What's *No*? Focus and Clause Linking in Malagasy[*]

Matt Pearson
Reed College

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Abstract

Contrastively focused constituents in Malagasy, a verb-initial language, occur at the left edge of the clause, separated from the remainder of the clause by the particle *no* (previous work has shown that *no* forms a constituent with what follows it, here called the *NO*-PHRASE). The Malagasy focus construction is usually analyzed as a pseudo-cleft: the focus phrase constitutes the main predicate of the clause, while the *no*-phrase is a DP containing a headless relative clause denoting the individual(s) of which the focus phrase is predicated (*no* itself being a special determiner or relative clause marker). In this paper I argue that the *no*-phrase and focus phrase are instead full clauses, with *no* acting as a clause linker—viz., a subordinating conjunction or complementizer. The focus construction is not a pseudo-cleft, but something akin to a conditional construction: hence, the relation between the *no*-phrase and the focus phrase is not one of predication, but of implication. Rather than a headless relative (of category DP), the *no*-phrase is an embedded clause (of category CP) which presents a presupposed state of affairs, a condition or temporal context necessary for evaluating the truth of the matrix clause.

1. Introduction

In Malagasy, an Austronesian language spoken on Madagascar, unmarked sentences consist of a PREDI-CATE PHRASE followed by a clause-final TRIGGER, whose grammatical function is indicated by the VOICE form of the verb.[1] ACTOR-TRIGGER (AT) voice morphology is used when the trigger is the external argument ('actor') of the clause, while THEME-TRIGGER (TT) morphology is used when the internal argument ('undergoer') is the trigger, and CIRCUMSTANTIAL-TRIGGER (CT) morphology is used when the trigger is an oblique participant (denoting instrument, manner, location, etc.). Examples of voice alternations are given in (1). As Keenan (1976), Dahl (1996), and others have discussed, the boundary between the predicate phrase and the trigger is marked by the placement of certain particles, such as the yes/no question marker *ve*, shown in parentheses.[2]

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[1] The trigger is usually characterized as the structural subject of the clause, making Malagasy a VOS language. However, Pearson (2005) argues that the trigger is in fact an A'-element, denoting the argument of sentence-level predication, while the postverbal actor in non-AT clauses is the structural subject. Under this analysis, Malagasy is actually a VSO language with a clause-final topic position. I abstract away from the status of the trigger here. For more information on basic clause structure and voice marking in Malagasy, see Keenan (1976, 1995), Randriamasimanana (1986), Pearson and Paul (1996), Paul (1998, 1999), Pearson (2001), Rasoloson and Rubino (2005), and the many references cited therein.

[2] Examples sentences are taken from my fieldnotes unless otherwise noted (since the internal structure of the Malagasy words is irrelevant to the points being made, I omit morpheme-by-morpheme segmentation). The following abbreviations are used in the glosses: 1s = first person singular, 2s = second person singular, 3 = third person singular/plural, Acc = accusative, AT = actor-trigger voice, CT = circumstantial-trigger voice, Det = determiner, Irr = irrealis/future, Lnk = linker, Neg = negative particle, Nom = nominative, Obl = oblique case marker, Pass = passive, Pf = perfective, Pst = past, Qu = question particle, Redup = reduplicated stem, Rel = relative clause marker, TDet = trigger determiner, TT = theme-trigger voice.

(1)   a.   *Nanoratra   taratasy tamin' ny   penina (ve) ny   mpianatra*
            Pst.AT.write letter   with   Det pen   Det student
            'The student wrote a letter with a pen'

      b.   *Nosoratan'   ny   mpianatra tamin' ny   penina (ve) ilay taratasy*
            Pst.TT.write Det student   with   Det pen   that letter
            'The student wrote that letter with a pen'

      c.   *Nanoratan'   ny   mpianatra taratasy (ve) ilay penina*
            Pst.CT.write Det student   letter   that pen
            'The student wrote a letter with that pen'

As illustrated in (2) below, a contrastively focused noun phrase may undergo fronting, in which case it is separated from the rest of the clause by the particle *no* (pronounced /nu/, and glossed simply 'NO'). For expository purposes I will refer to this as the FOCUS CONSTRUCTION. The fronted constituent will be referred to as the FOCUS or FOCUS PHRASE, and the remainder of the clause as the NO-PHRASE (see Paul 2001 for evidence that the *no*-phrase is a constituent).

(2)   *Ny   mpianatra **no** nanoratra   taratasy tamin' ny   penina*
            Det   student   NO Pst.AT.write letter   with   Det pen
            '[The student]$_F$ wrote a letter with a pen'

A nominal focus phrase obligatorily controls the voice of the following verb. For example, the verb takes AT morphology when the external argument is focused, as shown in (3), while focusing the internal argument triggers TT morphology, as in (4):

(3)   a.   *Ny   mpianatra no   nanoratra   taratasy tamin' ny   penina*
            Det   student   NO   Pst.AT.write letter   with   Det pen
            '[The student]$_F$ wrote a letter with a pen'

      b. * *Ny   mpianatra no   nosoratan(a) tamin' ny   penina ny   taratasy*
            Det   student   NO   Pst.TT.write with   Det pen   Det letter
            '[The student]$_F$ wrote the letter with a pen'

(4)   a.   *Ny   taratasy no   nosoratan'   ny   mpianatra tamin' ny   penina*
            Det   letter   NO   Pst.TT.write Det student   with   Det pen
            'The student wrote [the letter]$_F$ with a pen'

      b. * *Ny   taratasy no   nanoratra   tamin' ny   penina ny   mpianatra*
            Det   letter   NO   Pst.AT.write with   Det pen   Det student
            'The student wrote [the letter]$_F$ with a pen'

The pattern in (3) and (4) has been much discussed in the literature on Malagasy (see Keenan 1976 for the basic facts, and McLaughlin 1995, Nakamura 1996, Paul 2002, Sabel 2002, and Pearson 2005 for various analyses). This pattern is sometimes expressed as an accessibility constraint, such that only triggers can be focused, or that only triggers can undergo (A'-)extraction. However, the focus phrase position differs from the clause-final trigger position in terms of the range of constituents that can occur there. For instance, the focus may be an indefinite noun phrase, whereas the trigger must be formally definite, as shown in (5) (Keenan 1976). In addition, certain types of PP adjuncts and adverbials can be focused (6), whereas only noun phrases can act as the trigger (Paul 1999, 2001).

(5) a.   *Mpianatra   no   nanoratra   ilay   taratasy*
            student   NO   Pst.AT.write   that   letter
            '[A student]$_F$ wrote that letter'

     b. * *Nanoratra   ilay   taratasy   mpianatra*
            Pst.AT.write   that   letter   student
            'A student wrote that letter'

(6)   *Tamin'   ny   penina   no   nanoratra   taratasy   ny   mpianatra*
            Pst.with   Det   pen   NO   Pst.AT.write   letter   Det   student
            'The student wrote a letter [with a pen]$_F$'

This suggests that the focus phrase does not raise into its surface position by passing through the trigger position, as some authors have claimed (e.g., McLaughlin 1995). Instead of saying that only triggers can be focused/extracted, the correct generalization appears to be that [i] when the focus phrase is a nominal constituent, it must correspond to a gap within the *no*-phrase, and [ii] if the *no*-phrase contains a gap, that gap must function as a trigger (i.e., control the voice of the verb).

      The focus construction is quite widespread in Malagasy. Note, for example, that wh-questions commonly take the form of a focus construction, with the wh-phrase occupying the focus position:

(7) a.   *Iza   no   nanoratra   taratasy   tamin'   ny   penina?*
            who   NO   Pst.AT.write   letter   with   Det   pen
            'Who wrote a letter with the pen?'

     b.   *Inona   no   nosoratan'   ny   mpianatra   tamin'   ny   penina?*
            what   NO   Pst.TT.write   Det   student   with   Det   pen
            'What did the student write with the pen?'

