Information structure in Wolof narrative discourse

By
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DECLARATION

This dissertation is the product of my own work. I declare also that the dissertation is available for photocopying, reference purposes and Inter-Library Loan.

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Ruth A. Lowry
ABSTRACT

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Lambrecht’s (1994) model of information structure highlights the impact of an utterance’s discourse context on the linguistic forms used by the speaker or writer to refer to persons (referred to hereafter as ‘participants’) and entities. This paper applies his model to Wolof, an Atlantic language of the Niger-Congo family, spoken in Senegal, Mauritania and The Gambia.

In order to examine the impact of the discourse context on the forms used to refer to participant referents in Wolof, Lambrecht’s (1994) model of information structure is applied to a corpus of oral and written Wolof narrative texts. Following Lambrecht’s framework, the unmarked and marked forms used to signal identifiability and activation state, topic, and focus in Wolof narrative discourse are identified, and possible discourse-pragmatic motivations for the use of marked forms are discussed. Directions for further research are also suggested.
PREFAE

The research questions addressed here evolved in discussion with a team investigating the need for a Bible translation in ‘simple Wolof’, who felt that an analysis of the constructions used to signal topic and focus in Wolof narrative discourse, and the motivating factors behind the use of these constructions, could prove useful to future translation work.

Wolof uses a range of markers to signal different types of focus. The function of these markers has been investigated in detail, most notably by Robert (1991). The ways in which topic is marked in Wolof have received less attention in the literature, and neither topic nor focus marking have been considered within the context of narrative discourse.

The adoption of Lambrecht’s (1994) model of information structure as a theoretical framework for the study of topic and focus marking in Wolof widened the field to involve the question of how referents of varying degrees of identifiability and activation are referred to, as, in Lambrecht’s model, this is foundational to an understanding of how topic and focus are marked.

The study thus aims to identify the forms used to signal identifiability and activation state, topic, and focus in Wolof, and the discourse-pragmatic motivations for the use of marked forms, in the context of narrative discourse. The analysis is based on a corpus of oral and written narrative texts (see Appendix 2), some drawn from published sources, others collected during field research, between August 2013 and December 2014. Various aspects of the methodological approach, particularly the
compilation of the corpus and preparation of the texts for analysis, draw on Levinsohn’s (2011) practical guidelines for narrative discourse.

I am grateful to the many individuals who offered assistance throughout the research and writing process. Particular thanks are due to Colin Mills, whose patient advice, encouragement, and rigorous approach to academic writing were instrumental in shaping this dissertation. My supervisors, Tim Gaved and Howard Jackson, provided invaluable feedback on draft material.

Thanks are also due to Gerald Harkins, for his willingness to discuss possible avenues for research, his provision of an oral text for the corpus (Ousseynou), and especially for taking the time to read and comment on the accuracy of my analysis, as his grasp of the language far surpasses my own. Any remaining errors are mine alone.

The compilation of a suitable corpus was facilitated by Gaby Mbaye, Ousseynou Gaye, and Mamadou Diop, all of whom contributed original texts. I am grateful for their permission to use these texts here. I owe a particular debt of gratitude to Mamadou Diop, who spent countless hours answering grammatical questions, and ensuring I understood each text in the corpus fully.

I am grateful to my husband, David, for his warm encouragement, his patient assistance in helping me get my head around Lambrecht’s theory, and for giving me a push to get started when I needed it!

Finally, all praise to God, whose creativity far surpasses the intricacies of human language.
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### LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AUX</td>
<td>auxiliary particle (suffix which attaches to a verb functioning as an auxiliary)</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAUS</td>
<td>causative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLF</td>
<td>classifier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMP</td>
<td>complementizer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMP_EMPH</td>
<td>complement emphasis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEF</td>
<td>definite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEM</td>
<td>demonstrative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEM_PRO</td>
<td>demonstrative pronoun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIST</td>
<td>distal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMPH</td>
<td>emphatic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXCLAM</td>
<td>exclamative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXPL</td>
<td>explicative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HAB_PAST</td>
<td>habitual past</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMPFV</td>
<td>imperfective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INDEF</td>
<td>indefinite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEG</td>
<td>negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NP</td>
<td>noun phrase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OBJ</td>
<td>object</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAM</td>
<td>person-aspect-modality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PFV</td>
<td>perfective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PL</td>
<td>plural</td>
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<tr>
<td>POSS</td>
<td>possessive</td>
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<td>Abbreviation</td>
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<tr>
<td>PRF</td>
<td>perfect</td>
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<tr>
<td>PROX</td>
<td>proximal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRSV</td>
<td>presentative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REL</td>
<td>relative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REL_PRO</td>
<td>relative pronoun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SG</td>
<td>singular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUBJ_EMPH</td>
<td>subject emphasis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VERB_EMPH</td>
<td>verb emphasis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>first person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>second person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>third person</td>
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When we speak or write, we make assumptions about what our addressee already knows, or will be able to understand, and structure our utterance accordingly. These assumptions are matched with particular grammatical constructions by a component of grammar called ‘information structure’ (Lambrecht, 1994, p. 5). The aim of this paper is to investigate information structure within narrative discourse in Wolof, an Atlantic language of the Niger-Congo family (Lewis, Simons & Fennig, 2015), spoken largely in Senegal, but also in Mauritania and The Gambia.

Using Lambrecht’s (1994) framework of information structure, the unmarked and marked forms of referring to participants in narrative texts, based on their status within the three realms of information structure – identifiability and activation state, topic, and focus – are identified. The study builds on existing research (e.g. Torrence, 2013) by identifying the discourse-pragmatic motivations for the use of marked forms.

To achieve the aims of the study, Lambrecht’s framework (see 2.1) is applied to a corpus of narrative texts. Narrative is an appropriate context for an initial investigation of Wolof information structure, due to the helpful framework provided by existing models of narrative structure (see 2.3). A table listing the texts in the corpus is shown in Appendix 2. Where examples from the corpus are used in the body of the dissertation, the text in question is referenced using an abbreviated form of its title. These abbreviated forms are shown alongside the full titles in Appendix 2.
The information structure of Wolof, particularly the phenomenon of focus marking, has been studied in some detail (see for example Torrence, 2013 and Robert, 1991). However, Lambrecht’s model, which offers a coherent framework for studying the marking of participant identifiability and activation, topic, and focus, has not yet been applied systematically to Wolof. In addition, existing studies do not deal with Wolof information structure within the context of narrative texts. It is intended that, by applying Lambrecht’s model of information structure to the analysis of narrative texts, this study will facilitate a clearer understanding of the ways in which participant identifiability and activation state, topic, and focus are marked in Wolof narrative discourse, and the discourse-pragmatic motivations behind this marking.

The following study is divided into six main sections. In Chapter 2, the theoretical foundations are discussed. Particular attention is paid to Lambrecht’s (1994) model of information structure. Some space is also devoted to a discussion of the Wolof verb system, as this plays a central role in the marking of focus, followed by an overview of the current state of research into Wolof information structure. Chapter 3 outlines the methodological approach adopted in the study, and discusses the limitations thereof. The findings of the analysis of Wolof narrative texts are discussed in Chapters 4-6. Chapter 4 deals with the marking of participant identifiability and activation state, while Chapters 5 and 6 deal respectively with topic and focus marking. Finally, Chapter 7 summarizes the conclusions which can be drawn from this analysis, and suggests further avenues of study.
CHAPTER 2
Theoretical foundations

This chapter discusses the theoretical foundations for the study of information structure in Wolof. In 2.1, Lambrecht’s (1994) model of information structure is outlined, with a brief introduction to each of the three elements to be investigated – participant identifiability and activation state, topic, and focus. The current state of research into information structure in Wolof is considered in 2.2, including a discussion of various analyses of the Wolof verb system, as this is central to how focus is marked in Wolof. In 2.3, appropriate research questions are formulated, and useful models of narrative structure outlined, followed by a summary of the approach and models adopted, in 2.4.

2.1. Lambrecht’s model of information structure

Information structure is that component of grammar which matches a speaker’s assumptions about what his or her addressee already knows, or will be able to understand, with particular grammatical constructions. Contrary to what may be assumed, the term ‘information’ is not synonymous with ‘meaning’ (Lambrecht, 1994, p. 43). The study of information structure assumes that each individual has a particular ‘mental representation’ of the world, which is defined by Lambrecht as ‘the sum of “propositions” which the hearer knows or believes or considers uncontroversial at the time of speech’ (1994, p. 43). A proposition is defined by Crystal (1991, p. 282) as ‘the unit of meaning which constitutes the subject matter of a statement in the form of a simple declarative sentence’. If the hearer believes the
proposition that ‘the left hand is unclean’, and knows that ‘the rice is on the table’, then these propositions form part of his or her mental representation of the world. To be informative, an utterance must change this mental representation in some way. If the hearer already knows that the rice is on the table, the utterance ‘the rice is on the table’ will not be informative to him or her, although it will still have semantic meaning. However, if the speaker says ‘the rice that is on the table is for Moussa’, the utterance will be informative, as it contains information which is not part of the hearer’s existing mental representation, and will thus modify what the hearer already knows, believes or considers uncontroversial at the moment of the utterance. Thus ‘information’, according to Lambrecht, is something which influences the hearer’s mental representation of the world, whether the ‘real’ world, or the imaginary world constructed within a story.

The grammatical form used by the speaker will be determined by his or her conception of the hearer’s existing mental representation. A simple example is the choice between definite and indefinite articles. If the speaker assumes the hearer already knows that an entity exists, he can refer to that entity using the definite article, but if not, the indefinite article will be more appropriate. In some contexts, the speaker may wish to refer to a state of affairs rather than an entity. Lambrecht (1994, p. 37) therefore prefers to use the term ‘referent’ to denote both ‘the entities and states of affairs designated by linguistic expressions in particular utterances’.

The study of information structure is thus concerned with the relationship between the form used to refer to a given referent, and the speaker’s conception of the extent to which that referent forms part of the hearer’s existing mental representation of the world.

To facilitate more precise discussion of the status of a referent within the hearer’s mental representation of the world, Lambrecht (1994) adopts the terms ‘identifiability’ and ‘activation’. ‘Identifiability’ is concerned with the speaker’s
conception of whether or not a particular referent is part of the hearer’s mental representation of the world. Following Chafe (1976), Lambrecht defines an identifiable referent as ‘one for which a shared representation already exists in the speaker’s and the hearer’s mind at the time of the utterance’ (1994, pp. 77-8). This may occur when the referent has already been referred to in the discourse, can be inferred from another referent in the context, or is somehow salient in the setting in which the discourse is taking place, or within the ‘pragmatic universe’ of the interlocutors (see Lambrecht, 1994, pp. 88, 113). Unidentifiable (or ‘brand-new’) referents are those for which the speaker assumes the hearer does not have an existing mental representation.

If the speaker assumes that a particular referent is identifiable to the hearer, he will make further assumptions concerning the extent to which the hearer is actually thinking of this referent at the time of the utterance. This is where the concept of ‘activation’ becomes relevant. Again following Chafe (1987), Lambrecht identifies three possible ‘activation states’ for an identifiable referent – active, accessible, or inactive. An active referent is one which is in the hearer’s ‘focus of consciousness’ at the moment of the utterance (Lambrecht, 1994, p. 94, citing Chafe, 1987, p. 22ff.). A referent which is not being directly focussed on at the moment of the utterance, but of which the hearer has background awareness, or is peripherally aware, is termed ‘accessible’, and may be further classified as situationally, inferentially or textually accessible. These distinctions are discussed in 4.1. Finally, a referent may be inactive, meaning that, while still identifiable to the hearer, it is ‘neither focally nor peripherally active’, but stored in his or her long-term memory (Lambrecht, 1994, p.94, citing Chafe, 1987, p. 22ff.). The forms used to refer to a referent in a discourse will vary according to the speaker’s conception of how active it is in the mind of the hearer.
Related to these notions of identifiability and activation are the concepts of ‘topic’ and ‘focus’. Topic is commonly defined in terms of ‘aboutness’, that is, ‘a referent is interpreted as the topic of a proposition if IN A GIVEN DISCOURSE the proposition is construed as being ABOUT this referent’ (Lambrecht, 1994, p. 118, Lambrecht’s emphasis).

In Lambrecht’s definition, ‘aboutness’ means ‘expressing information which is RELEVANT TO and which increases the addressee’s KNOWLEDGE OF this referent’ (1994, p. 118, Lambrecht’s emphasis). The notion of increasing the addressee’s knowledge of the referent is significant, as it highlights the link between ‘topichood’ and the concepts of identifiability and activation. In order to be a topic, a referent must be assumed to exist already within the hearer’s mental representation of the world. The acceptability of a referent as the topic of an utterance therefore depends on the extent to which it is identifiable and active in the discourse. This is illustrated by Lambrecht’s Topic Acceptability Scale, which is discussed in 5.1.

Following Lambrecht (1994), the status of a referent as topical may be signalled in a range of syntactic ways, some marked, others unmarked. One such unmarked form is topic-comment articulation, defined by Lambrecht (1994, pp. 131-2) as a structure which is used ‘to convey information about some topic under discussion’. Lambrecht notes that across languages, the subject of a sentence which is unmarked for information structure will, in the absence of context, be interpreted by hearers as the topic of such an articulation. This is the case in (1), where the subject, Tagga, is interpreted as the topic.

(1) Tagga dem
    Tagga go
    Tagga went...
    Fatou
Based on this observation, Lambrecht argues that ‘in English, as in other languages, subjects are UNMARKED TOPICS and...the topic-comment articulation is the UNMARKED PRAGMATIC SENTENCE ARTICULATION’ (1994, p. 132, Lambrecht’s emphasis).

As for marked constructions, Gundel and Fretheim (2006, p. 186) describe detachment as ‘the structure most widely and consistently associated with topic marking’. In a detached construction, the topic appears in either sentence-initial or sentence-final position, with a coreferential pronoun or noun phrase appearing in its canonical position within the clause (see Crystal, 1991, pp. 197 & 302-3). In (2), the topic *man* is left-detached, appearing in sentence-initial position, and resumed within the clause nucleus by the coreferential marker *ma*. If the topic appears in sentence-final position, it is said to be right-detached.

