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6 CLAUSE STRUCTURE AND CLAUSE TYPES

In this chapter, we discuss the structure of a simple clause in Tafi, the order of the constituents in the clause and the grammatical relations arguments hold with the predicate. We then describe various constructions or clause types including predicative possessive, copula, presentational and locative constructions. We draw attention to the roles different constituents receive and the precedence relations that hold between them. The lexical and grammatical factors that determine aspects of their ordering are noted throughout. The semantics of verbs that function in the locative constructions are also examined.

In the second part of the chapter, we look at the positions that are opened up in the left periphery of the clause for information structuring purposes. We argue that as claimed for Kwa languages (Ameka 2010), Tafi also has at least three positions to the immediate left of the subject position in a simple clause. These positions are filled by constituents that are frame or left dislocated topics, contrastive topics and focalised constituents respectively. We describe each of the information structuring clause types noting how they relate to the core of the clause.

6.1 Basic clause structure and grammatical relations

In Chapter 7 on verbs and verbal modifiers, we identify various constructions involving predicates: one-place, two-place and three-place constructions. We describe in the same chapter various constructions involving operator verbs that take nominalised verbs as complements. For all these constructions, the basic constituent order is:

- | | | | | | |
|----|---------|------|-----------------|--------|---------|
| 1. | Subject | Verb | Obj1 | Obj2 | X |
| | | | DATIVE/
GOAL | THEME/ | Adjunct |

Tafi is thus an SV (in intransitive clauses) and an AV(D)O (in transitive clauses) language. Grammatical relations are distinguished by position. Subjects (A/S) occur initially in a simple clause and are cross-referenced on the verb. Subjects are also distinguished from objects by distinct pronominal forms. There is a subject object asymmetry in syntactic processes such as relativisation and focus. The objects, both O and D, occur postverbally. D and O occur in a fixed order where D precedes O but they are represented by the same pronominal forms.

In Tafi, the subject is cross-referenced on the predicate as in (2) – (4) but objects are not, as shown in (2) (see Chapter 3). The subject cross-reference markers are the same as the subject pronominal forms (see §3.6 for more details). Two paradigms of subject cross-reference markers can be distinguished. One group is used to cross-reference subjects in independent clauses while the second group which is made up of dependent pronominal forms is used in dependent clauses

such as relative, complement and adverbial clauses (cf. Table 3.2; Chapter 9). In example (4), the subject of the sentence is an independent pronoun **balí** ‘3PL.IND’ and it has been cross-referenced on the verb with **bá**. This shows that independent pronouns in Tafi behave like full nouns.

2. Anóvōń átsywĩ bawĩń.
a-nóvō **ńí** **á-tsywĩ** **ba-wi** **ńí**
 CM-child DEF SM-tear CM.PL-dress DEF
 ‘The child tore the dresses.’
3. Bawĩń átsywĩ.
ba-wi **ńí** **bá-tsywĩ**
 CM.PL-dress DEF SM-tear
 ‘The dresses are torn.’
4. Bal’ átsywĩ.
balí **bá-tsywĩ**
 3PL.IND SM-tear
 ‘THEY are torn.’

As stated above, objects are not cross-referenced on the verb and postverbal objects are represented with the same pronominal form. With regard to the pronominalisation of objects in a double object construction, both Object1 which is the Goal argument and Object2 which is the Theme argument can be pronominalised. Object1 can undergo pronominalisation without difficulty as shown in (6) whereas Object2 cannot. The pronominalisation of Object2 has some restrictions. The clearest is if the Goal argument is not a pronoun then the theme argument cannot be easily pronominalised in a monoverbal clause. The pronominalisation of the Theme argument in such a clause renders the sentence ungrammatical as exemplified by the sentence in (11). Sentence (5) illustrates a double object construction with both objects being animate. The sentence in (9) is an example of a double object construction with the Goal argument, (i.e. Object1) being animate and the Theme (i.e. Object2) being inanimate. In sentence (7), the Theme argument (i.e. Object2) which is animate is pronominalised. Sentence (8) shows both animate objects pronominalised while (10) exemplifies a double object construction in which both the animate and inanimate objects are pronominalised.

5. Ányín ákasí badzinóvōēń ádōkasín.
á-nyí **ńí** **á-kasí** **ba-dzinóvōē** **ńí** **á-dōkasí** **ńí**
 CM-man DEF SM-show CM.PL-girl DEF CM-teacher DEF
 ‘The man showed the girls the teacher.’
6. Ányín ákas’ álí ádōkasín.
á-nyí **ńí** **á-kasí** **balí** **á-dōkasí** **ńí**
 CM-man DEF SM-show 3PL CM-teacher DEF

‘The man showed them the teacher.’

7. Ányín ákas’ áðokasín ’álí.
á-nyí ní á-kasí á-ðokasí ní balí
 CM-man DEF SM-show CM-teacher DEF 3PL
 ‘The man showed them (to) the teacher.’

8. Ányín ákas’ yí ’álí.
á-nyí ní á-kasí yí balí
 CM-man DEF SM-show 3SG 3PL
 ‘The man showed them (to) him.’

It appears that if the Theme and Goal arguments differ in animacy and the Goal is not pronominalised, then the inanimate Theme cannot be pronominalised as in (11). In that case, an SVC with **yuk3** ‘take’ is used to express the state of affairs as shown in (12). Thus, there is some asymmetry linked to animacy between Object1 and Object2 (apart from the order in which they appear) in Tafi.

9. Ányín ák3 Kofi ’ikutú.
á-nyí ní á-k3 Kofi ki-kutú
 CM-man DEF SM-give Kofi CM-hat
 ‘The man gave Kofi a hat.’

10. Ák3 yí ’ílí.
á-k3 yí kulí
 3SG-give 3SG 3SG
 ‘He gave it (to) him.’

11. *ányín ák3 Kofi ’ílí.
á-nyí ní á-k3 Kofi kulí
 CM-man DEF SM-give Kofi 3SG
 ‘The man gave Kofi it.’

