *hal íta árifu mára de //*
 Q 2SG know woman PROX.SG
 ‘Do you know this woman?’ (inf.2)

In the absence of *hal*, prosody is a key grammatical element for distinguishing yes/no questions from declarative utterances. Contrasting with the declining intonation contour of declarative utterances, polar questions show a global rising of the intonation curve, whose highest pitch falls on the final syllable of the last word in the utterance.

Fig. 4 The prosodic contour of a yes/no question



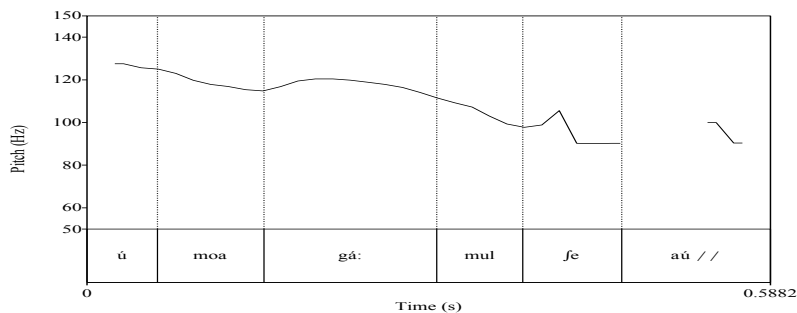
6. *waláhi ya jek íta árifu //*
 by_God VOC man 2SG know
 ‘By God, man, do you know?’ (inf.2)

⁶ The accented negative operator *ma* contrasts with comitative *ma* ‘with’ which does not systematically bear the sentence accent (as in 1.). We leave aside the question whether negative utterances are inherently in focus, as proposed among others by Zimmermann (2007).

In fig. 4, the sentence accent reaches 162 Hz and corresponds to the last unaccented syllable of the phonetic word [ˈta:rɪf] resulting from the agglutination of the 2SG independent pronoun *íta* with the following verb *árifu* ‘know.’ The bottom of the intonation curve, by contrast, corresponds to the first unaccented syllable of the first word *waláhi* [waˈlaj] ‘by God.’

In Wh-questions, question-words typically occur sentence finally. In prosodic terms, Wh interrogative utterances are marked by the same declining intonation pattern of declarative verbal utterances. However, since all the question-words present a lexical high pitch accent on their last syllable (i.e. *munú* ‘who,’ *yatú* ‘which,’ *šenú* ‘what’), the bottom of the intonation curve corresponds to the penultimate syllable of the question word.

Fig. 5 The prosodic contour of a wh question

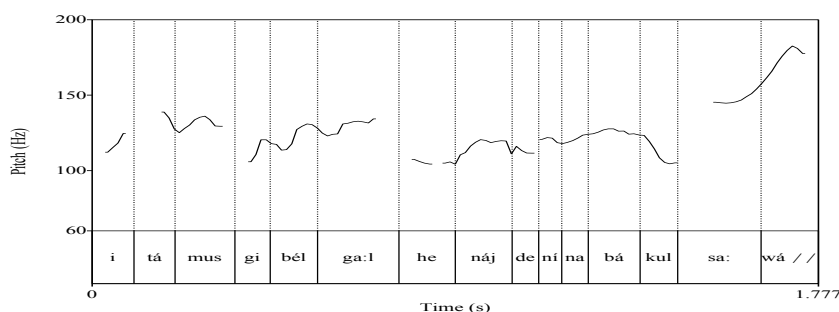


7. *úmon* *g=ámulu* *šenú* //
 3PL PROG=do what
 ‘What are they doing?’ (inf.1)

In fig. 5, sentence accent falls on the first accented syllable of the 3PL pronoun *úmon* [ˈumon] reaching 127 Hz. By contrast, the first unaccented syllable of the question word *šenú* presents a considerable pitch oscillation ($104 > 90$ Hz) whose lowest point coincides with the bottom of the intonation curve.

Finally, tag questions are marked by the negative interrogative particle *músu* ‘TAG’. *músu* is syntactically free, since it can occur both before and after the nominal head of the interrogative sentence or self-standing. Prosodically speaking, tag interrogative utterances show a final emphatic rising of the intonation curve

Fig. 6 The prosodic contour of a tag question



8. *íta* *músu* *gibél* *gále* *henáy* *de* *nína* *b=ákulu* *sáwa* //
 2SG TAG before say matter PROX.SG 1PL IRR=eat together
 ‘Didn’t you say before that we should eat together?’ (inf.3)

In fig. 6, the last unaccented syllable of the adverb *sáwa* ‘together’, being also the last syllable in the utterance, is the bearer of the sentence accent ([saːˈwa]) and reaches 182Hz). The rising nucleus

of the utterance is prepared by a falling pitch on the last syllable of the phonetic word ['bakul] resulting from the cliticization of the preverbal marker *bi=* to the verb *ákulu* 'eat'.

4. TOPICS

We turn now to the grammar of topics in JA. Generally speaking, JA marks topicalization both syntactically through left dislocation and prosodically. Two types of argument topic can be distinguished: definite and indefinite. Definite topics are marked by the phrase-final proximal demonstrative pronoun *de*, while indefinite topics are introduced by the invariable existential copula *fi* (Caron et al. forth.). JA also presents frame setting topics that can be syntactically opposed to argument topics because of the absence of coreferential expressions (i.e. anaphoric pronouns) in their comment.

4.1. DEFINITE ARGUMENT TOPICS

It has repeatedly been argued (e.g. Chafe 1976; Lambrecht 1994; Givón 1989) that the pragmatic feature of referent identifiability underlies the distinction between indefinite and definite syntactic expressions. According to Chafe (1976: 32), if the speaker assumes that the hearer can identify a given proposition, he/she is more likely to employ definite linguistic expressions. Lambrecht (1994: 78) goes further in the same direction and argues that, when an identifiable proposition becomes a discourse referent and serves as an argument in another proposition, it may be linguistically designed with the same expression as an entity (i.e. with a personal or demonstrative pronoun).

JA fully accords with these assumptions: when an argument topic makes reference to a previously established referent it is morpho-syntactically marked by a default singular proximal demonstrative pronoun and definite article *de* 'PROX.SG'.⁷ In topicalized definite constituents, *de* is much more common than in non-topicalized ones, and is also used with semantically definite elements (e.g., proper nouns, as in 12.). Coreferentiality in the comment is marked by anaphoric personal and possessive pronouns, or by oblique anaphoric adverbs such as the locative *fógo* 'in.ANAPH' which results from the grammaticalization of the prepositional phrase **fog úo* 'on 3SG'. As indicated by these resumptive elements, the topic can contain material covering different syntactic roles in the comment: subject (i.e. the argument preceding the verb: (9)), direct object (i.e. the argument following prototypical transitive verbs: (10)), oblique (i.e. any argument other than subject and object: (11)).

