

Focus in Jamaican Creole:  
An Investigative Study of  
the Contributions of Substrate Languages  
in Jamaican Creole Focus Structures

Leiden University  
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MA Linguistics:  
Language Diversity of Africa, Asia and Native America

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30<sup>th</sup> June 2017

Word Count: 17,950

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## ABBREVIATIONS AND CONVENTIONS

1	first person
2	second person
3	third person
ACC	accusative
ADV	adverb(ial)
aFOC	argument focus marker
CQ	content question (marker)
COMP	comparative
DECL	declarative
DEF	definite article
DEM	demonstrative
DET	determiner
DIEC	diectic
DIST	distal
FOC	focus marker
HAB	habitual
IND	indicative
INDEF	indefinite article
INTERR	interrogative sentence/marker
LOC	locative
NEG	negation, negative
NOM	nominative
OBJ	object
pFOC	predicate focus marker
PL	plural
POSS	possessive
POSSPRO	possessive pronoun
POST	postposition
PREP	preposition
PROG	progressive
PAST	past tense marker
Q	question particle/marker
RES	resumptive pronoun
REL	relative
SG	singular
+	feature is present
-	feature is absent
(+)	feature is optional
*	ungrammatical

## INTRODUCTION

### Aim of Study

This work aims to establish the extent of substrate influence on focus structures in Jamaican Creole (JC). Patrick posits that like most English-lexified Atlantic Creoles, Jamaican Creole is uniformly SVO, with the main deviation from this surface order occurring in focus structures (2003: 15). As these structures are ubiquitous in JC and not inherited from the superstrate language, my hope is that, through a typological comparison of the features of focus constructions in JC and a selection of substrate languages I will be able to shed some light on the extent of substrate influence on JC syntactic structures.

### Introduction to the Language

JC is an English-lexified creole, spoken by the 2.7 million inhabitants of the Caribbean island of Jamaica, alongside Standard Jamaican English (SJE), the country's official language. Most of the island's inhabitants use this creole in everyday life, with SJE being used for government, education and in all other professional settings. Known as *Patwa* among its speakers, JC is a contact language, the result of prolonged mixing between speakers of English dialects and West African languages. The foundations of JC are believed to have taken shape between 1660-1700, a period known as the "formative years" (Lalla and D'Costa, 1990: 16), following the arrival of the British in 1655 and the subsequent importation of enslaved Africans.

### Formation of Jamaican Creole

The nonstandard dialects of English, brought by colonialists, merchants, soldiers, sailors and indentured servants from various parts of the UK and its Caribbean colonies, would become the substrate for JC, providing the primary lexical basis and enjoying a superior social status to other languages spoken on the island. The African languages spoken by the enslaved exerted substrate influence on its grammar, syntax, and, to a far less extent, vocabulary. The majority of these languages belong to the Niger-Congo family, and include Akan, Kongo, Igbo, Yoruba and the Gbe languages; with some evidence of Hausa influence (Farquharson, 2012: 127).

Sources show that during the formative years of JC, between the years of 1655 and 1701, approximately 88,000 enslaved Africans were imported to Jamaica from various regions of West and Central Africa, including: Senegambia (4,200), Sierra Leone (800), the Windward Coast (11,400), the Gold Coast (5,500), the Bight of Benin (24,300), the Bight of Biafra (6,800), and the Angola-Congo regions of Central Africa (34,000) (Alleyne, 1988: 40). Kouwenberg, however, credits the Bight of Biafra as being a far more significant slave port than originally suggested by Alleyne, citing the

Bights of Benin and Biafra and West-central Africa as the main ports of origin of Africans during the formative period, with the rest being brought from “unspecified parts of Africa” and other British colonies in the Caribbean (2008: 9). It is surprising that Kouwenberg does not list the Gold Coast as a major port of origin, since Akan is often credited as the dominant substrate in JC vocabulary.

Although the import records provided by such sources as Alleyne (1988) and Kouwenberg (2008) are an invaluable resource in determining which African languages contributed to the formation of JC, they are not without their limitations: namely, that the origin of large numbers of slaves were unknown, owing to lack of properly kept records or the efforts of interlopers who chose not to document their illegal activities (Alleyne, 1988: 41). Thus, for a more accurate scope of substrate influence, other factors must be taken into consideration, and the figures on importation augmented by linguistic data that may further shed light on which specific language groups contributed to the formation of JC.

Through his analysis, Farquharson (2012) was able to establish the volume and nature of more than five-hundred putative lexical Africanisms that have been identified in JC. The result of which is “a list of 289 words whose etymologies have been fairly well-established” (Farquharson, 2012: i).<sup>1</sup> From here he was able to survey the distribution of these Africanisms “based on their source languages, time of attestation, the African region they come from and the semantic domain to which they belong” (Farquharson, 2012: i). Through his efforts, Farquharson was able to determine that the language that has made the most significant contribution, in terms of lexicon at least, is Akan (Tano, Kwa), which has been established as the source of 61 vocabulary items (36%); followed by Kongo with 33 (19%), and then Gbe with 16 (9%) (Farquharson, 2012: 127).

From the demographic data provided by Alleyne and Kouwenberg, and the etymological analyses carried out by Farquharson (2012), linguists and creolists are better able to ascertain which African languages were present on the island between the years 1660-1700, and, thus, contributed to the formation of JC. Akan, Kongo and Gbe are cited as “the chief contributors of items to the lexicon of Jamaican, [which] when combined...account for well over half (i.e. 64%) of words whose etymologies go back to a single source language” (Farquharson, 2012: 127). Despite the fact the Gold Coast did not arise as a significant slave port until after the formation of JC, Akan has proved to be the largest contributor to the vocabulary of JC of any substrate.

### Creole Continuum

The linguistic landscape of Jamaica during the formative period would have been extremely diverse, with speakers of a number of different West African languages and English dialects interacting on a daily basis, resulting in the creation of a pidgin language that would form the basis for JC. In cases

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<sup>1</sup> This figure refers to words that have a single source etymology, which Farquharson defines as “Africanisms whose etyma have been identified in only one African language” (2012: 127).

where “speakers of the creole have remained in contact with the lexical donor language” – as is the situation in Jamaica, where SJE is spoken alongside JC – there has been a tendency for speakers to forego features of speech associated with substrate languages, usually considered socially inferior, in favour of those closer to the socially superior superstrate language. This process has resulted in a continuum of Jamaican Creole dialects, with those closest to the superstrate at one end, known as the acrolect; those farthest at the other, called the basilect; and the mesolect, consisting of a range of isolects between the two polar varieties. These variations can make determining the specific typological characteristics of any dialect within this continuum difficult. As varieties of the acrolect tend to show little divergence from SJE, most studies on JC, including this current one, focus on the basilectal and or mesolectal varieties.

### Focus Structures

The term *focus* has been subject to various definitions, and given the wide range of theories and approaches, I feel it necessary to give a brief description of *focus* as discussed in this paper. Focus is a grammatical category, which refers to referents in an utterance which mark new and/or contrastive information in a discourse. This information is encoded differently in different languages, some mark focus prosodically, some morphologically or syntactically, while many use some combination of the three. Focus can be further divided into broad focus, which brings into focus an entire utterance, and narrow focus, which brings in to focus a selected part of it, such as an argument or adjunct. As broad focus is marked prosodically and narrow focus syntactically in JC, the latter will be the focus of this study. Focus is semantically and, often structurally, similar to topic, which provides background information in a discourse, and which will be treated along with focus in this paper.

In JC focus is marked syntactically, by fronting and marking with a focus particle. This strategy is used to focus argument or adjunct constituents. In the case of predicate focus, JC combines this strategy with a copying mechanism. This is very different to focus in English, which uses a clefting strategy to mark contrastive focus, as in (1b); and prosodic stress, which can be used to mark either new or contrastive information, as in (1c).

- 1 a) I love pizza
- b) It is pizza (that) I love
- c) I love PIZZA

Many of the substrates, on the other hand, have mechanisms of focus marking very similar to those in JC. For the purpose of this study, I have selected a few substrates known to be of significant influence in the formation of JC, and which have systems of focus marking highly comparable to that of JC. These include Akan, Ga, Ewe, Fon, Yoruba and Igbo. While Kongo has been established as a

significant substrate of JC, due to an inadequate amount of accessible data, it will not be discussed here.

### Data

The data used in this paper have been sourced mostly from my own field work,<sup>2</sup> and supplemented with my own knowledge and instincts of JC. In all instances where I have consulted my own knowledge or provided my own examples, my judgments have been confirmed by native speakers of JC. I also cite examples from a number of literary sources on JC, in which case I adhered to the original translations, unless otherwise stated, and provide my own interlinear gloss.

With regards to the substrate languages, the data have been sampled from various source literature, which are cited throughout. In all cases the original translation and interlinear glosses are maintained, unless otherwise stated.

### Orthography

Prior to Cassidy and LePage's standardisation of JC orthography, there were a number of inconsistencies in the transcription of JC, with words being spelt either phonetically, often resulting in various spellings of the same word, or etymologically, where they are spelt like the English words on which they are based. Cassidy and LePage developed a phonemic system, that only represents variation of sound that affect meaning, and does not rely on English spelling. Thus, the sounds /g/ and /dʒ/ are always represented by 'g' and 'j', respectively, and the letter 'c', which can represent either /k/ or /s/ in English, only occurs in the combination 'ch', which represents /tʃ/. Despite the many benefits to the Cassidy-LePage orthography, it was not without its shortcomings, most notably the use of 'ng' to represent both the consonant /ŋ/ and nasalised vowels.

In the present study, I will adhere to the orthographic system established and currently used by the Jamaican Language Unit (JLU) at UWI, Mona Campus, which is based on that of Cassidy and LePage, with some adjustments made by JLU (2003) (Durrleman-Tame, 2008: 10). This system yields a sound-symbol correspondence, accounting for the thirty-four phonemic segments in JC, as well as nasalised vowels<sup>3</sup>. In instances where I have taken examples from sources outside my own data, I have adhered to the orthographic conventions of the original authors.

### What will be covered

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<sup>2</sup> My primary consultant is 32-year-old native of Jamaica, Gelgado Dean Bowen, who was born in Kingston, where he spent his early years, before moving to Westmoreland to attend primary school, and St. Elizabeth for Secondary school. He has lived all over the island, in both the city and countryside, and now resides in Negril. He is educated to a secondary school level, and now works as a grounds keeper in a gated residential community.

<sup>3</sup> See Appendix for orthography.

This paper is divided into two major parts. Part one is comprised of six chapters: the first chapter will discuss the focus marker in JC and its distribution. The focus marker in JC is homophonous with a number of other particles in the language, all of which will also be brought under discussion; the second chapter will look at argument focus, paying particular attention to which constituents can be focused and the strategy used to focus them; the third chapter centres on predicate focus, which unlike argument focus, employs a copying strategy to mark focus; the fourth chapter will look at interrogative constructions, and in-situ versus ex-situ representations of content questions; in chapter five we move on to topicalization, with particular attention to movement and the JC topic marker; and chapter six looks at relativization in JC, which often co-occurs with topic or focus constructions.

The second part is divided into five chapters, and will describe focusing strategies in the selected substrate languages, following the same structure as part one, describing the features of focus structures in each of the substrates in turn and comparing them to those of JC.



## 1. FOCUS MARKER IN JAMAICAN CREOLE

In JC focus constructions are readily identifiable by constituent fronting and the presence of focus marker *a* in clause initial position. This particle must precede all fronted constituents regardless of category.

### Status of *a*

The item *a* serves a number of different grammatical functions in JC, all of which are illustrated in the following sentence:

- 1)        *a*        *Joe*        *a*        *di*        *one*        *who*        *a*        *tan up*  
              FOC        Joe        COP        the        one        who        PROG        stand up  
              *a*        *gate*        *wid*        *a*        *daag?*  
              PREP        gate        with        ART        dog  
              'Is Joe the one who is standing up at the gate with a dog?'

The first *a* is the focus marker and main subject of this chapter; the second is the copula form, used in equative constructions and realised mesolectally as *iz/is*; the third form is the progressive particle, which immediately precedes the verb it is modifying; the fourth is one of two prepositional forms of *a*, one a general locative preposition formed from English *at* but meaning *at*, *in*, *on* or *to*, the other formed from and meaning *of*. The final *a* is the indefinite article, which is more commonly found in acrolectal varieties of JC, with *wan* ('one') or null article being used more commonly amongst basilectal and mesolectal speakers. The above sentence shows the forms of *a* in the different syntactic positions in which they occur. Progressive *a* is distinct in that it is the only form to appear before a verb, whilst the others occur preminally, and focus *a* is distinct in that it can only occur clause initially. There are a number of other characteristics which further differentiate these forms, all of which will be discussed further below.

### Progressive *a*

The progressive marker *a* obligatorily occurs in preverbal position, and is used to express duration over a period of time or (2a), far less commonly, to mark habitual aspect (2b):

- 2 a)        *im*        *a*        *plie*        *baal*  
              3SG        PROG        play        ball  
              'He is playing football'
- b)        *wan*        *yaad*        *we*        *dem*        *a*        *gruo*        *aki*  
              one        house        REL        3PL        PROG        grow        ackee  
              'A house where they grow ackee'

It is clear from the syntactic restraints and progressive reading of these constructions that progressive *a* and focus *a* are not the same. Indeed, a focused verb cannot have a progressive reading unless the progressive particle also appears in preverbal position of the original verb.

b)	<i>a</i>	<i>ron</i>	<i>im</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>ron</i>
	FOC	run	3SG	PROG	run
	'He is RUNNING'				

The claim has been made that, over time, emphatic markers may change into progressive markers. In her 2015 article, Killie suggests that “emphatic markers...may emphasise any aspect of an event as noteworthy...[and that] the relevant markers then develop into markers of ‘stressed ongoingness’” (213). To support these claims, Killie provides examples that span the history of written English, from the old English period, through the middle and early-modern periods, to present-day English.