12. Ányín áyík3 ’el’ák3 Kofi.
á-nyí ní á-yík3 kulí a-k3 Kofi
 CM-man DEF SM-take 3SG SM-give Kofi
 ‘The man gave it to Kofi.’

In the rest of this chapter, we look at other clause types beginning with copula clauses and other predicate constructions which express existence, location, and possession.

6.2 Copula clause

Tafi has a copula verb **nu** ‘COP’ which takes a copula subject and a copula complement. It is used to express identity between two NPs (13a, c), or the role/function (13d) of the subject. It can also express classification (13e). For example,

- 13a. Minu Victoria.

mí i-nū victoria
1SG.IND SM-COP Victoria
‘I am Victoria.’

- 13b. Bagt baláávubó anón bal’énū ...

ba-gi balí bá-ba-vubó a-nō ní balí
3PL-REL 3PL.IND SM-FUT-bury CM-person DEF 3PL.IND
bé-nū
SM-COP
‘Those who will bury the person are...’

- 13c. W’onú Kweku Anansi kulí w’onú ánî?

wó o-nū Kwekú Ánansi kulí wó o-nū á-nī
2SG.IND SM-COP Kwekú Ánansi CONJ 2SG.IND SM-COP AM-who
‘You are Kweku Ananse therefore who do you think you are?’
(lit. ‘...therefore you are who?’) (Sáhwi)

- 13d. Bányân enú badokasí.

bá-nyí a-ní bé-nū ba-dokasí
CM.PL-man AM-PROX SM-COP CM.PL-teacher
‘These men are teachers.’

- 13e. Ányân énū atotopú.

á-nyí a-ní é-nū a-tutopú ní
CM-man AM-PROX SM-COP AM-first DEF
‘This man is the first.’

Commonly, the copula complement can be topicalised or questioned in which case it is fronted as shown in:

- 14a. Ehoeleté m’inū.

e-hoeleté mí i-nū
CM-cowrie.owner 1SG.IND SM-COP
‘A rich person, I am.’

- 14b. Sáhwī y'ágl̄5 y'enū.
sáhwī yí á-gl̄5 yí e-nū
 spider 3SG.IND CM-lover 3SG.IND SM-COP
 'Spider's lover she is.' (i.e. 'she is SPIDER'S LOVER') (Sáhwī)
- 14c. Ánī y'eyí w'onū?
á-nī yí e-yí wó o-nū
 AM-who 3SG.IND CM-child 2SG.IND SM-COP
 'Whose child are you?'
- 14d. Kikutú linū.
ki-kutú li-nū
 CM-hat 3SG.DEP-COP
 'A hat, it is.'

6.3 Presentational constructions

The presentational construction is a verbless clause/copula clause made up of a nominal and the proximal or distal demonstrative plus an initial **n-** which presumably could be the copula **nu** 'COP'. However, it does not occur with any subject marker to show agreement with the copula subject. As usual the demonstrative agrees with the class of the noun it is modifying. For example,

- 15a. M'epidzya n'ān.
mí e-pidzya nū a-ní
 1SG CM-goat COP AM-PROX
 'This is my goat.' (lit. 'my goat is this.')
- 15b. Kikutú n'ān.
ki-kutú nū i-ní
 CM-hat COP AM-PROX
 'This is a hat.'
- 15c. Bl̄3 n̄ wó 'uplukpá n'ān.
bl̄3 n̄ wó bu-plukpá nū u-ní
 1SG.IND COM 2SG.IND CM.PL-book COP AM-PROX
 'These books are mine and yours.'
- 15d. Okókó n'ān.
o-kókó nū o-líliní
 CM-hen COP AM-PROX
 'That is a hen.'

- 15e. Bomwɪ n'ɔ́lɪlɪnɪ.
bu-mwɪ nū u-lɪlɪnɪ
 CM-salt COP AM-DIST
 'That is salt.'

The copula **nu** is only used for present time reference. When a speaker wants to refer to an event that has a past time reference, then the verb **dzi** 'COP.NPRES, become' is used. For example,

- 16a. Ídzí ádɔkasí.
í-dzí á-dɔkasí
 1SG-COP.NPRES CM-teacher
 'I was a teacher.'

Also, for future time reference it is the verb **dzi** 'COP.NPRES, become' that is used instead of **nu** 'COP' as shown in (16b). When this verb combines with the present progressive it expresses a change of state that is currently on-going as in (16c).

- 16b. Kofí ebedzi ádɔkasí.
Kofí e-be-dzi á-dɔkasí
 Kofi SM-FUT-become CM-teacher
 'Kofi will be/become a teacher.'
- 16c. Kofí éédzi ádɔkasí.
Kofí é-é-dzi á-dɔkasí
 Kofi SM-PRSPROG-become CM-teacher
 'Kofi is becoming a teacher.'

6.4 Existential constructions

Existential constructions make use of the locative/existential verb which has two forms **li** 'be.at, exist' and **za** 'be.at:NPRES'. The former is used in the expression of present existence and the latter is used for non-present existence. In these constructions, the entity whose existence is being predicated on or theme occurs in the subject position as illustrated in (17). The example in (17b) was adapted from a story narration.

- 17a. Kpáyā 'lɪ.
kpáyā a-lɪ
 God SM-be.at
 'There is God.'

- 17b. ...kulí kásalā abāza.
kulí ká-sālā a-bá-za
 CONJ CM-tortoise SM-VENT-be.at:NPRES
 ‘..and tortoise came to exist.’ (Kásalā)

6.5 Predicate possessive constructions

Predicate possession in Tafi is expressed in a construction with the locative verb **li** ‘be.at, exist’ and **za** ‘be.at:NPRES’ with the possessed NP occurring as the subject NP while the object NP position is occupied by a possessive NP. The possessive NP consists of a possessor and the body-part **ahɔi** ‘hand’ which are juxtaposed. These sentences literally mean that the possessed item is at the possessor’s hand. The verbs **li** ‘be.at’ and **za** ‘be.at:NPRES’ are used for present and non-present possession respectively. The following are examples.

