

SYNTACTIC VS. INTONATIONAL FOCUS MARKING IN PAPIAMENTU

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In Papiamentu (Iberian creole; Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao), a constituent can be focused syntactically: the focused phrase appears sentence-initially, preceded by focus marker *ta* (1) (Kouwenberg & Murray 1994). Focus fronting is common in creoles (Sanchez 2005), and this specific construction is long-attested in the creole. Previous work has shown pragmatic constraints on focused constituents related to information status, and suggests that these constraints are correlated with the language contact situation. Focus fronting appears to be falling out of use in heavily contact-influenced Papiamentu dialects (Sanchez 2006). However, previous work was not able to point to the adoption of an alternate method of focus, leaving open the possibility that focus fronting is not being affected by contact, but that speakers in some dialects simply find occasion to focus fewer things than speakers in others (logically possible but linguistically improbable).

More recently, Remijsen and van Heuven (2005) describe intonational focus in the Papiamentu of Curaçao. Specifically, there is a LH prominence tone associated with the stressed syllable of a focused element like *lora* 'parrot' in (2) (an answer to 'Does Aruba have flamingo in the countryside?'). This prominence tone is not found in words with default focus (as *inlora* 'parrot' in (3), a response to 'Is this parrot gray?') or in words out of focus (as *inlora* 'parrot' in (4), a response to 'Does Curaçao have parrots in Punda (downtown)?'). [Papiamentu has a hybrid (or 'pitch-accent') prosodic system including both stress and tone, which Remijsen and van Heuven (2005) liken to that of Swedish. Data is only available for the Curaçao dialect.]

This paper compares the parameters of the use of the two methods of focus in the Papiamentu of Curaçao. I identify all instances of both syntactic and intonational focus (with the latter defined according to Remijsen and van Heuven's (2005) observations of changes in F_0) from a database of 52 socially-stratified sociolinguistic interviews collected in 2003 (Sanchez 2005), and describe the linguistic, social, and contact factors conditioning each. The analysis focuses on 1) the relationship between the two processes and 2) whether or not intonational focus can be correlated with language contact (or lack thereof).

- (1) Pero **TA** NOS tabata mala mucha.
but FOCUS we COPULA-PAST bad child
But, WE were the bad kids. (Sanchez 2005)
- (2) No, Ruba tin **LORA** na mondi
no Aruba has parrot in countryside.
No, Aruba has PARROTS in the countryside. (Remijsen and van Heuven 2005:233)
- (3) Si, esaki ta un lora shinishi
yes this COPULA a gray parrot
Yes, this is a gray parrot. (Remijsen and van Heuven 2005:232)
- (4) No, Korsow tin loran a **MONDI**
no Curaçao has parrots in countryside
No, Curaçao has parrots in the COUNTRYSIDE. (Remijsen and van Heuven 2005:233)

References

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