(2) man bu ma ňēw-ee  
   1sg.EMPH when 1sg come-PFV  
   Me, when I arrived...

   *Gaby 1*

Another type of marked construction is a presentational construction, typically involving the deictic adverbs *here* or *there*, the verbs *be* or *come*, and a subject, as in the English sentence ‘Here comes the cat’ (Lambrecht, 1994, p. 38). The function of this construction is to introduce a new entity into the discourse, rather than to predicate a property of an entity (Lambrecht, 1994, pp. 39-40).

 Whereas a topic must, to some degree, be assumed to be identifiable and active in the addressee’s mental representation of the world, Lambrecht argues that focus has to do with conveying information. The focal elements of a sentence are thus those which the speaker assumes will influence the hearer’s mental representation of the world. Lambrecht argues that all sentences must therefore have a focus, as
all sentences convey information. However, according to Lambrecht (1994, p. 47),
the informative, focal element of a sentence should not be equated directly with a
certain set of constituents. Rather, he defines the focus of an utterance as:

\[\text{The semantic component of a pragmatically structured proposition whereby} \]
\[\text{the assertion [what the hearer is expected to know as a result of hearing the} \]
\[\text{sentence] differs from the presupposition [what the speaker assumes the} \]
\[\text{hearer knows before hearing the sentence].} \]

(1994, pp. 52, 213)

Lambrecht (1994, p. 222) identifies three ‘focus structures’ – predicate focus,
argument focus and sentence focus, each of which conveys a particular focus-
meaning. The focus-meaning expressed by each of these three structures, and the
forms used to signal the different structures in Wolof, are outlined in Chapter 6.

2.2. Information structure in Wolof

Information structure in Wolof has been the subject of several studies, most notably
by Robert (2000, 1991) and Torrence (2013). Torrence deals with both topic and
focus marking, while Robert concentrates primarily on how focus is marked in the
verb morphology.

Robert (2000, p. 38) states that, contrary to the common assumption that intonation
is universally used to mark focus, in Wolof, information structure, particularly focus,
is expressed by the verb morphology. For this reason, an overview of the Wolof verb
system is foundational to a discussion of Wolof information structure.

Robert (1991, p. 21) analyses the Wolof verb system as having a two-part verb
phrase, made up of the verbal lexeme and a marker which signals person, as well
as aspectual and modal values. In (3), the verbal lexeme, bañi (‘hate’), is
accompanied by the marker _la_, which, according to Robert, signals not only a third-person singular referent, but also places emphasis on the complement, _Yumaane rek_ ('only Yumaane').

(3) Yumaane rek _la_ bañ

_Yumaane only 3sg.COMP_EMPH hate_

It was only Yumaane who she hated.

Robert argues that the most appropriate term for the markers which accompany the verb is ‘Indices de Personne-Aspect-Mode’ (Person-Aspect-Modality markers, henceforth PAM markers), thus taking into consideration the range of functions fulfilled by these markers. She identifies ten PAM paradigms (1991, p. 24), which she categorizes as shown in Appendix 1. The correlation between these paradigms and the ways in which information structure is signalled in Wolof is investigated in Chapters 4-6.

Across numerous studies of the Wolof verb system (eg. Torrence, 2013; Robert, 1991; Diouf, 1985; Church, 1981; Sauvageot, 1965), no one model has been unanimously adopted. Although all agree that the markers accompanying the verb serve to signal the person and number of the subject, the exact status and function of the different paradigms is debated.

Of the various existing models, Robert’s (1991) model seems best-suited to the purposes of this study for a number of reasons. First, one of Robert’s stated aims is to start to fill the gap created by a lack of systematic studies taking the discourse level as a starting point for the study of the Wolof verb system (1991, p. 14). Robert’s approach is thus similar to the approach adopted here, examining the use of language in its discourse context. Second, Robert gives a helpful critique of
existing models, arguing that they fail to give an analysis of the Wolof verb system that is both accurate and coherent, and attributing this failure to a lack of attention to context (1991, p. 33).

While the Wolof verb system, and thus the notion of focus marking, has been debated in some detail, the literature is less explicit on the subject of identifiability, activation state and topic marking. Martinović (forthcoming) offers some analysis of topic-comment sentences in Wolof, and Torrence (2013) pays particular attention to the use of left-detachment as a topic-marking construction in Wolof. However, there is no evidence that Lambrecht’s (1994) model of identifiability and activation state has been applied to Wolof, and, as this is foundational to his framework for understanding topic marking, this study thus makes a new contribution to the existing body of research concerning Wolof information structure.

A significant omission in the existing literature on topic and focus marking in Wolof is the lack of attention to contextual factors motivating the use of the forms employed. Martinović (forthcoming) and Torrence (2013) identify left-detachment as a topicalizing construction, but do not offer a detailed examination of the contexts in which it is required. Torrence (2013, pp. 67-8) bases his discussion of topic and focus in the Wolof left-periphery on the analysis and comparison of isolated sentences, intentionally elicited to illustrate a range of possible topic and focus constructions. As for Robert (1991), while her analysis of focus marking does take the immediate discourse context into account, giving examples in the form of question/answer pairs, the context she considers does not extend beyond this. This study thus aims to contribute to the existing body of research by considering the impact of contextual factors on the ways in which information structure is signalled in Wolof.
2.3. **Research questions and framework**

In light of the research context, this paper proposes an analysis, based on a corpus of spoken and written Wolof narratives, of the following three areas: identifiability and activation state; topic; and focus. Chapters 4-6 each investigate the following questions in relation to one of these areas:

i) What are the unmarked and marked forms used to signal this phenomenon in Wolof narrative discourse?

ii) What are the discourse-pragmatic motivations behind the use of marked forms?

It is hoped that the investigation of discourse-pragmatic motivations may shed light on some of the questions which have arisen from the literature, particularly the issue of how Robert’s PAM paradigms correlate with Lambrecht’s three types of focus.

Narrative is an appropriate context for an initial study of Wolof information structure, as existing models of narrative structure offer a suitable framework for analysis. Labov (1999, p. 207) and Labov and Waletzky (2003, pp. 93-100) provide useful terminology for an analysis of narrative discourse, identifying six key elements in a narrative:

- **Abstract** One or two clauses summarizing the story.
- **Orientation** Orients the listener in terms of person, place, time and behavioural situation.
- **Complicating Action** A ‘series of events’ comprising the main body of the narrative.
- **Evaluation** Reveals the attitude of the narrator towards the narrative.
- **Resolution** The outcome of the complicating action.
- **Coda** Returns the perspective to the present moment.
As noted by Labov (1999, p. 227), these elements may not always appear in the linear order presented above, and will not all be found in every narrative. Another useful concept is Zwaan and Radvansky’s (1998, p. 162ff.) notion of the episode. According to Zwaan and Radvansky (1998, p. 162), an episode describes a state of affairs, allowing the reader to produce a ‘situation model’ - an ‘integrated mental representation of a described state of affairs’. An episode boundary thus signals a shift to describing a different state of affairs, leading to the creation of a new situation model in the mind of the reader or hearer. This has an impact on the activation state of referents, as referents mentioned in the preceding episode may require reactivation after an episode boundary.

Zwaan and Radvansky (1998, p. 167) identify five situational dimensions - time, space, causation, intentionality, and protagonist. A shift in one or more of these dimensions may signal an episode boundary, causing the creation of a new situation model. The extent to which the activation states of referents are affected will vary depending on the situational dimension in which the shift takes place, or on the number of dimensions in which a shift occurs simultaneously (see 4.1).

2.4. Conclusions

This chapter gave an overview of the research context for the study of information structure in Wolof. Lambrecht’s (1994) model of information structure was outlined, followed by an overview of the Wolof verb system, as this is central to the marking of information structure, particularly focus. Robert’s (1991) model was adopted, as, unlike other models, she takes the discourse level as her starting point. Her term ‘PAM markers’ was found to give the clearest indication of the function of the markers accompanying verbs, and her categorisation of the different PAM paradigms (see Appendix 1) was also adopted.
Gaps in the research context were noted, particularly the need for an investigation into how identifiability and activation state are signalled in Wolof, as a prerequisite for the study of topic marking. The failure to discuss the contextual factors motivating the use of marked forms of topic and focus reference was also noted. Research questions were framed in light of this research context.

The chapter concluded with an overview of the model of narrative structure posited by Labov (1999, p. 207) and Labov and Waletzky (2003, pp. 93-100), and of Zwaan and Radvansky’s (1998, p. 162ff.) criteria for identifying episode boundaries within a narrative. These models provide a useful framework for the analysis of information structure in Wolof narrative discourse, supplying useful terminology, and facilitating the identification of discourse-pragmatic motivations for the use of marked reference forms.
CHAPTER 3
Methodology

This chapter outlines the methods used to investigate the unmarked and marked means of signalling identifiability and activation state, topic, and focus in Wolof, and the discourse-pragmatic motivations behind the use of marked forms. In 3.1, the motivating factors and ethical considerations involved in selecting the corpus are discussed, followed by a description, in 3.2, of how the texts were prepared for analysis. In 3.3, the methods employed to analyse the marking of identifiability and activation state, topic, and focus within the corpus are each outlined in turn. Significant strengths and limitations of the methodology adopted are discussed in 3.4.

3.1. The corpus

A corpus of nineteen narrative texts (see Appendix 2) was established as the basis for this study. While Lambrecht (1994) bases his model of information structure on an analysis of spoken language, the majority of the texts in the corpus used here were written. This was partly due to practical constraints - making use of existing written publications was more appropriate to the time-frame of the study than recording and transcribing an entire corpus of texts. Examining written texts would also, it was hoped, enable some pertinent observations to be made regarding the signalling of information structure in written Wolof.
However, this approach raised some problems, as several of the existing published narratives were originally collected orally, and then transcribed for publication in written form. It is unclear how much editing these texts have undergone, and therefore how many of the features they contain are representative of oral, rather than written, language. To overcome these unknown variables, some original written texts were collected by the researcher, along with several spoken texts, recorded and transcribed without any editing.

The corpus used here includes both folktales, defined by Mills (2013, p. 29) as ‘fictional or legendary narratives based on a traditional story’, and narratives of personal experience. A large proportion of the published material in Wolof consists of collections of folktales, and written folktales were therefore easy to obtain. However, Levinsohn (2011, p. 12) advises against using a corpus entirely composed of folktales, arguing that as the characters are often well-known to the audience already, the forms used to refer to them may be somewhat atypical. As this study investigates the forms used to refer to characters in a narrative, several first-person and third-person narratives of personal experience were also collected.

The ethical questions of text ownership and privacy were taken into consideration in the construction of the corpus. Those who contributed previously unpublished narratives to the corpus were asked to complete a consent form, giving permission for their narratives to be used in the study, and detailing the extent to which they were willing to be identified within the study. A sample of the consent form is included in Appendix 3.

While a detailed consideration of sociolinguistic questions is beyond the scope of this study, the variety of sources included in the corpus may reveal possible avenues for further research. In the case of the published written texts, where this information was available, the storyteller’s age, gender and geographical
background were recorded. Those who contributed previously unpublished narratives were asked to complete a sociolinguistic questionnaire (see Appendix 3), in which more detailed information was gathered regarding the narrator’s level of education, time spent in an urban setting or outside of Senegal, and other languages spoken.

3.2. Preparing the texts for analysis

Levinsohn’s (2011) method of text-charting aims to uncover patterns in the use of particular forms and constructions within a text, by entering the text, constituent by constituent, into the appropriate columns of a chart (see Appendix 4 for a sample text chart). It is thus appropriate to this study’s aim of identifying the discourse-pragmatic motivations for the use of marked forms to signal information structure in Wolof narrative discourse. For this study, the texts were charted using the program FieldWorks Language Explorer 8 (SIL International, 2014).

3.3. Methods of analysis

As one possible motivation for using a marked form is to signal a discontinuity in the narrative, Zwaan and Radvansky’s (1998, p. 162ff.) situation model framework (see 2.3) was used to identify episode boundaries in each text, so that cases where the use of a marked form coincided with a discontinuity could be clearly seen. As discussed later, in 4.1, an episode was viewed as being delimited by a discontinuity in time and/or space, whereas discontinuities in other dimensions seemed to create only a minor boundary within an episode.

In all three sections of the analysis, only those forms used to refer to participants, that is, animate referents, were considered. While Lambrecht’s (1994) use of the
term ‘referents’ also encompasses inanimate entities such as props, this was considered too broad an area of investigation for the scope of the current study.

3.3.1. Identifiability and activation state

The analysis of how identifiability and activation state are signalled was divided into Levinsohn’s (2011) categories of ‘participant introduction’ and ‘participant tracking’, dealing respectively with how participants are introduced into the narrative, and how they are referred to subsequently. Within these categories, Lambrecht’s model of identifiability and activation state was applied, the participant introduction section including his unidentifiable, inferentially accessible and situationally accessible referents, and the participant tracking section including his active and textually accessible referents (see 4.1). Lambrecht’s ‘inactive’ category was not included, as non-active participant referents within the corpus could all be accounted for within his unidentifiable, inferentially accessible or situationally accessible categories.

All instances of participant introduction within the corpus were identified. The participants in question were then classified as unidentifiable or identifiable, according to Lambrecht’s definitions (see 2.1).

Identifiable participants were further classified as situationally and inferentially accessible (see 4.1), and the forms used in instances of each of these types of reference were analysed.

Instances of unidentifiable participant reference were subdivided into three categories, by applying Lambrecht’s (1994, p. 86) definition of anchoring and Levinsohn’s (2011, p. 119) distinction between the introduction of a participant into a new or existing mental representation (see 4.1). The reference forms used to refer to participants in each of these categories were identified. Based on Levinsohn’s (2011, p. 2) maxim that ‘choice implies meaning’, those forms which involved a
choice on the part of the narrator, rather than being syntactically conditioned, were identified. The contexts in which they occurred were investigated, and, where possible, the unmarked and marked forms of participant reference in each category were identified.