- 18a. Sik’ áli y’áhɔi.
siká á-li yí a-hɔi
 money SM-be.at 3SG.IND CM-hand
 ‘S/he has money.’
- 18b. Aɖaŋu dzyɔgǝ áli Abisí ahɔi.
a-daŋu dzyɔgǝ á-li Abisí a-hɔi
 CM.PL-idea good SM-be.at Abisí CM-hand
 ‘Abisi has very good ideas.’
- 18c. Sik’ áza y’áhɔi.
siká á-za yí a-hɔi
 money SM-be.at 3SG.IND CM-hand
 ‘S/he had money.’
- 18d. Aɖaŋu dzyɔgǝ áza Abisí ahɔi.
a-daŋu dzyɔgǝ á-za Abisí a-hɔi
 CM.PL-idea good be.at:NPRES Abisí CM-hand
 ‘Abisi had very good ideas.’

As shown in the examples in (18), the subject NPs are not definite. When the verbs **li** ‘be.at’ and **za** ‘be.at:NPRES’ occur with a possessed item that is definite then the meaning of the construction is likely to be one of temporary and specific possession (Ameka 1991:227). Thus according to Ameka (ibid), such constructions may be glossed as ‘the Y is with X’ instead of ‘X has Y’. Consider the following examples:

- 19a. Sɪkán áli m'áhɔi.
sɪká ní á-li mí a-hɔi
 money DEF SM-be.at 1SG.IND CM-hand
 'I have the money.' or 'the money is with me.'

- 19b. Sɪkán áza m'áhɔi.
sɪká ní á-za mí a-hɔi
 money DEF SM-be.at 1SG.IND CM-hand
 'I had the money.' or 'the money was with me.'

Predicate possession involving body-parts as the possessed items can be expressed in two ways. One way is through the use of the construction as described above and the other is to use a construction in which the possessor is expressed as some sort of locative; as such the construction literally means the possessed body-part is at the possessor. This is illustrated in (20). In this example, the body-part occurs as the subject NP while the possessor occurs as the object of the verb **li** 'be.at, exist'.

20. ltsrĩ tɪbha ulí luín.
ɪ-tsɪrĩ tɪ-bha ulí ɪ-li mí
 CM.PL-foot AM-two 3PL SM-be.at 1SG
 'I have two feet.'

The verb **mɔ** 'see' is also used to express possession of material things like **sɪká** 'money' or **ehóé** 'money (lit. cowries)', as well as abstract attributes and states as shown in (21). In this construction, the possessor occurs as the subject NP while the possessed item occurs as the object NP.

- 21a. Adzĩn ámo sɪká.
a-dzĩ ní á-mɔ sɪká
 CM-woman DEF SM-see money
 'The woman has got money.'
- 21b. Ányínúvɔ̃ɛn ámo shuim.
a-nyínúvɔ̃ɛ ní á-mɔ shu kum
 CM-boy DEF SM-see body inside
 'The boy is fat.'

In fact, the experience (or possession) of certain emotional states such as **samu** 'joy, happiness' or **oblö** 'anger' are also expressed using this verb with the nominal denoting the emotion as object.

22. Ádɔkasín ámo oblö nɪ wó.
á-dɔkasí ní á-mɔ o-blö nɪ wó
 CM-teacher DEF SM-see CM-anger COM 2SG
 'The teacher is angry with you.'

As illustrated in examples (21) and (22), the verb **mɔ** ‘see’ is used as a possessive verb in which case its object is non-definite. When the object is marked for definiteness then the verb takes on the meaning ‘find’.

23. Adzĩn ámo skán
a-dzĩ ní á-mɔ sɔká ní
 CM-woman DEF SM-see money DEF
 ‘The woman saw or found the money.’

Constructions parallel to the predicative possessive constructions described here for Tafi are also available in Ewe (see Ameka 1991, 2012). Thus Ewe has a [Possessed Subject – **le** ‘be.at’ Possessor **sí** ‘hand’] construction as well as a [Possessed **li** éxist’ **ná** ‘DAT’ Possessor] for expressing body part and kinship possession. Moreover the verb **kpo** ‘see’ is used to express possession of attributes, and emotions with the same constraints on definiteness as in Tafi. This raises the question of whether the grammar of predicate possession in Tafi may have been influenced by Ewe. Ameka 2012b argues that Likpe grammar of possession is influenced by Ewe in some of the same ways, e.g. in the use of the verb for SEE.

6.6 Locative constructions

There are a number of constructions that are used to describe locative situations. These constructions include the Basic Locative Construction (BLC) and two other construction types. The Basic Locative Construction (BLC) is a construction which is commonly used to answer a question about the location of an object, ‘Where is X?’ (or simply, a “*where* search”-question) (Levinson and Wilkins 2006a). The “*where* search”-question in Tafi consists of an initial question word **fákó** ‘where’, followed by the Figure which is in turn followed by a locative verb as exemplified in (24a). The BLC in Tafi consists of an NP (i.e. the subject of the clause) which denotes the Figure, a locative verb followed by a postpositional phrase which is made up of an NP which specifies the reference object and a postposition which specifies the Search Domain. The Figure is the entity located, the Ground is the entity with respect to which the Figure is located (Talmy, 1985, 2000) and the Search Domain is the particular region of the Ground where the Figure is located (Ameka, 1995, 1999). The BLC is illustrated by the example in (24b).

- 24a. Fákó kópuń áń?
fákó kópu ní á-ń
 Where cup DEF SM-be.at
 Where Figure Locative Verb
 ‘Where is the cup?’

- In Tafi, different constructions are used to describe where an entity is located. The syntactic frames of these constructions are represented below:

The frames in (I) and (II) constitute the basic locative construction in Taŋi. The frames in (III) and (IV) are alternative locative constructions used when there is a deviation from the prototypical basic locative function. In the BLC, the expressions referring to the Figure, the verb and the reference object cannot be absent. However, the postpositions which specify the search domain can be omitted under certain conditions, for instance, when the Ground where the Figure is located is inherently locative such as **kesukpá** ‘land, ground’ as illustrated in (25a) or when the search domain is inferable from the verb, i.e., the information carried by the postposition is specified by the verb and so it is redundant. Thus, there is no mention of the search domain in sentence (25b) below.