9. *[kal tái de] / úo gi=géni fi bor sudán //*
maternal_uncle POSS.1SG PROX.SG 3SG PROG=stay in Port_Sudan
'As for my maternal uncle, he lives in Port Sudan' (inf.1)

10. *yála / [zélet de] / úmon gi=rága úo be seménti //*
then asphalt PROX.SG 3PL PROG=cover 3SG by cement
'Then, this asphalt, they covered it with cement' (inf.2)

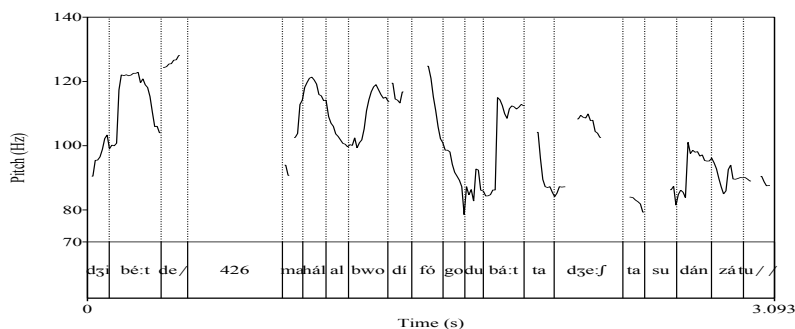
11. *[redmíya de] / ma fógo dége~dége ketír //*
gravel PROX.SG NEG in.ANAPH knock~knock much
'As for this gravel, there are not a lot of bumps' (inf.1)

⁷ Alike Ugandan Ki-Nubi (Wellens 2005: 126) and certain Sudanese Arabic dialects (Manfredi forth.b), also JA marks non-restrictive relative clauses (i.e. relative clauses that modify a definite and highly referential nominal head) by means of the same sentence final proximal demonstrative *de* as in the following example:

filán al g=álabu kwes de
guy REL PROG=play well PROX.SG
'The guy who plays well'

The left-dislocated argument is typically realized as a minor IU separated from the comment.

Fig. 7 The prosodic contour of a definite argument topic



12. [jibét de] / mahál al b=wodí fógó dubát ta
 Jibet PROX.SG place REL IRR=give in.ANAPH sergeant\PL POSS
 ješ ta sudán zá tu //
 army POSS Sudan CONTR
 ‘As for Jibet, (this is) the place were the sergeants of the Sudanese army are sent’ (inf.1)

In fig. 7 the first IU contains an oblique definite topic and it culminates with a sharp rise of the intonation curve accompanying *de* (127 Hz), then is followed by a pause of almost half a second. The comment constitutes a major IU presenting a declining intonation curve. The anaphoric oblique *fógó* is coreferential with the topicalized definite phrase; coreferentiality is prosodically marked on the first syllable of the anaphoric *fógó*, which bears the highest pitch in the comment.

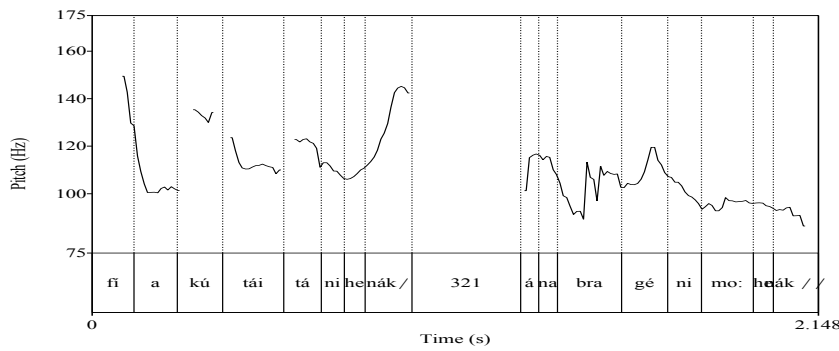
4.2. INDEFINITE ARGUMENT TOPICS

In the case of presumed non-identifiability of the topic, the speaker commonly resorts to indefinite expressions to mark the introduction of the new referents both into the consciousness of the addressee and the universe of discourse. In JA indefinite argument topics are introduced by the invariable existential copula *fí*, which can be supplemented by other inherently indefinite elements such as *wáhid* ‘one’ (13) or *táni* ‘other’ (14). (13) is a complex topicalized utterance composed of two topics where the left-dislocated *wáhid* is coreferential with the 3SG possessive pronoun *to* in the comment.

13. [fí wáhid] / [mín awlád nuér zey de] / ísim to modú //
 EXS one from sons Nuer like PROX.SG name POSS.3SG Modu
 ‘There is a man, from the Nuer tribe, his name is Modú’ (inf.1)

In Fig. 8 the existential *fí* introducing indefinite topics is characterized by an extra-high pitch (149 Hz) followed by a down-step of the intonation curve accompanying the topicalized referent. The topic ends with a final rising intonation on its last syllable (145 Hz) and is followed by a pause. Differently from definite topics, the anaphoric referents of indefinite topics are deaccented since the sentence accent falls on the first syllable of the main verb *géni* ‘stay’ (cf. neutral declarative utterances, as in (3)).

Fig. 8 The prosodic contour of an indefinite argument topic



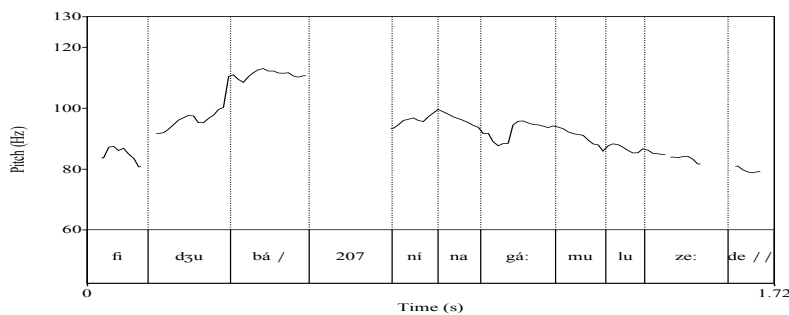
14. [fī akú táí táni henák] / ána bi=rówa géni ma úo
 EXS brother POSS.1SG other there 1SG IRR=go stay with 3SG
 henák //
 there
 ‘There is a friend of mine there, I will go to stay with him there.’ (inf.1)

The fact that in our corpus indefinite topics are much less common than definite ones suggests that in JA as elsewhere (cf. Lambrecht’s 1994: 165, ‘accessibility scale of topics’) topicalized referents tends to be identifiable from the discourse.