In the discussion of unidentifiable participant reference, a distinction was made between major, locally major and minor participants. Based on Dooley & Levinsohn’s (2001, p. 119) definition, major participants were defined as ‘those which are active for a large part of the narrative and play leading roles.’ Minor participants were defined as those which were active for only a few episodes in the narrative (see 4.1). Locally major participants were defined as minor participants which play a major role within the episode in which they appear, and in so doing, may contribute to a significant event within the complicating action of the narrative (see 2.3).

Within the category of participant tracking, a participant was considered active if it had already been referred to since the most recent episode boundary, and textually accessible if it had already been referred to in the narrative, but not since the most recent episode boundary (see 4.1). Because instances of active and textually accessible participant reference were more common than instances of participant introduction, a selection of texts from the corpus was used, as outlined below.

As a starting point for the analysis of active participant tracking, one text (Bukki) was analysed in detail. Zwaan and Radvansky’s (1998, p. 167) criteria were applied to identify episode boundaries and minor boundaries within an episode (see 4.1). Active subject and non-subject referents were thus identified, and a tally was made of the different forms used to refer to participants in each category. The most common, and therefore unmarked, form of reference to active subject and non-subject participants was thus identified, and the remaining forms of reference were
considered marked in some way. Further examples of these marked forms were identified in three additional texts - Mataayir, Makka 1 and Àddina. These texts, together with Bukki, are referred to collectively as Group A.

A similar approach was adopted to identify the unmarked and marked forms of textually accessible subject and non-subject participant reference. However, as instances of textually accessible participant reference were less common, examples were identified across seven texts – Bukki, Mataayir, Makka 1, Àddina, Ousseynou, Fatou and Kumba. These seven texts are referred to collectively as Group B.

For both active and textually accessible participants, the contexts in which marked reference forms appeared were analysed, and possible discourse-pragmatic motivations for their use identified.

3.3.2. Topic marking

The analysis of how topic is marked in Wolof narrative discourse, and the motivations for this marking, centred on the use of detached structures. According to Lambrecht's (1994, p. 182) definition, a detached referent is one which appears in a ‘syntactically autonomous’ position to the left or right of the clause nucleus, within which it is resumed by a coreferential pronoun. Torrence (2013, p. 75ff.) identifies left-detachment as a means of topic marking in Wolof (see 5.1), as opposed to the unmarked topic-comment structure (see 2.1).

However, as far as left-detached subject topics are concerned, Lambrecht’s definition was difficult to apply to Wolof. Unlike English, in which a coreferential pronoun simply marks person, a coreferential PAM marker in Wolof may also contain modal and aspetual information, which would be lost if the marker were omitted, thus changing the meaning of the sentence. In (4), the presence of the PAM marker nañu in the clause nucleus is thus obligatory, even in the presence of a
lexical subject, as omitting it would cause the particular aspectual and modal sense associated with that PAM paradigm to be lost. It therefore cannot be assumed that the lexical subject, *xale yi*, is left-detached, with *nañu* acting as a resumptive pronoun within the clause nucleus.¹

(4) Xale yi, dem nañu

*child CLF.PL-DEF.PROX go 3pl.PRF*

‘As for the children, they left.’

(Torrence, 2013, p. 76, my gloss)

More clearly defined criteria were therefore required to identify left-detached subject topics in Wolof.

Torrence’s (2013, p. 76) basis for viewing structures such as (4) as left-detached is the presence of a pause, which may be very short, between the apparently left-detached subject and the clause nucleus. While left-detachment is not precluded by the absence of a pause, a pause does strengthen the argument for it, particularly in the absence of conclusive syntactic proof. In order to determine whether constructions such as (4) could be viewed as left-detached, instances of apparently left-detached subjects were identified in two oral texts from the corpus (*Gaby 1* and *Ousseynou*). In each instance, the presence or absence of a pause between the apparently left-detached subject and the clause nucleus was noted. Across the two texts, 80 instances of possible subject left-detachment were identified. In 39 cases, there was a pause, and in 41 cases, there was no pause. While a pause is thus present in some cases, this cannot be used as an argument to treat all instances of

¹ This is true of all the PAM marker series apart from narrative, presentative, subject emphasis and, to some extent, optative (see Appendix 1). PAM markers belonging to the narrative series only mark person, and can therefore be omitted in the presence of a lexical subject. PAM markers belonging to the other series all mark something in addition to person. However, presentative, subject-emphasis and optative markers can be separated out into their constituent parts, and the parts marking person can be omitted in the presence of a lexical subject. PAM markers belonging to the remaining series cannot be separated into their constituent parts, and therefore cannot be omitted, even in the presence of a lexical subject.
apparent left-detachment as such, and so other criteria had to be found for
determining what counted as a left-detached construction.

Two criteria were adopted to identify instances of left-detached, and therefore
marked, subject topic participant reference. First, Levinsohn’s (2011, p. 2) maxim
that ‘choice implies meaning’ was applied. Constructions where both a PAM marker
and lexical or pronominal subject were included, when one could have been omitted
without creating ambiguity, or losing aspectual or modal information, were identified
(see i-iii). Second, instances in which the non-PAM subject reference clearly did not
form part of the clause nucleus were identified (see iv).

A construction was therefore considered marked if any of the following criteria
applied to it:

i) The inclusion of the lexical subject was not obligatory:

While inclusion of the PAM marker *nañu* is obligatory in (4), the necessity of
including the lexical subject *xale yi* will depend on the context. If it is clear from the
context that the referent of *nañu* is ‘the children’, even if the lexical subject is
omitted, then the inclusion of *xale yi* is based on the narrator’s choice, and may be
considered marked. As a non-essential element of the clause nucleus, the lexical
subject could therefore be viewed as a left-detached element.

ii) The inclusion of the full PAM marker was not obligatory:

In the presence of a lexical subject, with no intervening adverbial, narrative PAM
markers are not obligatory, nor are the person-marking elements of presentative,
subject-emphasis or optative PAM markers (see p. 30, note 1). In (5), the person-
marking element *mu* could be omitted, leaving the presentative marker *angi*, without
losing the particular aspectual sense communicated by this PAM paradigm. The
inclusion of the full PAM marker *mungi* may therefore be considered marked. Its function is to ‘resume’ the left-detached lexical subject *Gaaya*.

(5) Gaaya mu-ngi nekk ci tàkkal dex-u

Gaaya 3sg–PRSVP.ROX be on.PROX shore river-GEN

Senegaal

*Senegal*

Gaaya, it was on the shore of the Senegal river.

iii) The apparently left-detached subject reference took the form of an emphatic or demonstrative pronoun:

As in (6), the use of an emphatic or demonstrative pronoun does not denote any more clearly what the referent of the PAM marker is, unless its use signifies that the narrator is actually pointing at the participant in question. As it is unessential to determine the identity of the participant, its inclusion may be considered marked.

(6) moom mu gàddaay

3sg.EMPH 3sg be.exiled

He was exiled.

*Gaaya*

iv) There was an intervening adverbial between the noun phrase/emphatic pronoun/demonstrative pronoun subject reference, and the remainder of the clause:

In (7), both the lexical subject, *jaan*, and the person-marking part of the presentative PAM marker, *munga*, are essential, but only because of the intervening adverbial
The use of *nag* clearly separates the lexical subject *jaan* from the clause nucleus, so this may be considered an unambiguous example of left-detachment.

(7) Jaan nag mu –nga naan

*snake as for 3sg-PRSv.DIST say*

As for Snake, he said...

_Jamaale_

Given the frequency with which constructions conforming to any of criteria i) to iv) occur in the corpus, six texts were selected for analysis:

- Three written folktales (*Fatou; Yumaane; Bukki*)
- One written narrative of personal experience (*Makka 1*)
- Two oral narratives of personal experience (*Ousseyrou; Gaby 1*)

These texts are referred to collectively as *Group C*. It was hoped that choosing a variety of texts from within the corpus would permit some interesting insights into possible avenues for further research, particularly as regards the spoken/written distinction.

For each of these texts, all instances of marked subject left-detachment, non-subject left-detachment, right-detachment and unlinked constructions (see 5.1) were identified. The contexts in which these detached constructions appeared were analysed, to identify possible discourse-pragmatic motivations for their use.

### 3.3.3. Focus marking

In order to identify the ways in which Lambrecht’s three types of focus (see 2.1) are marked in Wolof, the six texts from *Group C* were analysed. Across these texts, each main clause, along with its associated dependent clauses, was classified according to Lambrecht’s model as a predicate-focus, argument-focus or sentence-
focus construction (see 6.1). As sentence-focus constructions were less common than the other two focus types, instances of sentence focus were identified across the remainder of the corpus.

The PAM markers used in each type of construction were noted, and the most common forms used to signal each type of focus identified. The contexts in which marked forms appeared were analysed, and possible discourse-pragmatic motivations for their use suggested.

3.4. **Conclusions**

This chapter outlined the methods used to gather the corpus and analyse the marking of information structure in Wolof narrative texts.

The use of narrative texts, rather than isolated sentences, was appropriate to the aim of identifying discourse-pragmatic motivations for the use of marked forms to signal identifiability, activation state, topic and focus. However, the adoption of Levinsohn’s (2011, p. 12) approach to compiling a corpus for narrative discourse analysis created several difficulties. First, his lack of attention to controlling variables, particularly sociolinguistic variables, resulted in a corpus containing texts from a range of different backgrounds. Given the range of texts in the corpus, it is possible that sociolinguistic issues may have impacted on the reference forms used, but the corpus did not contain a large enough sample of texts from any one sociolinguistic context to examine these in detail. Second, Levinsohn suggests quotas of different types of narratives to include in the corpus. However, asking a storyteller for a specific type of narrative may result in less ‘natural’ language, thus skewing the results.
Sociolinguistic information about the storyteller was noted where possible. Detailed questionnaires were completed by those who contributed oral narratives and written narratives of personal experience, but the lack of sociolinguistic information for many of the published written folktales meant less could be said about sociolinguistic variation than might otherwise have been possible.

The corpus was heavily weighted towards written narrative. Some comparison was made between the marking of information structure in spoken and written narratives, but further comment was prevented by the fact that many of the published written texts were originally collected orally. As a result, it was unclear to what extent these texts could be considered representative of written narrative discourse in Wolof.

At several points within the analysis, a subgroup of texts was used, rather than the entire corpus. This was appropriate where a particular form was very common, and it was therefore impractical to identify every instance across the entire corpus. However, while Group C was carefully chosen to contain several different types of text from the corpus, Groups A and B, used in the analysis of identifiability and activation state marking, mostly comprised written folktales. Ideally, a more balanced range of texts from the corpus would have been included in these groups.

The use of Levinsohn's (2011, p. 15ff.) method of text charting allowed patterns to be identified easily, and facilitated the analysis of the contexts in which marked forms appeared. The use of Zwaan and Radvansky’s (1998, p. 162ff.) notion of situation models to identify episode boundaries was helpful in identifying the discourse-pragmatic motivations for the use of marked forms, as was the distinction between major, locally major and minor participants.

Throughout the analysis, Levinsohn's (2011, p. 2) maxim ‘choice implies meaning’ was taken into account. Bearing this in mind avoided the attributing of discourse-pragmatic motivations to syntactically-motivated phenomena. The analysis of topic
marking was based on clearly-defined criteria for identifying constructions where both a lexical noun phrase and a PAM marker were present due to the narrator’s choice, and could therefore be considered marked.
CHAPTER 4

Identifiability and activation state

This chapter applies Lambrecht’s (1994) model of identifiability and activation state to selected texts from the corpus. Lambrecht’s model is outlined and evaluated in 4.1. His unidentifiable, inferentially and situationally accessible referents are considered under the heading ‘Participant Introduction’ (4.2), while his active and textually accessible referents are considered under the heading ‘Participant Tracking’ (4.3). In each section, the unmarked means of referring to such participants are identified. Marked forms of reference are noted, and possible discourse-pragmatic motivations for their use discussed.

4.1. Theoretical framework

The broad strokes of Lambrecht’s (1994) model for classifying referents according to the addressee’s perceived mental representation were presented in 2.1. His full schema is shown in Figure 1.

![Figure 1 - Lambrecht’s (1994, p. 109, 3.25) model of identifiability and activation state](image-url)
Unidentifiable referents, those for which the addressee is assumed to have no existing mental representation (see 2.1), may be further classified as ‘anchored’ or ‘unanchored’. Lambrecht (1994, p. 86) follows Prince (1981, p. 236) in defining a referent as anchored ‘if the NP representing it is LINKED, by means of another NP, or “Anchor,” properly contained in it, to some other discourse entity’. Anchoring makes an unidentifiable referent more identifiable by linking it to a referent for which the addressee already has a mental representation (see Lambrecht, 1994, p. 167). In (8), the younger sibling is linked to an already identifiable referent by means of the possessive determiner –*am*, contained within the noun phrase *rakkam*.

(8) Ñu jēl rakk-am

3pl take younger.sibling-3sg.POSS

They took his younger sibling...

*Gaaya*

Unanchored referents are those which are not linked to an already identifiable referent by an anchoring noun phrase.

Levinsohn (2011, p. 119) adopts a broader approach than Lambrecht, distinguishing instead between the introduction of a participant into a new or existing mental representation of the discourse context. A referent is considered as being introduced into an existing mental representation if it is syntactically or semantically linked to the mental representation already created by the discourse. Semantically-linked referents are covered by Lambrecht’s categories of inferential and situational accessibility, and are considered in 4.2.2. A syntactic link may be created by an anchoring noun phrase contained within the noun phrase referring to the unidentifiable entity, as in (8), or by introducing the participant in a non-subject role, as in (9).
He walked until he encountered a gorilla.

*Makka 1*

Both anchored and unanchored unidentifiable participant referents may therefore be considered as being introduced into an existing mental representation.

If there is no syntactic link between an unidentifiable referent and the mental representation already created by the discourse, the referent is considered as being introduced into a new mental representation. Such a referent must be unanchored, as an anchored referent cannot, by definition, be unlinked to the existing mental representation.