- A subconstruction of the basic locative construction, as shown in (II), is used to characterise locative situations in which the reference object is a body part. The Figure occurs as the subject and the Ground is spelt out as a body-part on which it is located. Examples of scenes that are described with this construction include a

‘hat on head’ (TRPS 5), and a ‘ring on finger’ (TRPS 10) as exemplified in sentence (26a). In this case, the postposition can be left out. The sentence in (26a) is a reduced form of the BLC because of the absence of a spatial element to denote the specific part of the Ground where the Figure is located (Essegbey 2005, Levinson and Wilkins 2006a, Ameka and Essegbey 2006). The body-part noun may, however, be followed by a postposition when the configuration relation between the Figure and the body-part is one of containment as shown in example (26b).

- 26a. Kísígbén íkpasí ’íwěń.
kí-sígbé ní kí-kpasí kí-wě ní
 CM-ring DEF SM-be.on CM-finger DEF
 ‘The ring is on the finger.’ (TRPS 10)

- 26b. Tógēń ákpasí ’útóním.
tógē ní á-kpasí bu-tó ní kumí
 Ear-ring DEF SM-be.in CM-ear DEF inside
 ‘The ear-ring is in the ear.’ (TRPS 69)

Alternatively, the sentence in (26b) can be expressed as a possessive construction in which the possessor of the body-part is specified as illustrated in (27).

27. Tógēń ákpasí adzín ’útóním.
tógē ní á-kpasí a-dzĩ ní bu-tó ní kumí
 Ear-ring DEF SM-be.in CM-woman DEF CM-ear DEF inside
 ‘The ear-ring is in the woman’s ear.’

The third type of locative construction has a locative adjunct phrase occurring after the verb. The locative adjunct phrase is a prepositional phrase consisting of a preposition as its head and a postpositional phrase as its complement. The sentence in (28) exemplifies this:

28. Anúvōń ábubō ní kegbuniede.
a-núvō ní á-bubō ní ke-gbu ní ke.de
 CM-child DEF SM-bend LOC CM-chair DEF behind
 ‘The child squats behind the chair.’ (TRPS 64)

A subtype of the prepositional construction involves the use of the allative preposition **kú** ‘ALL’ to introduce the Ground phrase. Situations characterised by such a construction are dynamic or active as in (29) and (30).

29. Batumpáń ákplā kú tisím.
ba-tumpá ní bá-kplā kú ti-sí kumí
 CM.PL-bottle DEF SM-be.fixed ALL CM-earth inside
 ‘The bottles are fixed in the ground.’ (PSPV 28)

30. Kishĩn íkplā kú kesukpogunuĩ.
ki-shĩ ní kĩ-kplā kú ke-sukpogunu ní
 CM-stick DEF SM-be.fixed ALL CM-tree.stump DEF
 ‘The stick is fixed into the tree stump.’ (PSPV 38)

In this example, a postposition specifying the search domain is omitted as the relation between Figure and Ground and the region where the Figure is located can be inferred from the verb and preposition.

The fourth type of locative construction is a serial verb construction (SVC). The first verb in the serial construction contributes information as to the manner in which a Figure is located on the Ground whereas the second verb describes how the Figure is positioned. The sentence in (31) is an example of an SVC (see chapter 10 on SVCs).

31. Kishĩn ídzĩ kplĩnĩ osĩ.
ki-shĩ ní kĩ-dzĩ kplĩnĩ o-sĩ
 CM-stick DEF SM-be.located.on.base lean.against CM-tree
 ‘The stick is on the ground leaning against a tree.’ (PSPV 1)

In the next section, we describe the meanings that locative verbs take in these constructions.

6.6.1 The meaning and use of the verbs

Tafi makes use of 13 verbs in the BLC (Bobuafor 2008b), and is thus a multiverb language according to the typology of locative predication (Ameka and Levinson 2007). Four language types have been identified on the basis of the verbal components used in the basic types of locative constructions. The first type is made up of languages whose BLC is verbless while the second type has in the BLC a copula verb (e.g. English), a locative or an existential verb (e.g. Ewe). The third type of languages tends to use a small contrastive set of between 3-7 positional verbs in the BLC (e.g. Dutch). Tutrugbu (Nyagbo) the sister dialect of Tafi uses only 4 verbs in its BLC and thus belongs to this type (see Essegbey 2010b). The last type makes use of a large set of between 9-100 dispositional verbs (e.g. Likpe, Logba and Akan). Based on this classification, Tafi belongs to the fourth type. This is because apart from the locative verbs **kĩ** ‘be.at’, **tsĩrĩ** ‘be.on’ and **kpasĩ** ‘be.in’, Tafi has about 10 dispositional verbs which occur in its BLC.

The 13 verbs used are listed in Table 6.1. They are grouped semantically.

Table 6.1 Locative verbs used in BLC

Semantic classes	Verbs	Gloss
General Topological	lɪ	‘be.at’
	tsirí	‘be.on’
	kpasí	‘be.in’
	búnɔ̃	‘be.near’
Postural	lí	‘be.positioned’
	dzí	‘be.located.on.base’
	sómí	‘hang’
	kpaplínɔ̃	‘lean.against’
Adhesion	bubɔ̃	‘bend’
	tá	‘be.fixed’
	nyá	‘be.tied’
	muna	‘be.tied.around’
Attachment	kana	‘surround, go.around’
	da	‘cover’

6.6.1.1 The general topological verbs

In this section, I focus on three of the verbs. These are verbs which express the general topological meanings of coincidence, **lɪ** ‘be.at’, contact and support, **tsirí** ‘be.on’, and containment, **kpasí** ‘be.in’.

6.6.1.1.1 **lɪ** ‘be.at’

The verb **lɪ** ‘be.at’ is a general locative verb used to signal the topological relation of coincidence (Ameka 2007). **Lɪ** ‘be.at’ seems to have been borrowed from Ewe and adapted into the language. There is a strong preference for using **lɪ** ‘be.at’ especially to talk about any location of any entity. Thus, this verb is used by some speakers in the topological relations stimuli task to localise, for instance, ‘butter on knife’ (TPRS 12) and a ‘ball under chair’ (TPRS 16) as illustrated in sentences (32a) and (32b) respectively.