Dahl (1986), Pearson (2001, 2005), and especially Paul (1999, 2001) and Potsdam (2006a,b), treat the Malagasy focus construction as structurally comparable to the pseudo-cleft construction in English. Paul and Potsdam argue specifically that the focus constitutes the matrix predicate of the clause (or is perhaps contained within the matrix predicate, as the complement of a null copula), while the *no*-phrase is a nominal constituent, kind of headless relative clause or free relative, which acts as the matrix trigger. This analysis is schematized in (8a,b), which show the structure of (1a) and (2), respectively:[3]

(8) a.   [$_{PredP}$ *nanoratra taratasy tamin'ny penina*] [$_{Trigger}$ *ny mpianatra*]
            'The student wrote a letter with a pen'

     b.   [$_{PredP}$ *ny mpianatra*] [$_{Trigger}$ *no nanoratra taratasy tamin'ny penina*]
            'The one who wrote a letter with a pen (is) the student'

As I discuss below, the evidence for treating the focus as the matrix predicate is quite compelling. However, there are problems with treating the *no*-phrase as a headless relative clause—e.g., interpreting *no nanoratra taratasy tamin'ny penina* in (8b) as a definite description, meaning 'the *x* such that *x* wrote a letter with a pen'. For one thing, in adjunct focus sentences like (6), the *no*-phrase does not look like a headless relative, insofar as it does not appear to contain a gap: the trigger position within the *no*-phrase is filled by an overt element.

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[3] Note that Sabel (2002, 2003) disputes this treatment of focus-fronting, arguing that focused constituents undergo movement to SpecCP, with *no* generated in C^0 (McLaughlin 1995 takes a similar approach). See the authors cited above for arguments against this analysis.

In order to determine the correct analysis of the *no*-phrase, we need to consider the identity of the particle *no* itself. Paul and Potsdam treat *no* as a kind of determiner or relative clause marker; however, it never functions as such outside of the focus construction. On the other hand, *no* does occur outside the focus construction in sentences like (9). Here *no* seems to act as a subordinator, roughly comparable to English *when*, which links two full clauses to form a complex sentence, marking a relationship of temporal overlap. (To the best of my knowledge, sentences of this sort have heretofore been overlooked in the literature on the focus construction.)

(9) a. *Nandoko   ny   trano aho   **no** nandalo   ny   namako*
         Pst.AT.paint Det   house 1sNom NO   Pst.AT.pass Det   friend.1s
         'I was painting the house when my friend passed by'

     b. *Efa   nanomboka   ny   dinika   **no** tonga   Rangahy*
         already   Pst.AT.begin Det   discussion NO   arrived Monsieur
         'The meeting had already begun when the gentleman arrived'

In this paper, I give a syntactic and semantic overview of clause linking with *no*. I argue that *no* is a complementizer or subordinating conjunction, and provide evidence that the *no*-phrase in (9) is a kind of adverbial clause whose function is to introduce a backgrounded (presupposed) event, for which the event or state of affairs denoted by the matrix clause provides an aspectual frame. I then extend this analysis to include the focus construction. I propose that the focus construction is merely a special case of the construction in (9), distinctive only in that the matrix clause consists of a non-verbal predicate and an empty trigger.

I begin my discussion by reviewing the major arguments for and against the pseudo-cleft analysis of the focus construction, as proposed by Paul (1999, 2001) and Potsdam (2006a,b). In section 2 I consider evidence in favor of treating the focus phrase as (contained within) the matrix predicate, while in section 3 I argue against treating the *no*-phrase as a headless relative. In section 4 I provide additional examples and discussion of the construction in (9), where *no* functions as a clause linker. In sections 5 and 6 I consider the information structure of sentences with clause-linking *no*, showing how it parallels the information structure of the focus construction. Then in section 7 I consider some of the consequences of treating the focus construction as a special case of the clause-linking construction. Section 8 summarizes the paper.

2. Evidence for the pseudo-cleft analysis: Focused constituents as predicates

According to the pseudo-cleft analysis of the focus construction, the focus constitutes the main predicate of the clause, of which the *no*-phrase is predicated. As such, focused nominals—bracketed in (10a)—are expected to pattern syntactically with predicate nominals in copular sentences (10b), and with verbal predicate phrases in non-focus sentences (10c), but to behave differently from triggers and other non-focused arguments.

(10) a. [*Mpianatra*] *no*   *nanoratra*   *ny*   *taratasy*
          student   NO   Pst.AT.write Det   letter
          'The one who wrote the letter is a student'

      b. [*Mpianatra*] *ny*   *rahalahiko*
          student   Det   brother.1s
          'My brother is a student'

  c. [*Nanoratra ny taratasy*] *ny rahalahiko*
     Pst.AT.write Det letter Det brother.1s
     'My brother wrote the letter'

There is considerable evidence that this is correct. For instance, Paul (2001) shows that the yes/no question particle *ve*, which occurs at the right edge of the matrix predicate phrase in unmarked sentences (11a), immediately follows the focused constituent in focus constructions (11b). Moreover, *ve* may not occur within the *no*-phrase, as shown in (11c); this follows if the predicate following *no* is embedded in some sort of subordinate clause, inasmuch as *ve* is confined to matrix clauses (embedded yes/no questions are formed using the complementizer *raha* 'if/when').

(11) a. *Manoratra taratasy **ve** Rabe?*
    AT.write letter Qu Rabe
    'Is Rabe writing a letter?'

  b. *Rabe **ve** no manoratra taratasy?*
    Rabe Qu NO AT.write letter
    'Is it *Rabe* who is writing a letter?'

  c. * *Rabe no manoratra taratasy **ve**?*
    Rabe NO AT.write letter Qu
    'Is it *Rabe* who is writing a letter?'

In addition, the focus behaves like verbal and nominal predicates (12a,b) in that it can be negated with *tsy* (12c).[4] As (13) shows, non-focused nominal arguments may not be negated.

(12) a. ***Tsy** nanoratra ny taratasy ny mpianatra*
    Neg Pst.AT.write Det letter Det student
    'The student didn't write the letter'

  b. ***Tsy** mpianatra ny rahalahiko*
    Neg student Det brother.1s
    'My brother is not a student'

  c. ***Tsy** mpianatra no nanoratra ny taratasy*
    Neg student NO Pst.AT.write Det letter
    'It wasn't a student who wrote the letter'

(13) a. * *Nanoratra ny taratasy **tsy** ny mpianatra*
    Pst.AT.write Det letter Neg Det student
    'Not the student wrote the letter'

  b. * *Nanoratra **tsy** taratasy ny mpianatra*
    Pst.AT.write Neg letter Det student
    'The student wrote not a letter' *or* 'The student wrote no letter(s)'

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[4] Negation can also occur inside the *no*-phrase, in which case the focus phrase is interpreted outside its scope (e.g., compare (12c) with *Mpianatra no tsy nanoratra ny taratasy* 'It was a student who didn't write the letter'). This is of course consistent with the pseudo-cleft analysis, since there is nothing to prevent the predicate within the headless relative clause from being negated.

The pattern in (12) and (13) is not due to a requirement that the negative particle come at the beginning of the clause. In addition to the focus construction, Malagasy has a second strategy for fronting arguments: As shown in (14a), contrastive topics normally occur at the beginning of the clause, separated from the predicate by the particle *dia*. Temporal adverbials (and other scene-setting elements) can also be fronted using the *dia* construction (14b). It is generally assumed that fronted topics and adverbials are not predicates, like focus phrases, but dislocated constituents, occupying a specifier or XP-adjoined position high in the left periphery of the clause (whether they raise into this position or are base-generated there, or whether both options are possible, is a matter of debate; see Paul 1999, 2001 and Flegg 2003 for discussion of this construction).

(14) a.   *Ny   mpianatra   **dia**   nanoratra   taratasy   omaly*
             Det   student   DIA   Pst.AT.write letter   yesterday
             '(As for) the student, (s/he) wrote a letter yesterday'

      b.   *Omaly   **dia**   nanoratra   taratasy ny   mpianatra*
             yesterday DIA   Pst.AT.write   letter   Det   student
             'Yesterday, the student wrote a letter'

Returning to negation, we see that unlike focus phrases, fronted topics and adverbials cannot be negated (15a); instead, negation must follow *dia* (15b) (Paul 1999, 2001). Assuming that fronted topics are dislocated arguments rather than predicates, this follows if the negative particle *tsy* occurs at the left edge of the predicate phrase, rather than the left edge of the clause.

(15) a. * **Tsy**   *i   Bakoly   dia nanapaka   bozaka omaly*
           Neg   Det Bakoly DIA Pst.AT.cut grass   yesterday
           ('Not Bakoly, she cut the grass yesterday')

      b.   *I   Bakoly dia   **tsy**   nanapaka   bozaka omaly*
           Det Bakoly DIA Neg Pst.AT.cut   grass   yesterday
           'Bakoly, she didn't cut the grass yesterday'

Potsdam (2006b) gives additional evidence showing that focus phrases pattern as matrix predicates while fronted topics do not. As illustrated below, the modal *tokony* 'should' can combine with a verbal predicate (16a) or with a focus phrase (16b), but not with a fronted topic (16c). This pattern can be explained if the semantic type of *tokony* is such that it can select predicates but not arguments (much like the negative particle *tsy*).