Equative copula *a*

4 a)      *mi*            *a*            *big*          *uman*                                 (Bailey, 1966: 32)  
         1SG          COP          big          woman  
         ‘I am a grown woman’

[illegible]

Cassidy argues that this *a* is the same as that used in focus constructions (1961: 56), claiming that focus *a* is “clearly verbal...and [is] either a phonetic reduction of *is* or, far more likely, an African loan-word” (1961: 59). As cited in Durrleman-Tame, Christie also indicates a “possible connection between...emphatic *a* and the copula when she notes that ‘there are grounds for seeing a historical relationship between the focus *a* and the copula *a*’” (Durrleman-Tame, 2008: 105). This view was popularly held, with much of its basis rooted in the obvious similarities in form and function, as well

as the “realisation of the focus marker in mesolectal varieties of JC, [which] replace basilectal *a* with the particle *iz/is* when focusing/questioning” (Durrleman-Tame, 2008: 105).

Speculations regarding the source of the focus marker *a* have also contributed to the idea of some kind of relation to copula *a*. Cassidy suggests that focus *a* is most likely an African loanword, with Durrleman-Tame proposing it is a likely representation of “Twi *à* (or some related form), an emphatic particle which, following a noun or adjective, means *it is* or *they are* (1961: 59). With regards to its use as an interrogative marker, Cassidy proposes that the interrogative particle *à*, which occurs in Twi and other Niger-Congo languages, has “probably survived to some extent in Jamaica” in such constructions as (5) (1961: 56). However, she also notes that “it is impossible...to show that this is not the verb meaning *is*, since the two are identical in form and fit such a context equally well” (1961: 56).

- 5)
- |          |           |           |              |
|----------|-----------|-----------|--------------|
| <i>a</i> | <i>wa</i> | <i>yu</i> | <i>waahn</i> |
| FOC      | what      | 2SG       | want         |
- ‘What do you want?’

#### Focus *a*

Because of its presence in content questions, focus *a* is often described as focus/interrogative *a*. In her 2008 analysis of Jamaican syntax, Durrleman-Tame proposes that the focus particle *a* and equative/copula *a* are syntactically and interpretationally distinct, and therefore, cannot be analysed as the same (106). Firstly, focus *a* is invariable and cannot be modified for TMA, as shown by examples (6a and b), unlike copula *a*, which can be modified for TMA, as illustrated in examples (6c and d) (Durrleman-Tame, 2008: 109).

- 6 a)
- |          |           |           |            |           |
|----------|-----------|-----------|------------|-----------|
| <i>a</i> | <i>yu</i> | <i>mi</i> | <i>com</i> | <i>fa</i> |
| FOC      | 2SG       | 2SG       | come       | for       |
- I came for YOU*

- b)\*
- |            |          |           |           |            |           |
|------------|----------|-----------|-----------|------------|-----------|
| <i>did</i> | <i>a</i> | <i>yu</i> | <i>mi</i> | <i>com</i> | <i>fa</i> |
| PAST       | FOC      | 2SG       | 2SG       | come       | for       |

- c)
- |           |            |          |           |              |
|-----------|------------|----------|-----------|--------------|
| <i>di</i> | <i>pus</i> | <i>a</i> | <i>fi</i> | <i>Mieri</i> |
| DEF       | cat        | COP      | for       | Mary         |
- The cat is for Mary*

- d)
- |           |            |            |          |           |              |
|-----------|------------|------------|----------|-----------|--------------|
| <i>di</i> | <i>pus</i> | <i>did</i> | <i>a</i> | <i>fi</i> | <i>Mieri</i> |
| DEF       | cat        | PAST       | COP      | for       | Mary         |
- The cat was for Mary*

Secondly, copula *a* requires a preceding subject and nominal complement (4), where focus *a* can only occur clause initially and can precede a variety of complements, as will be further discussed in the following chapters. With no overt subject in such contexts, one could assume that focus *a* is a null expletive. However, null expletives are not permitted in embedded sentences, while focus *a* is, as illustrated in examples (7a-d) (Durrleman-Tame, 2015: 4).

- 7 a) *i* *comin* *laik* *se* *di* *pikni* *a* *go* *ron we*  
EXPL seem like say DEF child PROG go run away  
‘It seems like the child is going to run away’
- b)\* *im* *tel* *mi* *se* *i* *comin* *laik* *se* *di*  
3SG tell 1SG say EXPL seem like say DEF  
*pikni* *a* *go* *ron we*  
child PROG go run away  
‘He told me that it seems like the child is going to run away’
- c) *i* *comin* *laik* *se* *im* *tel* *mi* *se* *di*  
EXPL seem like say 3SG tell 1SG say DEF  
*pikni* *a* *go* *ron we*  
child PROG go run away  
‘It seems like he told me that the child is going to run away’
- d) *im* *tel* *mi* *se* *a* *di* *buk* *im* *riid*  
3SG tell 1SG say FOC DEF book 3SG read  
‘He told me that he read THE BOOK’

Thirdly, we will see in the following chapters that focus *a* can precede all fronted constituents, regardless of category, whilst copula *a* can precede only predicate nominals and not AP or PP predicates, as exemplified in (8) (Durrleman-Tame, 2015: 94).

- 8 a) *im* *a* *mad* *man*  
3SG COP mad man  
‘He is a mad man’
- b)\* *im* *a* *mad*  
3SG COP mad  
‘He is mad’
- c)\* *im* *a* *anda* *di* *trii*  
3SG COP under DEF tree  
‘He is under the tree’

Durrleman-Tame attempts to account for the homonymy of the two forms by analysing focus *a* as “an instance of grammaticalization of the copula, the [logical result of which] is then a phonetically similar yet syntactically and interpretationally different element” (2008: 113).

## 2. ARGUMENT FOCUS IN JAMAICAN CREOLE

In JC, arguments are focused by fronting the constituent to sentence initial focus position, where it is obligatorily marked by the focus particle *a*, and optionally marked by prosodic stress.

### Subject Focus Constructions

In the case of a focused subject argument, the constituent remains in-situ. Sentence (1a) is pragmatically neutral, while sentence (1b) is pragmatically marked, with the subject argument in focus. As we can see, the only difference between the two constructions is the presence of the focus particle.

- 1 a)     *im*        *nyam*        *di*        *bred*  
              3SG        eat           DEF        bread  
              ‘He ate the bread’
- b)        *a*            *im*        *nyam*        *di*        *bred*  
              FOC        3SG        eat           DEF .ART   bread  
              ‘HE ate the bread’

A focused subject argument marks identificational focus, and can be expected as a response to a question like “who ate the bread?”, where a presupposition exists. Questions such as “what did he do?” or “what happened?”, which request new information, would require a focused sentence rather than focused subject response, and so would be better answered by the construction in (1a). Sentence focus is marked prosodically rather than syntactically in JC. Thus, sentence (1a) can be either pragmatically neutral or marked for sentence focus depending on the prosodic stress applied.

### Object Focus Constructions

When the object argument is being focused in JC, the constituent is fronted and obligatorily marked by the focus marker.

- 2)        *a*            *di*            *moni*        *im*        *tiif*  
              FOC        DEF        money       3SG       steal  
              ‘He stole THE MONEY’

In the case of ditransitive verbs, this process is the same for both the primary and secondary object, as exemplified in the sentences below:

- 3 a)     *mi*        *gi*        *di*        *bwai*        *wan*        *lik*  
              1SG        give       DEF        boy        one        lick  
              ‘I gave the boy a lick’
- b)        *a*            *wan*        *lik*        *mi*        *gi*        *di*        *bwai*  
              FOC        one        lick        1SG        give       DEF        boy

'I gave the boy A LICK'

c)	<i>a</i>	<i>di</i>	<i>bwai</i>	<i>mi</i>	<i>gi</i>	<i>wan</i>	<i>lik</i>
	FOC	DEF	boy	1SG	give	one	lick
	'I gave THE BOY a lick'						

(3a) is pragmatically neutral, while (3b) and (3c) are pragmatically marked: (3b) with the primary object argument in focus and (3c), the secondary object argument in focus. Both focused constructions mark identificational focus, and can be expected as appropriate responses to the questions "what did you do to him?" and "Who did you hit?", respectively.

### Possessive Focus Constructions

Patrick distinguishes four different possession structures in JC (2004: 29):

- i) POSSESSED NOUN + *of* + POSSESSOR NOUN eg. *buk of Mieri* ('book of Mary')
- ii) POSSESSOR NOUN + *z* + POSSESSED NOUN eg. *Mieri 'z buk* ('Mary's book')
- iii) POSSESSOR NOUN + POSSESSED NOUN eg. *Mieri buk* ('Mary book')
- iv) POSSESSOR PRONOUN + POSSESSED NOUN eg. *(fi)mi buk* (my book)

Structure (i), according to Patrick, occurs in all varieties of JC, but is extremely rare,<sup>4</sup> while (ii) is found in acrolectal varieties, and is a salient marker of SJE. With regards to the purpose of this study, only (iii) and (iv) are relevant, as they commonly occur in basilectal varieties of JC and are the only two possessive constructions that can be focused.

By prefixing the preposition *fi-* ('for') to a possessor pronoun (*mi*, 'my', *yu* 'your', *im* 'his'/'hers'/'its', *wi* 'our', *unu* 'your (pl.)', *dem* 'their'),<sup>5</sup> the speaker is able to create two new forms: one, an emphatic form of the possessor pronoun, which is often though not always stressed (4b), or a possessive pronoun, which can stand in place of a possessive NP, as in (4c).

4 a)	<i>im</i>	<i>tek</i>	<i>mi</i>	<i>buk</i>
	3SG	take	POSS	book
	'He took my book'			

b)	<i>im</i>	<i>tek</i>	<i>fimi</i>	<i>buk</i>
	3SG	take	POSS	book
	'He took MY book'			

<sup>4</sup> Patrick (2004: 29). I have found no evidence of this construction in basilectal or mesolectal varieties of JC.

<sup>5</sup> Possessor pronouns have the same form as personal pronouns and are phonologically, though not grammatically, indistinct.

- c)     *fimi*        *kuol*  
          POSS       cold  
          'Mine is cold'

Thus, both *mi* and *fimi* can be possessor pronouns, and *fimi* can be both possessor pronoun and possessive pronoun. Although the presence of *fī-* can alter the emphatic quality of a constituent, it is not inherently emphatic.

Like other NPs, possessive constructions are focused by fronting the focused constituent and inserting focus *a* in clause initial position.

- 5 a)     *dem*        *tiif*        *Mieri*     *buk*  
          3PL        steal        Mary       book  
          'They stole Mary's book'
- b)        *a*            *Mieri*     *buk*        *dem*        *tiif*  
          FOC        Mary       book        3PL        steal  
          'They stole MARY'S BOOK'

When focusing possession structure (iv) in declarative sentences, only the *fī-* form of the possessor pronoun can be used, as shown in example (6), where (6a) is a statement and (6b) a question. The focalization of interrogative structures will be dealt with in chapter 4.

- 6 a)     *a*            *fīyuu*     *buk*        *dem*        *tiif*  
          FOC        your        book        3PL        steal  
          'They stole YOUR book'
- b)        *a*            *yuu*        *buk*        *dem*        *tiif*  
          FOC        your        book        3PL        steal  
          'Did they steal YOUR book?'

It is also possible to combine structures (iii) and (iv) to create complex possessive phrases (7), which can be focused using the same strategy.

- 7)        *mi*            *pich*        *uova*        *mi*            *moma*     *pat*  
          1SG        pitch        over        1PL        mother     pot  
          'I knocked over my mum's pot'

In such instances, either form of the possessor pronoun can be used, with each construction focusing a different constituent, as exemplified below:

- 8 a)     *a*            *mi*            *moma*     *pat*        *mi*            *pich*        *uova*  
          FOC        1PL        mother     pot        1SG        pitch        over  
          'I knocked over MY MUM'S POT'
- b)        *a*            *fimi*        *moma*     *pat*        *mi*            *pich*        *uova*

FOC        my        mother    pot        1SG        pitch        over  
 'I knocked over MY MUM'S pot'

Sentence (8a) focuses the entire NP, and would be an appropriate answer to the question “what did you knock over?”, while (8b) focuses the possessive element and would be more appropriate as an answer to the question “whose pot did you knock over?”

### Adjunct Focus Constructions

Adverbial phrases in adjunct function can be focused in the same way as NPs. In the case of locative adverbials, the entire phrase (PREP + ADV) is fronted, as shown in sentence (9b):

9 a)    *di        man        a        luk        truu        di        winda*  
          DEF        man        PROG        look        through    DEF        window  
          'The man is looking through the window'

b)       *a        truu        di        winda    di        man        a        luk*  
          FOC        through    DEF        window   DEF        man        PROG        look  
          'The man is looking THROUGH THE WINDOW'

In the case of temporal phrases, the temporal adverb alone (without preposition) is subjected to the focusing strategy. The preposition *fi* ('for') occurs in sentence (10a), which is pragmatically neutral, but does appear in (10b), which is marked for focus.

10 a)    *im        de        de        fi        chrii        yierz*  
          3SG        LOC.COP    there        for        three        years  
          'He was there for three years'

b)       *a        chrii        yierz        im        de        de*  
          FOC        three        years        3SG        LOC.COP    there  
          'He was there FOR THREE YEARS' (lit. 'Three years he was there')

The adverb *suh*, from English 'so', can be, and often is used to substitute an adverb of manner construction (Bailey, 1966: 50), as in sentence (11a), and can also be fronted for focus, as in sentence (11b):

11 a)    *im        kuk        suh*  
          3SG        cook        so  
          'He cooks like that'

b)       *a        suh        im        kuk*  
          FOC        so        3SG        cook  
          'He cooks LIKE THAT'

Still, while this construction is possible for declaratives, it occurs much more commonly as an interrogative with a falling terminal contour [CTR<sub>F</sub>]:



- 12)      *a*            *suh*            *im*            *kuk*            [CTR<sub>F</sub>]  
           FOC            so            3SG            cook  
           'Is that how he cooks?'

Despite the presence of focus *a*, sentence (12) does not inherently bear focal stress, which would require the application of prosodic stress.