- 32a. Bobó ní lɪ thě ní shú.
bu-bó ní lɪ ɪ-hě ní shú
 CM-fat DEF be.at CM-knife DEF surface
 ‘The butter is on the knife’. (TRPS 12)

- 32b. Bólu ní a-lɪ ka-dangó ní kesí.
bólu ní a-lɪ ka-dangó ní kesí
 ball DEF SM-be.at CM-chair DEF under
 ‘The ball is under the chair.’ (TRPS 16)

The verb **li** ‘be.at’ can also be used in a response to a question as to the where-about of a person. The sentence in (33), for instance, is a response to a question about the where-about of God.

33. Alī oŵūsisé.
a-li **o-ŵūsisé**
 3SG-be.at CM-heaven
 ‘He is in heaven.’

The verb **li** ‘be.at’ can also be used in a two-place predicate possessive construction as in (34) (see section 6.4 for further discussion).

34. Sik’ álī Kofī áhɔɪ.
siká **á-li** **Kofī** **a-hɔɪ**
 Money SM-be.at Kofī CM-hand
 ‘Kofī has money.’

The verb **li** ‘be.at’ has two alternate lexemes, **má** ‘be.at:NEG’ which is used for negation and a non-present locative verb **za** ‘be.at:NPRES’. These are illustrated in (35) and (36) respectively. The sentence in (36) is taken from a Frog Story narration (Mayer (1969)).

35. Kofī ámā ’uvūnīm.
Kofī **á-mā** **bú-vū** **ní** **kɪmɪ**
 Kofī SM-be.at:NEG CM-room DEF inside
 ‘Kofī is not in the room.’
36. Anóvɔ́n nɪ y’óbhɪalí baláza bopá trúkpóim
a-nóvɔ́ **ní** **nɪ** **yí** **ɔ-bhɪa-alí** **balí** **bá-za**
 CM-child DEF CONJ 3SG CM-friend-PL 3PL SM-be.at:NPRES
bɔ-pá **tru-kpó** **kɪmɪ**
 CM-house AM-one inside
 ‘The child and his friends were in the same house.’ (FS)

The verb **li** ‘be.at’ is thus used to localise a figure be it animate or inanimate where the Figure is subject. The verb has two lexical alternants, one for negative existence and the other for non-present location. The verb is also involved in the expression of existence (see section 6.3) showing that Tafi is another language in which location, possession and existence are intimately linked (Clark 1978). Interestingly, the Ewe verb **le** ‘be.at:PRES’ also has a non-present locative alternant **no** ‘be.at:NPRES’ as well as arguably an existential alternant **li** ‘exist’.

6.6.1.1.2 **tsirí** ‘be.on’

tsirí ‘be.on’ is a contact support verb which is used to describe situations in which the Figure is in contact with the supporting surface, for instance, a ‘cup on a table’ (TPRS 1) as in (24b) above, repeated here as (37) for convenience.

37. Kópuń étsirí kplǎníábhā.
kópu ní é-tsirí kplǎ ní kábhā
 CM-cup DEF SM-be.on table DEF top
 ‘The cup is on the table.’ (TRPS 1)

This verb is also used to describe figures firmly attached to the reference object such as a ‘stamp on a letter’ (TPRS 3), a ‘head (embossed) on a stamp’ (TRPS 28) as well as a man standing on a roof (TRPS 34). These are illustrated in (38a) - (38c) respectively. Another type of situation in which **tsirí** ‘be.on’ is used is one in which the Figure is an adornment and the Ground is the body as illustrated in (38d). In each case, the appropriate postposition is used to indicate the place/region of the reference object. In (38c) however, the postposition is omitted as the search domain information can be deduced from the verb.

- 38a. Stámpuń étsirí pépa okotokúńíábhā.
stámpu ní é-tsirí pépa o-kotokú ní kábhā
 stamp DEF SM-be.on paper CM-pocket DEF top
 ‘The stamp is on the envelope.’ (TRPS 3)

- 38b. Anǎtǎń étsirí stámpuníábhā.
a-nǎtǎ ní é-tsirí stámpu ní kabhā
 CM-picture DEF SM-be.on stamp DEF top
 ‘The drawing is on the stamp.’ (TRPS 28)

- 38c. Ányín étsirí ovutǎ.
á-nyí ní é-tsirí o-vutǎ
 CM-man DEF SM-be.on CM-roof
 ‘The man is on a roof.’ (TRPS 34)

- 38d. Kikutún ítsirí ányín ádáníń.
ki-kutú ní kí-tsirí a-nyí ní á-dá ní kumu
 CM-hat DEF SM-be.on CM-man DEF CM-top.of.head DEF inside
 ‘The hat is on (top of) the man’s head.’ (TRPS 5)

The verb is thus used to talk about spatial situations involving contact and support relation between a figure and a ground.

6.6.1.1.3 **kpasí** ‘be.in’

kpasí ‘be.in’ is used to express containment. This verb is used to localize animate or inanimate entities which are movable or immovable such as a ‘fruit in a bowl’ (TRPS 2) or ‘a house within a fence’ (TRPS 60). The sentence in (39) is an answer to the question ‘where is the house?’ in relation to the spatial scene in TRPS 60 depicting house in fence.

39. Bupá ní **kpasí** bukáním.
bu-pá ní kpasí bu-ká ní kum
 CM-house DEF be.in CM-fence DEF inside
 ‘The house is inside the fence.’ (TRPS 60)

In sentence (39), the Figure, which is the house, is enclosed in the reference object, i.e., the fence, and no part of the house is touching the fence.

kpasí ‘be.in’ is also used to describe for example, a ‘foot in shoe’ (TRPS 21) as illustrated in the sentence in (40a).

- 40a. Afukpān ákpasí ɔtsrĩ.
a-fukpā ní á-kpasí ɔ-tsri
 CM-shoe DEF SM-be.in SM-foot
 ‘The foot is in a shoe.’ (TRPS 21)

The Figure-Ground relation for this scenario can be reversed and interestingly, as **afukpā** ‘shoe’ is not a body-part, the postposition **kum** ‘inside’ is used to indicate the part of the reference object where the Figure is located.