Applying Levinsohn’s distinction between new and existing mental representations in conjunction with Lambrecht’s narrower definition of ‘anchoring’ creates the three-way classification of unidentifiable referents applied in 4.2.1:

- Anchored; introduced into an existing mental representation (Anchored-Existing)
- Unanchored; introduced into an existing mental representation (Unanchored-Existing)
- Unanchored; introduced into a new mental representation (Unanchored-New)

As outlined in 2.1, Lambrecht (1994, p. 93) follows Chafe (1987) in classifying identifiable referents as active, accessible and inactive, depending on the degree to which the addressee may be assumed to be thinking about the referent. He further
subdivides accessible referents into three categories. A referent is considered textually accessible if it was previously mentioned in the discourse but has since been deactivated; situationally accessible if it is saliently present in the text-external world or forms part of the hearer’s knowledge of the world; or inferentially accessible if it can be inferred ‘from some other active or accessible element in the universe of discourse’ (Lambrecht, 1994, p. 100).

A significant limitation of Lambrecht’s model is its lack of a precise definition for the term ‘active’. Adopting Chafe’s (1987) terminology, Lambrecht states that a referent is active if it is ‘lit up’ in our consciousness, and usually ceases to be active as soon as another referent becomes the referent which a given proposition is about (1994, pp. 94, 119). This definition implies that only one referent may be active at once. However, Lambrecht later states that any referent referred to by a zero, inflectional or pronominal form, rather than a noun phrase, is active (1994, p. 95). This would surely lead to a much broader category than that allowed by ‘the referent which a given proposition is about’.

When Zwaan and Radvansky’s (1998) notion of ‘episodes’ (see 2.3) was applied to the corpus, it appeared that once a referent had been activated, it remained active until the next episode boundary. Discontinuities in time and/or space, often occurring simultaneously, seemed to create a clear episode boundary, after which reactivation of participant referents was required (see Appendix 4, where the reactivation of Kumba using a noun phrase is required in line 12a, due to the passage of time described in line 11). A shift in protagonist often coincided with a discontinuity in time and/or space, and therefore with an episode boundary. However, where a shift in protagonist occurred with no associated change in time or location, this did not seem to occasion an episode boundary. In (10), Hare is introduced into an already-established location and time-frame, and the other two participants thus remain active, and are referred to pronominally.
Discontinuities in intentionality and causation did not appear to deactivate participant referents to the same extent as discontinuities in time or space, and were therefore viewed as creating only minor boundaries, within an episode.

4.2. **Participant introduction**

4.2.1. **Unidentifiable participant referents**

As Wolof expresses a definiteness distinction using definite and indefinite articles, it would seem reasonable to expect unidentifiable referents to be introduced with an indefinite article (Lambrecht, 1994, p. 79). However, the correlation between definiteness and identifiability is not perfect. Lambrecht illustrates this using the ‘indefinite this’ in English. In (11), the ‘morphologically definite noun phrase this guy is... in fact “semantically indefinite”’, as the discourse referent to which it refers is unidentifiable (Lambrecht, 1994, p. 83).

(11) I met this guy on the train.

(based on Lambrecht, 1994, p. 83)

Lambrecht further states that the function of the ‘indefinite this’ in English is to signal that the speaker intends to add further information about the participant in question, whereas the use of the indefinite article a would signal that the referent is to play ‘only an ancillary narrative role’. He notes that in some languages, this same distinction may be signalled by the presence or absence of the numeral one. As shown below, this appears to be the case in Wolof.
Torrence (2013, pp. 18-9) identifies three indefinite articles in Wolof:

- **u-/a- plus noun class marker (see 12):**

  \[(12) \text{ Mu dox ba } \emptyset \text{ ni yem} \]
  \[
  3\text{sg walk until.DIST meet.unexpectedly}
  \]
  \[
  \text{ ci a-g } \text{ dàngin} \]
  \[
  \text{ at.PROX INDEF-CLF gorilla} \]
  He walked until he encountered a gorilla.

  *Makka 1*

  According to Torrence (2013, p. 18), there is no interpretive difference between the *u*- and *a-* forms.

- **noun class marker + -enn (see 13):**

  \[(13) \text{ Dafa am-oon g-enn } \text{ góor} \]
  \[
  3\text{sg.VERB_EMPH have-PAST CLF-one man}
  \]
  \[
  \text{ g-u màggat} \]
  \[
  \text{ CLF-REL.INDEF be old} \]
  There was once an old man...

  *Addina*
a zero determiner used with generic referents (see 14):

(14) Ø xaj d-u lekk mango
    dog IMPFV-3SG.NEG eat mango

Dogs don’t eat mangoes

(Torrence, 2013, p. 19)

While Diouf (2001, pp. 134-40, 147) does not include the –enn form in his list of Wolof determiners, presenting it simply as a cardinal numeral, meaning ‘one’, Torrence (2013, p. 18) calls it ‘a numeral determiner’. Dialo (1983, p. 37) suggests that the ‘-enn’ form could be translated as ‘a certain’, corresponding with Lambrecht’s (1994, p. 83) observation that in some languages, the numeral one can have a similar function to ‘indefinite this’ in English.

Several other forms were also used to refer to unidentifiable referents within the corpus. Given the maxim that ‘choice implies meaning’ (Levinsohn, 2011, p. 2), only those forms involving choice on the part of the narrator are considered in the subsequent analysis. Forms which do not involve choice include:

- Numeral greater than one + noun
- Plural form of u-/a- indefinite article + noun
- Possessive determiner + noun
- Relative/indefinite pronoun

Each of these forms signals something in addition to indefiniteness, such as the person and number of the possessor. In contexts where such things must be signalled, the narrator has no choice but to use the appropriate form.

The use of the zero determiner with a generic noun does not involve choice, as its use signals the generic nature of the referent. However, when a non-generic noun is
followed by a relative determiner, it is possible to use the –enn, u-/a- or zero
determiner before the noun, as illustrated in (15), (16) and (17).

(15) g-enn       siddéem     g-u-y       bàcc     bopp-am
   \textit{CLF-one}  jujube tree  CLF-\textit{INDEF-IMPFV}  hit  head-3sg.POSS
   ...a jujube tree which was hitting itself

\textit{Kumba}

(16) a-g       dàngin     g-u     toll     nii
   \textit{INDEF-CLF}  gorilla  \textit{CLF-\textit{INDEF}}  be.\textit{as.big.as}  thus
   ...a very large gorilla

\textit{Makka 1}

(17) Ø  cin         l-u-y       togg     bopp-am
   \textit{pot}  \textit{CLF-\textit{INDEF-IMPFV}}  \textit{cook}  head-3sg.POSS
   ...a pot which was cooking itself.

\textit{Kumba}

The reference forms involving choice are therefore:

- –enn determiner
- u-/a- determiner, when used with a singular referent
- zero determiner, when used with a non-generic noun followed by a relative
determiner.

For each of the three types of unidentifiable participant reference (see 4.1),
instances of these reference forms involving choice were analysed, and, where
possible, the unmarked and marked forms of reference for each category were
identified. Particular attention was paid to the contexts in which the –enn form appeared.

All seven instances of Unanchored-New participant introduction in the corpus occur in written folktales, and all involve the –enn form, as in (18).

(18) Dafa am-oon k-enn nit
    3sg.VERB_EMPH have-PAST CLF-one person

    k-u am-oon ñaari jabar
    CLF-REL.INDEF have-PAST two wife

There was a man who had two wives.

Kumba

In five cases, the -enn form is used to introduce a major participant (see 3.3.1). This is in line with Lambrecht’s comments regarding the function of ‘indefinite this’ in English, as outlined above. However, in two cases, the participant in question has, in Lambrecht’s terms, ‘only an ancillary narrative role’ (1994, p. 83), and appears to be introduced in order to establish a reference point against which to introduce other referents. This is the case in (18).

As the –enn form is used in all Unanchored-New contexts in this corpus, to introduce both major and minor participants, it may therefore be considered the unmarked form of Unanchored-New participant reference.

The situation is less clear-cut in the remaining two categories of participant introduction. Of eight instances of Anchored-Existing participant introduction within the corpus, only two involve choice as regards the use of an indefinite article. The u-/a- form of the indefinite article is used in (19), and the –enn form in (20).
In (19) and (20), the indefinite article is used to designate a particular referent among a number of possibilities. One possible factor motivating the use of –enn in (20) is that the uncle is a major participant (see 3.3.1) in this series of stories about Makka’s life, whereas the sister, introduced with the u-/a- form in (19), is active for only two episodes within the narrative, and is arguably a minor participant.

Based on the limited number of examples, it is difficult to identify the unmarked and marked forms of Anchored-Existing participant reference. However, it appears that the –enn form is used to introduce major participants, while the u-/a- form is used to introduce minor participants (see 3.3.1 for definitions).

In the final category, Unanchored-Existing, the distinction between marked and unmarked reference forms was also unclear. Of twenty-six instances of Unanchored-Existing participant introduction, seventeen involved choice on the part of the narrator. Of these, thirteen used the –enn form of the indefinite article, one used the u-/a- singular form, and three used a zero determiner and a noun phrase containing a relative construction.
The –enn form is used to introduce both major and locally major Unanchored-Existing participants. In (21), the man, a locally major Unanchored-Existing participant, whose entrance allows the main character of the story to escape imprisonment, is introduced with -enn.

(21) G-enn gòor g-u war gëléem romb fa

\textit{CL-one man CLF-REL.INDEF mount camel pass.by there.DIST}

A man came past, riding a camel.

\textit{Xale}

While the man is only active for one episode within the discourse, he is a major participant in this episode, and contributes to a significant event within the complicating action of the narrative.

However, not all such locally major participants are introduced with –enn. In Kumba, Kumba-amul-ndey goes on a journey, on which she meets a talking tree, a talking pot, and an old woman. The introduction of each of these participants coincides with the start of a new episode, and each participant may be considered locally major within their respective episodes. However, while both the tree and the old woman are introduced with –enn, the pot is not (see 22).

(22) Ø fekk Ø cin l-u-y togg bopp-am

\textit{find pot CLF-REL.INDEF-IMPFV cook head-3sg.POSS}

...she found a pot which was cooking itself.

\textit{Kumba}

This may be because, while locally major, the pot plays a less significant role within the narrative as a whole. The introduction of the tree with –enn signals the start of a new series of events in the narrative, that of Kumba’s meetings with these magical entities. Kumba’s meeting with the pot, as part of this series of events, is less prominent. Finally, her meeting with the old woman, the last in this series of events,
constitutes a more significant development in the narrative, introducing a longer episode, with more participants, and making a greater contribution to the resolution of the narrative.

Based on this example, it would appear that, in order to be introduced with -enn, a locally major participant must contribute to a significant event within the complicating action of the narrative.

It thus appears that one discourse-pragmatic motivation for introducing Unanchored-Existing major participants using the –enn form is to signal their significance as major participants throughout the narrative, or as locally major participants who contribute to a significant event within the complicating action of the narrative. However, it must be noted that not all major or locally major participants in the corpus are introduced with -enn.

4.2.2. Situationally and inferentially accessible participant referents

According to Lambrecht’s (1994, pp. 77-8) definition of identifiable referents as those for which the speaker and hearer have a shared mental representation at the time of the utterance, a referent may be identifiable on its first appearance within a text. Such referents may be situationally or inferentially accessible, or inactive (see 4.1). For reasons justified in 3.3.1, Lambrecht’s ‘inactive’ category is not included here.

As noted in 4.1, a referent may be situationally accessible due to its presence in the environment in which the storytelling act is taking place, or because it forms part of the addressee’s wider world knowledge. The latter is true of the well-known animal and human folktale participants evoked in the corpus, as the addressee may be assumed to know that these form part of the expected cast of a Wolof folktale. Such participants tend to be introduced by a noun accompanied by a definite article, or by
name. In (23), the noun *bukki* is used without a determiner. A similar pattern is followed throughout the corpus, suggesting that *bukki* is here being used as a proper noun. As in (23), situationally accessible participants may make their first appearance as a subject, rather than as a complement.

(23) B-enn bés bukki di rëbb

*CLF-one day hyena IMPFV hunt*

One day, Hyena was hunting.

*Bukki*

Ethnic groups are also assumed to be situationally accessible to the addressee, and can thus be introduced with a definite article, as in (24).

(24) Waa lo Waalo y-a

*Waalô-Waalô CLF.PL-DEF.DIST*

The Waalo-Waalo...

*Gaaya*

A referent may also be considered situationally accessible if it is present in the environment in which the storytelling act is taking place. In (25), the narrator compares one of the characters in the story world to an individual in his audience. The member of the audience is referred to by name, and also with the relative demonstrative *mii*, as a means of deictically locating the referent within the situational context.

(25) Ø mel na Makumba m-ii toog

*resemble like Makumba CLF-REL.DEM.PROX sit*

He was like Makumba who is sitting here...

*Addina*
A referent is considered inferentially accessible if it belongs to a schema evoked within the narrative. In *Yumaane*, the schema of the family is evoked. When the father is introduced (see 26), the definite article is used, as he is assumed to be identifiable to the addressee.

(26) Baay  b-i

father  CLF-DEF.PROX

The father...

*Yumaane*

From these examples, it can be concluded that situationally and inferentially accessible participant referents tend to be introduced either with a proper noun (or with a noun acting as a proper noun, as in 23), or with a noun accompanied by a definite article. In the case of situationally accessible participant referents, a demonstrative determiner may be used as a means of deixis, locating the referent within the situational context.

### 4.3. Participant tracking

#### 4.3.1. Active participant referents

Participants were defined as active according to the criteria outlined in 4.1. Unmarked and marked forms of active subject participant reference are presented first, followed by a consideration of active non-subject participant reference forms.

In *Bukki*, 26 out of 50 references to an active subject participant were found to use a zero morpheme. This was therefore the unmarked form of active subject participant reference, used when the subject was the same as in the preceding clause. Marked forms of active subject participant reference in *Bukki* included a PAM marker, a noun phrase, and a noun phrase followed by an emphatic pronoun. Instances of
these forms were identified throughout the remaining texts from *Group A*. For each form, only those appearing in contexts involving choice on the part of the narrator were considered marked.