(16) a.   **Tokony** *hamangy   an-dRabe   Rasoa*
             should   Irr.AT.visit Acc-Rabe   Rasoa
             'Rasoa should visit Rabe'

      b.   **Tokony** *Rasoa   no hamangy   an-dRabe*
             should   Rasoa   NO Irr.AT.visit Acc-Rabe
             'It should be Rasoa who visits Rabe'

      c. * **Tokony** *Rasoa   dia hamangy   an-dRabe*
             should   Rasoa   DIA Irr.AT.visit Acc-Rabe
             ('Rasoa, she should visit Rabe' *or* 'Given that it should be Rasoa, she will visit Rabe')

Finally, consider the emphatic particle *tena* 'really, indeed'. Potsdam shows that this element can precede a verbal predicate (17a) or focus phrase (17b), but cannot precede a fronted topic (17c). Instead, it must

occur between *dia* and the verb (17d). If we assume that *tena* targets the left edge of a predicate phrase, this provides additional evidence that focus phrases behave as matrix predicates in a pseudo-cleft-like construction, while fronted topics do not.

(17) a. ***Tena***   *hovidin'*   *ny*   *zaza*   *ny*   *fiaramanidina*
              indeed   Irr.TT.buy Det child   Det airplane
              'The child will indeed buy the airplane'

      b. ***Tena***   *Rabe*   *no*   *mahandro*   *vary*
              indeed   Rabe   NO   AT.cook   rice
              'It is indeed Rabe who cooks rice'

      c. * ***Tena***   *ny*   *fiaramanidina*   *dia*   *hovidin'*   *ny*   *zaza*
              indeed   Det airplane   DIA Irr.TT.buy Det child
              'Indeed the airplane, the child will buy (it)'

      d. *Ny*   *fiaramanidina*   *dia*   ***tena***   *hovidin'*   *ny*   *zaza*
              Det airplane   DIA indeed Irr.TT.buy Det child
              'The airplane, the child will indeed buy (it)'

3. A challenge for the pseudo-cleft analysis: The status of the no-phrase

Although there is general consensus (*pace* Sabel 2002, 2003) that the focus phrase is the matrix predicate, there is less agreement on the treatment of the *no*-phrase. As I mentioned above, Paul (1999, 2001) and Potsdam (2006a,b) analyze the *no*-phrase as an individual-denoting nominal constituent, a type of headless relative clause. This headless relative acts as the matrix trigger of the clause, standing in a predication relation with the focus-fronted constituent. For example, (18) below may be paraphrased 'The x such that x wrote that letter (is) a student'.

(18)   *Mpianatra*   *no*   *nanoratra*   *ilay*   *taratasy*
              student   NO   Pst.AT.write that   letter
              'It was a student who wrote that letter'

There are at least two objections that one could raise to this analysis, the first having to do with the identity of the particle *no*. Paul (2001) tentatively identifies *no* as the determiner head of the DP containing the headless relative clause. However, as Law (2005) points out, *no* does not seem to function as a determiner outside of the focus construction. Instead, the usual determiner is *ny* (19a-c). Potsdam (2006a) analyzes *no* as a special relative complementizer. But outside of the focus construction, relative clauses are introduced by a different element, the operator *izay* (19b) (usually optional). *Izay* clauses can also occur as arguments by themselves, roughly equivalent to free relatives in English (19d). In addition, a headless relative construction can be formed simply by omitting the head noun, so that the modifying relative clause immediately follows the determiner (19c). Crucially, *no* may not be used in place of either *ny* or *izay* in any of the sentences in (19).[5]

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[5] In support of his claim that *no* is a relative complementizer, Potsdam (2006a) notes that this particle can alternate with *izay* under certain circumstances. For example, when an indefinite quantifier of the form *(na) X na X*—e.g., *(na) iza na iza* 'someone, whoever' (< *iza* 'who')—takes a clausal modifier denoting its range of quantification, that modifier may be headed by either *no* or *izay*:

(i)   a. *Na*   *iza*   *na*   *iza*   ***no***   *tsy*   *mamafa*   *lalana*   *dia*   *voasazy*
              or   who   or   who   NO   Neg   AT.sweep road   DIA Pass.punish
              'Whoever doesn't sweep the road will be punished'

(19) a.   *Hitako* [**ny**   *vehivavy*]
            see.1s   Det woman
            'I saw the woman'

      b.   *Hitako* [**ny**   *vehivavy*   **(izay)** *namaky*   *ny*   *boky*]
            see.1s   Det woman   Rel   Pst.AT.read Det   book
            'I saw the woman who was reading the book'

      c.   *Hitako* [**ny**   Ø   *namaky*   *boky*]
            see.1s   Det   Pst.AT.read book
            'I saw the (ones) who were reading books'

      d.   *Tsy   fanta-dRakoto*   [**izay** *nanasa*   *lamba   omaly*   ]
            Neg   known.Lnk-Rakoto   Rel Pst.AT.wash clothes yesterday
            'Rakoto doesn't know who washed clothes yesterday'

A second problem with analyzing the *no*-phrase as a headless relative comes from adjunct focus senten-
ces. Recall that not only nominals, but also PPs and certain kinds of adverbials can be focused, with AT
marking on the verb, as in (20a) (from Paul 1999). Here it is unlikely that the *no*-phrase is interpreted as a
headless relative, since it does not appear to contain a gap (the trigger position within the *no*-phrase is
filled). To account for such cases, Paul suggests that the *no*-phrase here denotes an event rather than an
individual—i.e., the meaning is something like '(The event of) Bakoly cutting the grass (is) with a knife'.
However, Law (1995) points out that this explanation is problematic for cases of long-distance focusing,
such as (20b). This latter sentence cannot be taken to mean '(The event of) Rasoa saying that Bakoly cut
the grass (is) with a knife', where 'with a knife' is predicated of the saying event. Rather, 'with a knife' is
associated with the event denoted by the embedded clause.

(20) a.   *Amin' ny   antsy no   manapaka bozaka i   Bakoly*
            with   Det knife NO   AT.cut   grass   Det Bakoly
            'It's with the knife that Bakoly is cutting the grass'

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      b.   *Na iza na iza   **izay** tsy   mamafa   lalana dia   voasazy*
            or who or who Rel Neg AT.sweep road   DIA Pass.punish
            'Whoever doesn't sweep the road will be punished'

However, Law (2005) argues that (ia) and (ib) are not structurally equivalent. Phrases of the form *(na) X na X izay*
... pattern syntactically as noun phrases, while those of the form *(na) X na X no* ... do not. For example, the former
but not the latter can function as the complement of a preposition:

(ii)   *Handihy   amin' iza   na iza { **izay** / * **no** } tonga   aloha i   Rabe*
            Irr.AT.dance with   who or who Rel   NO   arrived first   Det Rabe
            'Rabe will dance with whoever comes first'

I suggest tentatively that in (ib), *na iza na iza izay tsy mamafa lalana* 'whoever doesn't sweep the road' is a trigger
DP which has been topic-fronted; whereas in (ia), *na iza na iza no tsy mamafa lalana* is a clause containing a focus-
ed indefinite quantifier, which has been conjoined with the clause *voasazy* using the clause linker *dia* 'then' (see
footnote 14). Example (ia) might be more literally translated: 'If it's someone or other who doesn't sweep the road,
then (that someone) will be punished' (i.e., supposing it is true of some *x* that *x* doesn't sweep the road, *x* will be
punished).

b. *Amin' ny antsy   no   nolazain-dRasoa   fa   manapaka bozaka i   Bakoly*
with   Det knife NO Pst.TT.say-Rasoa that AT.cut   grass   Det Bakoly
'It's with the knife that Rasoa said that Bakoly is cutting the grass'

Based on such examples, Law (2005) proposes an alternative to the pseudo-cleft analysis. He concurs with Paul and Potsdam that the focus construction is biclausal, and that the focus phrase is (contained within) the matrix clause. However, he argues that the focus phrase occupies the specifier of a null copular head 'BE', which selects the *no*-phrase as its complement. Under this analysis, the *no*-phrase is treated as an event-denoting expression (a full clause) embedded within a copular predicate, rather than an individual-denoting expression functioning as the trigger of the matrix clause.[6]

Interestingly, neither of the above challenges to the pseudo-cleft analysis—the uncertain status of *no*, and possibility of adjunct focus in AT clauses—applies to constituent focus in Tagalog, a closely related language. Like Malagasy, Tagalog is a predicate-initial language where focused constituents undergo fronting and are separated from the rest of the clause by a particle. This is shown in (21a,b) below (taken from Richards 1998), where the latter sentence illustrates contrastive focus of the external argument. In Tagalog, as in Malagasy, the focus phrase necessarily controls the voice of the following verb. However, unlike in Malagasy, the focus particle (*ang*) is quite clearly a determiner—specifically, the determiner used to mark common noun triggers in non-focus sentences (cf. *ang lalaki* in (21a)). Hence the Tagalog counterpart of the *no*-phrase is transparently a nominal expression functioning as the matrix trigger, just as the Paul/Potsdam pseudo-cleft analysis would lead us to expect.