### Prepositional Phrase Focus

In JC, prepositions can be characterised as having an extended functional load, meaning they can express meanings or occur in syntactic contexts not common in British English or SJE. This makes the analysis of prepositional phrase (PP) focus relatively less straight forward than that of other constituents, as only certain prepositions expressing certain meanings can be focused. Patrick argues that, with the exception of *fi* ('for'), "pied-piping is not possible in JC", claiming "prepositions and other postverbal particles are tightly bound to the verb" (Patrick, 2004: 23). However, the examples below will demonstrate that pied-piping is, in fact, possible in focus constructions.

### Locative prepositions

With the exception of *a* ('at', 'to', 'in') and *pon* ('on', 'upon'), all locative PPs can be focused by fronting and marking with focus *a*:

- 13 a)      *im*            *de*            *a*            *tong*  
           3SG            LOC.COP    in            town  
           'He is in town'
- b)\*      *a*            *a*            *tong*            *im*            *de*  
           FOC            in            town            3SG            LOC.COP  
           'He is IN TOWN'
- c)      *di*            *wata*            *de*            *pon*            *di*            *tiebl*  
           DEF            water            LOC.COP    on            DEF            table  
           'The water is on the table'
- d)\*      *a*            *pon*            *di*            *tiebl*            *di*            *wata*            *de*  
           FOC            on            DEF            table            DEF            water            LOC.COP  
           'The water is ON THE TABLE'
- e)      *dem*            *(de)*            *ina*            *di*            *kichin*  
           3PL            LOC.COP    in            DEF            kitchen  
           'They are in the kitchen'
- f)      *a*            *ina*            *di*            *kichin*            *dem*            *de*  
           FOC            in            DEF            kitchen            3PL            LOC.COP

‘They are IN THE KITCHEN’

- g) *di shuz-dem anda di tiebl*  
 DEF shoes-PL under DEF table  
 ‘The shoes are under the table’

- h) *a anda di tiebl di shuz-dem de*  
 FOC under DEF table DEF shoes-PL LOC.COP  
 ‘The shoes are UNDER THE TABLE’

In pragmatically unmarked locative clauses with prepositions *ina* and *unda*, the locative copula *de* is optional, as in (13e) and (13g). This would account for the *de* obligatorily occurring at the end of the clause when focusing place PPs, as in (13f) and (13h), regardless of whether it appears in the pragmatically neutral construction (compare sentences (13g), where *de* does not appear, and (13h), where it does.

*fi*

When expressing a benefactive relationship, the preposition *fi* (‘for’) can be focused (14). However, when appearing in a temporal phrase, *fi* cannot be focused and must be omitted from the focused construction, as seen in examples (14c and d).

- 14 a) *im bai i fi yuu*  
 3SG buy it for 3PL  
 ‘He bought it for you’
- b) *a fi yuu im bai i*  
 FOC for 3PL 3SG buy it  
 ‘He bought it FOR YOU’
- c) *im did sliip fi trii ouwaz*  
 3SG PAST sleep for three hours  
 ‘He slept for three hours’
- c) *a trii ouwaz im did sliip*  
 FOC three hours 3SG PAST sleep  
 ‘He slept for THREE HOURS’

*fram*

The preposition *fram* (‘from’) can be used to denote both spatial and temporal points of origin, where spatial *fram* is a preposition of direction, and temporal *fram* a preposition of time, sometimes described as a “quasi-conjunction” (Sand, 1999: 84), as it incorporates the meaning of English ‘since’,

which occurs in acrolectal varieties, and is often used in the same contexts (15a). Both directional and temporal *fram* can be fronted, as in examples (15b-e):

- 15 a) *fram im riich, im a baal*  
 from 3SG arrive 3SG PROG cry  
 ‘Since he arrived, he has been crying’
- b) *im a com fram im yaad*  
 3SG PROG come from his house  
 ‘He is coming from his house’
- c) *a fram im yaad im a com*  
 FOC from his house 3SG PROG come  
 ‘He is coming FROM HIS HOUSE’
- d) *im de ya fram maanin*  
 3SG LOC.COP here from morning  
 ‘He’s been here since this morning’
- e) *a fram maanin im de ya*  
 FOC from morning 3SG LOC.COP here  
 ‘He’s been here SINCE THIS MORNING’

In JC, as in English, the preposition *wid* (‘with’) can express either a comitative (16a) or an instrumental (16d) relationship. Regardless of the relationship being expressed, *wid* cannot be fronted for focus (16b and e). In instances of PP focus, only the object is fronted while the preposition remains stranded in its original position (16c and f):

- 16 a) *im a taak wid di uman*  
 3SG PROG talk with DEF woman  
 ‘He is talking with the woman’
- b)\* *a wid di uman im a taak*  
 FOC with DEF woman 3SG PROG talk  
 ‘He is talking WITH THE WOMAN’
- c) *a di uman im a taak wid*  
 FOC DEF woman 3SG PROG talk with  
 ‘He is talking WITH THE WOMAN’
- d) *dem lik mi wid di dosta*  
 3PL hit 2SG with DEF board cleaner  
 ‘They hit me with the board cleaner’
- e)\* *a wid di dosta dem lik mi*

FOC          with          DEF          board cleaner    3PL          hit          2SG  
 'They hit me WITH THE BOARD CLEANER'

- f)    *a*          *di*          *dosta*          *dem*          *lik*          *mi*          *wid*  
       FOC          DEF          board cleaner    3PL          hit          2SG          with  
       'They hit me with THE BOARD CLEANER'

This process of preposition stranding is also possible for prepositions that can be fronted, with the exception of *ina* ('in', 'into'), as illustrated in the examples below, where the preposition is stranded and the object fronted:

- 17 a)    *a*          *di*          *uman*          *im*          *a*          *taak*          *wid*  
           FOC          DEF          woman          3SG          PROG          talk          with  
           'He's talking to THE WOMAN'

- b)    *a*          *di*          *tiebl*          *di*          *shuz-dem*          *anda*  
       FOC          DEF          table          DEF          shoes-PL          under  
       'The shoes are under THE TABLE'

- c)    *a*          *yu*          *im*          *bai*          *i*          *fa*<sup>6</sup>  
       FOC          2SG          3SG          buy          it          for  
       'He bought it for YOU'

- d)    *a*          *im*          *yaad*          *im*          *a*          *com*          *fram*  
       FOC          POSS          house          3SG          PROG          come          from  
       'He is coming from HIS HOUSE'

- e)\*    *a*          *di*          *kichin*          *dem*          *de*          *ina*  
       FOC          DEF          kitchen          3PL          LOC.COP          in  
       'They are in THE KITCHEN'

Unlike in many other Atlantic Creoles, such as Vincentian and Guyanese (Michaelis et al., 2013: 375), resumptive pronouns following the preposition are not permitted (18):

- 18)\*    *a*          *di*          *tiebl*          *di*          *shuz-dem*          *anda*          *i*  
           FOC          DEF          table          DEF          shoes-PL          under          it  
           'The shoes are under THE TABLE' (lit. 'The table the shoes are under it')

<sup>6</sup> If not followed by an overt object, the preposition *fi* is pronounced *fa*.

### 3. PREDICATE FOCUS IN JAMAICAN CREOLE

There is a slightly different strategy employed for marking predicate focus in JC than that used for non-predicate focus. When focusing verbs and adjectives, a copied predicator is fronted to focus position and marked with the focus particle.

#### Adjective Focus

Attributive adjectives appear prenominally as part of an NP (1a), while predicative adjectives appear postnominally (1b). A predicative adjective can also appear in post verbal position, in which case it modifies the preceding verb, as in sentence (1c). Regardless of which element its modifying, predicative adjectives are focused using the predicate focus strategy described above, as shown in sentences (1d) and (1e).

1 a)     *im*         *a*         *wan*         *gud*         *kuk*  
              3SG        is        one        good        cook  
              'He is a good cook'

b)        *di*         *man*        *fuul*  
              DEF        man        fool  
              'The man is stupid'

c)        *im*         *kuk*         *gud*  
              3SG        cook        good  
              'He cooks well'

c)        *a*         *fuul*        *di*         *man*        *fuul*  
              FOC        fool        DEF        man        fool  
              'The man is STUPID'

e)        *a*         *gud*        *im*         *kuk*         *gud*  
              FOC        good       3SG        cook        good  
              'He cooks WELL'

#### Verb Focus

All verbs can also be subjected to this mechanism, as shown in example (2).

2 a)     *a*         *swel*        *it*         *swel*  
              FOC        swell       3SG        swell  
              'It certainly swelled up'

b)        *luk*        *hou*        *a*         *krievm*    *im*        *krievm*  
              look        how        FOC        greedy    3SG        greedy  
              'See how greedy s/he is!'

In the case of modals, however, *mos* ('must') is unique in that it is the only modal verb that can be focused. In clauses where this modal appears, both the main verb and modal verb can be focused (though not at the same construction). If you compare the sentences below, (3a) and (3b) are acceptable, while (3c) and (3d) are not:

- 3 a)     *a*            *mos*        *im*        *mosi*     *gaan*     *aredi*  
           FOC        must       3SG       must       gone       already  
           'He MUST have left already'
- b)       *a*            *gaan*       *im*        *mosi*     *gaan*     *aredi*  
           FOC        gone       3SG       must       gone       already  
           'He must have LEFT already'
- c)\*      *a*            *mos*        *gaan*       *im*        *mosi*     *gaan*     *aredi*  
           FOC        must       gone       3SG       must       gone       already  
           'He MUST HAVE left already'
- d)\*      *a*            *kuda*       *im*        *kuda*     *gaan*     *aredi*  
           FOC        could       3SG       could       gone       already  
           'He COULD have left already'

#### Verb Focus in Serial Verb Constructions

As "verbs in a Serial Verb Construction (SVC) are co-dependent on each other semantically and syntactically" (Ameka, 2010: 161), it seems odd that only one and not all SVC components can be focused. This, however, is the case in JC, where only the initial verb in an SVC can be focused, by fronting a copy of the verb to clause initial position and marking it with the focus particle.

- 4 a)     *a*            *tek*        *im*        *tek*        *naif*     *kot*        *mi*  
           FOC        take       3SG       take       knife     cut        2SG  
           'He CUT me with a knife' (lit. 'Take he take knife cut me')
- b)\*      *a*            *tek*        *kot*        *im*        *tek*        *naif*     *kot*        *mi*  
           FOC        take       cut        3SG       take       knife     cut        2SG  
           'He CUT me with a knife' (lit. 'Take cut he take knife cut me')
- c)\*      *a*            *tek*        *im*        *naif*     *kot*        *mi*  
           FOC        take       3SG       knife     cut        2SG  
           'He CUT me with a knife' (lit. 'Take he knife cut me')

If we consider the sentences above, (4a) is the only possible focusing mechanism for SVC in JC. (4b) has both components of the SVC copied and fronted, while (4c) has fronted the uncopied initial verb only, neither of which is grammatical.

#### 4. INTERROGATIVE FOCUS IN JAMAICAN CREOLE

##### Polar questions

There is no syntactic strategy to form or mark polar interrogatives in JC. Instead declaratives are realised with a falling terminal contour [CTR<sub>F</sub>], which marks the sentence as interrogative. With regards to focus, all constituents and constructions of interrogatives undergo the same focusing strategy as their declarative counterparts, but with this falling terminal contour.

- 1 a)     *di*        *daag*     *kech*     *di*        *pus*        [CTR<sub>F</sub>]  
          DEF       dog       catch     DEF       cat  
          ‘Did the dog catch the cat?’
- b)       *a*         *di*         *daag*     *kech*     *di*        *pus*        [CTR<sub>F</sub>]  
          FOC       DEF       dog       catch     DEF       cat  
          ‘Did THE DOG catch the cat?’
- c)       *im*        *a*         *baal*       [CTR<sub>F</sub>]  
          3SG       PROG       cry  
          ‘Is he crying?’
- d)       *a*         *baal*     *im*        *a*         *baal*       [CTR<sub>F</sub>]  
          FOC       cry       3SG       PROG       cry  
          ‘Is he CRYING?’

In the case of interrogatives, possessive adjectives in focused phrases behave the same way as declaratives, where both forms of the adjective can be fronted, with each construction focusing a different constituent, as exemplified below. Sentence (2a) focuses the entire NP, while (2b) focuses only the possessive element:

- 2 a)     *a*         *yuu*        *buk*        *dem*     *tiif*        [CTR<sub>F</sub>]  
          FOC       your       book       3PL       steal  
          ‘Did they steal YOUR BOOK?’
- b)       *a*         *fiyuu*     *buk*        *dem*     *tiif*        [CTR<sub>F</sub>]  
          FOC       your       book       3PL       steal  
          ‘Did they steal YOUR book?’

##### Content Questions

Content questions are constructed using interrogative pronouns (*we* ‘where’, *wa* ‘what’, *huu* ‘who’, *huufa* ‘whose’), adjectives (*wich* ‘which’) or adverbs (*wen* ‘when’, *wichpaat* ‘where’, *wamek* ‘why’, *hou* ‘how’/‘why’, *homoch* ‘how much’/‘how many’); all of which function similarly in terms of focus,

where the interrogative form is moved to the left periphery and optionally preceded by focus marker *a*.

- 3 a)     *a*            *huu*        *tel*            *yu*            *so*  
           FOC        who        tell            2SG          so  
           'Who told you that?'
- b)       *a*            *wich*        *wan*        *im*            *waahn*  
           FOC        which        one        3SG          want  
           'Which one does he want?'
- c)       *wamek*    *yu*        *waahn*       *bruk*        *fimi*        *bak*  
           why        2SG        want        break        my          back  
           'Why do you want to break my back?'

The structure of content questions does not hold for echo questions, in which the question particle appears, *in-situ* as in example (4). This construction cannot be preceded by focus *a*, and the question particle can bear focal stress through the emphatic pronunciation only.

- 4)       *im*            *se*            *wah*  
           3SG        say          what  
           'What did he say?' (lit. 'He said what?')