PAM markers were used in cases of active subject reference within *Group A* in the following contexts, of which only (iii) involves choice on the part of the narrator:

i) When a PAM marker is required to signal modality, aspect, or focus:

In (27), the referent of the PAM marker *la* is Makka, the main character of the story. Although Makka is already active within the narrative, and was the subject of the preceding clause, he cannot be referred to using a zero morpheme, because the PAM marker *la* is required to signal focus on the place where he grew up.

(27) fa la gimme-e

*there 3sg.COMP_EMPH open.one’s.eyes-PLACE*

*It was there that he grew up... (lit. it was there that he opened his eyes)*

*Makka 1*

ii) In a relative clause:

In (28), Hyena is referred to with a zero morpheme, as she is active. However, in the relative clause, although she is still active, the PAM marker *mu* is required.

(28) Ø wax ko li mu wax-oon giléem

*say 3sg.OBJ REL_PRO 3sg say-PAST camel*

*She said to her what she had said to Camel.*

*Bukki*

iii) To signal a minor shift, within an episode:

In (29), the PAM markers *ñu* and *ñuy* both refer to the father and son. The use of *ñuy* in the second clause, rather than a zero morpheme, is unexpected, as the
subject is the same as in the preceding clause, and there has been no sudden shift in space or time to deactivate the participants.

(29) ñu dem

\[
\text{3pl} \quad \text{go}
\]

\[
\text{Nu-y dox } \emptyset \text{ di dox}
\]

\[
\text{3pl-IMPFV walk} \quad \text{IMPFV walk}
\]

They went.

They walked and walked...

Addina

In (29), the use of the PAM marker ñuy appears to have been motivated by a gradual shift in space, and an implied passing of time, within the episode dealing with their journey from one village to the next.

Noun phrases were used in cases of active subject reference within Group A to establish an active participant as the topic referent (see 2.1), either for the first time in an episode, or when the participant had been the topic referent earlier in the same episode.

This is particularly evident in reported conversations between participants. In (30)a, Hyena is the topic referent. Cow, who was the topic referent earlier in the episode, becomes the topic referent again in (30)b, where she is referred to with a noun phrase.

(30) a Bukki tontu ko

\[
\text{Hyena answer 3sg.OBJ}
\]

Bukki answered her...
The old cow replied...

_Bukki_

A noun phrase followed by an emphatic pronoun was used in cases of active subject reference within _Group A_ to signal contrast. In (31), the use of a noun phrase to refer to Cow, an active referent, would be expected, as she is being established as the topic referent. However, the noun phrase _nag wu màggat wi_ is also accompanied by the emphatic pronoun _moom_. This heavier encoding appears to signal contrast between Hyena and Cow, as each takes up a different position.

(31) _Bukki_ dugg-aat ci biir kàmb g-i

_Hyena_ enter-ITER in.PROX inside hole CLF-DEF.PROX

_Nag_ w-u màggat w-i moom

cow CLF-REL.INDEF be.old CLF-DEF.PROX 3sg.EMPH

taxaw ci wet-u kàmb g-i

_stand_ on.PROX side-GEN hole CLF-DEF.PROX

Hyena got back into the hole.

The old cow, she stood beside the hole.

_Bukki_
Turning to active non-subject participant reference, 16 of the 17 references to an active non-subject participant in Bukki used an object pronoun. This may therefore be viewed as the unmarked form of active non-subject participant reference. The only marked form of active non-subject participant reference was a noun phrase, used to refer to the active non-subject participant bukki (see 32).

(32) Ci saa s-i mu won bukki gannaaw
     in.PROX instant CLF-DEF.PROX 3sg show hyena behind
     That very moment she turned her rear end towards hyena....  

Bukki

In (32), Cow, who has previously refused to help, now offers Hyena her tail, so she can climb out of a hole. This clause thus appears to constitute a minor boundary in the narrative, due to a discontinuity in intentionality. Hyena, an active non-subject participant, is therefore more heavily encoded, with a noun phrase instead of an object pronoun.

Across the three additional texts examined here, (33) was the only other instance where a noun phrase was used to refer to an apparently active non-subject participant. The son, although activated in the first clause, using the noun phrase doom ji, is again referred to with a noun phrase, rather than an object pronoun, in the second clause.

(33) Doom j-i ree
     child CLF-DEF.PROX laugh

Baay b-i ne doom j-i
     father CLF-DEF.PROX say child CLF-DEF.PROX

The son laughed.

The father said to the son...

Àddina
In this narrative, the father and son have been on journey to discover what the world is like. The marked reference to an active non-subject participant in (33) occurs at the resolution of the narrative, introducing the speech in which the father says to his son ‘You’ve seen and heard that this is what the world is like.’ The use of a noun phrase rather than an object pronoun to refer to the son here highlights the speech which follows as significant.

In summary, throughout the texts analysed here, the unmarked form of reference to active subject participants was a zero morpheme, and in the case of active non-subject participants, an object pronoun. Several marked forms of active subject participant reference occurred in the texts, with a range of discourse-pragmatic motivations. A PAM marker was used to signal a shift within an episode. A noun phrase was used to establish a participant referent as the topic, and the use of a noun phrase and emphatic pronoun together appeared to mark contrast. The only marked form of active non-subject reference attested in the texts analysed here was a noun phrase, used in cases of a minor boundary within an episode, or to signal the resolution of the narrative.

4.3.2. Textually accessible participant referents

Participants were defined as textually accessible according to the criteria described in 4.1. The unmarked forms of subject and non-subject reference in the Group B texts are identified first, followed by a discussion of the marked forms of subject and non-subject reference in these texts.

In all but one text, the most common, and therefore unmarked, form of reference to a textually accessible subject or non-subject participant was a noun phrase. The exception was Ousseynou, the only oral narrative, and also the only first-person narrative of personal experience, in Group B. In this text, a noun phrase was still the
unmarked form of reference to a textually accessible third-person subject or non-subject participant. However, the unmarked form of reference to a textually accessible first-person subject or non-subject participant was a PAM marker or object pronoun. This is due to the fact that, in the original story-telling context, the first-person participant, that is, the storyteller, is present throughout the act of narrating, and is therefore highly accessible to the listener, situationally as well as textually.

Some other interesting patterns emerged in Ousseynou. In (34), a textually accessible non-subject participant is referred to with the object pronoun ko. The identity of this participant is then clarified by the use of the noun phrase xale bu jigéen bi in the subsequent clause.

(34) ma woo ko sama kër
    1sg call 3sg.OBJ 1sg.POSS house

    ma woo–lu xale b-u jigéen b-i
    1sg call-CAUS child CLF-REL.INDEF be.female CLF-DEF.PROX

sama kër
    1sg.POSS house

I called her to my house.

I had the girl called to my house.

Ousseynou

This may be attributed to the often unplanned nature of an oral text (see Koch & Oesterreicher, 2001, p. 597), in which the narrator may refer to a textually accessible participant pronominally, but then realise that a noun phrase is required if the listeners are to correctly identify the participant in question.
Within the Group B texts, no other marked references to a textually accessible non-subject participant were identified, and the only marked form of reference to a textually accessible subject participant was a left-detached noun phrase (see 3.3.2). The use of this marked form appears to have the following discourse-pragmatic motivations:

- To signal the resolution of the narrative:

In (35), a left-detached proper noun and exclamatory particle are used at the point where Kumba returns triumphantly to the village, as rich as a king. As well as involving a change in location, this is also the resolution of the first act of the story, as it is here that the wrongs against Kumba are righted.

(35) Kumba dall bi mu–y dugg

Kumba EXCLAM when.PROX 3sg-IMPFV enter

ci biir dékk bi

in.PROX interior village CLF-DEF.PROX

mu-nga niro-og buur

3sg-PRSV.PROX resemble-with king

Now Kumba, when she entered the village, she looked like a king.

Kumba

- To signal the start of a significant episode in the plot:

In (36), a left-detached construction containing repeated emphatic pronouns and a proper noun is used to refer to a first-person textually accessible subject participant, in addition to the PAM marker ma within the clause nucleus.
(36) man Ousseynou man ma woo ko
   1sg.EMPH Ousseynou 1sg.EMPH 1sg call 3sg.OBJ

Me, Ousseynou, me, I called her...

Ousseynou

The use of this marked reference form coincides with a discontinuity in space, time and protagonist, and thus with the start of a new episode. This is a pivotal episode in the plot, as Ousseynou discovers that the girl truly wants to marry Mansour, contradicting his earlier doubt. It is as a result of this change in opinion that he recommends her to Mansour, resulting in their marriage.

- To signal emphasis:

In the text preceding (37), the father and son have, in response to criticism, changed positions several times, first neither of them riding the donkey, then the father riding and the son walking. Now they are both riding the donkey, and this fact is emphasised, and perhaps contrasted with the previous configurations, by the use of a left-detached noun phrase and the quantifier ýépp.

(37) Baay b-i ak doom j-i ýépp
   father CLF-DEF.PROX and child CLF-DEF.PROX all

ñu-ngi ci kaw mbaam m-i
   3pl-PRS.V.PROX on.PROX top donkey CLF-DEF.PROX

Both the father and the son, they were riding the donkey.

Àddina

Based on an analysis of the Group B texts, the unmarked form of reference to textually accessible subject participants appears, in written, third-person narratives, to be a noun phrase, and, when referring to first-person participants in oral, first-
person narratives, a PAM marker. In both text types, the unmarked form of
reference to textually accessible non-subject participants appears to be a noun
phrase. No marked forms of reference to textually accessible non-subject
participants were identified. The only marked form used to refer to textually
accessible subject participants was a left-detached noun phrase, used to signal
resolution, highlight a particularly significant episode in the text, or create emphasis.
CHAPTER 5

Topic marking in Wolof narrative discourse

This chapter investigates the discourse-pragmatic motivations for the use of detachment as a topic-marking construction in Wolof. In 5.1, Lambrecht’s (1994) Topic Acceptability Scale is presented, and the function of detached constructions described. Torrence’s (2013) overview of the use of detachment to mark topic in Wolof is then discussed. The subsequent analysis of the Group C texts (see 3.3.2) is organised into two main sections, 5.2 dealing with subject topic marking, and 5.3 with non-subject topic marking. Within each section, a range of detached topic constructions are identified, and possible discourse-pragmatic motivations for their use are suggested. Finally, in 5.4, a brief mention is made of unlinked topic constructions. For the sake of consistency, Lambrecht’s term ‘detachment’ is used throughout the chapter, even where the author cited uses the alternative term ‘dislocation’.

5.1. Theoretical framework

Following Lambrecht (1994), ‘topic’ was defined in 2.1 as the referent which a proposition is about. The more active a referent, the more acceptable it is as a topic, as per Lambrecht’s scale of topic acceptability, shown in Figure 2.
Active and accessible referents are acceptable as topics, but brand-new referents are less so, particularly in spoken language. The acceptability of unused referents (identifiable but not yet mentioned in the discourse) as topics will, according to Lambrecht (1994, p. 166), vary depending on language, discourse type and speech situation.

If a speaker wishes to say something about a referent which is not currently accessible in the discourse, he may use a 'topic-promoting construction' to make it more acceptable as a topic (Lambrecht, 1994, pp. 176-7). A presentational construction may be used to introduce a referent into the discourse, ‘making it available for predication in subsequent discourse’ (Lambrecht, 1994, p. 177).

Alternatively, a left-detached noun phrase may be used to refer to a non-active topic referent which already has ‘a certain degree of pragmatic accessibility’ (Lambrecht, 1994, pp. 181-2) (see 2.1 for examples of each).

In addition to topic promotion, left-detachment may also have a contrastive function. In such instances, a left-detached noun phrase or pronoun is used ‘to mark a shift in attention from one to another of two or more already active topic referents’ (Lambrecht, 1994, p. 183).

Lambrecht (1994, pp. 183, 204) notes that right-detachment is also possible, and is often used for active or quasi-active referents, but, unlike left-detachment, may not be used to indicate a new topic or a topic shift. He also notes the possibility of an ‘unlinked topic construction’ in spontaneous spoken language (1994, p. 193). In
such constructions, the detached lexical noun phrase is not resumed by a
coreferential pronominal element within the clause nucleus (see 38).

(38) The typical family today, the husband and the wife both work.

(Lambrecht, 1994, p. 193)

In such cases, Lambrecht argues, the left-detached referent is still to be interpreted
as the topic, since the following proposition ‘can be construed as conveying
information about it.’

Torrence (2013, pp. 75-7) gives a brief overview of detached structures in Wolof,
noting that a left-detached topic may be either a subject or non-subject referent,
expressed by a noun phrase or a ‘strong’ [i.e. emphatic] pronoun. A left-detached
subject topic is resumed in the clause by a subject marker, referred to here as a
PAM marker (see 2.2), and a non-subject topic by a ‘non-subject clitic’, such as an
object pronoun or locative expression (see 47).

Multiple elements can be left-detached and may, according to Torrence (2013, p.
77), appear in any order. The same referent may be repeatedly referred to by
several forms in a ‘left peripheral chain’, as in (39), in which Chameleon is referred
to by two successive left-detached forms - the noun Kàkktar and the emphatic
pronoun moom.

(39) Kàkktar moom mu-nga naan

  chameleon 3sg.EMPH 3sg-PRSV.DIST say

  Chameleon, him, he said...

  Jamaale

Right-detachment is also possible, and can occur together with left-detachment.
Torrence (2013, p. 76) claims that, in general, only emphatic pronouns may be right-
detached.
Torrence’s analysis has some limitations. First, his assumption that clause-initial subject topics resumed by a PAM marker are left-detached is not necessarily justified, as discussed in 3.3.2. Second, while Torrence describes the various detached constructions which are possible in Wolof, he does not discuss the discourse-pragmatic motivations for using these constructions. This is the aim of the current chapter.