4.3. FRAME SETTING TOPICS

As already stated (§ 2.), frame setting topics typically involve adverbial phrases that restrict the spatial and/or temporal context of the following predication. Similarly to argument topics, frame setting topics are left-dislocated. However, the discourse interpretation of such adverbial expressions involves no anaphoric processing because there is no referent that gets activated by the topic.

Fig. 9 The prosodic contour of a frame-setting topic



15. [fī júba] / nína g=ámulu zey de //
 in Juba 1PL PROG=do like PROX.SG
 ‘In Juba, we do like that’ (inf.1)

Fig. 9 shows that frame setting topics present the same prosodic contours as definite and indefinite argument topics (rising intonation followed by a pause and declining on the comment).⁸

⁸ It should be noted that, contrary to the accented *fī* ‘EXS’ of 14., the preposition *fī* ‘in’ is not systematically accented.

5. FOCI

JA makes use of three different particles for marking focus. These are the focus-sensitive operator *zátu* and the dedicated focus markers *yawú* and *yáwu*.⁹ Emphasis is rather expressed by *ya* in one of its different uses. Despite the fact that these particles have different information scopes, all of them involve essential reference to the information structure of the utterances in which they occur. Furthermore, it is important to remark that focus in JA can be expressed only *in situ* or, in other words, in constructions where the focused constituent, followed or preceded by a focus sensitive operator or a focus marker, remains in its unmarked position. Accordingly, focus cleft constructions are absent, and focus is always expressed within a single IU. In specific configurations, prosody complements morphosyntax in marking three types of focus:

- *Contrastive focus*
- *Information focus*
- *Re-assertive focus*

5.1. THE REFLEXIVE-CONTRASTIVE PARTICLE *ZÁTU*

According to Selkirk (2007), contrastive focus primarily evokes a contrast with other non-focused entities that might fill the same position as the focused item. In this regard, there are different views about whether contrastive focus constituents are dissimilar in their prosodic and syntactic configurations from non-contrastive constituents. Certain scholars (Büring 2006: 28) have proposed that contrastive focus is subject to a grammatical principle for the assignment of sentence accent leading to a grammatical distinction between contrastive and non-contrastive constituents. Others (Gussenhoven 2010: 85) have instead claimed that principles of grammar do not assign contrastive focus any distinctive prosodic prominence. Rooth (1992: 83), for his part, affirms that the ‘contrast set’ evoked by the focus provides the locus for focus sensitive operators such as ‘only’, ‘even’, and ‘also.’

In JA a contrastively focused argument is morpho-syntactically marked by *zátu* following the contrasted argument, while a specific prosodic marking is lacking (Caron et al. forth.). *zátu* is diachronically related to the emphatic 3SG.M reflexive pronoun **zāt=uh* ‘PRO.EMPH=3SG.M’ of Sudanese Arabic. In JA, when *zátu* follows a noun or a personal pronoun, it can still express an emphatic reflexive meaning as in (16), not yet a contrastive focus:

16. *úo zátu b=wónusu ma ána sáwa //*
 3SG REFL IRR=talk with 1SG together
 ‘He himself would talk with me’ (inf.2)

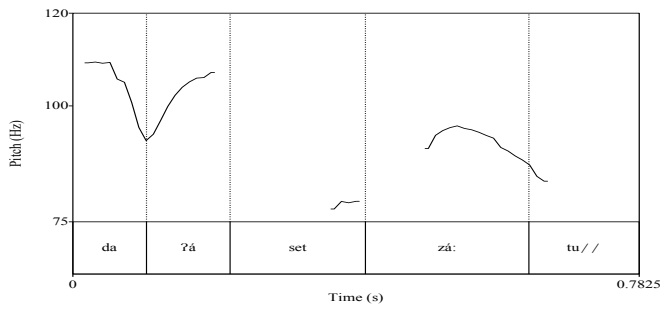
Not surprisingly, the emphasizing function of the pronoun *zátu* furnished a favourable semantic source for the partial grammaticalization of a contrastive focus marker. In (17.a) the question sets the frame for a possible contrast, asking for a confirmation against any possible alternative solution.

- 17.a *[abigó de] / tában yáwu merfeín wála šenú //*
 abigó PROX.SG obviously IDF hyena or what
 ‘Is this *abigó* the hyena or what?’ (inf.1)

The answer (17.b) thus includes a contrastive focus marked by *zátu* and it makes use of the same prosodic contour of neutral declarative nominal utterances (cf. fig. 1).

⁹ Acrolectal varieties of JA also integrated the counter-assertive focus marker *mà=* from Sudanese Arabic (Caron et al. forth.), which will not be further analysed in the present work.

Fig. 10 The prosodic contour of an argument contrastive focus marked by *zátu*



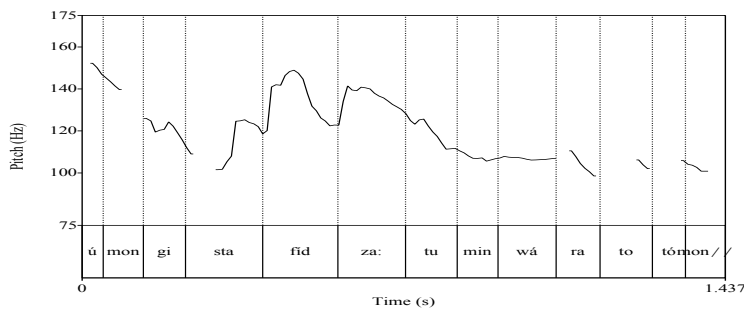
- 17.b *de* *ásed* *zátu* //
 PROX.SG lion CONTR
 ‘This is a lion’ (not a hyena or anything else) (inf.3)

In this context, a possible neutral answer (without *zátu*) remains perfectly grammatical.

18. *de* *ásed* //
 PROX.SG lion
 ‘This is a lion’

zátu can also be used to contrast a preceding verbal predicate, as in 19. The same morpho-syntactic and prosodic rules of fig. 10. apply (cf. fig. 3. for a neutral declarative verbal utterance).