The presence of focus *a* with content questions was considered obligatory by Bailey (1966: 88) and later by Patrick (2007: 147), but has since been described as "optional" by Durrleman-Tame (2008: 84). Durrleman-Tame (2008: 84) cites Veenstra and den Besten (1995: 310), who suggest that the increasing absence of focus *a* in content questions is a result of decreolization. Despite her previous arguments to the contrary, Durrleman-Tame (2015) suggests that the analysis of focus *a* as optional in content questions is "inaccurate", as "the presence of *a* in a *wh* question requests a maximal and exhaustive answer, [but] without *a*, the question does not require the maximal set, as any contextually-relevant subset will do" (11-12). However, judging from my own data and knowledge of JC, I am inclined to agree with her earlier claim that *a* is, in fact, optional, and with the observation of Veenstra and den Besten that the absence of focus *a* is a matter of decreolization and not exhaustiveness. The following question (5a), in which there is no focus particle, would demand the exact same answer as example (3a) in which the focus particle is present.

- 5 a)     *huu*        *tel*            *yu*            *suh*  
           who        tell            2SG          so  
           'Who told you that?'
- b)       *a*            *im*            *tel*            *me*            *suh*  
           FOC        3SG        tell            2SG          so  
           'He told me that?'



## 5. TOPICALIZATION IN JAMAICAN CREOLE

In JC, topicalization of an argument, which Christie labels “non-contrastive emphasis” of a “thematic expression” (as cited in Durrleman-Tame, 2008: 70), is marked by the left-dislocation of the argument, the appearance of a resumptive pronoun in its base position, and, perhaps most interestingly, the optional, yet frequent, use of *de*, which will be discussed further below. As illustrated by (1a) and (1b), respectively, subject and object arguments are topicalized using the same strategy, while the ungrammaticality of (1c) testifies to the necessity of an anaphoric pronoun when topicalizing an argument:

- 1 a)     *da*        *bwaai*     *de*,            *im*        *laik*        *mi*  
           that        boy        TOP            3SG       like        2SG  
           ‘That boy, he likes me’
- b)        *da*        *bwaai*     *de*,            *mi*        *laik*        *im*  
           that        boy        TOP            2SG       like        3SG  
           ‘That boy, I like him’
- c)\*       *da*        *bwaai*     *de*,            *mi*        *laik*  
           that        boy        TOP            2SG       like  
           ‘That boy, I like [him]’
- d)        *di*        *daag*,     *im*        *nyam-aaf*   *di*        *uol*        *a*        *di*        *foul-dem*  
           DEF       dog        3SG       eat-off     DEF       whole    of       DEF       fowl-PL  
           ‘The dog, it ate all of the chickens’ (lit. the dog, it ate off the whole of the chickens’)

The following example, however, shows that a topicalized adjunct has different structural properties. Unlike argument topicalization, topicalization of an adjunct does not require the presence of a proform in the comment to refer back to it, and the element *de* cannot occur.

- 2 a)     *Tumaro*,    *mi*        *wi*        *bai*        *di*        *bami*  
           tomorrow 2SG       FUT       buy       DEF       bammy  
           ‘Tomorrow, I will buy the bammy’
- b)\*       *Tumaro*     *de*,        *mi*        *wi*        *bai*        *di*        *bami*  
           tomorrow TOP       2SG       FUT       buy       DEF       bammy  
           ‘Tomorrow, I will buy the bammy’

Topicalization of both arguments and adjuncts in the same construction is also possible as exemplified below:

- 3)        *yeside*,    *da*        *bwaai*        *de*,        *mi*        *cos*        *im*  
           yesterday that        boy            TOP        2SG       tell off    3SG  
           ‘Yesterday, that boy, I scolded him’

$De$ 

As seen in example (1), topicalized arguments often, though not obligatorily (1d), occur with *de*, which is generated to the right of the topicalized element. The particle *de* is a contrastive topic marker that succeeds in “singling out [the expression] from the rest of the sentence” (Durrleman-Tame: 2008, 70). In the past, issues have arisen when attempting to analyse this particle, as JC has three forms of *de*, each serving a distinct function.

- |      |                                  |                |              |           |                |
|------|----------------------------------|----------------|--------------|-----------|----------------|
| 4 a) | <i>di</i>                        | <i>man-dem</i> | <i>waahn</i> | <i>go</i> | <i>de</i>      |
|      | DEF                              | man-PL         | want         | go        | there          |
|      | 'The men want to go there'       |                |              |           |                |
|      |                                  |                |              |           |                |
| b)   | <i>di</i>                        | <i>man-dem</i> | <i>de</i>    | <i>a</i>  | <i>conchri</i> |
|      | DEF                              | man-PL         | LOC.COP      | in        | country        |
|      | 'The men are in the countryside' |                |              |           |                |

In sentence (4a), *de* fulfills an adverbial function, equivalent to English ‘there’, whilst the same form in (4b) is used as a locative copula, comparable to the English verb/copula ‘be’. The co-occurrence of both uses of *de* in (5) “reinforces the idea that they are two different elements” (Durrleman-Tame, 2008: 71).

- 5) *di man-dem de de*  
 DEF man-PL LOC.COP there  
 'The men are there'

Bailey also seems to acknowledge this distinction, classifying *de* as seen in (4a) as a place adverb (1966: 48), and *de* as it appears in (4b) as the “locating verb ‘be’” (1966: 33). Following Durrleman-Tame’s classification, *de* as it occurs in (4b) will be analysed as the “locative copula *de*” and glossed as [LOC.COP] (2008: 71).

She suggests that topic *de* is unlikely to be another form of *de* which has undergone leftward movement “since quantifiers can occur with both the locative adverb and the copula, but not with topic *de*”, providing the following examples to illustrate her claim.

- |      |                              |                      |                              |                        |                   |                            |
|------|------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 6 a) | <i>evribadi</i><br>everybody | <i>de</i><br>LOC.COP | <i>a</i><br>at               | <i>skuul</i><br>school |                   | (Durrleman-Tame, 2008: 72) |
|      | 'Everybody is at school'     |                      |                              |                        |                   |                            |
| b)   | <i>mi</i><br>2SG             | <i>laik</i><br>like  | <i>evribadi</i><br>everybody | <i>de</i><br>there     |                   | (Durrleman-Tame, 2008: 72) |
|      | 'I like everybody there'     |                      |                              |                        |                   |                            |
| c)*  | <i>evribadi</i><br>everybody | <i>de,</i><br>TOP    | <i>mi</i><br>2SG             | <i>laik</i><br>like    | <i>dem</i><br>3PL | (Durrleman-Tame, 2008: 72) |
|      | 'Everybody, I like them'     |                      |                              |                        |                   |                            |

Topic *de* has, therefore, been analysed as distinct from both copula and adverbial *de*, and will be glossed as [TOP], on the basis that the split between topic *de* and the other elements holds on a structural, as well as interpretational level.

## 6. RELATIVIZATION IN JAMAICAN CREOLE

There is an obvious relationship between focus and relativized structures in JC. Christie observes that “an extraordinarily high proportion of Jamaican relative clauses are constituents of NPs appearing in sentence initial position” (Christie, 1996: 48), and that the NP being modified by the relative clause represents a focused element. In most cases, these relative clauses either identify or characterise the focused NP, and are used to mark emphatic focus.

Although the aim of this work is an analysis of focus structures, it seems prudent to give a basic description of the internal structure of relative clauses in Jamaican in order to understand relatives in focus. Patrick distinguishes three basic types of relativization in Jamaican: those with overt relativizers, those with null relativizers, and those that use resumptive pronouns within the restricting clause. Christie labels these “the relative pronoun type” (1a), “the gap type” (1b), and “the pronoun retention type” (1c), respectively, the last of which she suggests “more usually occurs, where the co-referential NP is possessive (1996: 58).

- 1 a)     *di*        *uman*     *huufa*     *biebi*     *dem*     *tiif*  
           DEF        woman    REL        baby       3PL        steal  
           ‘The woman whose baby they stole’
- b)        *di*        *uman*     *yu*        *si*        *de*  
           DEF        woman    2SG        see        there  
           ‘the woman [who] you see there’
- c)        *di*        *uman*     *we*        *dem*     *tiif*     *ar*        *biebi*  
           DEF        woman    REL        3PL        steal     3SG.F     baby  
           ‘The woman whose baby they stole’ (lit. ‘The woman that they stole her baby’)

The strategy used to focus complex NPs, which are “often, though not exclusively, ones with a relative clause modifier” (Christie, 1996: 52), is that of left-dislocation, which marks identificational focus. By Christie’s definition “Left-dislocation is characterised by the presence of an NP external to the main clause, whose semantic value is represented in that main clause by an anaphoric proform” (Christie, 1996: 50). All three types of relatives can be used to modify left-dislocated NPs, as shown in the examples below:

- 2 a)     *di*        *piipl-dem*     *we*     *liv*     *de,*     *dem*     *gan*     *a*     *konchri*  
           DEF        people-PL    REL    live    there    3PL    gone    to     country  
           ‘The people who live there, they have gone to the country’
- b)        *mi*        *yu*        *si*        *ya,*     *mi*        *kyaanh*     *bada*     *wid*     *dem*  
           2SG       2SG        see        here     2SG       cannot    bother    with    3PL  
           ‘I [whom] you see here, I can’t be bothered with them’

- c) *di man we dem kil im waif, im gan mad*  
 DEF man REL 3PL kill POSS wife 3SG gone mad  
 'The man whose wife they killed (lit. 'The man that they killed his wife'), he has gone mad'

This anaphoric proform can be used to represent relativized NPs with various grammatical functions, such as subject (3a), object (3b), possessor (3c) or locative (3d), as illustrated in Christie's examples (Christie, 1996:50):

- 3 a) *di liedi we ben gi mi di tuu die*  
 DEF lady REL PAST give 2SG DEF two day  
*shi sel di plies*  
 3SG.F sell DEF place  
 'The woman who gave me the two days [work], she sold the place'
- b) *di ponishment dat de wer getin in mai diez*  
 DEF punishment that 3PL were getting in my days  
*de didn dizerv it*  
 3PL NEG deserve it  
 'The punishment they were getting in my days, they didn't deserve it'
- c) *di pikni-dem we goin dong di conchri*  
 DEF child-PL REL going down DEF country  
*fidem chrien a di mantigo bie*  
 their train COP DEF montigo bay  
 'The children who are going down into the country, their train is the Montego Bay [train]'
- d) *eniwier wii sit im hafi in de tu*  
 anywhere 1PL sit 3SG must in there too  
 'Anywhere we sit, he has to be in there too'

Relativized NPs are topicalized through left-dislocation, but not marked with topic marker *de*.

## SUMMARY

In JC all major syntactic categories can be focused, using one of two strategies. The first is the fronting strategy, used for argument and adjunct focus, And the second is copying, which includes fronting and is used to focus predicates. JC employs a consistent gap strategy in focus constructions, and the focus marker is obligatorily used in all focus sentences, with the exception of content questions in which it is optional.

These features of focus structures in JC are clearly not inherited from English, which prefers to mark focus prosodically and has no lexical focus marker. Thus, it stands to reason that these distinctive mechanisms of focus are likely the result of substrate influence. Of course, the transfer of substrate syntactic features is not a unitary process with a one-to-one correspondence between the relevant substrate language and creole. Indeed, the transfer of substrate features may be selective, targeting only certain elements and constructions (Muysken and Smith, 2015).

The following chapters will compare focus marking in the selected substrates, paying particular attention to which argument can be focused and the strategies employed in each language to achieve focus, and comparing them to those in JC.

## 7. FOCUS MARKER IN SUBSTRATE LANGUAGES

There has been much speculation regarding the origin of focus *a* in JC, with many suggesting that it is a reduction of English ‘is’ (Bailey (1966), Patrick (2004)), and, therefore, a result of superstrate influence in JC. However, the analysis of this particle in the previous section suggests that focus *a* is more than likely a remnant of one or more substrate languages. The following chapter aims to identify the focus markers of the selected substrates and compare them in form and functionality to the JC focus marker.

### Focus Marker in Akan

In Akan, focus structures are marked by the particle *na/ne*. In Boadi’s *Focus-Marking in Akan*, he describes *na* as “the exclusive focus marker, [which] narrows down the referential range of the constituent to which it is attached and places it in an exclusive class by itself” (1974: 7). Unlike JC, the Akan focus marker obligatorily occurs to the right of the fronted constituent, as in example (1b).

- 1 a) *Kofi ba-a ha* (Ofori, 2011: 242)  
       Kofi come-PAST here  
       ‘Kofi came here’
- b) *Kofi na ɔ-ba-a ha* (Ofori, 2011: 242)  
       Kofi FOC 3SG-come-PAST here  
       ‘Kofi is the one who came here’

The variant particle *ne* is a derived form, which Boadi describes as the ‘telescoped surface realisation of the focus marker *na* and the [equative] copula *ye*’ (1974: 15).

- 2) *Yaw ne onipa a me-huu no ennora* (Ofori, 2011: 246)  
       Yaw FOC-COP person REL 1SG-saw him yesterday  
       ‘Yaw is the person I saw yesterday’

The focus marker *na* has another variant form *a*, which is used to mark clauses which consist of a focus NP only. Thus, answers comprised of only an NP are marked for focus using *a* instead of *na*, as demonstrated in the following question-answer pair:

- 3 a) *hena na Kofi hu-u no wɔ fie ho* (Ameka, 1992: 5)  
       who FOC Kofi see-PAST 3SG LOC house LOC  
       ‘Who did Kofi see in the house’
- b) *Kwame a* (Ameka, 1992: 5)  
       Kwame FOC  
       ‘Kwame’

This form is also used to mark focus in Akan topic-comment constructions, which are made up of a nominal relative topic, and a specific comment phrase (Ameka, 1992: 22):

- 4 a)    *ɔbarima a wo-hu-u no, me wɔfa a* (Ameka, 1992: 22)  
          man    who    2SG-see-PAST    him    DEF    1SG.POSS    uncle    FOC  
          ‘The man whom you saw, it was MY UNCLE’ (Gloss altered by LTF)
- b)    *bea a o-wu-ii no, eha a* (Ameka, 1992: 22)  
          place    which    3SG-die-PAST    DEF    here    FOC  
          ‘The place where he died, it is HERE’ (Gloss altered by LTF)

There seems to be an obvious connection between Akan *a* and the JC focus marker. Not only are they identical, but JC *a* is also used to mark focus in topic-comment constructions and clauses consisting of an NP only.