(21) a. *Bumili   ang   lalaki ng tela*   Tagalog
AT.Pf.buy TDet man   Det cloth
'The man bought cloth'

b. *Lalaki **ang**   bumili   ng tela*
man   TDet AT.Pf.buy Det cloth
'[The man]$_F$ bought cloth' (lit. 'The one who bought cloth is a man')

Moreover, the construction in (21b) cannot be used to focus adjuncts. When an adjunct is interpreted contrastively, it undergoes simple fronting to preverbal position, as in (22) (from Richards 1998), where the focused adjunct is the temporal interrogative element *kailan*. Notice that the sentence is ungrammatical if the focus marker *ang* follows the adjunct.

(22)   *Kailan (***ang**) bumili   ang lalaki ng   tela?*   Tagalog
when   TDet AT.Pf.buy TDet man   Det cloth
'When did the man buy cloth?'

That (21b) is a pseudo-cleft construction while (22) involves simple fronting is shown by the placement of second-position clitics, such as the first person singular (non-trigger) pronominal *ko*: In (23a), with argument focus, *ko* appears inside the *ang*-phrase, immediately following the verb; while in (23b), with adjunct focus, *ko* immediately follows the fronted adjunct (examples from Kroeger 1993). Clitics in Tagalog are clause-bound (Kroeger 1993, Richards 1998). Hence, the position of *ko* in (23) shows that the argument focus construction is biclausal (*ko* is contained in a relative clause embedded in the *ang*-phrase) while the adjunct focus construction is monoclausal, with the focus constituent raising to the left periphery of the clause.

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[6] Law argues that in most cases, the focus-fronted constituent raises out of the *no*-phrase into the specifier of the copula, rather than being base-generated in its surface position. He has little to say about the status of *no*, identifying it merely as a functional element heading the focus projection FocP within the embedded clause.

(23) a.   *Itong   tasa   ang   binili   **ko**   sa   pamilihan*   Tagalog
                this.Lnk cup   TDet TT.Pf.buy 1s Obl.Det market
                'This cup is what I bought at the market'

      b.   *Para kay   Pedro **ko** binili   ang   laruan*
                for   Obl.Det Pedro 1s   TT.Pf.buy TDet toy
                'For Pedro I bought a toy'

Why should the Tagalog focus construction differ from its Malagasy counterpart in just these respects? I propose that whereas the Tagalog focus construction (with *ang*) instantiates the pseudo-cleft structure Paul and Potsdam argue for, its Malagasy counterpart (with *no*) does not. In its place, I propose a stucture for the Malagasy focus construction which incorporates properties of both the Paul/Potsdam approach and the alternative suggested by Law (2005). While I agree with Paul and Potsdam that the focus-fronted constituent is a genuine predicate (as opposed to the subject/specifier of a null copula), I agree with Law that the *no*-phrase is not an individual-denoting DP constituent (a headless relative), but rather an event-denoting CP constituent.

    The key to the correct analysis of the Malagasy focus construction, I believe, lies in pinpointing the category and function of *no*. This in turn involves identifying contexts other than the focus construction in which *no* can appear. As discussed above, *no* does not appear in non-focus contexts as a determiner or relative complementizer/operator. However, *no* is sometimes used as a clause linker. I consider the properties of the clause linker *no* in the following two sections.

4. The focus particle as a clause linker

Alongside the focus construction discussed above and illustrated again in (24) below, we find sentences like those in (25) ((25a) is adapted from a textual example, while (25c) is taken from Rahajarizafy 1960). Here, *no* is preceded by what looks like a full clause, consisting of a predicate phrase and a trigger, rather than a DP or PP.

(24)   *Ny mpianatra **no**   nanoratra   ny   taratasy*
              Det student   NO   Pst.AT.write Det letter
              'It was the student who wrote the letter'

(25) a.   *Mbola tanora izy   **no** tonga   tany   Amerika*
                still   young   3Nom NO arrived Pst.there America
                'S/he was still young when (s/he) came to America'

      b.   *Nijery   fahitalavitra aho   **no** injay naneno   ny   telefaonina*
                Pst.AT.look.at television   1sNom NO voilà Pst.AT.ring Det telephone
                'I was watching television when suddenly the phone rang'

      c.   *Efa   nanomboka ny dinika   **no** tonga   Rangahy*
                already Pst.AT.begin Det discussion NO arrived Monsieur
                'The meeting had already begun when the gentleman arrived'
                (original gloss: 'Déjà l'entretien commença, lorsque le monsieur arriva')

For purposes of discussion, I will refer to the construction in (25) as the TEMPORAL *NO* CONSTRUCTION. Here, *no* functions similarly to English *when* or French *lorsque*, establishing a temporal relation between

two eventualities (events or states of affairs), each denoted by a full clause.[7] As I discuss below, there is evidence that the clause preceding *no* is the matrix clause, while the clause following *no* is embedded. Hence I analyze the *no* in (25) as a kind of subordinator (a complementizer or subordinating conjunction). In this section I consider some of the formal properties of the temporal *no* construction, before turning to its information structure properties in section 5. I then compare the temporal *no* construction with the focus construction in (24), and conclude that the subordinator *no* and the focus particle *no* are one and the same.

4.1. Event framing and constraints on event type

In the examples in (25) above, the eventuality expressed by the first (matrix) clause introduces a temporal context or orientation—or, in the terminology of Chung and Timberlake (1985), an EVENT FRAME—for the eventuality expressed by the second (embedded) clause. In addition, a temporal ordering is imposed on the two clauses: The time of the event frame either includes the time of the framed event, as in (25a,b), or the time of the event frame properly precedes the time of the framed event, as in (25c). (Alternatively, perhaps the time of the event frame always includes the time of the framed event, and in (25c) the event frame denotes the state resulting from a telic event—rather than an activity, as in (25b).)

   Crucially, the time of the event frame never follows the time of the framed event. Hence, in (26) it is understood that plate fell first, and then the speaker grabbed it: this sentence can describe a situation where the speaker picked up a fallen plate from the floor, but not a situation where the speaker grabbed the plate out of a cupboard and then dropped it.

(26)   *Nianjera   ny   lovia   no   noraisiko*
          Pst.AT.fall Det   plate   NO   Pst.TT.take.1s
          'The plate had (already) fallen when I grabbed it'
          ≠ 'The plate fell when I grabbed it'

Given its framing function, there appear to be restrictions on the event type (aktionsart) of the matrix clause. For example, (27a) below is well-formed, with the first clause interpreted as durative and the second clause as more or less punctual: the event of Rakoto watching television is interrupted by the ringing of the phone. However (27b), with the two clauses reversed, was judged unacceptable by most of the speakers I consulted:

(27) a. *Nijery   fahitalavitra Rakoto no   naneno   ny   telefaonina*
          Pst.AT.look.at television   Rakoto NO   Pst.AT.ring Det   telephone
          'Rakoto was watching television when the phone rang'

      b. # *Naneno   ny   telefaonina   no   nijery   fahitalavitra Rakoto*
          Pst.AT.ring   Det   telephone   NO   Pst.AT.look.at television   Rakoto
          ('The phone rang when Rakoto watched television')

This is presumably because activities (and states) are plausible event frames for highly punctual events, but not vice versa. One speaker I consulted suggested that (27b) was acceptable, but only under a pragmatically odd reading where the phone rang for some time, and rather than answering it Rakoto chose to start watching television instead ('It was while the phone was ringing that Rakoto began watching television'). In order to make sense of (27b), it seems, the first clause must be interpreted as relatively durative, while the second clause is interpreted as punctual, its predicate referring to the beginning point of the watching event rather than to the event as a whole.

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[7] Notice that in (25a) there is no overt trigger in the second clause. In Malagasy, it is common—for some speakers, virtually obligatory—to omit the trigger of a clause when it corefers with the trigger of an earlier clause in the same sentence or stretch of discourse. See section 7.2 below for discussion.