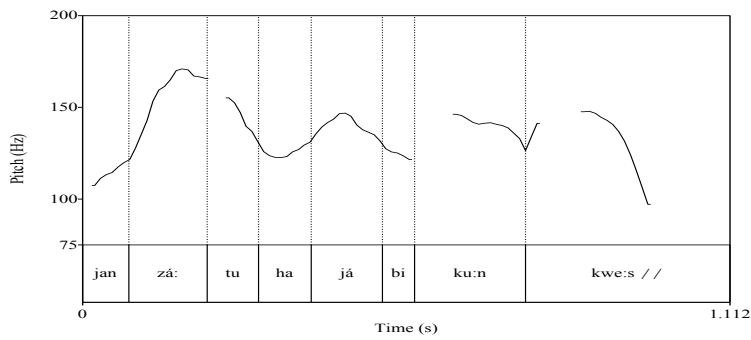
Fig. 11 The prosodic contour of a predicate contrastive focus marked by *zátu*



19. *úmon* *g=istafid* *zátu* *min* *wára* *ta* *tómon* //
 3PL PROG=take_advantage CONTR from behind POSS POSS.3PL
 ‘They are actually taking advantage of them’ (inf.1)

A special morpho-syntactic and prosodic contour is instead found when a whole sentence is in contrastive focus: in this case, *zátu* precedes the focused predication and it bears an extra-high pitch accent (in fig. 12 pitch reaches 171 Hz). The following focused utterance instead correlates with a global declining of the intonation curve.

Fig. 12 The prosodic contour of a sentence contrastive focus marked by *zátu*



20. *yáni zátu hayá bi=kún kwes //*
 that_is_to_say CONTR life IRR=be good
 'That is to say, life can indeed be good' (inf.1)

zátu can also introduce a contrastive focus on a preceding adverbial, as in (21), where *ketír* 'much' is in focus, or (22), where focus affects *šwéya* 'a bit'.

21. *ašan kéda / nas bi=gídu~gídu árabí ketír zátu //*
 for like_this people IRR=pierce~pierce Arabic much CONTR
 'For this reason, people often make a lot of mistakes (while speaking) Arabic' (inf.1)

22. *úmon tówaru árabí júba šwéya zátu //*
 3PL develop Arabic Juba a_bit CONTR
 'They developed Juba Arabic a little bit' (inf.2)

In (23), the locative adverb *wen* 'where' is in focus, while the first occurrence of *zátu* after the subject pronoun is possible to be interpreted as an emphatic element not necessarily contrastive (as in example (16)).

23. *íta zátu ma árifu móya gi=tála min wen zátu //*
 2SG CONTR NEG know water PROG=get_out from where CONTR
 'You don't know where on earth the water come from' (inf.2)

It is also interesting to remark that when *zátu* directly follows *háta* 'even,' it expresses a broad scalar focus on the following predication, implying that the predication in focus is less likely than other alternative predications (König 1991: 69; Krifka 1998: 92). Thus, unlike *zátu*, which simply evokes a contrast, the introduction of *háta* causes the alternative predications to be ordered on a scale of likelihood; the value of the *háta zátu* construction is associated with the lowest ranked element on this likelihood scale:

24. *háta zátu / fi júwa mustéšfa de / kúlu amúl~amulú*
 even CONTR in inside hospital PROX.SG all do\PASS~do\PASS
bulát //
 tiled_floor
 'Even the whole inside of the hospital was tiled' (inf.1)

25. *háta zátu / kan úo ázu ákara / bi=kún fi sérir //*
 even CONTR if 3SG want defecate IRR=be in bed
 ‘Even if he wants to defecate, he might do it in the bed’ (inf.2)

The sequence *háta zátu* is prosodically independent being enclosed by a minor prosodic boundary. The combination of *háta* and *zátu* can also convey a narrow scalar focus on a subject argument. In this case, the focused NP separates *háta* and *zátu* as in 26.:

26. *háta habóba zátu / bi=rówa árifu hája isim to giráya //*
 even grandmother CONTR IRR=go know thing name POSS.3SG study
 ‘Even an old woman will know what ‘education’ means’ (inf.1)

In a comparative perspective, it is important to note that the Ki-nubi creole of Uganda also presents a (minor) contrastive focus marker *bizátu* (derived from Sudanese Arabic **bi=zāt=uh* ‘by=PRO.EMPH=3SG.M). According to Wellens (2005: 174), *bizátu* adds emphasis on a preceding pronoun or, alternatively, it highlights the meaning of a following sentence. In spite of these syntactic similarities between JA *zátu* and Ugandan Ki-Nubi *bizátu*, it seems that the pragmatic functions of the latter are much more restricted than those of JA *zátu*. This is presumably due to the grammaticalization of *ya* as a main contrastive device in Ki-Nubi (cf. 5.2.).

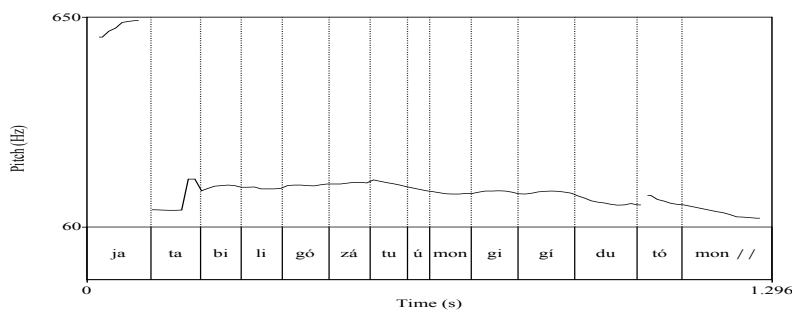
5.2. TOWARDS A FOCUS MARKER: THE PARTICLE *YA* AND ITS MULTIPLE USES

The particle *ya* is extremely multifunctional. Its Arabic etymological and still very common meaning is vocative, as was exemplified in 6. above. Another example is (27), which further shows the more common utterance-final position of vocative expressions in JA:

27. *sekeséke bada kúbu ya zol //*
 drizzle start pour VOC man
 ‘The rain started to fall down, bro’ (inf.1)

In many cases the vocative value is weakened. In (28) *ya* is used before a personal pronoun and its meaning seems to be that of calling attention to what is about to be said. In this case, the multifunctional *ya* is linked with a prosodic prominence (cf. 5.3).