Another particle that can be used for focus in Akan is *deɛ*, which occurs to the right of the focused constituent, and which Boadi tentatively describes as “the non-exclusive or potentially inclusive” focus marker that does not place the constituent referent alone in an exclusive class (1974: 8). According to Boadi, if we take, for example, the following sentences: (5a) puts *me* in an exclusive relation to all other members of the paradigm to which it belongs, thus the sentence could be interpreted as “I was the only one...who came here yesterday and *nobody* else did” (Boadi, 1974: 7); whilst (5b), on the other hand, suggests that *me* is in an exclusive relation to all other similar referents, but leaves open the possibility that it may not be. Thus, (5b) can be interpreted as “I came here; others did too, or they may have (Boadi, 1974: 8)”

- 5 a)    *me na me baa ha nera* (Boadi, 1974: 6)  
          1SG    FOC    1SG    come-PAST    here    yesterday  
          ‘I came here yesterday’
- b)    *me deɛ me baa ha nera* (Boadi, 1974: 6)  
          1SG    FOC    1SG    come-PAST    here    yesterday  
          ‘I came here yesterday’

In her 2010 paper, Amfo provides a different analysis of the same particle, which she reduces to *de*. She refutes Boadi’s exclusive-non-exclusive distinction between *na* and *de*, claiming that *de* is no less exclusive than *na*, since “within a given context, whatever property is attributed to the referent of a *de*-marked constituent will not be attributed to another referent” (Amfo, 2010: 217). According to Amfo, the fact that *de* usually takes scope over old information where there has already been mention of the discourse referents in the preceding discourse “indicates that the *de*-marked constituents are discourse topics” (Amfo, 2010: 218), and, therefore, suggests that Boadi’s non-exclusive focus marker be analysed as a “contrastive/emphatic topic marker” (Amfo, 2010: 219).



## Focus Marker in Ga

7) *Lè nà yòó !é* (Ameka, 2010: 150)  
 3SG see woman DEF  
 'HF saw the woman'

8) *Mángò-nyè-wó* (yé) *Kòfí* *dù* (Badan and Buell, 2012: 141)  
Ewe mango-1SG-PL FOC Kofi eat  
'Kofi ate MY MANGOES'

The particle *yé* is used to mark focus on argument constituents [aFOC], while predicate focus is marked by the invariable focus particle *dè* [pFOC]. There is no movement involved in *dè* constructions, and the focus marker appears to the left of the predicate and has scope over the entire proposition. Overt lexical subjects in *dè* constructions must precede *dè* and “cannot be followed by the focus marker *yé*” (Badan and Buell, 2012: 152), as shown in examples (7b) and (7c), respectively. Such subjects are always recapitulated by a resumptive pronoun in the main clause:

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This corresponding clitic pronoun must always co-occur with *dè*, regardless of whether or not there is an overt lexical subject (Badan and Buell, 2012: 152), as shown in the sentence below, which has no overt subject, but like (9a), still has a corresponding clitic pronoun.

- d) *dè wò-dzè ànyí* (Badan and Buell, 2012: 151)  
 pFOC 3SG-fall ground  
 'She/he fell down'

These characteristics are particularly interesting when compared to those of JC topic marker *de*, which has a similar form, and, like Ewe *dè*, cannot precede a full lexical subject, cannot co-occur with the focus marker, and must co-occur with a resumptive pronoun in the main sentence. There are some obvious differences, of course: JC *de* marks topic and occurs with arguments, while Ewe *dè* marks focus and occurs with predicates; JC *de* cannot occur sentence initially, while Ewe *dè* can. However, despite these differences, there seems to be enough evidence to claim a connection between the two.

#### Focus Marker in Yoruba

In Yoruba, focus constituents, which are moved to the left peripheral position, are obligatorily followed by focus marker *ni*.

- 10) *Kìnìún ni oba eranko* (Jones, 2006: 145)  
 lion FOC king animal  
 'THE LION is the king of the animals'

As well as appearing in focus constructions, *ni* also appears in certain nominal predications, in which it functions as a copula verb. *Ni* is one of two copula verbs in Yoruba and occurs in inverse copula constructions, where the predicate precedes the subject:

- 11) *Olópá ni Adé* (Jones, 2006: 146)  
 police.officer FOC Ade  
 'Ade is a police officer'

The other is *jé*, which occurs in canonical copula sentences, as in the following example:

- 12) *Kìnìún jé eranko ñlá* (Jones, 2006: 145)  
 lion COP animal big  
 'The lion is a big animal'

Based on this syntactic distribution, *ni* has been classified as a type of copula, and Yoruba focus constructions described as "inverse predications" (Jones, 2006: 145-146).

#### Focus Marker in Igbo

The analysis of focus markers in Igbo is a little more complex, as a number of focus particles exist in the form of independent morphemes and suffixes. These markers can occur before or after the focus

constituent, and their usage is dependent on the grammatical function of the constituent in focus, and the information being coded. Subject arguments occur with focus marker *é, á, kwá* or *-nụ*; object arguments with *má* or *ká*; and verbs with *nà, gá, weé* and *kwá*.

- 13 a) *Òbí kwá bià-rà* (Agbo, 2013: 60)  
 Obi FOC come-IND  
 'Obi (unexpectedly) also came'

- b) *Írì ká Àdà rì-rì* (Agbo, 2013: 64)  
 food FOC Ada eat-IND  
 'It is food that Ada ate'

### Summary

Like JC, each of the languages discussed above have a distinct particle used to syntactically mark focus. Furthermore, in Akan and Yoruba, in particular, there appears to be an obvious connection between the focus particle and equative copula, as is also the case in JC. Igbo, on the other hand, though generally considered to have significant substratal influence on JC, seems to have little, if anything in common with JC with regards to focus marking. Another interesting difference, is the position of the focus particle, which invariably occurs to the right of the focused constituent in all of the substrates under discussion, but to the left in JC. Furthermore, the appearance of the focus particle is optional in Ga, Ewe and Fon, depending on various factors, which will be investigated further in the following chapters.

There seems to be a connection between Akan *a* and JC *a*, which are identical in form and which share certain functions, with JC *a* performing the functions of both Akan *na* and *a*. Of course, Akan *a* cannot occur sentence initially, where JC *a* often does, and reversely, JC *a* cannot occur sentence finally, where Akan *a* does.

Akan and Ewe, respective focus markers *dee/de* and *de*, bear an obvious resemblance to JC topic marker *de*. It can be argued that the three have similar functions, given the obvious pragmatic connection between the discourse status of focus and topic constituents, and it has been demonstrated that JC topic marker shares certain features of syntactic behavior with each particle. Of course, Amfo's analysis of Akan *dee/de* as a topic marker significantly reduces the gap between that particle and JC topic *de*, with which it shares a form, syntactic position and functionality by Amfo's definition.

	Argument Focus Marker		Predicate Focus Marker	
Akan		XP- <i>na</i> XP- <i>deɛ</i>	<i>na</i> -IP	
Ga		NP- <i>a</i> XP- <i>nì</i>	<i>nì</i> -IP	
Ewe		XP- <i>yé</i>	<i>dɛ</i> -IP	
Fon		XP- <i>wé</i>	<i>wé</i> -IP	
Yoruba		XP- <i>ni</i>	<i>ni</i> -IP	
Igbo		XP- <i>é</i> XP- <i>á</i> XP- <i>kwá</i> XP- <i>nụ</i>		
JC	<i>a</i> -XP		<i>a</i> -IP	

## 8. ARGUMENT FOCUS IN SUBSTRATE LANGUAGES

As demonstrated above, all core arguments can be subject to focus strategies in JC, as well as most oblique arguments. JC exhibits an asymmetry between constructions in which the subject-argument is in focus, and those in which a non-subject-argument is in focus, the former using an in-situ focus strategy and the latter ex-situ. In instances of direct and indirect object-argument focus, JC uses a consistent gap strategy where no anaphoric pronominal form occurs in default object position. In many of the substrate languages, we find similar morphosyntactic strategies for argument focus. This chapter aims to examine the focus strategies of the selected substrates, in an attempt to better determine the similarities and differences between those languages and JC.

### Subject Focus in Substrate Languages

#### Akan

Subject arguments are fronted to focus position and obligatorily followed by the focus particle *na*. The subject is represented in its original position by an anaphoric pronoun:

- 1 a) *Kofi ba-a ha* (Ofori, 2011: 242)  
 Kofi come-PAST here  
 'Kofi came here'
- b) *Kofi na ɔ-ba-a ha* (Ofori, 2011: 242)  
 Kofi FOC 3SG-come-PAST here  
 'Kofi is the one who came here'

#### Ga

In Ga, subject arguments are focused using the same strategy of fronting, obligatorily marking with the focus particle, and being recapitulated by an anaphoric pronoun:

- 2 a) *Tèté jwà plé!té* (Ameka, 2010: 150)  
 NAME break plate  
 'Tetty broke the plate'
- b) *Tèté \*(ní) (è-)jwà plé!té* (Ameka, 2010: 150)  
 NAME FOC 3SG-break plate  
 'Tetty (not another person) broke the plate'

In cases where the focused subject is expressed by an independent pronoun, it is likely that no anaphoric pronoun will appear in the default position of the subject argument, as in sentence (3a). In such instances, the use of the focus particle is optional, as in sentence (3b). However, in cases where the focus marker occurs, it is possible for an anaphoric pronoun to appear in the default subject position, as in sentence (3c) (Ameka, 2010).

- 3 a) *È-nà yòó !é* (Ameka, 2010: 150)

3SG-see woman DEF  
 'She saw the woman'

- b) *Lè nà yòó !é* (Ameka, 2010: 150)  
 3SG see woman DEF  
 'HE saw the woman'

- c) *Lè nì (è-)nà yòó !é* (Ameka, 2010: 150)  
 3SG FOC 3SG-see woman DEF  
 'HE saw the woman'

#### Gbe (Ewe and Fon)

In the Gbe languages, Ewe and Fon, subject arguments remain in their default position where they are marked by the focus particle (*yé/wé*), and no resumptive pronoun occurs. Sentences (4a) and (4b) give examples from Ewe and Fon, respectively:

- 4 a) *mamá-é ná ga Kofí le así-me* (Ameka, 2010: 150)  
 grandmother.FOC give money Kofi LOC market-containing.region  
 'GRANDMA gave money to Kofi in the market'

- b) *nyònú ó wè d̀̀ àyíkún* (Fiedler et al, 2006: 6)  
 woman DEF FOC eat beans  
 'THE WOMAN ate the beans'

#### Yoruba

Like in Akan, in Yoruba focus subject arguments are moved to the left-periphery, obligatorily marked by the focus particle *ní*, and recapitulated in its original position by an anaphoric pronoun:

- 5) *Adé ní ó ra ìwé* (Jones, 2006: 144)  
 Ade FOC 3SG buy book  
 'ADE bought [a/the] book'

#### Igbo

As previously stated, Igbo has a number of different particles used to mark focus. The focus marker *kwá*, which occurs to the right of the focused subject argument and serves to "accentuate the fact that the subject is indeed the agent of the event the verb encodes" (Agbo, 2013: 60).

- 6 a) *Òbí kwá bià-rà* (Agbo, 2013: 60)  
 Obi FOC come-IND  
 'Obi (unexpectedly) also came'
- b) *Gí kwá mè-rè ílé á* (Agbo, 2013: 60)  
 2SG FOC do-IND thing DEM  
 'You (of all persons) also did this thing'

There are a number of other focus particles, including the subject marking morphemes *é* and *á*, used to “emphasise the action of the agent” (Agbo, 013: 59), as shown in the examples below:

7 a) *Àdá è-kúzí-gó há ákwúkwō* (Agbo, 2013: 59)  
 Ada FOC-teach-ABS 3PL book  
 ‘Ada has comprehensibly taught them academics’ / ‘Ada has absolutely educated them’

b) *Òbí à-tú-gō Àdá ímē* (Agbo, 2013: 59)  
 Obi FOC-throw-ABS Ada pregnant  
 ‘Obi has indeed got Ada pregnant’

With the exception of *kwá*, none of the other subject focus markers, including *é* and *á*, bear any apparent relevance to this study, which is why they have not been included here.

#### Summary

There are some obvious differences between the focus of subject arguments in JC and its substrates. In addition to the position of the focus particle, which precedes the focus constituent in JC, but immediately follows it in the substrates, there is also no resumptive pronoun in the original site of the sentence in JC as one might expect. As anaphoric pronouns in subject focus constructions exist in many of known substrate languages, as shown in the table below, their absence in JC is an interesting phenomenon, and may be a result of Gbe influence, as both Ewe and Fon display the same property. However, it is also possible that such a loss could be due to universal processes of creolization, where morphosyntactic processes are often simplified or even deleted in order to facilitate language acquisition (Holm, 2000: 32).