5.2. Subject topic marking

Based on the criteria outlined in 3.3.2, instances where the use of a detached construction to refer to a subject was due to the narrator's choice were identified. Analysis of these instances revealed several possible discourse-pragmatic motivations for choosing to left-detach a lexical or pronominal subject topic, as outlined in i) - iv) below.

i) To signal the first use as topic of a previously introduced referent:

Often, a participant is introduced in a presentational clause, or in the comment of a topic-comment construction, then appears as a left-detached subject topic in the subsequent clause. In (40), the child who will become Mansour’s wife is introduced in a presentational clause, then established as the topic using a left-detached construction.
There was a child who lived in our house

Ousseynou

The child is introduced into the discourse with the presentational construction ‘Mu am....’, followed by a relative clause giving us more information about her. In this clause, the demonstrative pronoun ‘bii’ is left-detached, establishing the child as the topic, even though the child would have been understood to be the subject without the detached construction, given the third-person singular marking on the PAM marker la.

ii) To signal an episode boundary (see 4.1):

Not all episode boundaries are signalled by left-detachment of a subject topic. However, in several cases, a boundary or shift in the text appears to be a motivating factor for using left-detachment. In (41), the narrator shifts from a scene-setting description of his friends’ family in the preceding clauses, to the central theme of the narrative, his own behaviour as a child. He re-establishes himself as the topical referent by means of a left-detached emphatic pronoun.
(41) Léegi nag man nekk-oon naa xale  

now as.for 1sg.EMPH be-PAST 1sg.PRF child  

Now as for me, I was the sort of child.....

Gaby 1

iii) To signal contrast between two referents:  

In *Gaby 1*, the narrator is sent to school in old, ragged clothes. At home time, too embarrassed to be seen by his friends, he gives his sister his schoolbag to take home, while he goes home by a different route (see 42). The left-detached *man tamit* contrasts his actions with those of his sister.

(42) man tamit ma jaar-aat feneen

1sg.EMPH also 1sg pass-ITER another.place  

As for me, I went a different way.

Gaby 1

iv) To signal emphasis or exclamation in reported speech:

In cases of reported speech within written narratives, a left-detached subject topic is sometimes used to create an exclamatory quality, often in conjunction with an exclamatory particle such as *dé* or *daal*, as in (43), where the step-mother exclaims that she has nothing to give the lion in return for his help.
But as things stand right now, I haven’t got anything! (Lit. ‘Me, this place where I am like this, I don’t have anything.’)

Yumaane

The Group C texts analysed here contain only two instances of a right-detached subject topic. In both cases, the right-detached element is an emphatic pronoun, in keeping with Torrence’s (2013, p. 76) claim that this is usually the only constituent which may be right-detached in Wolof. As both constructions appear to fulfil the same function, only one is discussed in detail here (see 44).

He set off all by himself (lit: He set off on the way, him only).

Makka 1

In accordance with Lambrecht (1994, p. 204), the right-detached emphatic pronoun moom in (44) is not used to establish a new topic, or a topic shift, as the referent in question is already active. Koch and Oesterreicher (2001, p. 597) suggest that the key function of right-detachment is to specify, as an afterthought, information which is deemed necessary to the addressee’s understanding of the utterance, but which the narrator did not include within the clause nucleus due to the often unplanned nature of oral discourse. However, as (44) occurs in a written text, and as the right-
detached element is an emphatic pronoun, which does not serve to signal the identity of the referent more clearly, such a function seems unlikely.

Rather, the function of the right-detached construction in (44) appears to be to create emphasis. In the preceding clauses, the narrator describes how Makka used to go off to work in the fields with his father and the servants. However, on the morning described in (44), he sets off alone. The fact that he is alone is significant, as this is why he is so terrified by his encounter with a large monkey. The inclusion of the adverb rekk (‘only’) in the right-detached phrase implies that the purpose of this construction is to emphasise Makka’s aloneness. Another possibility is that the narrator is emphasising the contrast between what usually happened (he went with his father and servants) and what happened on this particular occasion (he went alone).

Finally, an analysis of (45) suggests some possible avenues for further research as regards detached subject topics. In (45), the left-detached referent is ‘parked’ for several clauses, before finally being resumed as the subject referent within a clause nucleus.

(45) ndax sama baay xam-oon naa ne
    because 1sg.POSS father know-PAST 1sg.PRF COMP

    bu ma dugg-ee li mu daan def
    when 1sg enter-PFV REL_PRO 3sg HAB_PAST do

....because I knew what my father would do when I went in
(lit. because my father, I knew, when I went in, what he would do)

    Gaby 1

The addressee is thus expected to keep the referent ‘my father’ activated in his memory across several intervening clauses in which it does not feature, before its
resumption with the PAM marker mu. As this is the only example of such a construction within the texts analysed here, it is difficult to suggest a motivation for its use. This is a possible avenue for further research, along with an investigation into the number of clauses which can intervene between a left-detached subject topic and its resumption in a clause nucleus, and the possibility of similar constructions containing left-detached non-subject topics. As the example here is from an oral narrative, it would also be interesting to investigate whether this phenomenon occurs in written narratives, or if it is primarily a feature of spoken Wolof.

5.3. Non-subject topic marking

In Wolof, it is grammatically possible to have both a lexical subject and non-subject within the clause nucleus, as in (46). This means that, where a non-subject topic is left-detached, this is due to the narrator’s choice, rather than grammatical constraint.

(46) baay b-i ne doom j-i
      father CLF-DEF.PROX say child CLF-DEF.PROX
      the father said to the son

However, only 6% of the total number of clause nuclei in the Group C texts contained both a lexical subject and non-subject reference, suggesting that in Wolof, it is preferable to limit the number of non-active referents in a single clause nucleus. Non-subject left-detachment is therefore not only possible, but may in fact be a preferred structure to use, when it would otherwise be necessary to refer to more than one non-active referent in a clause nucleus.
Nevertheless, across the Group C texts, non-subject topic left-detachment occurs on only 22 occasions, compared to 42 instances of subject topic left-detachment. Where non-subject topic left-detachment does occur, it appears to have one of the following functions, which are also exhibited by subject topic left-detachment:

i) To signal a shift or episode boundary in the narrative:

In Gaby 1, the narrator describes how his habit of staying out late with his friends caused him trouble with his father. He then gives the summary statement in (47).

(47) Kon nag suma nekkinn xale
    therefore so 1sg.POSS manner.of.being child

    am-oon naa ci a-y jafejafe
    have-PAST 1sg.PRF in.it INDEF-CLF.PL difficulty

So the way I behaved as a child, it caused me some difficulties.
(lit. I had some difficulties in it)

Gaby 1

The topic suma nekkinn xale (lit. ‘my way of being a child’) summarises all the various behaviours he has outlined in preceding clauses, while the use of kon nag signals that this utterance is explaining the outcome of what has gone before. The use of non-subject left-detachment here is thus associated with a shift from a detailed description of his actions and their consequences, to a summary statement.

ii) To signal emphasis or exclamation in reported speech:

In Bukki, Cow states her suspicion that, if she helps Hyena out of her predicament, Hyena will make even more demands of her. In Hyena’s reply (see 48), the left-detached Man kay seems to communicate an outraged contradiction of this negative portrayal.
In addition to these shared functions with subject topic detachment, non-subject topic detachment is often used where a language such as English would use the passive. Creissels and Nouguier-Voisin (2008, p. 290) observe that:

*Strictly speaking, Wolof does not have passives, and regularly uses constructions combining object topicalization and subject focalization with a function similar to that fulfilled by passive constructions in other languages...*

However, the texts analysed here also contain examples of non-subject detachment (‘object topicalization’), occurring in the absence of subject focalization, in contexts where English would use the passive, as in (49).

(49) Makka dañu ko teel-a tâggat ci liggéey  
*Makka* 3pl.EXPL 3sg.OBJ be early-AUX train in.PROX work  
Makka was taught to work from a young age.  
(lit. Makka, they trained him early to work.)  
*Makka 1*

If the left-detached noun *Makka* was omitted here, the phrase would retain a meaning functionally similar to the passive (‘He was taught to work from a young age’), and it is likely that, given the context, *ko* would still be understood to refer to
Makka. However, including the left-detached noun phrase allows Makka to be firmly established as the topic. This is particularly important given the tendency to interpret the subject as the topic, in the absence of any marking (see 2.1).

5.4. **Unlinked topic constructions**

Lambrecht (1994, p. 193) claims that unlinked topic constructions are a characteristic of spontaneous spoken language, but are not considered acceptable in writing (see 5.1). Example (50) occurs in the context of reported speech within a written narrative.

(50) Seen kër néeg b-a ame yomba
    3pl.POSS house room CLF-REL.DEF.DIST have calabash tree

moo-y seen néeg
    3sg.SUBJ_EMPH-IMPFV 3pl.POSS room

Their compound, the room with the calabash tree outside is their room.

*Fatou*

While it must be borne in mind that Lambrecht’s association of these constructions with spoken language is based largely on his analysis of English, it could be that the individual telling the story of *Fatou* is here attempting to imitate a style more typical of the spoken medium. It would be interesting to investigate the frequency with which this construction occurs in a larger corpus, and particularly if it is ever used elsewhere in written narratives, outside of a reported speech context. It would also be interesting to examine more closely the relationships between unlinked topic referents and referents in the clause nucleus, to determine the range of permissible relationships in this context.
CHAPTER 6
Focus marking in Wolof narrative discourse

This chapter examines the way in which the three types of focus identified by Lambrecht (1994) are marked in Wolof narrative discourse, and the discourse-pragmatic motivations for their use. In 6.1, Lambrecht’s definition of the three types of focus is outlined, followed by a consideration of existing approaches to focus marking in Wolof. In sections 6.2-6.4, the PAM markers used in argument-focus, sentence-focus and predicate-focus constructions within the corpus are identified, and possible motivations for using marked focus constructions in particular contexts are discussed.

6.1. Theoretical framework

As noted in 2.1, Lambrecht (1994, pp. 52, 213) defines focus as the semantic component whereby the mental representation the hearer is expected to hold as a result of hearing an utterance (the assertion) differs from what he or she is expected to know or take for granted at the time of utterance (the presupposition). Lambrecht identifies three types of focus construction - predicate, argument and sentence focus - each evoking a different presupposition and changing the hearer’s mental representation in a particular way.

Predicate focus occurs in a topic-comment construction, the unmarked, most common sentence articulation (Lambrecht, 1994, p. 132; see 2.1), and is therefore the unmarked, most common focus construction. A predicate-focus construction
evokes the presupposition that the argument, whether subject or non-subject, is available as a topic for discussion (Lambrecht, 1994, p. 226). The change in the hearer’s mental representation is therefore caused by what is predicated about that argument. In (51), it is presupposed that the woman is a topic for discussion, while the assertion is that she went out into the bush. The difference between the presupposition and assertion is what is predicated about the woman, and this is therefore a predicate-focus construction.

(51) ndaw s-i dem ca àll b-a
    woman CLF-DEF.PROX go to.DIST bush CLF-DEF.DIST

    The woman went out into the bush.

    Yumaane

In argument-focus constructions, it is the predicate which is presupposed, not the argument. In (52), it is presupposed that the story ends somewhere, and the assertion is that it is there that it ends. The difference between the presupposition and assertion is the argument, and so this is an argument-focus construction.

(52) Foofu la léeb b-i jeex-e
    there 3sg.COMP_EMPH story CLF-DEF.PROX finish-PLACE

    It's there that the story ends.

    Bukki

Finally, in sentence-focus constructions, no pragmatic presupposition is lexicogrammatically evoked. That is, neither the predicate nor the argument is presented as presupposed, although there may be a situationally-implied presupposition that ‘something happened’ (Lambrecht, 1994, p. 233). Whereas predicate-focus and argument-focus constructions are categorical sentences, in which the important thing is that there is a participant, and that the event happened to that participant, sentence-focus constructions are thetic sentences, in which the
important thing is simply that an event happened (event-reporting sentences) or an entity exists (presentational sentences) (Lambrecht, 1994, pp. 140, 144). In (53), a sentence-focus construction is used to present a new participant into the discourse.

(53) Dafa am-oon k-enn nit
    3sg.VERB_EMPH have-PAST CLF-one person
    There was a man
    Kumba

The notion of focus plays a significant role in existing analyses of Wolof grammar. Among her ten PAM series, Robert (1991, p. 24) identifies three which mark emphasis: on the subject (moo), complement (la) and verb (dafa) respectively (only the third-person singular forms are given here – see Appendix 1 for the full series). Torrence (2013, p. 67) assigns similar functions to these three series, terming them subject (moo), non-subject (la) and predicate (dafa) focus clefts. For the sake of consistency, Robert’s terminology is used throughout.

It is important to note that Robert’s and Torrence’s terminology may be misleading when applied alongside Lambrecht’s model of focus. For example, as shown below, Robert’s verb-emphasis markers are not the only PAM series to occur in cases of predicate focus, although this is what both Robert’s and Torrence’s terminology would cause us to expect. A key aim of this chapter discussion is therefore to determine which PAM markers may be used in each of Lambrecht’s three focus constructions.

6.2. **Argument focus**

There are two ways of marking argument focus in Wolof, depending on whether the difference between the presupposition and assertion is caused by a subject or non-subject argument.
Subject argument focus may be marked by a subject-emphasis PAM marker, as in (54), or, in the presence of a lexical or independent pronoun subject within the clause nucleus, by the suffix –a, as in (55) (Robert, 1991, p. 117).

(54) Yàlla moo ko ci dugg–al  

\[ \text{God 3sg.SUBJ_EMPH 3sg.OBJ in.PROX enter-CAUS} \]

It was God who caused it to happen (lit. made her enter into it).  

\[ \text{Ousseynou} \]

(55) ndaw s-e-e^{2} ko fi def  

\[ \text{woman CLF-DEF.PROX-SUBJ_EMPH 3sg.OBJ here.PROX do} \]

...it was the woman who did it.  

\[ \text{Yumaane} \]

Non-subject argument focus is marked by a complement-emphasis PAM marker, as in (56).