Compare also the sentences in (28). In (28a), *natory* 'slept' is most naturally understood as durative: the leaving event is properly contained within the time frame established by the sleeping event. In (28b), which switches the order of the clauses, the relationship between the two events is reversed. Here *natory* is most naturally interpreted as punctual, and taken to refer to the beginning point of the sleeping event ('went to sleep'). The leaving event—or rather, its result—provides the frame for the beginning point of the sleeping event.[8]

(28) a. *Natory   aho   no lasa   ny   vadiko*
          Pst.AT.sleep 1sNom   NO left   Det spouse.1s
          'I was sleeping when my husband left'

      b. *Lasa ny   vadiko   no   natory   aho*
          left   Det   spouse.1s NO   Pst.AT.sleep 1sNom
          'My husband was gone when I went (back) to sleep'

4.2. Constraints on voice

In some cases, the choice of voice form seems to affect the acceptability of the temporal *no* construction. For example, when the matrix clause is transitive, there is a strong tendency to prefer the actor-trigger (AT) form of the clause over the theme-trigger (TT) form. In many cases, the TT form was flat-out rejected by my consultants:

(29) a. *Nandoko   ny   trano aho   no nandalo   ny   namako*
          Pst.AT.paint Det house 1sNom NO Pst.AT.pass Det   friend.1s
          'I was painting the house when my friend passed by'

      b. * *Nolokoiko   ny   trano no nandalo   ny   namako*
          Pst.TT.paint.1s Det   house NO Pst.AT.pass Det   friend.1s
          'I was painting the house when my friend passed by'

(30) a. *Nitady   ny kiraroko aho   no injay naneno   ny   telefaonina*
          Pst.AT.look.for Det shoe.1s   1sNom NO voilà Pst.AT.ring Det telephone
          'I was looking for my shoes when the phone rang'

      b. * *Notadiaviko   ny   kiraroko no injay naneno   ny   telefaonina*
          Pst.TT.look.for.1s Det shoe.1s NO voilà Pst.AT.ring Det telephone
          'I was looking for my shoes when the phone rang'

This pattern seems consistent with the observation that, under certain poorly understood conditions, the choice of voice form affects the aspectual interpretation of the clause (Pearson 2001). It seems that, all else being equal, TT clauses are interpreted as more telic, more punctual, more perfective, or otherwise higher in transitivity (in the sense of Hopper and Thompson 1980) than their AT counterparts. For example, speakers I consulted interpreted the AT clause in (31a) below as describing a durative activity, where the woman applies continuous force to the cart to move it forward, while the TT clause in (31b) describes a punctual achievement, lacking a continuous application of force:

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[8] Importantly, uninflected root predicates such as *lasa* tend to be ambiguous between a change-of-state reading, in which case they denote punctual events (= 'leave'), and a resultative reading, where they denote states (= 'have left, be gone/absent').

(31) a.   *Nanosika   sarety   ny   vehivavy*
            Pst.AT.push   cart   Det   woman
            'The woman pushed / was pushing a/the cart'

      b.   *Natosiky   ny   vehivavy   ilay   sarety*
            Pst.TT.push   Det   woman   that   cart
            'The woman gave that cart a push'

In other cases, the choice of AT inflection sometimes seems to place ASPECTUAL FOCUS (in the sense of Erteschik-Shir and Rapoport 1999) on the inception or activity component of the event, while TT inflection places aspectual focus on the endpoint or result. For instance, the TT clause in (32b) is construed as telic/perfective, with the temporal phrase *nandritra ny adiny roa* measuring the time from the inception of the event to its endpoint; whereas the AT clause in (32a) is construed as atelic/imperfective, with the measure phrase expressing the time from the inception to some arbitrary stopping point.

(32) a.   *Nanoratra   ny   taratasy nandritra   ny   adiny   roa   izy*
            Pst.AT.write Det letter   Pst.AT.last Det hour   two 3Nom
            'She wrote / was writing the letter for two hours' (but didn't necessarily finish it)

      b.   *Nosoratany   nandritra   ny   adiny   roa   ny   taratasy*
            Pst.TT.write.3 Pst.AT.last Det hour   two Det letter
            'She wrote the letter in two hours'

Returning to (29) and (30), it is possible that the (b) sentences were judged unacceptable for much the same reason as (27b): TT morphology favors a (relatively) punctual reading for the event, and (certain kinds of) punctual events are less than fully natural as frames for other events. Interestingly, in those cases where speakers judge that the AT and TT forms were both acceptable in the matrix clause of the temporal *no* construction, they generally report a difference in meaning between the two. AT inflection forces a reading where the framing event properly contains the framed event (cf. (25a,b) and (28a) above), but with TT inflection it is understood that the framing event precedes the framed event (cf. (25c) and (28b)):[9]

(33) a.   *Nijery   fahitalavitra Rakoto   no   naneno   ny   telefaonina*
            Pst.AT.look.at television   Rakoto   NO Pst.AT.ring Det telephone
            'Rakoto was watching television when the phone rang'

      b.   *Nojeren-dRakoto   ny   fahitalavitra no   naneno   ny   telefaonina*
            Pst.TT.look.at-Rakoto Det television   NO Pst.AT.ring Det telephone
            'Rakoto had watched television when the phone rang'

(34) a.   *Nijinja   vary ilay mpamboly no   avy   ny   orana*
            Pst.AT.harvest rice that farmer   NO came Det rain
            'The farmer was harvesting rice when it rained / began to rain'

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[9] It is unclear why (29b) would be judged ungrammatical, rather than assigned the reading 'I had (already) painted the house when my friend passed by'; likewise for (30b). This might have to do with how readily a given predicate can be interpreted as denoting the result of an activity rather than the activity itself. Clearly further investigation of the relation between voice and aspect is needed.

b.   *Nojinjain'*   *ilay mpamboly ny vary no avy   ny orana*
Pst.TT.harvest that farmer   Det rice   NO came Det rain
'The farmer had finished harvesting the rice when it rained / began to rain'

5. Clause linking *no* and information structure

According to one of my consultants, in (35) the speaker is emphasizing the writing event over the breaking event. It appears that the use of *no* as a clause linker imposes a certain information structure on the sentence, where the first clause provides the INFORMATION FOCUS, while the content of the second clause is PRESUPPOSED.

(35)   *Nanoratra   ilay taratasy Rabe   no injay tapaka   ny   pensilihazo*
Pst.AT.write that letter   Rabe   NO voilà broken Det pencil
'Rabe was writing the letter when suddenly the pencil broke'
or 'It was while Rabe was writing the letter that the pencil suddenly broke'

As evidence for this, note that speakers readily accept clefts as translation equivalents of temporal *no* sentences, where the clefted constituent corresponds to the first (matrix) clause. Occasionally speakers even volunteer clefts as translations, as with the French glosses in (36). I construe these as attempts to convey that the clause preceding *no* is focused, while the clause following *no* is interpreted as given information.

(36) a.   *Lasa ny vadiko   no natory   aho*
left   Det spouse.1s NO Pst.AT.sleep 1sNom
'It was when my husband (had) left that I went back to sleep'
(original gloss: 'C'est quand mon mari est parti que je me rendormi')

b.   *Nitsangatsangana aho   no hitako   ny   bokiko very*
Pst.AT.Redup.walk 1sNom NO found.1s Det book.1s lost
'It was while I was walking in the woods that I found my lost book'
(original gloss: 'C'est pendant que je me suis promené que j'ai retrouvé mon livre perdu')

Additional evidence comes from the question-answer pairs given below. Speakers report that (37a,b) is a felicitous question-answer pair. Since (37a) presupposes that the pencil broke, presumably (37b) does as well (while asserting that Rabe was writing the letter when this happened). On the other hand, (38a,b) is not an acceptable question-answer pair, since (38a) does not presuppose that the pencil broke. Instead, speakers volunteered (38c) (optionally including a subordinate clause headed by *rehefa* 'when/while') as an appropriate answer to (38a).