- 40b. ɔtsrĩn ɔkpasí afukpānīm.
ɔ-tsri ní á-kpasí a-fukpā ní kum
 CM-foot DEF SM-be.in CM-shoe DEF inside
 ‘The foot is in the shoe.’

Negative spaces or damages (see Levinson & Wilkins 2006b:516) which are perceived to be contained in the reference object are also described with this verb. For example,

41. Oziń ɔkpasí kávlōnīm.
o-zi ní á-kpasí ká-vlō ní kum
 CM-hole DEF SM-be.in CM-towel DEF inside
 ‘The hole is in the towel.’ (TRPS 18)

Moreover, animate Figures which are located in contained regions are localised with **kpasí** ‘be.in’. Thus, it is used to describe a ‘fish in a bowl’ (TRPS 32), a dog in a kennel (TRPS 71) or a human being in a room.

42. Kakudzɔgɛ́n ákpasí kalí 'uvuníṃ.
ka-kudzɔgɛ́ **ní** **ka-kpasí** **kalí** **bú-vū** **ní** **kumí**
 CM-dog DEF SM-be.in 3SG.IND CM-house DEF inside
 'The dog is in its house.' (TRPS 71)

In most of the situations described so far, the locative verb **kpasí** 'be.in' is used followed by a postpositional phrase which is made up of an NP referring to the Ground and the postposition **kumí** 'in/inside'. This postposition specifies the search domain, i.e., the specific part of the Ground where the Figure is located.

This containment verb **kpasí** 'be.in' is also used to describe spatial scenes in which the reference object is not a prototypical container such as a 'ball under chair' (TRPS 16), a spoon under napkin' (TRPS 24) and a 'handle on door' (TRPS 61) as shown in (43). In situations like those represented in (43), different types of postpositions are employed to show the location where the Figure is contained.

- 43a. Bólu ákpasí kadangóniésí.
bólu **ní** **á-kpasí** **ka-dangó** **ní** **ke.sí**
 ball DEF SM-be.in CM-chair DEF under
 'The ball is under the chair.' (TRPS 16)

- 43b. Kékɛ́n ákpasí opúpúníshú.
ké-kɛ́ **ní** **ká-kpasí** **o-púpú** **ní** **shú**
 CM-handle DEF SM-be.in CM-door DEF surface
 'The handle is on the door'. (TRPS 61)

In (43), for example, the verb **kpasí** 'be.in' is used to represent a scene in which a Figure 'ball' (43a) or 'handle' (43b) is located in an open space or on a door and the postposition **kesí** 'under' or **shú** 'surface' is, respectively, used to indicate the specific part of the chair or door where the ball or handle is located. Thus, speakers who use **kpasí** 'be.in' to describe these spatial scenes construe the space under the chair or the door as a sort of container for the ball or handle whereas those who construed the space under the chair or the door as just a place (as opposed to container) where the ball or handle is located used **li** 'be.at'.

Another context in which **kpasí** 'be.in' is also used is where the Figure is an adornment and the Ground is a part of the body as in a 'ring on finger' (TRPS 10), a 'shoe on foot' (TRPS 21) and a 'necklace on neck' (TRPS 51). Hence, adornments and clothing on the body are considered as containment i.e., the Figure is presumed as contained. This containment feature of the verb is perceived as signalling the location of the Figure (i.e., ring, shoe or necklace) in relation to the reference object (i.e., finger, foot or neck) (Ameka 2007). Contrary to what happens in Ewe where, for all clothing and adornment scenes, the (human) possessor of a body-part on which the Figure is located needs to be expressed (see Ameka and Essegbey 2006), in Tafi, the possessor may be left unexpressed as

shown in the examples below. If left out it is the general location as characteristic of a thing. Example (40a) is repeated here as (44b).

- 44a. Kísígbén íkpasí 'íwéń.
kí-sígbé ní kí-kpasí kí-wě ní
 CM-ring DEF SM-be.in CM-finger DEF
 'The ring is on the finger.' (TRPS 10)
- 44b. Afukpǎń ákpasí ɔtsrĩ.
a-fukpǎ ní á-kpasí ɔ-tsĩ
 CM-shoe DEF SM-be.in SM-leg
 'The foot is in a shoe.' (lit. 'The shoe is in a leg') (TRPS 21)
- 44c. Oliehúń ókpasí (a-dzĩń) ólí.
o-liehui ní ó-kpasí (a-dzĩ ní) o-lí
 CM-necklace DEF SM-be.in (CM-woman DEF) CM-neck
 'The necklace is on the (woman's) neck.' (TRPS 51)

Kpasí 'be.in' is also used in situations involving part-whole relations, that is, relations in which the Figure is part of the Ground such as fruits on a tree. This is illustrated by the example in (45).

45. Iseyuyúń íkpasí osíníń.
i-seyuyu ní í-kpasí o-sí ní kum
 CM.PL-fruit DEF SM-be.in CM-tree DEF inside
 'The fruits are on the tree.' (lit. 'The fruits are in the tree.') (TRPS 45)

Kpasí 'be.in' can be used intransitively as in answer to questions asked about the health of people during greetings as in (46b).

- 46a. W'adzyań?
wó á-dzyā-álí
 2SG CM-brother-PL
 'How are your brothers?' (lit. 'Your brothers?')
- 46b. Bákpasí.⁴⁷
bá-kpasí
 3PL-be.in
 'They are well.'

⁴⁷ Usually, when **kpasí** 'be.in' is used in a response to questions about someone's health, most speakers drop the subject NP.

In this case, it is perhaps being used as a general locative rather than as a containment verb.

6.6.1.1.4 **búnɔ̃** ‘be.near’

búnɔ̃ ‘be.near’ is a propinquity verb mainly used for human Figures. It is used to describe a locative scene involving a ‘boy sitting near fire’ (TPRS 38) as illustrated in (47).