(56) ci biir ndox m-i  

\[ \text{in.PROX inside water CLF-DEF.PROX} \]

\[ \text{laa yendo-o} \]

\[ \text{1sg.COMP_EMPH spend.the.day-PLACE} \]

It was in the water that I spent the day.  

\[ \text{Gaby 1} \]

Among the instances of subject and non-subject argument focus identified in the \textit{Group C} texts, there are several in which the lexicogrammatically-evoked presupposition does not match the contextually motivated mental representation which the reader or listener could be expected to hold. In such cases, the purpose of

\[ \text{2 In this case, the suffix –a has assimilated to the preceding vowel, becoming –e.} \]
the construction appears to be to give special salience to the argument referent, as in (57).

(57) Ndakete gaynde g-i
    because lion CLF-DEF.PROX

moo d-oon seet Yumaane

3sg.SUBJ_EMPH IMPFV-PAST look.for Yumaane

Because it was the lion who was looking for Yumaane.

Yumaane

The lexicogrammatically-evoked presupposition in this construction is that somebody was looking for Yumaane. The assertion is that the lion was looking for her, and the focus is therefore the fact that it was the lion who was looking for her. However, this fact is already known to the reader from the narrative context. The use of an apparently unwarranted argument-focus structure here gives special salience to the referent gaynde gi (‘the lion’), just as he is about to reappear on stage for the climactic action of the narrative.

The argument-focus construction in Wolof thus appears to have the secondary function of highlighting particularly salient constituents, by presenting them as if they were not part of the pragmatic presupposition which the reader is expected to hold.

6.3. **Sentence focus**

Eleven instances of sentence focus were identified across the entire corpus. When the contexts in which they appeared were analysed, they were each found to have one of the following discourse-pragmatic functions:
i) To introduce participants:

Of the seven sentence-focus constructions with this function within the corpus, five occur in the opening line of a written folktale (this context is referred to hereafter as ‘narrative-initial’). All five of these use the verb-emphasis PAM marker *dafa*, as in (58). This may therefore be considered the unmarked form of narrative-initial sentence-focus construction, when introducing a participant.

(58) Dafa am-oon b-enni
    3sg.VERB_EMPH have-PAST CLF-one

    ñale b-u jigéen
    child CLF-REL.INDEF be.female

    b-u ſu naan Yumaane
    CLF-REL.INDEF 3pl say Yumaane

There was a girl called Yumaane.

    Yumaane

In all five narrative-initial sentence-focus constructions with this function, the main clause is accompanied by a relative clause. If the participant in question is a major participant (see 3.3.1), as in (58), the relative clause may give more information about that participant. A relative clause may also be used to introduce another participant in relation to the first. In the latter case, both participants may be of equal significance, as in (59), where both father and son are major participants throughout the narrative.
(59) Dafa am-oon g-enn góor
3sg.VERB_EMPH have-PAST CLF-one man

    g-u màggat
    CLF-REL.INDEF be.old

    g-u am-oon j-enn doom
    CLF-REL.INDEF have-PAST CLF-one child

There was an old man who had a son.

Àddina

Alternatively, the participant or participants introduced in relation to the first may be even more significant within the narrative. This is the case in (60), where the wives play a much more important role in the narrative than the father, who is merely mentioned as a means of introducing his wives.

(60) Dafa am-oon k-enn nit
3sg.VERB_EMPH have-PAST CLF-one person

    k-u am-oon ñaari jabar
    CLF-REL.INDEF have-PAST two wife

There was a man who had two wives.

Kumba

Where the relative clause gives additional information about the participant, other than the participant’s name, that information is significant within the plot. In (61), the fact that the woman is pregnant is central to the plot, as the child to whom she eventually gives birth is the main protagonist of the subsequent narrative.
There was a woman who was pregnant.

Sentence-focus constructions may also be used to introduce participants later in a narrative (this context is referred to hereafter as ‘non-narrative-initial’). There are two instances of this within the corpus, shown in (62) and (63). In both cases, the narrative PAM marker is used, rather than the verb-emphasis PAM marker used in narrative-initial constructions with this function.

(62) Mu am xale

There was a child...

(63) Mu am sama rakk

There were my younger siblings...

Both (62) and (63) occur together at the start of a new episode in the narrative, and the participants introduced in these two constructions are the major participants in that episode. One possible discourse-pragmatic motivation for using sentence focus in this context is to signal a major discontinuity – at this point in the narrative, there is a discontinuity in space, protagonist and time, as the narrator shifts from
comments about his habitual interactions with Mansour, to a specific time frame in which the siblings spoke to the girl.

ii) To introduce a state of affairs:

Only two instances of this function occur in the corpus, both within the orientation section (see 2.3) of Ousseynou, a first-person oral narrative of personal experience. (64) precedes an abstract summarizing the main events of the narrative (see 2.3). This abstract is then followed by another sentence-focus construction, (65), again introducing a state of affairs.

(64) dafa am lu nga xam ne
3sg.VERB_EMPH have REL_PRO 2sg know COMPL

dama la ko-y nettali
1sg.VERB_EMPH 2sg.OBJ 3sg.OBJ-IMPFV narrate

Something happened which I am about to tell you. Ousseynou

(65) Dafa am lu ma ci dox-oon
3sg.VERB_EMPH have REL_PRO 1sg in.it walk-PAST

I had some involvement in what happened (lit. there was something I undertook in it). Ousseynou

The fact that Ousseynou is a first-person narrative may explain why the orientation contains sentence-focus constructions with this function. As the main participant, the narrator, is situationally accessible from the storytelling context, the focus in the orientation is therefore on the fact that something happened in which the narrator
was involved, whereas in the folktales within the corpus, the focus is on the
participants involved in the story.

iii) To establish the temporal setting of the narrative:

The corpus contains two sentence-focus constructions with this function, (66) and
(67), both of which use the perfect PAM marker na.

(66) Ba mu am-ee yàgg na lool
when.DIST 3sg have-PFV be.a.long.time 3sg.PRF very

It all happened a very long time ago.

Tëngéej

(67) Booba-ak léegi nak mat na sax
at.that.time-and now as.for be.complete 3sg.PRF even

ñaari at walla ŋetti at
two year or three year

Since then, two or three years have passed.

Ousseynou

(66) occurs narrative-initially and, like (64) and (65), its function is linked to the
nature of the narrative in which it occurs. Tëngéej is a narrative of origins, explaining
the origins of a settlement. The focus in the opening orientation section is therefore
on the fact that the events of the narrative took place a long time ago.

(67) occurs non-narrative-initially, and its function is to present the time lapse
between the events which have just been described in the narrative, and the time at
which the story is told.
Based on this corpus, the use of the PAM marker *na* in a sentence-focus construction appears to signal that the function of the construction is to establish the temporal setting of a narrative. However, it may also be compatible with other functions, not attested in this corpus.

6.4. **Predicate focus**

Robert’s (1991, p. 24) use of the term ‘verb emphasis’, and Torrence’s (2013, p. 67) ‘predicate-focus cleft’ give the impression that only the verb-emphasis marker *dafa* may be used in a predicate-focus construction. However, within the corpus, the only PAM markers found to be incompatible with predicate focus were Robert’s subject-emphasis and complement-emphasis markers. Robert’s verb-emphasis, perfect, narrative and presentative PAM markers were all found to occur in cases of predicate focus. The presentative marker occurs solely in predicate-focus constructions, as in (68), and this may therefore be considered its unmarked, default usage.

(68) Mu-ngi-y woy
    3sg-PRS.V.PROX-IMPFV sing
    He was singing...

    Yumaane

Of particular interest is the fact that the perfect PAM marker, *na*, may occur in predicate-focus constructions, as in (69), and is therefore not exclusively linked with sentence-focus constructions, as Torrence (2013, p. 29) appears to suggest.
According to Lambrecht’s model, the lexicogrammatically-evoked presupposition in (69) is that something was true of the man. The assertion is that the man had many wives, and the focus is therefore on the fact that he had many wives, that is, on the predicate.

This appears to contradict Torrence’s (2013, p. 29) claim that, in a na clause, ‘the entire clause is new information’ and ‘no subconstituent is in focus’, when Torrence is read in light of Lambrecht’s (1994) definitions of ‘information’ and ‘focus’.³ According to Torrence’s argument, the na marker would be expected to appear only in sentence-focus constructions, for which no presupposition is evoked.

As shown in 6.3, na does appear in sentence-focus constructions, but evidence from the corpus thus shows that it may also occur in predicate-focus constructions. When used in sentence-focus constructions, as in (66) and (67), the perfect PAM marker has a non-specific referent, whereas it has a specific referent when used in predicate-focus constructions, as in (69).

³ Torrence may, admittedly, be intending these terms to be understood differently, but his lack of a clear definition for ‘new information’ obliges the reader to interpret his comments by means of definitions provided by others.
CHAPTER 7

Conclusion

7.1. Summary of findings

The aim of this study was to identify the unmarked and marked forms of signalling identifiability and activation state, topic, and focus in Wolof narrative discourse, and to identify the discourse-pragmatic motivations behind the use of marked forms. This was achieved by applying Lambrecht’s model of information structure to a corpus of Wolof narrative texts.

In Chapter Four, Lambrecht’s (1994) model of identifiability and activation state was applied to selected texts from the corpus.

The forms used to refer to participants for the first time within a narrative were considered under the heading ‘Participant Introduction’. Lambrecht’s (1994, p. 86) notion of anchoring was applied in conjunction with Levinsohn’s (2011, p. 119) distinction between referents introduced into new or existing mental representations, resulting in the identification of three categories of unidentifiable referent – Unanchored-New, Unanchored-Existing and Anchored-Existing. This three-way distinction was not as useful as hoped, as the main distinction seemed to depend on whether a referent was introduced into a new or existing mental representation. The unmarked reference form for all Unanchored-New referents, whether major or minor, was the –enn form of the indefinite article. However, in the ‘Unanchored-Existing’ and ‘Anchored-Existing’ categories, the –enn form was only used to introduce major participants, or locally major participants who contributed to a significant event within
the complicating action, and thus shared discourse-pragmatic motivations with Lambrecht’s ‘indefinite-this’ (see 4.2.1).

In light of these observations, it would have been more efficient to adopt a broader definition of anchoring, to encompass any syntactic link between referents, as per Levinsohn’s model, rather than Lambrecht’s narrower notion of a referring noun phrase contained within an anchoring noun phrase.

The unmarked form of reference to situationally or inferentially accessible participants was a noun accompanied by a definite article, or, where the participant had a name, a proper noun. If the participant was present in the storytelling context, the noun was accompanied by a deictic demonstrative.

The forms used to refer to participants previously mentioned in the narrative were considered under the heading ‘Participant Tracking’. The unmarked form of reference to active subject participants was found to be a zero morpheme, and several marked forms were identified, each with different discourse-pragmatic motivations. A PAM marker was used to signal a minor boundary; a noun phrase was used to establish a different referent as the topic; a noun phrase and emphatic pronoun were used together to signal contrast. The unmarked form of reference to active non-subject participants was an object pronoun, and the marked form was a noun phrase, used to signal a minor boundary, or to give prominence to the resolution of the narrative.

The unmarked form of reference to textually accessible subject and non-subject participants was a noun phrase. No marked forms of textually accessible non-subject participant reference were identified. The marked form of textually accessible subject participant reference was a left-detached noun phrase, used to signal the resolution of the event line, to highlight a significant episode, or to create emphasis.
Chapter Five identified four discourse-pragmatic motivations for using a left-detached construction to refer to a subject topic referent, the last two of which also applied to cases of non-subject topic marking:

- to signal the first appearance of a previously introduced referent as the topic
- to signal contrast
- to signal an episode boundary
- to signal emphasis or exclamation in reported speech

Right-detached constructions were used to signal emphasis or contrast in both spoken and written texts. Unlinked topic constructions were found to occur in reported speech, within a written narrative.

In Chapter Six, the PAM markers used in cases of predicate, argument and sentence focus were identified:

- Argument focus: subject emphasis; complement emphasis
- Sentence focus: verb emphasis; perfect; narrative
- Predicate focus: verb emphasis; perfect; narrative; presentative

Subject-emphasis and complement-emphasis markers are clearly associated with the expression of argument focus, while presentative markers occur only in predicate-focus constructions. Where there is an overlap in the PAM markers used in different focus constructions, the sentence-focus constructions may be distinguished from the predicate-focus constructions by the non-specific nature of the third-person singular PAM marker referents they contain.

The evident overlap between the PAM markers which may be used in predicate-focus constructions, and those which appear in sentence-focus constructions, highlights the difficulty of using Robert’s (1991) terminology in conjunction with Lambrecht’s (1994) model of focus. It cannot be assumed, for example, that every
predicate-focus construction will involve a verb-emphasis marker, nor that verb-emphasis markers appear exclusively in predicate-focus constructions.

In several places within the corpus, the lexicogrammatically-evoked presupposition in an argument-focus construction did not coincide with the mental representation which the reader or listener could be expected to hold, given the context. In these instances, it seemed that the discourse-pragmatic motivation for using an argument-focus construction was to give special salience to the argument referent, and this was therefore posited as a secondary function of argument-focus constructions in Wolof.

Sentence-focus constructions were used to introduce a participant or state of affairs, or to establish the temporal setting of the narrative. While the majority of cases where they were used to introduce a participant or state of affairs occurred narrative-initially, such constructions also occurred non-narrative-initially, where they were found to have the additional function of signalling an episode boundary. All sentence-focus constructions introducing a participant included a relative clause, giving new information about that participant, or introducing another participant in relation to the first. Where the relative clause gave additional information about the participant, other than the participant’s name, that information was significant within the plot.

7.2. **Problems and further questions**

Levinsohn's (2011) guidelines for putting together a corpus were followed here, but proved to be inadequate, largely due to his lack of attention to controlling sociolinguistic variables. This approach, coupled with the nature of the sources from which several of the written narratives were obtained, meant that detailed sociolinguistic information was, in many cases, lacking. It is therefore unclear
whether the unmarked and marked reference forms identified in the corpus are representative of a particular variety of Wolof, spoken by speakers from a particular sociolinguistic background. The ambiguous status of several of the narratives as originally spoken texts, but published in written form, also precluded much comment on the differences between the signalling of information structure in written and spoken Wolof narrative discourse.

Several avenues for further research were identified throughout the analysis.