	Fronting	Focus Marker	Resumptive Pronoun
Akan	+	+	+
Ga	+	+	+
Ewe	+	+	-
Fon	+	+	-
Yoruba	+	+	+
Igbo	+	+	-
JC	+	+	-

## Object Focus in Substrate Languages

### Akan

In Akan object arguments are focused by movement of the argument to the left-periphery where it is obligatorily followed by focus marker *na*. If the focused argument is an animate object, it must be recapitulated in the default position by an anaphoric pronoun, as in sentence (8a). If, however, the argument in focus is an inanimate object, no anaphoric pronoun is present and a gap is left in object position, as in sentence (8b):

- 8 a) *Kwame na Kofi huu no wo fie ho* (Ameka, 2010: 152)  
Kwame FOC Kofi see-PAST 3SG LOC house DIEC  
'KWAME Kofi met in the house'

- b) *dua no na Kwame foro-o-ye*  
tree DEF FOC Kwame climb-PAST  
'THE TREE Kwame climbed'

### Ga

The focus of object arguments in Ga are very similar to that in Akan, in that the focus argument is moved to the left periphery, and followed by the focus marker *nɛ*. The main difference between Akan and Ga with regards to focus of object arguments is that in Ga the presence of the focus particle is optional, as exemplified in sentence (9), and that there is no resumptive pronoun in object position, regardless of animacy of the object (Ameka, 2010: 152):

- 9) *Kɔfi (nɛ) ɛ-yi* (Ameka, 2010: 152)  
Kofi FOC 3SG-beat  
'He beat KOFI' (lit. 'Kofi he beat')

### Gbe (Ewe and Fon)

In the Gbe languages, Ewe and Fon, object arguments in focus are fronted to focus position in the left-periphery and obligatorily marked by the focus particle, *yé* and *wé*, respectively, in postposed position. As in Ga, no anaphoric pronoun is present, leaving a gap in object position. Sentences (10a) and (10b) give examples from Ewe and Fon, respectively (Badan and Buell (2012), Fiedler et al. (2006)):

- 10 a) *Mángò-nyè-wó (yé) Kɔfi dũ* (Badan and Buell, 2012: 141)  
mango-1SG-PL FOC Kofi eat  
'Kofi ate MY MANGOES' (lit. 'My mangoes Kofi ate')

- b) *àyikún wè nyɔnú ɔ dũ* (Fiedler et al., 2006: 6)  
beans FOC woman DEF eat  
'The woman ate BEANS'

### Yoruba



In Yoruba, as in the other Kwa languages, the argument object is fronted to focus position, and like the Gbe languages above, the focus marker is obligatory and a gap is left in object position:

- 11) *Ìwé ni Adé rà* (Jones, 2006: 144)  
 book FOC Ade buy  
 'Ade bought [a/the] BOOK' (lit. 'Book Ade bought')

#### Igbo

Igbo uses a number of different focusing strategies, each of which have their own focus marker. The following sentences illustrate one of many focus strategies available in Igbo, shows that the focused object arguments remain in-situ and that the focus marker *má* appears twice, once with each focused element; neither of which is possible in JC.

- 12 a) *Ádá zù-rù éwū nà jí* (Agbo, 2013: 63)  
 Ada buy-IND goat and yam  
 'Ada bought a goat and some yams'
- b) *Ádá zù-rù má éwū má jí* (Agbo, 2013: 63)  
 Ada buy-IND FOC goat FOC yam  
 'Ada bought a GOAT AND SOME YAMS'

#### Summary

Like in JC, the object argument of the majority of substrate languages are fronted for focus and, with the exception of animate objects in Akan, no resumptive pronouns appear in the default object position. The main difference between JC and its substrate languages in object focus constructions is the optionality of the focus marker, where Ga, Ewe and Fon allow object focus without the focus particle, while Akan, Yoruba and JC do not. Although it has been established as a significant substrate of JC, for the purposes of this study it is not necessary to further investigate the focus strategies used in Igbo, as it is clear they bear very little resemblance to those in JC.

	Fronting	Focus Marker	Resumptive Pronoun	
			Animate	Inanimate
Akan	+	+	+	-
Ga	+	(+)	-	-
Ewe	+	(+)	-	-
Fon	+	(+)	-	-
Yoruba	+	+	-	-
Igbo	-	+	-	-
JC	+	+	-	-

#### Second Object Focus

## Akan

In the case of ditransitive verbs, it is possible to focus either the direct or indirect object, by fronting and marking with the focus particle. Second object focus does not seem to require a resumptive pronoun at the original object site.

- 13 a) *Me-ma-a abaamua no sika* (Asante)  
 1SG-give-PAST boy DEF money  
 'I gave the boy money'
- b) *abaamua no na me-ma-a no sika* (Asante)  
 boy DEF FOC 1SG-give-PAST DEF money  
 'I gave THE BOY money'
- c) *sika na me-ma-a abaamua no* (Asante)  
 money FOC 1SG-give-PAST boy DEF  
 'I gave the boy MONEY'

## Ga

When a second object argument is fronted to focus position, a resumptive pronoun in agreement with the focused argument obligatorily occurs in the default position of the second object (compare (13a) and (13b)). It is also possible "to front-shift the two objects in a double object construction together as a unit for focus" (Ameka, 2010: 154), as exemplified in sentence (13c).

- 14 a) *Nùú è nì è-tsɔ̀ɔ̀ lɛ shí!á !á* (Ameka, 2010: 153)  
 man DEF FOC 3SG-show 3SG house DEF  
 'THE MAN he showed him the house'
- b) *Hɛ ɛ̀ nì è-tsɔ̀ɔ̀ àmè shí!á !á* (Ameka, 2010: 153)  
 man.PL DEF FOC 3SG-show 3PL house DEF  
 'THE MEN he showed them the house'
- c) *Nùú !é shí!á á nì è-tsɔ̀ɔ̀* (Ameka, 2010: 154)  
 man DEF house DEF FOC 3SG-show  
 'He showed THE MAN THE HOUSE'

## Gbe

In Ewe the second object is fronted and optionally marked with the focus particle. An invariable pronoun, [which] does not agree in number or person with the fronted second object" (Ameka, 2010: 153), can optionally occur in that object's default position. In (15a) the focused constituent has a singular referent, while (15b) has plural, but both use the same form of the pronoun (Ameka, 2010: 154).

- 15 a) *nye-é mamá ná ga-(i/\*-m)* (Ameka, 2010: 154)  
 1SG-aFOC grandmother give money-INV/-1SG  
 'I Grandma gave money'

- b) *ḍeví má-wó-é me-ná dɔ-(i/\*wó)* (Ameka, 2010: 154)  
 child DEM-PL-aFOC 1SG-give work-INV/3PL  
 'THOSE CHILDREN I gave work to'

Like Ewe, Fon unmarked ditransitive constructions have two surface word orders, as shown in the examples below. Sentence (16a) exhibits direct object-indirect object word order, while sentence (16b) exhibits indirect object-direct object word order. According to Lefebvre and Brousseau, "the two word orders do not involve any difference in meaning," (2002: 445).

- 16 a) *Kòkú xlé xwé ɔ Àsibá* (Lefebvre and Brousseau, 2002: 443)  
 Koku show house DEF Asiba  
 'He showed Asiba the house'

- b) *Kòkú xlé Àsibá xwé ɔ* (Lefebvre and Brousseau, 2002: 443)  
 Koku show Asiba house DEF  
 'He showed Asiba the house'

Each argument can be focused by fronting to focus position and marking with the focus particle. Unlike Ga, there is no anaphoric pronoun in default object position in either construction.

- 17 a) *àsón lé wè Kòkú sɔ yì àxì mèn* (Lefebvre and Brousseau, 2002: 525)  
 crab PL FOC Koku take go market in  
 'Koku brought THE CRABS to the market' (translation modified by LTF)
- b) *àxì mèn wè Kòkú sɔ àsón lé yì* (Lefebvre and Brousseau, 2002: 525)  
 market in FOC Koku take crab PL go  
 'Koku brought the crabs TO THE MARKET' (translation modified by LTF)

## Yoruba

Second object focus in Yoruba is not discussed here, as there appears to be limited accessible data regarding this kind of construction.

## Summary

Akan, Ga, Ewe and Fon all allow second objects to be brought into focus by fronting. As with single object focus, focused second object arguments in Akan obligatorily occur with a resumptive pronoun in the default object position if the object is animate. Ga also has an obligatory resumptive pronoun at the original site of the focused object, regardless of animacy. In Ewe, the focus marker and resumptive pronoun are optional, while Fon, like JC, has an obligatory focus marker and no resumptive pronoun.

	Fronting	Focus marker	resumptive pronoun	
			Animate	Inanimate
Akan	+	+	+	-
Ga	+	+	+	+
Ewe	+	(+)	(+)	(+)
Fon	+	+	-	-
JC	+	+	-	-

### Possessive Focus

#### Akan

In Akan the entire possessive NP can be fronted, and is obligatorily marked by the focus particle, with no resumptive proform occurring in the original position of the possessive NP.

- 18 a) *ɔ-fa-a me nhoma no*  
 3SG-take-PAST 1SG.POSS book DEF  
 ‘S/he took my book’
- b) *me nhoma no na ɔ-fa-a*  
 1SG.POSS book DEF FOC 3SG-take-PAST  
 ‘S/he took MY BOOK’

#### Ga

In Ga, either element of the possessive phrase can be fronted and focus marked. If the possessor is fronted to focus position, a resumptive pronoun must remain in its default position, as in (19b). If, however, the possessum is fronted to focus position, the possessor is stranded and a gap left in the the default possessum position, as in sentence (19c) (Dakubu (2005), cited in Ameka (2010: 164)). It is also possible to front the entire possessive phrase in which case, no resumptive pronoun occurs in this original site (19d). In all instances, the occurrence of the focus marker is optional.

- 19 a) *Tèté jù nùú è Shiká* (Ameka, 2010: 164)  
 Tetey steal man DEF money  
 ‘Tetey stole the man’s money’
- b) *nùú è (nì) Tèté jù \*(è-)Shiká* (Ameka, 2010: 164)  
 man DEF (FOC) Tetey steal money  
 ‘THE MAN Tetey stole his money’
- c) *Shiká à (nì) Tèté jù nùú è* (Ameka, 2010: 164)  
 money DEF (FOC) Tetey steal man DEF  
 ‘THE MONEY Tetey stole (from) the man’

- d) *nùú è Shiká (ní) Tèté jù* (Ameka, 2010: 164)  
 man DEF money (FOC) Tettey steal  
 'THE MAN'S MONEY Tettey stole'

In Ewe, on the other hand, while the possessive phrase can be focused, as in (20b), neither the possessor nor the possessum can be individually fronted and focused, as exemplified by the ungrammaticality of examples (20c) and (20d).

- 20 a) *Akú gba Afúa fě ze* (Ameka, 2010: 164)  
 Aku break Afua POSS pot  
 'Aku broke Afua's pot'

- b) *Afúa fě ze-é Akú gba* (Ameka, 2010: 164)  
 Afua POSS pot-aFOC Aku break  
 'Afua's pot Aku broke'

- c)\* *Afúa-é Akú gba é-fě ze* (Ameka, 2010: 164)  
 Afua-aFOC Aku break 3SG-POSS pot  
 'Afua Aku broke her pot'

- d)\* *ze-é Akú gba Afúa tɔ* (Ameka, 2010: 164)  
 pot-aFOC Aku break Afua POSSPRO  
 'Pot Aku broke Afua's'

## Fon and Yoruba

As an NP, it seems logical to assume that possessive phrases can be focused by fronting and marking with the focus particle in both Fon and Yoruba. However, due to a lack of accessible data, no further deductions can be made regarding this construction in those languages, and no examples have been provided.

## Summary

While all of the substrates allow the entire possessive NP to be focused, Ga is the only one which allows the individual elements of the possessive phrase to be focused separately, and is also the only substrate in which the focus marker is optional. Unfortunately, a lack of data has prevented the presentation of possessive focus in Fon and Yoruba. Despite the limited amount of available data, it is evident from the information presented in the table below that the possessive focus constructions of Akan and Ewe bear the most resemblance to those of JC.

	Focus Marker	Possessor	Possessum	Possessive NP
Akan	+	-	-	+
Ga	(+)	+	+	+
Ewe	+	-	-	+
JC	+	-	-	+

### Adjunct Focus

#### Akan

In Akan nominal and adverbial adjuncts can be fronted to focus position and marked with the focus particle, with no anaphoric element in the default adjunct position to refer back to the focused constituent.

- 21) *nɛra na me-ba-a ha* (Boadi, 1974: 36)  
 yesterday FOC 1SG-come-PAST here  
 'YESTERDAY I came here'

#### Gbe

Nominal and adverbial adjunct focus is also possible in Ewe and Fon, where the constituent is fronted and marked for focus. In Ewe, as in Akan, a gap is left in the default adjunct position.

- 22) *ɔɔɔɔɔɔ-é wó-ɔa-a kpé wò-bí-ná* (Ameka, 2010: 155)  
 slowly-aFOC 3PL-boil-HAB stone 3SG-cook-HAB  
 'SLOWLY stones are boiled and they get cooked'

In Yoruba, "restrictions are placed on the constituent that can occupy the focus position", with adjunct phrases being among those that cannot undergo focus movement (Jones, 2006: 148).

### Summary

Like JC, Akan, Ewe and Fon all allow an AP to be fronted to focus position, and like JC also, none require an anaphoric proform in the original position. Yoruba stands alone as the only substrate under discussion here that does not allow APs to be focused.

	Fronting	Focus Marker	Anaphoric pronoun
Akan	+	+	-
Ewe	+	+	-
Fon	+	+	-
Yoruba	-	-	-
JC	+	+	-

## Prepositional Phrase

### Akan

In Akan it is not possible to focus the entire PP. The prepositional object can be fronted and marked for focus, but as shown in example (23b), the locative preposition does not occur at all in focus constructions:

- 23 a) *Me-hyia-a no wɔ adwa-m*  
1SG-meet-PAST 3SG LOC.PREP market-POST  
'I met him/her at the market'

- b) *adwa-m na me-hyia-a no*  
market-POST FOC 1SG-meet-PAST 3SG  
'The market is where I met him/her'

### Ga

In Ga, like Akan, it is not possible to focus the entire PP. The prepositional object can be fronted and marked for focus, while the preposition is stranded, as shown in (24b):

- 24 a) *Mi-kɛ lɛ kpe yɛ jara lɛ nɔ*  
1SG-with 3SG.ACC meet at market DEF on  
'I met him/her at the market'

- b) *jara lɛ nɔ ni Mi-kɛ lɛ kpe yɛ*  
market DEF on FOC 1SG-with 3SG.ACC meet at  
'The market is where I met him/her'

### Gbe

Pied-piping is not possible in Ewe, nor can the preposition alone be fronted for focus. Prepositional objects can be fronted and optionally marked with the focus particle. The preposition may be stranded, as in example (25a), or an invariable pronoun may fill the gap, as in example (25b), depending on the semantic relation of the complement (Ameka, 2010: 155)

- 25 a) *asi me-é mamá ná ga Kofi le* (Ameka, 2010: 155)  
market containing.region-aFOC grandma give money Kofi at  
'IN THE MARKET grandma gave money to Kofi'

- b) *dɔ.srɔ.ví má-wó-é afɛnɔ lá wɔ dzre kplí-i* (Ameka, 2010: 155)  
apprentice DIST-PL-aFOC mistress DEF do quarrel with-3SG  
'THOSE APPRENTICES the mistress quarrelled with'

### Yoruba

In Yoruba, prepositional objects can be fronted and marked for focus, with the preposition remaining in its original position and a resumptive pronoun obligatorily occurring in the original object position.