(37) a.   Q: *Oviana   no tapaka ny   pensilihazo?*
when   NO broken Det pencil
'When did the pencil break?'

b.   A: *Nanoratra   ilay taratasy Rabe no tapaka ny   pensilihazo*
Pst.AT.write that letter   Rabe NO broken Det pencil
'It was while Rabe was writing the letter that the pencil broke'

(38) a.   Q: *Inona no nahazo   ny   pensilihazo?*
what   NO Pst.AT.get Det pencil
'What happened to the pencil?'

   b. # A: *Nanoratra   ilay   taratasy Rabe   no   tapaka   ny   pensilihazo*
        Pst.AT.write that   letter   Rabe   NO   broken Det   pencil
        'It was while Rabe was writing the letter that the pencil broke'

   c.   A: *Tapaka   ny   pensilihazo (rehefa nanoratra   ny   taratasy Rabe)*
        broken   Det   pencil   while   Pst.AT.write Det   letter   Rabe
        'The pencil broke (while Rabe was writing the letter)'

I conclude that the embedded clause headed by *no* is necessarily old information, providing a presupposed (discourse-given or accommodated) event with respect to which the proposition asserted by the main clause is interpreted. Typically the main clause asserts an event frame for the embedded clause, as discussed above. However, other kinds of relations between the two clauses appear to be possible as well. Consider the examples in (39), from Rahajarizafy (1960). Here the main clause asserts the reason or motivation for the event in the embedded clause. (Notice that in (39a) Rahajarizafy glosses the *no* clause as a conditional.)[10]

(39) a.   *Marary   angamba   i   Koto   no   tsy   nianatra*
        sick   perhaps   Det   Koto   NO   Neg   Pst.AT.study
        'Perhaps it's because Koto is sick that (he) didn't study'
        (original gloss: 'Si Koto n'a pas etudié, c'est que peut-être il est malade')

      b.   *Marary   angaha ianao   no   matory?*
        sick   Qu   2sNom   NO   AT.sleep
        'Are you sick, and that's why (you) are sleeping?'
        (original gloss: 'Es-tu malade pour que tu dormes?')

That that subordinator *no* should introduce a presupposition is hardly surprising, if it is in fact the same element as the focus particle *no*. Compare the temporal *no* construction in (40a) below with the focus construction in (40b): In both cases, the predicate preceding *no* maps to the focus domain of the sentence, while the constituent following *no* provides given/old information.

(40) a.   <u>FOCUS</u> ·············· <u>PRESUPPOSITION</u>
        *Mbola   tanora izy   **no** tonga   tany   Amerika*
        still   young 3Nom   NO   arrived Pst.there America
        'It was while he was still young that (he) came to America'

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[10] This conditional reading of the biclausal *no* construction appears to be less common than the temporal reading illustrated above. Consider (37b), for example: The speakers I consulted claim that this sentence would be an appropriate answer to the question 'When did the pencil break?', but not 'Why did the pencil break?'—despite the plausibility that there might be a cause-and-effect relation between the writing event and the breaking event.
    Rahajarizafy (1960) gives examples of yet another construction involving *no*, illustrated below. Here *no* occurs in combination with the linker *ka* 'and so' (i) or *kanefa* 'however' (ii). I have nothing insightful to say about this construction, except to note that in (i) the predicate following *no* seems to be presenting background information (Rahajarizafy glosses *no* using French *si* 'if', as he does in (39a)).

(i)   ***No** matanjaka, hoy i   Botity, **ka** nazeran'   ny   hazo dia tapaka   ny   feko?*
        NO strong   said Det Botity   so   Pst.TT.knock.down Det tree DIA broken Det thigh.1s
        'If (I'm so) strong, said Botity, then why did the tree knock (me) over and break my thigh?'

(ii)   ***No** miasa   ianao   **kanefa**   marary?*
        NO AT.work 2sNom   however   sick
        'How can you work when you're sick?'

b.   FOCUS   PRESUPPOSITION
    Rasoa   ***no***   *tonga*   *tany*   *Amerika*
    Rasoa   NO   arrived   Pst.there   America
    'It was *Rasoa* who came to America'

In the next section I present certain scopal parallels between the focus construction in (40b) and the temporal *no* construction in (40a). I go on to propose an analysis which treats the focus construction as a special case of the temporal *no* construction.

6.   The focus and temporal *no* constructions compared

Note for a start that the focus and temporal *no* constructions behave alike with respect to the scope of matrix negation. In both cases, when the constituent preceding *no* is negated, the *no*-phrase is interpreted as outside the scope of negation: (41a) entails (or at least strongly implicates) that somebody wrote the letter, and asserts that that individual was not Rasoa. Likewise, (41b) entails (or strongly implicates) that Rakoto left, but denies that the speaker was asleep when this event occurred.[11]

(41)   a.   *Tsy   Rasoa   no   nanoratra   ilay   taratasy*
        Neg   Rasoa   NO   Pst.AT.write   that   letter
        'It's not Rasoa who wrote that letter'

    b.   *Tsy   natory   aho   no   lasa   Rakoto*
        Neg   Pst.AT.sleep   1sNom   NO   left   Rakoto
        'I wasn't sleeping when Rakoto left' *or* 'It wasn't while I was sleeping that Rakoto left'

Similarly, the focus and temporal *no* constructions behave alike with regard to the scope and placement yes/no question particle *ve*. Recall that in unmarked sentences, *ve* appears between the predicate phrase and the trigger (cf. the examples in (1)). *Ve* behaves as an operator, taking scope over the portion of the sentence to its left.[12] Consider the examples below, which differ in the position of the locative PP *tany antokotany* 'in the garden', whether inside the predicate phrase (42a) or extraposed to the right of the trigger (42b). These sentences differ in whether that the PP is inside or outside the scope of *ve*: the first sentence might be paraphrased 'Is writing a letter in the garden what the student did?' (*ve* scopes over the PP), while the second would be paraphrased 'Is writing a letter what the student did in the garden?' (*ve* does not scope over the PP).

(42)   a.   *Nanoratra   taratasy   tany   an-tokotany   **ve**   ny   mpianatra?*
        Pst.AT.write   letter   Pst.there   Obl-garden   Qu   Det   student
        'Did the student [write a letter in the garden]F?'

    b.   *Nanoratra   taratasy   **ve**   ny   mpianatra   tany   an-tokotany?*
        Pst.AT.write   letter   Qu   Det   student   Pst.there   Obl-garden
        'Did the student [write a letter]F in the garden?'

In focus constructions, *ve* follows the focus phrase (43a), and may not occur within the *no*-clause (43b), as discussed in section 2. This is just where we expect *ve* to occur, given the observation that it scopes

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[11] When the predicate following *no* is negated, (41b) is judged unacceptable by the speakers I consulted (**Natory aho no tsy lasa Rakoto* 'It was while I was sleeping that Rakoto didn't leave'). I suspect that such sentences are not actually ungrammatical, but merely pragmatically deviant, insofar as it is odd to specify an event frame for an event that did not take place.

[12] Sentences with fronted topics (cf. (14)) are an exception to this generalization. See Paul (1999) for discussion.

over the portion of the clause to its left. Question operators operate over the focus domain of the clause, and in the focus construction it is the constituent preceding *no* which defines this domain.

(43) a.   *Rasoa **ve** no nanoratra   ilay taratasy?*
          Rasoa Qu NO Pst.AT.write that letter
          'Is it Rasoa who wrote that letter?'

   b. * *Rasoa no nanoratra   ilay taratasy **ve**?*
          Rasoa NO Pst.AT.write that letter   Qu
          'Is it Rasoa who wrote that letter?'

Turning to *ve*-placement in the temporal *no* construction, we see a comparable distribution: *ve* may occur in the first clause, either before (44a) or after (44b) the trigger; however, it may not occur in the second clause (44c).[13] As expected, the second clause is interpreted outside the scope of *ve*: (44a,b) presuppose that Rakoto came to America. Note that, inasmuch as *ve* is confined to root contexts (cf. section 2), the data in (44) provide evidence for treating the first clause as the matrix clause and the second clause as embedded.

(44) a.   *Mbola tanora **ve** Rakoto no tonga tany   Amerika?*
          still   young   Qu Rakoto NO   arrived Pst.there America
          'Was Rakoto still young when he came to America?'

   b. ? *Mbola tanora Rakoto **ve** no tonga tany   Amerika?*
          still   young   Rakoto Qu NO arrived Pst.there America
          'Was Rakoto still young when he came to America?'

   c. ?* *Mbola tanora Rakoto no tonga tany   Amerika **ve**?*
          still   young   Rakoto NO arrived Pst.there America Qu
          'Was Rakoto still young when he came to America?'