Within the framework of identifiability and activation state, some differences were found between the reference forms used in oral and written texts. In written texts, the unmarked form of reference to textually accessible participants was a noun phrase, whereas in Ousseynou, an oral text, a PAM marker was often used to refer to textually accessible third-person participant referents, followed by a clarification of the referent using a noun phrase in the subsequent clause, or in a detached construction. The use of a larger corpus with a higher proportion of oral narratives would facilitate a more detailed comparison of the forms of participant reference used in oral and written texts, and the contexts in which marked forms of participant reference occur in each.

As regards the marking of topic, further research could investigate the number of clauses which may intervene between a left-detached topic referent and the clause containing the resumptive PAM marker. A future study could also investigate Torrence’s (2013, p. 76) claim that, where multiple left-detached topics are present, they may occur in any order, and examine the effect of the order in which they are placed on the relative prominence of each.

As for focus marking, future research could examine in greater detail the contexts in which argument-focus constructions are used to give special salience to participants, as there were only a few instances of this in the corpus used here. In
addition, given that a range of possible sentence-focus and predicate-focus constructions were identified, the contexts in which each of the different constructions occurs could be investigated further.

7.3. **Contributions to existing research**

This study contributes to the existing body of research in a number of ways. First, the application of Zwaan and Radvansky’s (1998) notion of situation models to the narratives in the corpus identifies those factors which cause a referent to become deactivated in a Wolof narrative. Second, Lambrecht’s (1994) model of information structure, particularly the notion of participant identifiability and activation state, had not previously been systematically applied to Wolof. The identification of the forms used to refer to participants, according to their degree of identifiability and activation, is therefore significant. Third, in addition to identifying the forms of reference used, this study, unlike existing research, investigates the discourse-pragmatic motivations for the use of marked forms of participant reference. It thus builds on Torrence’s (2013) outline of the forms used to signal topic and focus in Wolof, by identifying the contextual factors motivating the use of marked forms.
Bibliography


*Duma Wolof......Walaf Laa!* (1993), Dakar: SIL


Sauvageot, S. (1965) *Description Synchronique D’un Dialecte Wolof: Le Parler Du Dyolof*, Dakar: IFAN


Appendix 1: Robert’s (1991) PAM paradigms

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Robert, 1991, p 24 (English headings my translation)
## Appendix 2: Table of texts in corpus

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<td>Folktale/myth</td>
<td>Church, 1981, pp. 339-343</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Edited to written form</td>
<td>Edited to written form</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>428</td>
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<td>Kumba-am-ndey ag Kumba-amul-ndey</td>
<td>Kumba</td>
<td>Narrative</td>
<td>Folktale</td>
<td>Kesteloot &amp; Mbodj, 1983, pp. 23-31</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Kesteloot &amp; Mbodj (1983, p. 10) state that all the texts in this volume were collected from older people.</td>
<td>Khombole, Thiès</td>
<td>Edited to written form</td>
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<td>1210</td>
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<td>Type of narrative</td>
<td>Source</td>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Geographical links</td>
<td>Spoken/written</td>
<td>Circumstances in which obtained</td>
<td>No. of words</td>
<td>No. of minutes</td>
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<td>Lan mooy âddina</td>
<td>Addina</td>
<td>Narrative</td>
<td>Folktales, Kesteloot &amp; Mbojd, 1983, pp. 35-41</td>
<td>Mamadou Kâ</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>60s</td>
<td>Cayor</td>
<td>Edited to written form</td>
<td>Collected by Mor Diaw (student of Faculté des Lettres at UCAD); told with an audience present.</td>
<td>636</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Netti xuuge yi</td>
<td>Xuuge</td>
<td>Narrative</td>
<td>Folktales, Kesteloot &amp; Mbojd, 1983, pp. 83-87</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td></td>
<td>Kesteloot &amp; Mbojd (1983, p. 10) state that all the texts in this volume were collected from older people.</td>
<td>Edited to written form</td>
<td>Recorded by les Archives culturelles du Sénégal</td>
<td>420</td>
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<td>Yumaane</td>
<td>Yumaane</td>
<td>Narrative</td>
<td>Folktales, Kesteloot &amp; Dieng, 1989, pp. 29-33</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td></td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Edited to written form</td>
<td>Collected by Oumel Kairy Diallo</td>
<td>818</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xale bu muus ba ak buur ba</td>
<td>Xale</td>
<td>Narrative</td>
<td>Folktales, Kesteloot &amp; Dieng, 1989, pp. 41-44</td>
<td>Khady Dieng</td>
<td>female</td>
<td></td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Edited to written form</td>
<td>Collected by Madeleine Diop</td>
<td>730</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neenti Jamaale yi</td>
<td>Jamaale</td>
<td>Narrative</td>
<td>Folktales, Kesteloot &amp; Dieng, 1989, pp. 55-57</td>
<td>Daw Samb Gewel Mbaye, griot de Mboro</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Mboro</td>
<td>Edited to written form</td>
<td>Collected by Pathe Lo (student of Faculté des Lettres at UCAD)</td>
<td>377</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Type of narrative</td>
<td>Source</td>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Geographical links</td>
<td>Spoken/written</td>
<td>Circumstances in which obtained</td>
<td>No. of words</td>
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<td>Netti Ragal</td>
<td>Ragal</td>
<td>Narrative</td>
<td>SIL, 1993, pp. 42-43</td>
<td>Abdulaay Ja</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td></td>
<td>Written</td>
<td>Author was participant in a 10-day literacy workshop at SIL in Dakar</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bukkeek nag wu mággat wi</td>
<td>Bukki</td>
<td>Narrative</td>
<td>SIL, 1993, pp. 51-55</td>
<td>Roosali Seen</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td></td>
<td>Written</td>
<td>Author was participant in a 10-day literacy workshop at SIL in Dakar</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mataayir ak Usmaan</td>
<td>Mataayir</td>
<td>Narrative</td>
<td>Laajalahti &amp; Fall, 1996, p. 71</td>
<td>Njuga Faal</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td></td>
<td>Written</td>
<td>Author was participant in a 10-day literacy workshop at SIL in Dakar</td>
<td>338</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaby's story 1</td>
<td>Gaby 1</td>
<td>Narrative</td>
<td>Personal research, May 2014</td>
<td>Gaby Mbaye</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Dakar</td>
<td>Spoken</td>
<td>Recorded at SIL in Dakar, by researcher. Narrator asked to talk about a personal experience.</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>6 mins 58 sec</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaby's story 2</td>
<td>Gaby 2</td>
<td>Narrative</td>
<td>Personal research, May 2014</td>
<td>Gaby Mbaye</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Dakar</td>
<td>Spoken</td>
<td>Recorded at SIL in Dakar, by researcher. Narrator asked to talk about a personal experience.</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>5 mins 17 secs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Text-type</td>
<td>Type of narrative</td>
<td>Source</td>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Geographical links</td>
<td>Spoken/written</td>
<td>Circumstances in which obtained</td>
<td>No. of words</td>
<td>No. of minutes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|-----------------------|-----------|-------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|-----|-----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------|--------------|----------------|}
| Ousseynou marriage story | Narrative | Personal story    | Gerald Harkins, November 2013 | Ousseynou Gaye     | male | 61  | From village near Mbane (close to Richard Toll) but has lived in a town since his 20s. Now lives in Thies. | Spoken         | Recorded by Gerald Harkins at friend's house. | n/a          | 5 mins 40 secs  |
| Makka 1               | Narrative | Personal story (told in 3rd person) | Personal research, July 2014 | Mamadou 'Pedio' Diop | male | 60  | Thiès (grew up in Dakar and lived in the US for an extended period of time as an adult) | Written        | Researcher asked Wolof teacher to write some stories about personal experiences. | 252          | n/a             |
| Makka 2               | Narrative | Personal story (told in 3rd person) | Personal research, July 2014 | Mamadou 'Pedio' Diop | male | 60  | As above                                                                            | Written        | Researcher asked Wolof teacher to write some stories about personal experiences. | 491          | n/a             |
| Makka 3               | Narrative | Personal story (told in 3rd person) | Personal research, July 2014 | Mamadou 'Pedio' Diop | male | 60  | As above                                                                            | Written        | Researcher asked Wolof teacher to write some stories about personal experiences. | 595          | n/a             |
Appendix 3 : Consent form and questionnaire
Feuille d'explications pour les participants

Dans le cadre de ses recherches linguistiques, Mme. Ruth LOWRY est en train de recueillir des récits en wolof, afin de faire des analyses linguistiques sur le wolof.

Dans ce but, on vous a demandé de raconter une histoire, ou plusieurs histoires, en wolof. Ces histoires peuvent être soit des histoires vraies de l'expérience personnelle, soit des contes. Les histoires recueillies seront utilisées par Mme. LOWRY en rédigeant son mémoire, afin d'obtenir sa maîtrise.

Votre nom et vos détails personnels ne seront partagés qu'avec votre permission expresse, indiquée dans le formulaire ci-joint.

La participation dans ces recherches est complètement volontaire.
Questionnaire pour les participants :

1. NOM et prénoms ___________________________________________________

2. Ethnie ___________________________________________________________

3. HOMME/FEMME (Rayer la mention inutile)

4. Age _____________________________________________________________

5. Métier(s) _______________________________________________________

6. Langue maternelle _______________________________________________

7. Dans votre famille, parle-t-on wolof la plupart du temps?   OUI/NON

8. Si NON, quelle(s) autre(s) langue(s) parle-t-on la plupart du temps dans votre famille, et qui parle cette(ces) langue(s)?
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________

9. Où avez-vous grandi? (Donnez le nom de la province)
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________

10. Avez-vous passé des périodes de plus de trois mois hors d'une région Wolophone/hors du Sénégal? Si oui, donnez des précisions (où, combien de temps, quel âge aviez-vous à peu près? On peut donner un chiffre global pour le cas d'absences fréquents.)
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________

11. Vous avez atteint quel niveau d'éducation formelle?
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________

12. A part le wolof, quelles autres langues parlez-vous et à quel niveau?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Langue</th>
<th>Un peu</th>
<th>Assez bien</th>
<th>Bien</th>
<th>Très bien</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Français</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Déclaration des candidats

Je, soussigné, atteste avoir lu/entendu la 'feuille des explications pour les participants'.

J'affirme que:

- On m'a expliqué le but de ces recherches, et j'ai bien compris pourquoi on recevait des histoires, et comment on va les utiliser.
- On m'a donné l'occasion de poser des questions.
- Je comprends que je peux me retirer du processus à n'importe quel instant.

J'ai pris connaissance du fait que la publication de ces histoires/contes/récits n'aura pas de bénéfices financiers et j'accepte de ne pas réclamer de rémunération. Je donne mon autorisation pour l'utilisation du récit dont je suis l'auteur dans les analyses linguistiques.

Donnez-vous votre accord pour qu'on cite votre nom comme auteur du/des conte(s) que vous avez écrit(s)/raconté(s)?

______ OUI, je donne mon accord
______ NON, vous pouvez me remercier, mais ne dites pas quelle histoire j'ai racontée/écrite.
______ NON, ne mentionnez pas mon nom.

Donnez-vous votre accord pour qu'on écrive les détails personnels que vous avez donnés pour ce questionnaire en faisant mention de votre nom? Ces détails ne seront pas vus par le grand public - c'est seulement pour les savants qui lisent les analyses linguistiques.

______ OUI, je donne mon accord.
______ NON, on ne doit pas savoir que c'est moi.
______ NON, on ne doit pas savoir certaines informations sur moi (à préciser).

Autres précisions
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Nom et Prénom __________________________________________________________

Signature/Marque_________________________ Date____________________________
Appendix 4 : Sample text chart

The following chart shows the opening paragraphs of the text *Kumba-am-ndey ag Kumba-amul-ndey*. 
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-nuclear</th>
<th>Post-nuclear</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outer</td>
<td>Topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3b</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There was a certain man who had two wives.
The two girls had the same name.

So that they could tell them apart, they distinguished between them:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5d</th>
<th>Kumba-am-delay</th>
<th>xale bi</th>
<th>yaay-am</th>
<th>di</th>
<th>dund</th>
<th>---</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>child CLF. REL. DEF. PRO X</td>
<td></td>
<td>mother-3sg. POSS</td>
<td>IMPFV</td>
<td>live</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

‘Kumba-with-a-mother’ was the child whose mother was alive.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6</th>
<th>Kumba-am-delay</th>
<th>xale bi</th>
<th>yaay-am</th>
<th>dee</th>
<th>---</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>child CLF. REL. DEF. PRO X</td>
<td></td>
<td>mother-3sg. POSS</td>
<td>die</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

‘Kumba-without-a-mother’ was the child whose mother had died.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7a</th>
<th>Boroom kër gi nag</th>
<th>dafa</th>
<th>ragal</th>
<th>jabar ji</th>
<th>lool</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>master house CLF.DE F.PRO X as.for</td>
<td>3sg.EXP L</td>
<td>be.afraid</td>
<td>wife CLF. DEF.PR OX mux h've ry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As for the father, he was very afraid of his wife, so much so that whatever she did, or whatever she said, it pleased him.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7b</th>
<th>banga xam né</th>
<th>lu</th>
<th>mu</th>
<th>def</th>
<th>---</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>until 2 sgkno w COMP</td>
<td>REL_. PRO</td>
<td>3sg</td>
<td>do</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Row</td>
<td>Translation</td>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7c</td>
<td>wàlla</td>
<td>3sg</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7d</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>na</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8a</td>
<td>Daan</td>
<td>sax</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8b</td>
<td>muy</td>
<td>def-loo</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9a</td>
<td>Am bés</td>
<td>Kumba-amul-ndey</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9b</td>
<td>ba</td>
<td>fâtte</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

He even let her make Kumba without a mother do all the household chores.

One day, Kumba without a mother was washing the dishes and forgot a spoon.

Her mother's day...
co-wife told her to go and wash it in the sea of Ndaayan.

Kumba set off, crying as she went.

She walked for two days and two nights.
Kumba walked and walked until she came across a jujube tree which was hitting itself. She knelt down and greeted it.