- 26) *Adé ni a sòrò nípa rẹ*  
 Ade FOC we talk about 3SG  
 'Ade was the person we talked about'

(Adesola, 2006: 13)

### Summary

Between these languages and JC, there seems to be considerably more divergence among the constructions used to encode prepositional focus than those used to realise any other type of focus. None of the substrates discussed here allow fronting of the preposition or the entire PP, where JC allows the latter but not the former.<sup>7</sup> As is the case in JC, the focused constituent is marked for focus in each of the substrates. However, in Ewe this is optional, as is the occurrence of the resumptive pronoun in the default object position. In Yoruba, however, this anaphor is obligatory. Interestingly, the locative preposition disappears altogether when the prepositional object is focused in Akan. Unfortunately, there is limited data available on prepositional focus in Fon, which has rendered me unable to treat it here.

	Focus Marker	PP Fronting	Object Fronting	Resumptive Pronoun
Akan	+	-	+	-
Ga	+	-	+	-
Ewe	(+)	-	+	(+)
Yoruba	+	-	+	+
JC	+	+	+	-

<sup>7</sup> Recall, only certain prepositions can be fronted as part of a PP in JC.



## 9. PREDICATE FOCUS IN SUBSTRATE LANGUAGES

Like JC, substrate languages use a different strategy for marking predicate focus than that used for argument focus. Unlike JC, however, certain substrate languages also use a different strategy for marking adjectival predicate focus to that used for verbal predicate focus. In the case of verb focus, a common strategy is to front a copy of the verb to focus position, where it is marked by the focus particle, which is the strategy used for predicate focus in JC. Another strategy is to nominalise the verb or VP using whichever nominalisation process is available in the language.

### Adjective focus

#### Akan

In Akan predicative adjectives can be focused by fronting and obligatory marking with the focus particle. In such a construction it is possible for either a copy of the adjective or a gap to be left in the default predicate position, as shown in sentences (1a and b):

- 1 a) *fɛ*                      *na*                      *ɛ-yɛ*                      *fɛ*                      (Ameka, 2010: 163)  
          beautiful          FOC                      3SG-COP              beautiful  
          ‘it is BEAUTIFUL’
- b) *fɛ*                      *na*                      *ɛ-yɛ*                      (Ameka, 2010: 163)  
          beautiful          FOC                      3SG-COP  
          ‘it is BEAUTIFUL’

According to Ameka (2010), it seems evident that formal differences exist between predicative and attributive adjectives, where some adjectives are “invariable in form regardless of their function (e.g. *bone* ‘bad’), and others...have different forms depending on whether they have an attributive or predicative function (Ameka, 2010: 163). An example of the latter would be *fɛ* in sentence (1), which is reduplicated in order to derive its attributive form (*fɛfɛ*).

There have been no instances of predicative adjective focus attested for Ga (Ansah, 2014: 168), and there are a number of languages which do not have predicative adjectives at all and, thus, no means of focusing them, as is the case with Ewe. Yoruba possesses predicate adjectives, but they are not among the class of constituents that can undergo focus movement (Jones, 2006: 148). There also seems to be a lack of information concerning predicative adjective focus in many languages (Ameka, 2010). If we compare the focusing strategy of Akan with that of JC, we see that JC focuses predicative adjectives using a similar strategy as that employed in (1a), where the adjective is copied, fronted and marked for focus. Unlike Akan, JC does not allow the focus of adjectives without copying.

## Verb Focus

### Akan

In Akan verbs are focused by moving a nominalised form of the verb, derived by a nominalising prefix, to focus position, where it is obligatorily marked by the focus particle. A copy of the verb remains in the default position.

- 2)        *n-kyerew*        *na*        *me-kyerew*        (Boadi, 1974: 38)  
          NOM-write    FOC        1SG-HAB.write  
          ‘Writing I do’

### Ga

In Ga two verb focusing strategies occur. Verb focus can occur by fronting a copy of the verb to clause initial position (3a). Verbs can also be focused using the nominalisation strategy, where a nominalising suffix is added to the verb and then the verb fronted to focus position (3b). In both cases, the focus marker is optional, as exemplified below:

- 3 a)        *gbó*        (*!ní*)        *é!-gbó*        (Ameka, 2010: 158)  
          die        FOC        3SG.PERF-die  
          ‘DIE he has died’

- b)        *sèlè-m*        (*nì*)        *è-sèlè*        (Ameka, 2010: 159)  
          swim-NOM    FOC        3SG-swim  
          ‘Swam he did’

### Gbe

Many of the Gbe languages also employ different strategies. In Ewe there are three predicate focusing strategies. The first is the copying strategy where the focus verb is nominalised via reduplication, fronted and optionally marked with the focus particle (Badan and Buell, 2012: 150).

- 4)        *fo-fo-é*        *wò-fo*        *dévi-á*        (Badan and Buell, 2012: 150)  
          RED-hit-aFOC    3SG-hit        child-DEF  
          ‘BEATING he beat the child’ (i.e. ‘He gave the child a THOROUGH BEATING)

The second strategy for verb focus is through the use of *dè*, which, “appears at or near the beginning of the sentence” (Badan and Buell, 2012: 151), and, unlike the focus particle, has focus scope over the entire predicate. Recall, that in such constructions, the subject must precede *dè* and cannot be marked by the focus particle, as in sentence, and that there is a corresponding clitic pronoun, which must attach to the main verb in the sentence:

- 5)        *dè*        *wò-dzè*        *ànyí*        (Badan and Buell, 2012: 151)  
          pFOC        3SG-fall        ground  
          ‘S/he FELL DOWN’ (i.e. ‘Fall down s/he did’)

6) *sí*                      *wò*                      *sí*  
escape                      3SG                      escape  
'He ESCAPED'

7)      *wá*      *wè*      *kòkú*      *wá*      (Lefebvre, 2002: 503)  
          arrive      FOC      Koku      arrive  
          ‘Koku has ARRIVED’

8 a) *Rírà*      *ni*      *Adé*      *ra*      ìwé      (Jones, 2006: 144)  
 NOM-buy    FOC      Ade      buy      book  
 ‘Ade BOUGHT a/the book’

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	Predicate copying	Nominalisation	Focus Marker
Akan	+	+	+
Ga	+	+	(+)
Ewe	+	+	(+)
Fon	+	-	+
Yoruba	+	+	+
JC	+	-	+

### Verb Focus in Serial Verb Constructions

#### Akan

In Akan only the initial verb of SVCs can be fronted and marked for focus, in which case an unmarked copy of the verb is fronted to focus position and marked with the focus particle, as shown in sentence (9b). Akan does not allow the second verb of an SVC to be focused, as exemplified by the ungrammaticality of (9c). This is because the verbs of an Akan SVC are sequential, not only in syntactic order, but also in the chronological order of the actions being encoded, where the initial verb causes, informs or somehow leads to the second. Thus, the action of a fronted verb cannot be preceded by that of another verb.

- 9 a) *Kofi tɔ-ɔ aduane di-i*  
 Kofi buy-PAST food eat-PAST  
 'Kofi bought food and ate it'
- b) *tɔ na Kofi tɔ-ɔ aduane di-i*  
 buy FOC Kofi buy-PAST food eat-PAST  
 'buy Kofi bought food and ate it'
- c)\* *di na Kofi tɔ-ɔ aduane di-i*  
 eat FOC Kofi buy-PAST food eat-PAST  
 'eat Kofi bought food and ate it'

It is not possible to focus the entire complex predicate in Akan, nor is it possible to focus the entire VP, as shown by the ungrammaticality of the following sentence:

- d)\* *tɔ aduane di Kofi tɔ-ɔ aduane di-i*  
 buy food eat Kofi buy-PAST food eat-PAST  
 'buy food and eat Kofi bought food and ate it'

#### Gbe

In Ewe, initial verb components in SVC can be focused using one of two strategies. In all Ewe dialects a nominalised form of the verb, derived via reduplication, is preposed to the clause and a copy of the verb left in its original position, as in sentence (10a). Another strategy for focusing

elements of SVC is that of verb copying, employed in some Ewe dialects only, where a copy of the verb is fronted to focus position (10b). The focus marker does not appear in either construction.

- 10 a) *fo-fo gǎ ádɛ́ (é) wò-fo da-a wu* (Ameka, 2006: 140)  
 RED-hit big INDEF FOC 3SG-hit snake-DEF kill  
 'A huge beating he hit the snake and killed it'

- b) *sí wò-sí dzó* (Ameka, 2006: 140)  
 flee 3SG-flee leave  
 'Fled she fled away'

In Fon the initial verb of an SVC can be focused, via copying, moving to focus position and marked with the focus particle.

- 11 a) *só wè Kòkú só àsón ó yì àxì mè* (Lefebvre and Brosseau, 2002: 407)  
 take FOC Koku take crab DEF go market in  
 'It is bringing the crab to the market that Koku did' (as opposed to e.g. selling it)

Second verb focus, while possible, is considered acceptable to some speakers only and rejected by others (Ameka, 2010: 162).

- b) *yì wè Kòkú só àsón ó yì àxì mè* (Lefebvre and Brosseau, 2002: 407)  
 go FOC Koku take crab DEF go market in  
 'It is bringing the crab to the market that Koku did' (as opposed to e.g. selling it)

Focus of both verbs in an SVC is not possible in Fon, as illustrated by the ungrammaticality of the following sentence:

- c)\* *só yì wè Kòkú só àsón ó yì àxì mè* (Lefebvre and Brosseau, 2002: 407)  
 take go FOC Koku take crab DEF go market in  
 'It is bringing the crab to the market that Koku did' (as opposed to e.g. selling it)

However, the translations of (11a) and (11b) show that, while all verbs of an SVC cannot be focused at once, the phrase is interpreted as though both verbs are in focus (Lefebvre and Brosseau, 2002: 407).

## Yoruba

The initial verb of an SVC can be focused in Yoruba, where a copy of the verb is nominalised via reduplication, fronted to focus position and marked with the focus particle (12a). The second verb of an SVC, however, cannot be focused, as exemplified in (12b).

- 12 a) *sisáré ló sáré lo ilé* (Ameka, 2010: 161)  
 running FOC:he ran go home  
 'Running home is what he did'

- b)\* *lilo ló sáré lo ilé* (Ameka, 2010: 162)  
 going FOC-he ran go home

### 'Running home is what he did'

While focus of the second verb of an SVC is not acceptable in Yoruba, it is possible to focus both verbs/VPs via the same process of reduplication, in which the first verb of a complex predicate is reduplicated and the second adjoined to the reduplicated form. The structure derived from this process is then fronted and marked for focus (12c). In cases where the verb takes a direct object, the entire VP is fronted and focus marked, as shown in sentence (12d) (Ameka, 2010: 162).

c)    *sísáré*    *lo*    *ló*    *sáré*    *lo*    *ilé*    (Ameka, 2010: 162)  
       running   go    FOC-he   ran   go   home  
       'Running home is what he did'

d)    *sísáré*    *lo*    *ilé*    *ló*    *sáré*    *lo*    *ilé*    (Ameka, 2010: 162)  
       running   go    home   FOC-he   ran   go   home  
       'Running home is what he did'

### Summary

In the case of verb focus in SVCs, it seems preferable for JC and its substrates to focus the initial verb rather than the second, or both. In fact the ability to focus the initial verb is the only feature of SVC verb focus that all these languages share. In Akan focusing of the second verb results in a monoverbal clause, thus proving that second verb focus of an SVC is not possible. There seems to be no evidence of second verb or entire complex predicate focus in Ewe, and focused verbs are optionally marked by the focus particle. In Yoruba second verb focus is not permitted either. However, Yoruba does seem to be the only substrate under discussion in which the focusing of the entire complex predicate and focusing of VPs is attested.

Given the disparity of information on the relevant substrates, it is hard to determine which of these languages bears the closest resemblance to JC in terms of verb focus in SVCs. The initial verb of an SVC can be focused in both JC and all of the substrates, and with the exception of Ewe, all substrates obligatorily mark the fronted constituent with the focus marker, as does JC. Beyond this, Fon, or at least certain dialects of Fon,<sup>8</sup> appears to be the most similar to JC in terms of SVC verb focus, in that only the initial verb can be focused and said verb is always marked with the focus particle. In addition to this, neither Akan nor Fon require the fronted verb to undergo nominalization, which is interesting given the preference for this process when fronting verbs in many West African Languages.

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<sup>8</sup> Some dialects of Fon allow second verb focus, while others do not. This is represented by '+/-' in the table.

	Initial Verb	Second Verb	Entire SVC	Focus Marker
Akan	+	+	-	+
Ga				
Ewe	+	-	-	(+)
Fon	+	+/-	-	+
Yoruba	+	-	+	+
JC	+	-	-	+

## 10. INTERROGATIVE FOCUS IN SUBSTRATE LANGUAGES

### Akan

Content questions can be constructed in one of two ways in Akan. The first maintains the canonical structure of the declarative sentence (1a), and the question-words substituting argument functions of subject and object can remain in-situ in place of the new information being introduced in the discourse (Marfo, 2005: 118), as shown in sentences (1b) and (1c), in which the question word *hwán* ('who') substitutes subject and object arguments, respectively:

- 1 a) *Kùsì rè-sèré àbòfrá nó* (Marfo, 2005: 181)  
 Kusi PROG-laugh child DEF  
 'Kusi is laughing at the child'
- b) *Hwán rè-sèré àbòfrá nó* (Marfo, 2005: 181)  
 who PROG-laugh child DEF  
 'Who is laughing at the child?'
- c) *Kùsì rè-sèré hwán* (Marfo, 2005: 181)  
 Kusi PROG-laugh who  
 'Kusi is laughing at whom?'