Fig. 13 An extra-high pitch falling on *ya* before a personal pronoun



28. *ya ita bi=ligó zátu úmon gi=gídu tómon //*
 VOC 2SG IRR=find CONTR 3PL PROG=pierce POSS.3PL
 ‘So, you will find out that they also make mistakes (while speaking) their (Arabic)’ (inf.1)

Fig. 13 shows an emphatic extra-high pitch reaching almost 650 Hz while the rest of the utterance is linked to a declination of the intonation curve that does not exceed 200 Hz. The translation, where

ya is loosely rendered with “so,” draws the attention to this truly modal value of a vocative expression, which ‘*is in fact a request to pay attention*’ (Izre’el forth.; italics in the original). Interestingly, in Sudanese Arabic *ya* is frequently coupled in its use as a vocative by the vocative morphemes *hōy* (male speaker) and *hēy* (female speaker); alone, *ya* is used, at least in certain Western Sudanese dialects, such as Baggara (Manfredi forth.a), as a preposition ‘up to’ or as a disjunctive conjunction ‘or.’

If we accept that a vocative is not an extraphrasal nominal case, we can better understand its extension in JA as a marker of emphasis for a following element; most commonly the element in emphasis is a predicate, either nominal (29) or verbal (30):

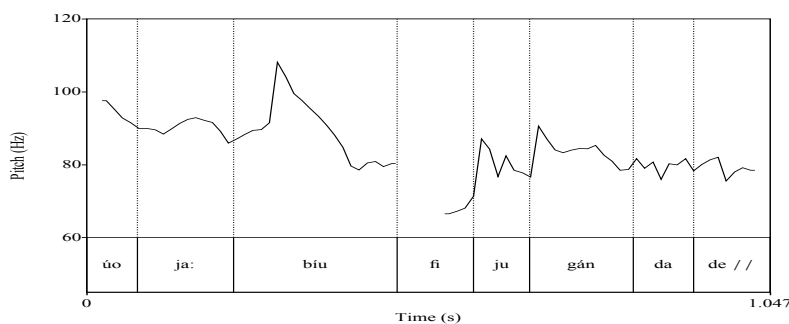
29. *de ya kalām tómon / úmon g=wónusu~wónusu tawáli de //*
 PROX.SG EMPH talk POSS.3PL 3PL PROG=talk~talk directly PROX.SG
 ‘This is indeed their talk, which they keep saying right now’ (inf.2)
30. *áhal to ya bi=kún kasran-ín //*
 family POSS.3M EMPH IRR=be lost-PL.ADJ
 ‘His family must have disappeared’ (inf.3)

In 31. *ya* emphasizes the following adverbial *tában* ‘obviously, of course:’

31. *úmon ya tában jibu fíkra //*
 3PL EMPH obviously bring idea
 (following a list of nations who introduced the football African Cup of Nations) ‘They quite obviously came up with the idea’ (inf.1)

In prosodic terms, the particle *ya* as an emphasis marker differs sharply from its use as a vocative and as an attention-calling modal. It operates as a trigger word and it bears a considerably low pitch, while the following presented item has an emphatic high pitch, e.g. in fig. 14, where the verb *bíu* is characterized by a sharp rise of its lexical pitch that reaches 116Hz.

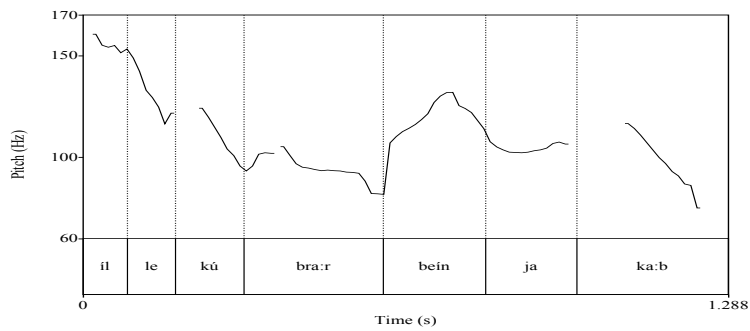
Fig. 14 The prosodic contour of emphasis marked by *ya*



32. *úo ya bíu fì yugánda de //*
 3SG EMPH buy in Uganda PROX.SG
 (discussing a man dealing with motorbikes) ‘He buys them in Uganda’ (inf.2)

When the presented item corresponds to the last word of the utterance, as in fig. 15, it correlates with a considerable pitch oscillation ending at the bottom of the intonation curve (132 > 73 Hz):

Fig. 15 The prosodic contour of an utterance-final emphasis marked by *ya*



33. *ille kúbri arbein ya kab //*
 except bridge forty EMPH bad
 ‘Indeed, the Bridge of the Forty is crap’ (inf.1)

In Ki-Nubi *ya* further develops into a true focus marker. In Kenyan Ki-Nubi, according to Owens (1996: 151), the most common focus construction consists of a left-dislocated constituent followed by the morpheme *ya*. This morpheme can mark in principle a constituent in any part of the sentence; interestingly, when used alone *ya* serves as a presentative locative (in variation with *yadá* cf. paragraph 5.3.). By contrast, Wellens (2005: 171-172) states that, in Ugandan Ki-Nubi, *ya* is associated with a contrastive focus highlighting both new and asserted information. As reported by Wellens, *ya* can both precede or follow the sentence constituent it focuses. The situation in JA is radically different: first of all, *ya* is not contrastive and it always precedes its scope, be it nominal or verbal, while no left-dislocation is involved (*ya* can well be the first element of the sentence as in (34)).

34. *ya dinka ma b=wónusu árabi ya zol //*
 EMPH Dinka NEG IRR=talk Arabic VOC man
 ‘Dinka people do not speak Arabic, bro’ (inf.1)

The fact that no dislocation is involved in the case of arguments preceding *ya* is easily shown by the absence of co-referential elements after *ya* and before the predicate (cf. (29-33)). At the same time, the possible co-occurrence of *ya* with focus-sensitive operators such as *zátu*, as in (35) and (36), clearly shows that we are not faced here with a focus marker.

35. *de ya múškila zátu kúlu //*
 PROX.SG EMPH trouble CONTR all
 ‘This is the real problem’ (inf.2)
36. *úmon ya zátu wodí le áнна árabi henák //*
 3PL EMPH CONTR give to 1PL Arabic there
 ‘They brought us the Arabic language, down there (in South Sudan)’ (inf.2)

In diachronic terms, the sequence *ya úo* ‘EMPH 3SG’ gave rise to two elements of interest for the information structure of JA: *yáwu* ‘INF’ (information focus marker) and *yawú* ‘RE-ASS’ (re-assertive focus marker). This also forms an interesting case of accentual opposition which does not find its origin in the Arabic superstrate. It has been seen that when used as an attention-calling device (cf. fig. 13, (28) above), *ya* is prosodically more prominent than the following noun or pronoun. It is thus plausible to assume that the origin of *yáwu* ‘INF’ can be found in the lexicalization of the sequence **yá uo*, in which the second element, already de-accented, further lost

its pronominal value. Along these lines, a further development of *yáwu* ‘INF’ has led in (at least certain varieties of) Ki-Nubi to the dropping of final /o/, yielding *yaw*, which is defined by Wellens (2005: 173) as a sentence-final marker of emphasis (see 5.4.). By contrast, the accent on the last syllable of *yawú* ‘IDF’ is possibly the result of the lexicalization of a sentence accent on *úo* ‘3SG,’ which was emphasized by *ya* ‘EMPH,’ therefore being the most salient element of the sequence **ya úo* (cf. fig. 14, (32) above). In JA, both *yáwu* and *yawú* can be considered dedicated focus markers, since no other use has been recorded.