As a final piece of evidence suggesting that the focus and temporal *no* constructions are isomorphic, note that in a complex sentence containing the clause linker *no*, neither the trigger of the first conjunct nor the trigger of the second conjunct can itself be focused. In other words, the focus particle *no* and the subordinator *no* are mutually exclusive in the same sentence. Speakers I consulted rejected (45b,c) as "having too many *no*'s", and gave the grammatical paraphrases in (45a,b) (with the temporal subordinators *amin'* 'at, when' and *rehefa* 'while') in their place. This could be due to a semantic or processing constraint against a sentence having multiple foci, or against the focus (or presupposition) being itself partitioned into a focus and a presupposition.

(45) a.   *Nijery   fahitalavitra Rakoto **no** naneno   ny telefaonina*
          Pst.AT.look.at television   Rakoto NO Pst.AT.ring Det telephone
          'Rakoto was watching television when the phone rang'

   b. * *Rakoto **no** nijery   fahitalavitra **no** naneno   ny telefaonina*
          Rakoto NO Pst.AT.look.at television   NO Pst.AT.ring Det telephone
          'It's Rakoto who was watching television when the phone rang'

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[13] It is unclear to me why (44a) and (44b) are both judged grammatical (albeit with a definite speaker preference for the former), and whether there is a structural and scopal difference between the two. I set these questions aside for future investigation, noting merely that some speakers marginally allow *ve* to follow the matrix trigger under certain circumstances, even when no *no*-phrase is present.

c. * *Ny   telefaonina **no**   nijery   fahitalavitra Rakoto **no**   naneno*
       Det telephone   NO   Pst.AT.look.at television   Rakoto NO   Pst.AT.ring
       'It's the telephone that Rakoto was watching television when (it) rang'

(46) a.   *Rakoto **no**   nijery   fahitalavitra tamin'   ny   telefaonina   naneno*
            Rakoto NO   Pst.AT.look.at television   at/when Det telephone   Pst.AT.ring
            'It's Rakoto who was watching television at (the time when) the phone rang'

      b.   *Ny   telefaonina **no**   naneno   rehefa nijery   fahitalavitra Rakoto*
            Det telephone   NO   Pst.AT.ring while Pst.AT.look.at television   Rakoto
            'It's the telephone that rang while Rakoto was watching television'

7. The structure of the *no*-phrase revisited

Based on the data in the previous sections, we have reason to believe that sentences like (47a,b) are structurally identical, differing only in the apparent category (clause versus DP) of the constituent preceding *no*. This is the hypothesis that I will defend here. More specifically, I will argue that the focus construction in (47b) as a special case of the temporal *no* construction in (47a).

(47) a.   *Mbola tanora izy   no   tonga   tany   Amerika*
            still   young   3Nom NO arrived Pst.there America
            'S/he was still young when (s/he) came to America'

      b.   *Rasoa no   tonga   tany   Amerika*
            Rasoa   NO arrived Pst.there America
            'It's Rasoa who came to America'

In its broad outlines, my approach to the focus construction follows that of Paul (1999, 2001), Potsdam (2006a,b), and Law (1995), all three of whom treat focus sentences like (47b) as biclausal, with the focus phrase in the matrix clause and the predicate following *no* embedded. Like Paul and Potsdam, but unlike Law, I treat the focus phrase as the matrix predicate (Law treats it as the specifier of a null copula 'BE'). Like Law, but unlike Paul and Potsdam, I treat the *no*-phrase as an event-denoting constituent (a CP) rather than an individual-denoting constituent (a DP containing a headless relative clause). I differ from both Paul/Potsdam and Law regarding the position of the *no*-phrase: In the temporal *no* construction (47a), the *no*-phrase is neither the matrix trigger nor a complement, but is instead an adverbial clause extraposed to the right of the trigger (as adverbial clauses generally are in Malagasy). I assume the same is true of the *no*-phrase in the focus construction (47b). In the latter case, the matrix trigger is null, possibly an expletive element of some sort. My structures for (47a,b) are schematized in (48), where PredP stands for the matrix predicate phrase and the extraposed adverbial clause is labelled CP:

(48) a.   [$_{PredP}$ *mbola tanora*] [$_{Trigger}$ *izy*] [$_{CP}$ ***no** tonga tany Amerika*]

      b.   [$_{PredP}$ *Rasoa*] [$_{Trigger}$ Ø] [$_{CP}$ ***no** tonga tany Amerika*]

What are the semantics of the focus construction under this approach? For Paul and Potsdam, who treat the *no*-phrase as a headless relative occupying the trigger function, the semantic relation between the *no*-phrase and the focus phrase is one of (equative) predication between a topic and a comment: *Rasoa no tonga tany Amerika* means 'The *x* such that *x* came to America = Rasoa'. Under my analysis, the *no*-phrase is a full clause, and denotes a presupposed state of affairs rather than a presupposed individual. In both the focus and temporal *no* constructions, the *no*-phrase provides a logical or temporal context or contingency for the main clause. In this respect, the *no*-phrase is similar to a conditional clause (cf. (39)

above and (55) below), and the semantic relation between the *no*-phrase and the focus phrase is essentially one of implication ('if/when A, then B') rather than predication ('A is B'). Under this approach, a sentence like *Rasoa no tonga tany Amerika* might be paraphrased 'If/when/given that *x* came to America, *x* is Rasoa', or 'It's when *x* is Rasoa that *x* came to America' (I return to the nature of *x*, the gap in the *no*-phrase, below).

The discourse functional parallels between conditional constructions and topic-comment constructions (sentence-level predication) have been observed by a number of authors, notably Haiman (1978). Haiman notes that in topic-comment structures, the topic denotes an existentially presupposed entity, whose identification as discourse-relevant is a necessary precondition for the interpretation of the comment. When a topic is new or contrastive, its discourse-relevance is asserted by the speaker, and the fact that it is presupposed must be accommodated by the listener. Likewise in conditional constructions of the form 'if A then B', the conditional clause 'if A' establishes a presupposition for the event in the main clause 'B'—in this case, a presupposed eventuality rather than a presupposed discourse participant. As with topics, the propositional content of the conditional clause is asserted by the speaker, and its presuppositionality accommodated by the listener (even if only provisionally, as a hypothetical proposition). Haiman treats this function of establishing a presupposition as a defining property of topics, and hence he regards conditional clauses as a special kind of topic.[14] Insofar as this analysis is supported, my interpretation of the Malagasy focus construction (where the *no*-phrase is a kind of conditional clause) is not substantially different from that assumed by Paul and Potsdam (where the *no*-phrase is a topic-like trigger constituent): Under both approaches, the role of the *no*-phrase is to introduce a background, or framework, for the assertion contained within the matrix predicate (the focus phrase). However, my approach generalizes to the temporal *no* construction in (47a), where the relationship between the *no*-phrase and the main clause cannot be one of predication.

Before concluding this paper, I briefly consider some of the consequences of my treatment of the focus construction.

7.1. Adjunct focus revisited

As discussed in section 3, there are sentences in which the *no*-phrase does not look like a headless relative clause, in that it does not seem to contain a gap. Paul (1999, 2001) and Law (2005) point out examples like (49), in which a PP adjunct or adverbial is focused, and the constituent following *no* appears to be a complete clause containing an overt trigger (*Rasoa*).

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[14] Haiman supports his treatment by noting that contrastive topics and conditional clauses show formal parallels in many languages (see also Thompson and Longacre 1985, Bril 2005). Interestingly, Malagasy is one such language: As discussed briefly in section 3, the particle *dia* functions as a marker of fronted contrastive topics (ia). In addition, *dia* acts as a clause linker, commonly used to introduce the consequence (apodosis) in a conditional construction (ic). Moreover, when the contrastive topic is new (not previously mentioned in the discourse), it is optionally preceded by the conditional marker *raha* 'if', as in (ib) (Keenan 1976 refers to (ia) and (ib) as WEAK TOPICALIZATION and STRONG TOPICALIZATION, respectively). I leave the analysis of *dia*—and potential semantic and syntactic parallels between *dia* constructions and *no* constructions—as a subject for future research.