It is also possible to deviate from the canonical phrase structure, where the question-word is fronted to the left-periphery, marked with the focus particle, and the focused argument obligatorily recapitulated by an anaphoric pronoun in its default position.

- 2) *Hwán nà Kùsì ré-séré nó* (Marfo, 2005: 182)  
 who FOC Kusi PROG-laugh 3SG  
 'Whom is Kusi laughing at?'

### Gbe

In Ewe content questions are constructed using question markers *ka* (CQ) or *néne* ('how many'), which "occur as [post-nominal] determiners in the questioned NP" (Ameka, 1991: 53). The NP and question marker are fronted and marked for focus.

- 3 a) *afi-ka é Kofi yi* (Ameka, 1991: 53)  
 place-CQ aFOC Kofi go  
 'Where did Kofi go?'
- b) *te néne-é Ama dzrá egbe* (Ameka, 1991: 54)  
 yam how many-FOC Ama sell today  
 'How many yams did Ama sell today?'

Echoic interrogative constructions are also possible, where the constituents remain in-situ and are not marked for focus:

- c) *e-bé nú ka* (Ameka, 1991: 54)  
 2SG-say this CQ



‘What did you say?’

In Fon content questions are formed by fronting a question word to the left-periphery, and optionally marking with the focus particle.

- 4 a) *négbòn* (wè) *Asíba* *yì* (Lefebvre and Brousseau, 2002: 157)  
 how.come FOC Asiba leave  
 ‘How come Asiba left?’

- b) *nàbí* (wè) *à* *dù* (Lefebvre and Brousseau, 2002: 157)  
 how.much FOC 2SG eat  
 ‘How much/many did you eat?’

In instances where the question marker acts as a determiner, it always follows the questioned NP and precedes the focus marker:

- c) *nu* *tɛ* (wè) *Kòkú* *xò* (Lefebvre and Brousseau, 2002: 157)  
 thing which FOC Koku buy  
 ‘What did Koku buy?’

- d) *fí* *tɛ* (wè) *Kòkú* *yì* (Lefebvre and Brousseau, 2002: 157)  
 place which FOC Koku go  
 ‘Where did Koku go?’

## Yoruba

Content questions in Yoruba involve fronting to focus position and marking for focus. In the case of content questions subjects, a resumptive pronoun occurs in the original site of the subject argument (5a) (Jones, 2006: 155). However, in the case of content question objects, a gap is left in object default position (5b) (Adesola, 2006):

- 5 a) *ta* *ni* *ó* *ra* *ìwé?* (Jones, 2006: 155)  
 who FOC 3SG buy book  
 ‘Who bought a/the book?’

- b) *kí* *ni* *Adé* *rà?* (Adesola, 2006: 15)  
 what FOC Ade buy  
 ‘What did Ade buy?’

In content question in which multiple question nouns occur, a question NP can appear in-situ, as in the following example:

- c) *kí* *ni* *tani* *rà?* (Adesola, 2006: 15)  
 what FOC who buy  
 ‘What did who buy?’ (or ‘What was the thing that who bought?’)

## Summary

With the exception of Fon, all languages under discussion here, including JC, allow both in-situ and ex-situ representation of content questions, where in-situ requires no movement and no focus

marking. In cases of ex-situ interrogative constructions, all of these languages require the question word to be marked for focus, once again with the exception of Fon, in which the focus marker is optional.<sup>9</sup> Neither Ewe nor Fon require recapitulation by an anaphoric pronoun in the default position of the question NP, a trait also shared by JC. Akan, on the other hand, does require such a pronoun, while Yoruba requires it only in case of content question subject focus.

Due to a lack of data, I have been unable to source any examples of in-situ interrogative constructions in Fon. Similarly, although the construction in (5c) involves an echoic in-situ question NP, I have also been unable to find any examples of pure echo questions in Yoruba. Based on the available data, which is represented in the table below, Ewe and JC seem to be the most similar in their representation of content questions.

	In-situ	Ex-situ	
		Focus Marker	Anaphoric pronoun
Akan	+	+	+
Ewe	+	(+)	-
Fon	-	(+)	-
Yoruba	+	+	+
JC	+	+	-

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<sup>9</sup> Depending on the function, the focus marker is optional in Ewe.

## 11. TOPICALIZATION IN SUBSTRATE LANGUAGES

These Substrate languages make a distinction between background information topics and contrastive topics. The former highlights “information that should be kept in mind for the rest of the utterance” (Ameka, 2010: 143), and can refer to nominal constituents or adjuncts, while the latter indicates emphasized or contrastive information in a discourse. Topicalized constituents occur in the left-periphery, where they are marked by a topic particle.

### Akan

In Akan topicalized constituents are recapitulated by a resumptive pronoun, which must agree with the topic in number and person (Marfo, 2005: 104). As is the case in Akan focus structures, no resumptive pronoun occurs at the original site of a topicalized inanimate object (1b).

- 1 a) *Kòfí Kùsì, rɛ-sɛ́ nɔ́* (Marfo, 2005: 103)  
 Kofi Kusi, PROG-beg 3SG  
 ‘(about) Kofi, Kusi is begging him’
- b) *Dùá nɔ́, Kùsì rɛ-fɔ́ró* (Marfo, 2005: 106)  
 tree TOP Kusi PROG-climb  
 ‘(about) the tree, Kusi is climbing it’

Background information topics are marked by the particle *no* if “the events of the dependent clause occurred in the past or are certain to occur in the future” (Ameka, 2010: 143); or the particle *yi* if “the event in the dependent clause is in progress at the time the main event occurred” (Ameka, 2010: 143).

- 2 a) *o-dur hɔ no ɔ-kɔ-to-o de aberwa* (Ameka, 2010: 144)  
 3SG-reached there FOC 3SG-ITIVE-meet-PAST COMP old.woman  
*bi tsena gya ho*  
 INDEF sit fire around  
 ‘When he got there, he met an old woman sitting by the fire’
- b) *wo-a-nya a-ba yi tra ase* (Ameka, 2010: 144)  
 2SG-PERF-already PERF-come FOC sit down  
 ‘As you have come now sit down’

In Akan, NPs, verbs, adjectives and adverbs can be contrastively topicalized (3a-d), with such elements being marked by the contrastive topic particle *deɛ*.

- 3 a) *me deɛ me ba-a ha nera* (Boadi, 1974: 6)  
 1SG FOC 1SG come-PAST here yesterday  
 ‘I came here yesterday’
- b) *ba deɛ me ba-a ha nera* (Boadi, 1974: 6)  
 come FOC 1SG come-PAST here yesterday  
 ‘I CAME here yesterday’

c) *ha deε me ba-a nɛra* (Boadi, 1974: 6)  
 here FOC 1SG come-PAST yesterday  
 'I came HERE yesterday'

d) *nɛra deε me ba-a ha* (Boadi, 1974: 6)  
 yesterday FOC 1SG come-PAST here  
 'I came here YESTERDAY'

In addition to *de(ε)* there are a number of intensifiers used to highlight contrastive topics, including *mpo* ('even'), *ara* ('only', 'itself') and *nso* ('too'), to name a few (Ameka, 2010: 168).

4) *me nso me ba-a ha nɛra* (Boadi, 1974: 6)  
 1SG too 1SG come-PAST here yesterday  
 'I also here yesterday'

#### Gbe

In Ewe, background information topics are marked by the particle (*l*)á, often realized phonetically as /ɔ/.

5) *Émegbé lá, mí-a-fo nu le e-ɣú-a* (Ameka, 2010: 143)  
 afterwards TOP 1PL-strike mouth LOC 3SG-side-Q  
 'Afterwards, shall we talk about it?'

While both nominal constituents and adjuncts can be topicalized for background information, only nominal constituents can be contrastively topicalized, with the topicalized elements being marked by one of a number of topic particles, including *yá* ('as for') and *há* ('also', 'too') (Ameka, 2010: 168).

6 a) *é-nò bíyà sià* (Badan and Buell, 2012: 143)  
 3SG-drink beer this  
 'He drank this beer'

b) *bíyà sià yá é-nò-è* (Badan and Buell, 2012: 143)  
 beer this TOP 3SG-drink-3SG  
 'This beer, he drank it'

Fon allows the topicalization of NPs and entire clauses, but not APs or VPs (Lefebvre, 2002: 151). Topicalized elements are immediately followed by the definite determiner *ɔ́*, which "serves as a topic marker" for background information topics (Lefebvre, 2002: 151). Topic structures exhibit asymmetry between subject and object topicalization, where a resumptive pronoun is obligatory in the default position of topicalized subject arguments (3a), but optional in default position of topicalized object arguments (3b).

7 a) *Kòkú ɔ́ é d̀ù m̀lìkún* (Lefebvre and Brousseau, 2002: 152)  
 Koku TOP RES eat rice  
 'Koku, he ate rice'

b) *m̀lìkún ɔ́ Kòkú d̀ù (é)* (Lefebvre and Brousseau, 2002: 152)

rice	TOP	Koku	eat	RES
'The rice, Koku ate it'				

## Summary

In all of the substrates discussed here, topicalized elements are left dislocated and marked with a topic marker that occurs to the right of topicalized elements, as is the case in JC. Unlike JC, however, each of the substrates discussed in this chapter distinguish between background information topics and contrastive topics,<sup>10</sup> and vary with regards to which constituents can be topicalized: In Ewe alone, as in JC, only NPs can be contrastively topicalized. As is evident from the brevity of the chapter, I have encountered some difficulties when trying to obtain data on topicalization in some substrates.

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<sup>10</sup> While the data available on Fon topics is limited, it seems there is no distinction made between types of topics, with all being marked with the same topic particle.

## CONCLUSION

Through this work I have tried to establish a basis of comparison between the realisation of focus in JC and its substrate languages, in order to quantify the similarities and differences of focus strategies in those languages. The first half of this paper provided an account of focus structures in JC; which constituents can be focused and the strategies used to accomplish this. The second half gave a similar account of focus structures in the selected Jamaican substrate languages, namely Akan, Ga, Ewe, Fon, and Yoruba. Unfortunately, a lack of accessible data for some languages has resulted in an disparity of treatment in this work.

Of course, the transfer of syntactic features is not a clean linear one, but rather a selective process where certain features from some languages survive while others are lost. This work set out to better understand the extent to which substrate influence has effected the focus structures in JC and which among those have had the biggest influence. It is clear from the data and analysis above that focus structures in JC are a remnant of African substrate influence, as each of the substrate languages use either the same or very similar mechanisms to mark focus.

There are some obvious similarities between the particles used to mark focus and topic in JC and some of those used to mark focus and topic in Akan, and with Akan being credited as the main contributor to JC in terms of vocabulary, it seems more than likely that the focus marker *a* and topic marker *de* in JC may well have been contributed from Akan. However, Ewe seems to consistently emerge as the language with which JC has the most in common with regards to the structural typology of focus marking. In particular, Ewe employs a consistent gap strategy in focus constructions, is the only substrate that does not require fronted verbs to be nominalised, and does not allow second verb or complex predicate focus in SVCs; all features shared by JC.

There are still some areas which would benefit from further research, such as the acceptability of pied-piping in JC, which Patrick claims is not possible, but for which I have been able to find conclusive examples. The use of the focus marker *a* in JC content questions is also an area which needs to be clarified, which I believe to be optional, but for which no decisive conclusion has been reached in any of the literature. With regards to the substrate languages, I believe the holes in my work are a direct indication of the areas in which more research is needed.

## APPENDIX I

The following tables present the twelve vowels, twenty-two consonants and one nasal vowel marker used in JC, along with their orthographic representations (OR).

### Vowels

Short Vowels		Long Vowels		Diphthongs	
Phoneme	OR	Phoneme	OR	Phoneme	OR
/ɪ/	i	/i:/	ii	/iɛ/	ie
/ɛ/	e	/a:/	aa	/ʊo/	uo
/a/	a	/u:/	uu	/ai/	ai
/ɔ/	o			/oʊ/	ou
/ʊ/	u				

### Consonants

Phoneme	OR	Phoneme	OR
/b/	b	/ŋ/	ng
/d/	d	/p/	p
/tʃ/	ch	/r/	r
/f/	f	/s/	s
/g/	g	/ʃ/	/sh/
/h/	h	/t/	/t/
/dʒ/	j	/v/	v
/k/	k	/w/	w
/l/	l	/j/	y
/m/	m	/z/	z
/n/	n	/ʒ/	zh

### The Peculiar Status of *h* in JC

In western varieties of JC, /h/ is phonemic, whereas in eastern varieties it is merely emphatic and no phonemic contrast exists. In items where /h/ is present in western varieties, eastern varieties can either retain or delete it. If we take for example the word *han*, for western speakers, this can only mean ‘hand’. However, for eastern speakers, the same form can be interpreted as ‘hand’, or an emphatic realisation of *an* (‘and’). Conversely, in [h]-less items eastern varieties may insert the [h], where their Western counterparts do not. Thus, for western speakers *an* is ‘and’, while eastern speakers can

interpret *an* as either ‘and’ or ‘hand’, depending on context (Harry, 2006: 126). The JLU recommends that the letter *h* be used in writing in accordance with the manner in which it is used in speech.

### Nasalisation

The letter *hn*, is used to mark the preceding vowel as nasalised, as in the following example:

- 1)        *yu*        *kyahn*    *du*        *dat*  
          /ɥ        kjǎ        dɥ        dat/  
          2SG       cannot    do        that  
          ‘You can’t do that’



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