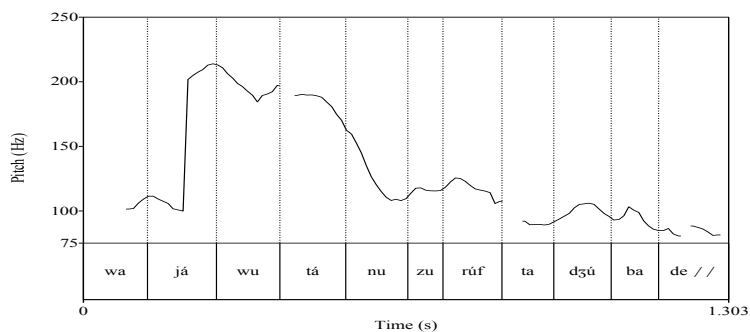
5.3. THE INFORMATION FOCUS MARKER *YÁWU*

The most common use of *yáwu* is related to the expression of ‘information’ focus: i.e., a focus which marks the non-presupposed status of the information it carries (Kiss 2008: 92). JA *yáwu* (different from Ki-Nubi *yadá*) always precedes the focused constituent. It can also precede a verbal predicate, as in (37), where it focalizes the auxiliary verb *gi=rówa* ‘going’ in the expression of a near future.

37. *íta gi=já ligó farik-át tan-ín al sukár~sukár*
 2SG PROG=come find team-PL.N other-PL.ADJ REL small.PL~small.PL¹⁰
dol / yáwu gi=rówa šilu kas //
 PROX.PL INF PROG=go bring cup
 (discussing the fact that Sudan are no longer winning the Africa Cup) ‘Now, what you find it is that other teams, the small ones, are going to win the cup’ (inf.1)

While utterances marked for emphasis by *ya* present an emphatic high pitch on the focused item (cf. fig. 14, (32)), *yáwu* usually carries the highest pitch of the utterance, as in fig. 16, where it precedes a 2SG independent pronoun and reaches 209 Hz:

Fig. 16 An information focus marked by *yáwu* bearing prosodic prominence

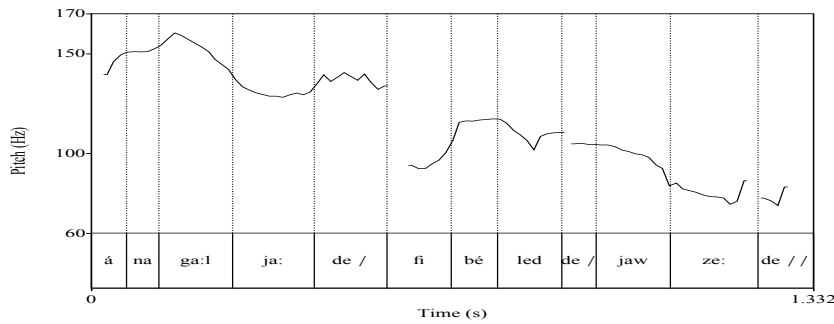


38. *wa yáwu íta áynu zurúf ta júba de //*
 and INF 2SG see condition\PL POSS Juba PROX.SG
 ‘and you know the conditions in Juba’ (inf.1)

In other cases, neither *yáwu* nor the following item bears prosodic prominence, as shown in fig. 17, where the definitional focus *yáwu zey de* ‘it is just like this’ corresponds to the comment of the frame-setting topic *fī béled de* ‘in this country’:

¹⁰ A number of Arabic frozen adjectival and nominal plural forms are used in JA. Some of them are of wide occurrence, while others are a function of the knowledge of and exposure to Sudanese or Standard Classical Arabic on the part of the speaker. Another example is *zurúf* ‘conditions’ in 38.

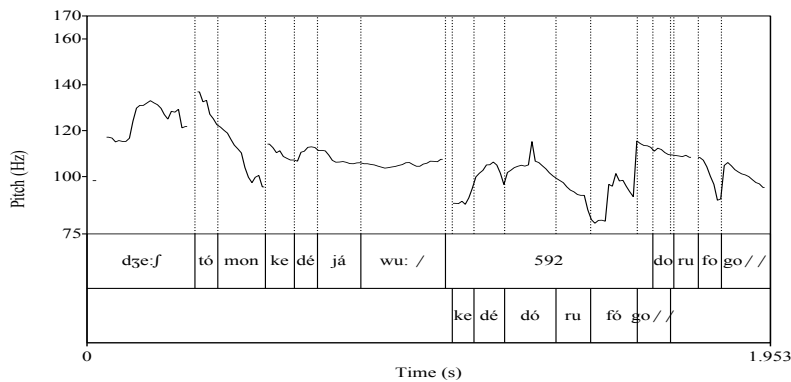
Fig. 17 An information focus marked by *yáwu* without any prosodic prominence



39. *ána gále ya de / fi béled de / yáwu zey de //*
 1SG say PRES PROX.SG in country PROX.SG INF like PROX.SG
 ‘I say: “It, in this country, is like that”’ (inf.2)

Moreover, a pause (induced here by hesitation) can cause *yáwu* to be prosodically separated from the focused item, as in 40.a, where *yáwu* is realized with a long final vowel and the following verbal predicate *dóru* ‘walk’ occurs after a pause of 592 mms:

Fig. 18 An information focus marked by and prosodically separated from *yáwu*



- 40.a *ješ tómon kedé yáwu /*
 army POSS.3PL so_that INF
 ‘(They built the bridge) ... so that their army...’ (inf.2)
 40.b *kedé dóru fògo //*
 so_that walk on.ANAPH
 ‘... so that (they can) walk on it’ (inf.1)
 40.c *dóru fògo //*
 walk on.ANAPH
 ‘... (they can) walk on it’ (inf.2)

In (41) *yáwu* restricts the comment to the subject argument *de*:

41. *yáwu de binía / tában //*
 INF PROX.SG girl obviously
 ‘(discussing youth language and the word *bám̐ba* ‘girl’) This means girl, of course’
 (inf.2)

The next, and final, example is exceptional insofar as *yáwu* occurs in post-focal and clause-final position:

42. *bágara de / úo wáhid kúlu yawu //*
 cow PROX.SG 3SG one all INF
 ‘(As for) cows, they are all the same’ (inf.2)

The corresponding comment with *yawu* preceding the focus is obviously perfectly correct as a selfstanding utterance:

43. *úo yawu wáhid kúlu //*
 3SG INF one all
 ‘They are all the same’

One can hypothesize that the presence of the immediately preceding definite argument topic *bágara de* gives prominence to the anaphoric pronoun *úo*; shifting *yawu* to a post-focal position could be a strategy to balance the salience between the constituents of the utterance.