47. Ányínúvɔ̃ɛ́n ébúnɔ̃ kifún.
á-nyínúvɔ̃ɛ́ **ní** **é-búnɔ̃** **ki-fú** **ní**
 CM-boy DEF SM-be.near CM-fire DEF
 ‘The boy is near fire.’ (TRPS 38)

Other responses elicited with respect to the scene with a ‘boy sitting near fire’ have verbs such as **lí** ‘be.positioned’ and the posture verb **dzi** ‘be.located on base’.

6.6.1.2 Positional verbs

Positional verbs code information about the Figure’s posture or disposition with respect to the ground, e.g., squat, hang etc.

6.6.1.2.1 The verb **lí** ‘be.positioned’

The verb **lí** ‘be.positioned’ is used to describe both animate and inanimate Figures in a standing, sitting or lying position. Examples of such Figures are human beings, animals, buildings and trees. This verb is used to describe scenes involving a ‘dog near its kennel’ (TRPS 6), a ‘ball under chair’ (TRPS 16), a ‘cat on mat’ (TRPS 40), a ‘bottle lying on tree stump’ (PSPV 26), a ‘ball on ground’ (PSPV 7) and ‘beans on ground’ (PSPV 11) among others.

- 48a. Kakudzɔ̃gɛ́n élí kalí ’ugblén ɔ̃bhā.
ka-kudzɔ̃gɛ́ **ní** **ké-lí** **kalí** **bu-gble** **ní**
 CM-dog DEF SM-be.positioned 3SG.IND CM-kennel DEF
ɔ̃bhā
 near
 ‘The dog is near its house.’ (TRPS 71)
- 48b. Ayín élí ’ésúkpá.
a-yí **ní** **é-lí** **ke-sukpá**
 CM.PL-beans DEF SM-be.positioned CM-ground
 ‘The beans are on the ground.’ (PSPV 11)

6.6.1.2.2 **dzí** ‘be.located.on.base’

The locative verb **dzí** ‘be.located.on.base’ is used to describe Figures whose base is supported from below by a surface. For instance, it is used to describe humans in sitting posture, trees in standing position, sticks or poles that are erected such as ‘poles fixed in the ground’ (PSPV 20) and also for animal Figures such as a ‘cat (on its hind) under table’ (TRPS 31) or a ‘cat sitting on mat’ (TRPS 40). The following are examples. Sentence (49a) was given as a response in describing a ‘cat sitting on a mat’ whereas sentence (49b) was used to describe a ‘tree in front of church’ (TRPS 49).

49a. Adzyramuán édzí opútsóniábhā.

a-dzyramuá	ní	é-dzí	o-pútsó	ní	kábhā
CM-cat	DEF	SM-be.located.on.base	CM-mat	DEF	top

‘The cat is on the mat.’ (TRPS 40)

49b. Osín ódzí búsolú ’uvū otúgba.

o-sí	ní	ó-dzí	bú-solú	bú-vū
CM-tree	DEF	SM-be.located.on.base	CM-worship	CM-house

otúgba
in.front.of
‘The tree stands in front of a church.’ (TRPS 49)

6.6.1.2.3 **sómí** ‘hang’

The verb **sómí** ‘hang’ is used to talk about Figures which are attached to their reference objects by suspension. Thus, the Figure is attached at the highest part and lacks support from below. This verb is used to describe a ‘coat on a hook’ (TRPS 9), ‘dresses on a drying line’ (TRPS 37), a ‘picture on a wall’ (TRPS 44), a ‘flag hoisted’ (TRPS 56), a ‘rope hanging from a tree’ (TRPS 33) or a ‘cloth dangling from a tree’ (PSPV 59). The sentence in (50a) is a response to the question ‘where is the coat?’ in relation to the depiction in TRPS 9. In this sentence, the Figure (**awi**) is attached at a point to the reference object (**ɔdǎ**) and this is emphasised by the use of the postposition **shú** ‘surface’.

50a. Awiń ásómí ɔdǎńishú.

a-wi	ní	á-sómí	ɔ-dǎ	ní	shú
CM-garment	DEF	SM-hang	CM-metal	DEF	surface

‘The coat hangs on the metal.’ (TRPS 9)

The use of the verb **sómí** is not restricted to relations of attachment to a single point nor to dangling objects since it was used for describing a ‘telephone fixed to a wall’ (TRPS 25) as in (50b). Some speakers chose to use the verb **tsirí** ‘be.on’ for the same scenario.

- 50b. Fônń á-sómí kidrińíshú.

fôn ní á-sómí ki-dri ní shú
 Phone DEF SM-hang CM-wall DEF surface
 ‘The phone hangs on the wall.’ (TRPS 25)

There are instances where the verb **sómí** is used but there is no contact between the Figure and the reference object such that the Figure is located above the reference object as shown in (51) which was given as a description of a ‘lamp above a table’ (TRPS 13). In this case, **ada** ‘top.of.head’ is used to indicate that the lamp is above the table.

51. Kifúń ísómí kplǎń ádáníĩ.

ki-fú ní kí-sómí kplǎ ní á-dá ní kum
 CM-lamp DEF SM-hang table DEF CM-top.of.head DEF inside
 ‘The lamp is above the table.’ (TRPS 13)

6.6.1.2.4 **kpaplínǎ** ‘lean.against’

The verb **kpaplínǎ** ‘lean.against’ is used to characterise locative relations involving a leaning position. In this case, the Figure does not stand straight and it is only in contact with the reference object at the upper part and it is supported at another point external to the reference object but orthogonal to it. Such Figures have to be in a rigid and solid state (Ameka 2007). **kpaplínǎ** ‘lean.against’ is used during the elicitation for this study to describe locative scenes including a ‘ladder against a wall’ (TRPS 58), a ‘stick against a tree’ (PSPV 1) and ‘five tubers of cassava against a tree stump’ (PSPV 28).