(i)   a.   *Rabe **dia** manoratra taratasy*
           Rabe DIA AT.write   letter
           'Rabe, he's writing a letter'

      b.   ***Raha** Rabe **dia** manoratra taratasy*
           if   Rabe DIA AT.write   letter
           'As for Rabe, he's writing a letter'

      c.   ***Raha** tsara ny andro **dia** hilomano   aho*
           if   good Det day   DIA Irr.AT.swim 1sNom
           'If the weather is nice, I will go swimming'

(49)   *Tamin' ny pensilihazo no nanoratra   ilay taratasy Rasoa*
        Pst.with Det pencil   NO Pst.AT.write that letter   Rasoa
        'It was with a pencil that Rasoa wrote the letter'

Under my approach, examples like (49), far from being a problem for the analysis of the focus construction, actually represent the syntax of this construction more transparently than nominal focus sentences like (47b). I have argued that the *no*-phrase is always a full clause, comprised of a predicate phrase and a trigger, and this is clearly the case in (49). The *no*-phrase establishes a presupposed state of affairs and stands in an implicational relation with the proposition denoted by the main clause, which in turn consists of the focus phrase predicated of an empty trigger. Under this approach, we might translate (49) roughly as 'Inasmuch as Rasoa wrote that letter, (it was) with a pencil', or 'It's when (it was) with a pencil that Rasoa wrote that letter' (the interpretation of 'with a pencil' as the instrument of the writing event being a matter of inference). Since there is no direct predication relation between the *no*-phrase and the focus phrase, there is no need to assume—as there is under the pseudo-cleft analysis—that the *no*-phrase contains a gap coindexed with the focus phrase.

7.2. The nature of the gap

What should we say about nominal focus sentences like (50), where the trigger position within the *no*-phrase is occupied by a gap? Here the *no*-phrase looks superficially like a headless relative, in conformity with the pseudo-cleft analysis of the focus construction.

(50)   *Rasoa* [*no   nanoratra   ilay taratasy* Ø]
        Rasoa   NO Pst.AT.write that letter
        'It's Rasoa who wrote the letter'

I claim that the phonologically null trigger in the *no*-phrase is not the kind of gap which previous analyses have assumed it to be. It is not a trace of the focus phrase, as in Law (1995), nor is it the trace of an empty operator coindexed with the focus phrase, as in Paul (1999, 2001), Pearson (2001), and Potsdam (2006a,b). Rather, it is a null pronominal, comparable in its distribution to a logophor (Koopman and Sportiche 1989) or perhaps (the trace of) a null topic (Huang 1984). Under this approach, the meaning of (61) is something like 'It is when (we're talking about) $Rasoa_i$ that e_i wrote the letter'. Logophors and the traces of null topics pattern as variables. Hence, this analysis of the gap in (50) is consistent with Pearson's (2005) treatment of voice morphology as a kind of obligatory WH-AGREEMENT on the verb (cf. Chung 1998), whose role is to identify the grammatical function of an operator-variable chain in the clause containing that verb.

Note that gapping of embedded triggers is extremely common in Malagasy. For example, in complex sentences where the external argument of the main clause is coreferential with an argument in the complement clause, the latter is most naturally realized as a null trigger rather than an overt pronominal. Consider the following examples from Keenan (1976):[15]

(51) a.   *Mihevitra Rabe* [*fa   tadiavin-dRasoa   Ø*]
           AT.think Rabe   that TT.look.for-Rasoa
           '$Rabe_i$ thinks that Rasoa is looking for (him_i)'

      b. ?? *Mihevitra Rabe* [*fa   tadiavin-dRasoa   izy*]
            AT.think Rabe   that TT.look.for-Rasoa 3Nom
            '$Rabe_i$ thinks that Rasoa is looking for him_i'

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[15] Keenan reports that the preference for (51a) over (51b) is "absolute" for some speakers, though not all. As expected, the sentence in (51b) is fully natural under the reading where *izy* is not bound by *Rabe*.

Indeed, we see what appears to be the same phenomenon in the temporal *no* construction. In (47a), repeated below as (52), the trigger of the *no*-phrase is omitted under coreference with the trigger of the main clause. I suggest that (50) has essentially the same structure as (52) (modulo the absence of an overt matrix trigger in (50)).

(52)   *Mbola tanora   izy*   [*no   tonga   tany   Amerika Ø*]
               still   young   3Nom   NO   arrived Pst.there America
               'S/he$_i$ was still young when (s/he$_i$) came to America'

As for why gapping of the trigger in the *no*-phrase is obligatory when the matrix clause is a DP predicate (in nominal focus sentences) but optional otherwise, I leave this as a question for future research.

7.3. The bodyguard construction

There are a number of challenges to treating the focus construction as a special case of the temporal *no* construction. Here I will mention only one such challenge here. When the focus phrase is an adjunct (a PP or adverbial) and the trigger of the *no*-phrase is overt, the latter optionally appears immediately in front of *no* rather than at the right periphery, as in (53b). This fronted trigger is called the BODYGUARD, following Keenan (1976).[16] According to the speakers I consulted, when *no* acts as a subordinator in the temporal *no* construction, the trigger of the *no*-phrase may not occur in the bodyguard position, as shown in (54b).

(53) a.   *Tamin'   ny   pensilihazo no   nanoratra   ilay taratasy **Rasoa***
             Pst.with Det   pencil   NO   Pst.AT.write that letter   Rasoa
             'It was with a pencil that Rasoa wrote the letter'

      b.   *Tamin'   ny   pensilihazo **Rasoa** no   nanoratra   ilay taratasy*
             Pst.with Det   pencil   Rasoa NO   Pst.AT.write that letter
             'It was with a pencil that Rasoa wrote the letter'

(54) a.   *Natory   ny   vadin-dRakoto   no   lasa **izy***
             Pst.AT.sleep Det   spouse.Lnk-Rakoto NO   left   3Nom
             'It was while Rakoto's wife was sleeping that he left'

      b. * *Natory   ny   vadin-dRakoto   **izy**   no   lasa*
             Pst.AT.sleep Det   spouse.Lnk-Rakoto 3Nom   NO   left
             'It was while Rakoto's wife was sleeping that he left'

If the focus construction is simply a special case of the temporal *no* construction, it is unclear why the former but not the latter would license a bodyguard. In any case, the ban on bodyguards in the temporal *no* construction may not be absolute. Consider (55), taken from Rahajarizafy (1960). In this example we have what appears to be the subordinator *no*, heading a conditional clause which has been fronted. Here the trigger of the *no* clause has itself been fronted, and appears before *no*. It is possible that (54b) is not actually ungrammatical, but merely disfavored for processing reasons: perhaps speakers dislike having a

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[16] Paul (1999) presents evidence from coordination to show that the bodyguard forms a constituent with the following *no*-phrase to the exclusion of the focus phrase. This suggests that the bodyguard is at the left edge of the *no*-phrase, rather than in the trigger position within the matrix clause.

(i)   *Omaly   [Rasoa **no** nivarotra   hena*] *ary* [*Rakoto **no** nividy   mofo*]
           yesterday   Rasoa NO Pst.AT.sell meat   and   Rakoto NO Pst.AT.buy bread
           'It was yesterday that Rasoa sold meat and Rakoto bought bread'

sequence of two triggers (e.g., *ny vadin-dRakoto izy*), and fronting of the trigger within the *no* clause is disallowed just in case it produces such a sequence. I leave this as one of many issues for further research.

(55)   ***Izaho***   *no mananatra   anao, tiako   ho hendry ianao*
          1sNom NO AT.give.advice 2sAcc want.1s Irr wise   2sNom
          'If I give you advice, it's (only) because I want you to be wise'
          (original gloss: 'Si je te donne des avis, c'est que je veux que tu sois sage')

8. Conclusion

In this paper I have shown that the Malagasy focus particle *no* also functions as a clause linker, roughly comparable to English *when/if* or French *lorsque/si*, which heads a subordinate clause denoting a presupposed state of affairs. I referred to descriptively as the temporal *no* construction. I presented preliminary data on this construction, showing that its syntactic and discourse structure properties are comparable to those of the focus construction.

   I then argued that the focus particle *no* is actually a special case of the clause linker *no*, rather than a determiner or relative clause marker introducing a topicalized headless relative clause, as in earlier analyses (Paul 1999, 2001; Potsdam 2006a,b). Under this approach, the Malagasy focus construction is not a pseudo-cleft, where the *no*-phrase denotes an individual and stands in a predication relation with the focus phrase. Instead, the *no*-phrase denotes a proposition, and stands in an implicational relation with the proposition denoted by the matrix clause (containing the focus phrase as its predicate), making the focus construction more akin to a conditional construction. Treating *no* as a clause linker accounts straightforwardly for the fact that [i] the constituent preceding *no* need not be a DP or PP, but can be a root clause, and [ii] the constituent following *no* need not contain a gap. This analysis also explains some crucial differences between the Malagasy focus construction and its functional counterpart in Tagalog, which does appear to possess the properties of a pseudo-cleft. Other issues surrounding the focus construction remain to be addressed, such as the proper treatment of voice restrictions (why focused nominals control the voice of the verb within the *no*-phrase, while focused adjuncts do not) and the position of overt triggers within the *no*-phrase (the bodyguard construction).

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