5.4. THE RE-ASSERTIVE FOCUS MARKER *YAWÚ*

JA *yawú* is somehow similar to the locative presentative of Kenyan Ki-Nubi *yadá* (Owens 1996: 152) and Ugandan Ki-Nubi *yadé* (Wellens 2005: 173), derived from **ya de* ‘EMPH PROX.SG’ (unattested in JA). Like Ki-Nubi clause final *yadá* / *yadé*, JA *yawú* selects a previously textually-given element as the most salient information. It is different from a counter-assertive focus, ‘in which the speaker is in contrast with a previously assertion, because he/she guesses that the embedded proposition should be already part of the mutual knowledge of conversation’ (Zimmermann 2007: 150), because the speakers are aware of the mutually shared status of the focused element, and no contrast is implied. Using *yawú* the speaker re-asserts the pragmatic salience of the element and brings it to the fore. JA *yawú* is thus a re-assertive focus. In (44), informant 2 focalizes the proper name Modu immediately after it was introduced by his interlocutor in (13) above:

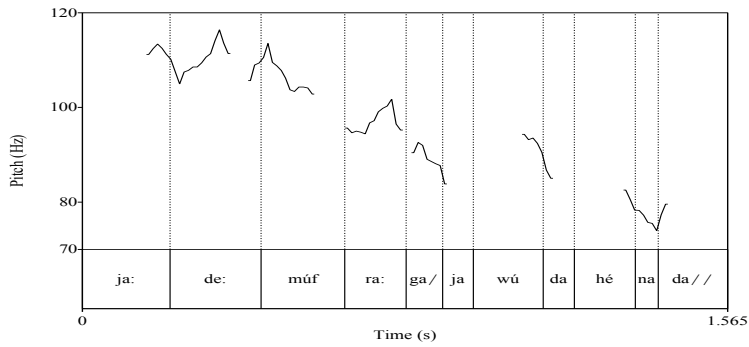
44. *munú yawú modú //*
 who RE-ASS Modu
 ‘Who is (this) Modu?’ (inf.2)

In the same manner, in (45) *yawú* focalizes the previously mentioned element *abigó*:

45. *abigó fi hena / taláta yom / yawú áda úo //*
 lion EXS here three day RE-ASS bite 3SG
 ‘And here the lion (...) after three days it bit him’ (inf.3)

Moreover, different from the focus sensitive particles *zátu* and *ya*, *yawú* is not associated with any prosodic prominence, as shown in fig. 19:

Fig. 19 The prosodic contour of a re-assertive focus marked by *yawú*



46. *ya de mufrága / yawú de héna de //*
 PRES PROX.SG stirrer RE-ASS PROX.SG here PROX.SG
 ‘This is the wooden spoon. Here it is’ (inf.3)

6. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The article has shown that in JA topic and focus-marked sentences can be opposed to ‘neutral’ (informationally-unmarked) sentences, whose behaviour can be summarized as follows.

Table 1. Neutral utterances in JA

Declarative nominal	<i>syntax</i> <i>prosody</i>	SBJ ↗	PRED.N ↘ //	
Declarative verbal (positive)	<i>syntax</i> <i>prosody</i>	SBJ ↑	PRED.V ↘	(OBJ) ↓ //
Declarative verbal (negative)	<i>syntax</i> <i>prosody</i>	SBJ ↗	<i>ma</i> ↑	PRED.V ↓ //
Yes-No question	<i>syntax</i> <i>prosody</i>	(<i>hal</i>) ↓	SBJ ↗	PRED ↑ //
Wh-question	<i>syntax</i> <i>prosody</i>	SBJ ↑	PRED.V ↘	Wh ↓ //
Tag question	<i>syntax</i> <i>prosody</i>	<i>músu</i> ↓	SBJ →	PRED ↑ //

Table 1. describes the syntactic and prosodic behaviour of neutral utterances. The Subject (SBJ) is always the first element, except for the optional use of *hal* in Yes-No questions and the presence of *músu* in Tag questions. In prosodic terms, declarative nominal utterances are characterized by a rising-falling intonation contour (↗ ↘), in which the subject corresponds to the rising part, and the predicate to the falling part of the contour. Declarative verbal utterances, in their turn, display a very common declination of the fundamental frequency (↓). In declarative negative verbal utterances the negative marker *ma* is the most prosodically prominent element (↑). Wh-question display basically the same pattern of declarative verbal utterances, except for the presence of the sentence-final Wh-word. Yes-No and Tag questions share a very high pitch prominence on the final syllable, but, while Yes-No questions are marked by a gradual rising of the intonation curve, Tag questions remain low (→) until the very last element.

All these neutral utterances can be opposed, either syntactic and/or prosodic terms, to topic- and focus-marked utterances.

It has further been shown that morphosyntax and prosody are complementary in marking topicalization in JA. Three types of topic constructions have been identified.

Table 2. *Types of Topic in JA*

		TOPIC			COMMENT		
Definite argument	<i>syntax</i>	NP	<i>de</i>		X	ANAPH	σ
	<i>prosody</i>	↗	↑ /		↘	↑	↓ //
Indefinite argument	<i>syntax</i>	<i>fī</i>	NP	σ	X	ANAPH	σ
	<i>prosody</i>	↑	↘	↑ /	↑	↘	↓ //
Frame setting	<i>syntax</i>	NP	σ		X	σ	
	<i>prosody</i>	↗	↑ /		↘	↓ //	

In Table 2., the topical material is always a NP. As has been seen, topic is prosodically signalled by rising intonation, with the last syllable (σ) receiving the highest pitch in the IU, which in its turn is followed by a pause.

In the case of definite topics, the PROX.SG marker *de*, being the last element, receives the highest pitch. Indefinite topics, are introduced by an accented existential copula *fī*. The comment contains an anaphoric element in both definite and indefinite argument topics. The comment is made up of whatever lexical material (X), followed by the anaphora. The comment is signalled by a declining intonation, whose bottom point lies on the final syllable (σ), be it the final syllable of the anaphora or of any other element following it. Frame setting topics are marked negatively by the absence of coreferential, anaphoric elements.

None of these strategies is of course typologically exceptional, nor is the absence of a dedicated topic marker.

Focus constructions, instead, do have (almost-) dedicated markers. Contrastive focus is marked by an “almost-dedicated” marker *zátu*. It acts alone in marking a contrastive focus on a (preceding) argument or predicate, while it is supplemented by prosody when a whole sentence is in focus. Interestingly, the highest pitch falls in this case on *zátu* itself therefore running contrary to a well-attested tendency to prosodically stress the focalized item(s) (cf. Büring 1997: 29).

Table 3. *Contrastive focus in JA*

Argument	<i>syntax</i>	X	<i>zátu</i>
	<i>prosody</i>	↘	↓ (//)
Predicate	<i>syntax</i>	X	<i>zátu</i>
	<i>prosody</i>	↘	↓ (//)
Sentence	<i>syntax</i>	<i>zátu</i>	X
	<i>prosody</i>	↑	↘ //

Other focus constructions involve the use of the derivatives of the multifunctional element *ya*. In this regards, it should be stressed that the syntactic and semantic differences associated with the use of *ya* in JA and Ki-Nubi bear witness to different degrees of grammaticalization. In JA, when *ya* precedes a nominal it acts as a vocative or, with a pronominal, as an attention-calling device; when it precedes a predicate it acts as an element emphasizing the importance and new status of the following element. In Ki-Nubi *ya* becomes a focus marker, possibly contrastive, with the same functions of *zátu* in JA. The semantic cline leading to the uses of *ya* in JA and Ki-Nubi is shown in Table 4.:

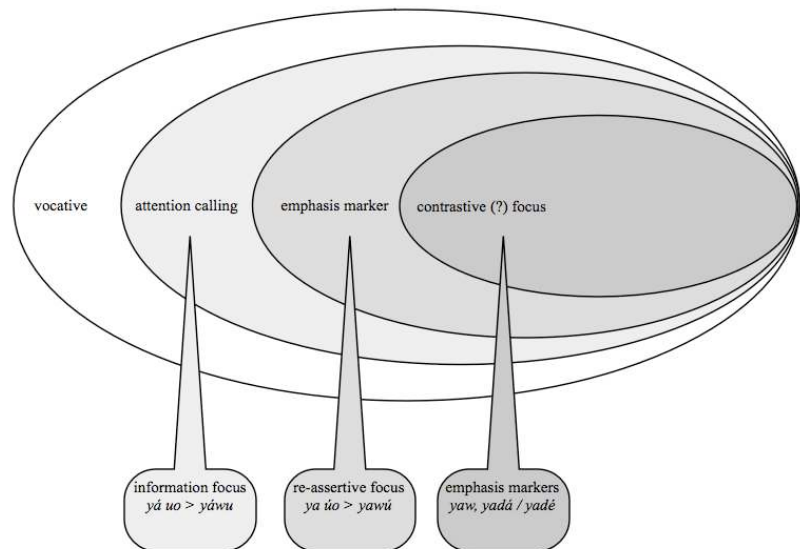
Table 4. The diachronic development of *ya* in Juba Arabic and Ki-Nubi

value historical development	vocative	attention-calling	emphasis marker	contrastive focus
Sudanese Arabic	✓			
Early Pidgin Arabic	✓	✓ (?)		
Juba Arabic	✓	✓	✓	
Ki-Nubi	✓	✓ (?)	✓ (?)	✓

Prosody complements *ya* in its different uses in JA: when *ya* functions as a vocative or as an attention-calling device it is associated with an emphatic high pitch. By contrast, when *ya* marks emphasis, it is the emphasized element which bears prosodic prominence. These two prosodic configurations are at the basis of the grammaticalization of *ya*-derived focus markers: *yáwu* for information focus and *yawú* for re-assertive focus. Fig. 20 depicts the grammaticalization of the dedicated JA focus markers *yawú* and *yáwu*, and of Ki-Nubi *yaw* and *yadá/yadé*. While in JA the information and re-assertive focus are grammaticalized respectively from the attention-calling and emphatic uses of the marker *ya* (with the addition of a 3SG pronoun), in Ki-Nubi the grammaticalization of the emphasis markers *yaw* and *yadá / yadé* seems to be, according to Wellens's (2005) description, a further development of a contrastive focus value of *ya*.

Fig. 20 The possible grammaticalization of the dedicated focus markers in JA and Ki-Nubi

- Sudanese Arabic, Early Pidgin Arabic, Juba Arabic, Ki-Nubi
- Early Pidgin Arabic, Juba Arabic, Ki-Nubi
- Juba Arabic
- Ki-Nubi



While the lexical elements responsible for the expression of topic and focus are Arabic-derived, no such influence is ascertainable in the prosodic means. A possible role of the Nilotic substrate is possible, but unlikely, given the general lack of sensible substratal influence in JA and Ki-Nubi (cf. Owens, this volume, and contrary to early assumptions: cf. Bureng 1986). We are more probably faced with internal developments. We likewise leave open the whole, fascinating issue of the possible typological correlates of this interplay of morphosyntactic and prosodic formal means in the expression of the information structure of pidgins and creoles at large.

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List of abbreviations, glosses and symbols

ADJ	Adjective/Adjectival	RE-ASS	Re-assertive focus particle
ANAPH	Anaphoric	REFL	Reflexive
ANT	Anterior	REL	Relative pronoun
CONTR	Contrastive	SBJ	Subject
EMPH	Emphatic	SG	Singular
EXS	Existential copula	TAG	Tag question particle
INF	Information focus particle	V	Verb, verbal
IRR	Irrealis	VN	Verbal noun
IU	Intonation Unit	1, 2, 3	First, second, third person
M	Masculine	-	Affix boundary
N	Noun/Nominal	=	Clitic boundary
NEG	Negation	\	Ablaut
NP	Noun phrase	~	Reduplication
OBJ	Object	/	Minor prosodic boundary
PASS	Passive	//	Major prosodic boundary
PL	Plural	↗	Rising intonation
POSS	Possessive	↘	Declining intonation
PRED	Predicate	→	Continuing intonation
PRO	Pronoun	↑	Highest pitch (top)
PROG	Progressive	↓	Lowest pitch (bottom)
PROX	Proximal	[...]	Topicalized phrase

Q Interrogative particle