- 52a. Kédéńglén ákpaplínǎ kidriń.

ké-déńglé ní ká-kpaplínǎ ki-dri ní
 CM-Ladder DEF SM-lean.against CM-wall DEF
 ‘The ladder is leaning against the wall.’ (TRPS 58)

- 52b. Agbedjín ákpaplínǎ kesukpogunuń.

a-gbedj ní á-kpaplínǎ ke-sukpogunu ní
 CM-cassava DEF SM-lean.against CM-tree.stump DEF
 ‘The tubers of cassava are leaning against the tree stump.’ (PSPV 28)

As illustrated in the sentences in (52), the verb **kpaplínǎ** ‘lean.against’ does not take a postpositional complement. This is due to the fact that the search domain is inferable from the verb so it is redundant.

6.6.1.2.5 **bubo** ‘squat’

The verb **bubo** ‘bend, squat’, which appears to have been borrowed from Ewe **bobo** ‘bend down’, is used to characterise Figures which are in squatting or crouching position. This verb was used to describe a ‘boy behind a chair’ in a squatting position (TRPS 64) as shown in example (53) which is a repetition of example (28).

53. Anóvɔ́n ábubɔ ní kegɔniedɛ.
a-nóvɔ ní á-bubɔ ní ke-gbu ní ke.de
 CM-child DEF SM-bend LOC CM-chair DEF behind
 ‘The child squats behind the chair.’ (TRPS 64)

6.6.1.3 Verb of adhesion

There is one verb of adhesion which is used to code information about how a Figure is firmly attached to the ground and cannot be easily removed or separated from the Ground.

6.6.1.3.1 **tá** ‘be.fixed, be.pasted’

The verb **tá** ‘be.fixed, be.pasted’ is used to characterise locative relationships in which the Figure is firmly attached to a reference object such that it cannot be easily removed. This verb is used to describe a ‘gum attached under table’ (TRPS 53), ‘plaster on a leg’ (TRPS 35), ‘handle on door’ (TRPS 61) as well as ‘hooks in a wall’ (TRPS 50).

- 54a. Plástań áta katsrukɔ́.
plásta ní á-tá ka-tsrukɔ́
 plaster DEF SM-be.fixed CM-foot
 ‘The plaster is fixed on the foot.’ (TRPS 35)
- 54b. Behúkuń áta kidriníshú.
be-huku ní á-tá ki-dri ní shú
 CM.PL-hook DEF SM-be.fixed CM-wall DEF surface
 ‘The hooks are fixed into the wall.’ (TRPS 50)

tá ‘be.fixed, be.pasted’ can also be used in agentive constructions in which the verb has a caused locative reading as illustrated below.

- 54c. Áta keplukpá ní kidriníshú.
á-tá ke-plukpá ní ki-dri ní shú
 3SG-paste CM-book LOC CM-wall DEF surface
 ‘S/he pasted a piece of paper on the wall.’

6.6.1.4 Verbs of attachment

These are verbs which code information about Figures which are loosely attached to the Ground.

6.6.1.4.1 **nyá** ‘be.tied’

The verb **nyá** ‘be.tied’ is used in situations in which the Figure is tied around the reference object. The Figure has to be in contact with the reference object and it could be a rope, thread, bandage etc. This verb was used in a response with reference to a ‘ribbon on a candle’ (TRPS 4).

55a. Ohuiń anyá tsyéńdeń.

o-hui	ńí	ɔ-nyá	tsyéńde	ńí
CM-rope	DEF	SM-be.tied	candle	DEF

‘The rope is tied around the candle.’ (TRPS 4)

The verb **nyá** ‘be.tied’ can also occur in an agentive transitive construction. This structure has a caused locative reading as shown in (55b).

55b. Adzĩn anyá yĩ ’tɔkputíkā.

a-dzĩ	ńí	á-nyá	yĩ	kɪ-tɔkputíkā
CM-woman	DEF	SM-tie	3SG	CM-hair

‘The woman has plaited her hair.’

The difference between (55a) and (55b) is that the sentence in (55a) describes the resultant state occurring due to a prior action, namely, the rope having been tied around the candle whereas the construction in (55b) describes the action of the woman.

6.6.1.4.2 **muna** ‘be.around’

The verb **muna** ‘be.around’ is used for Figures that are around the reference object such that the Figure is in contact with the reference object. This verb was used to describe a ‘rope around a tree stump’ (TRPS 55) as shown in (56).

56. Ohuiń ɔmuna kesukpogunuń.

o-hui	ńí	ɔ-muna	ke-sukpogunu	ńí
CM-rope	DEF	SM-be.around	CM-tree.stump	DEF

‘The rope is around the tree stump.’ (TRPS 55)

6.6.1.4.3 **kana** ‘surround, go.around’

kana ‘surround, go.around’ is an active verb used to describe situations in which the Figure is around or goes round the reference object. The Figure may or may not be in contact with the reference object such as a ‘fence around a house’ (TRPS 15), a ‘rope around a tree stump’ (TRPS 55) or a ‘rope around a stone’ (PSPV 15). The sentences in (57) are responses to the “where-search” question about a ‘rope around a stone’ (PSPV 15) and a ‘fence around a house’ (TRPS 15).

- 57a. Ohuiń ókana kúklángbu.

o-hui	ní	ó-kana	ki-klangbu	ní
CM-rope	DEF	SM-go.around	CM-stone	DEF
‘The rope is around the stone.’			(PSPV 15)	

- 57b. Boká ní kana bupán.

bu-ká	ní	kana	bu-pá	ní
CM-fence	DEF	go.around	CM-house	DEF
‘The fence is around the house.’			(TRPS 15)	

Some speakers also used the verb **kana** as the second verb in an SVC to describe the scene with a ‘fence around a house’ (TRPS 15).

- 57c. Boká ní lí kana bupán.

bu-ká	ní	lí	kana	bu-pá	ní
CM-fence	DEF	be.positioned	go.around	CM-house	DEF
‘The fence is around the house.’			(TRPS 15)		

6.6.1.4.4 **da** ‘be.covered’

The verb **da** ‘be.covered’ is used to describe situations in which the Figure is spread over the reference object or attached to the reference object tightly or loosely. In the elicitation task, **da** ‘be.covered’ is used to describe scenes such as a ‘cloth covering a table’ (TRPS 29) and a ‘cork in a bottle’ (TRPS 62) as illustrated below.

- 58a. Kplǎ́íábhēpótín ’ída kplǎ́.

kplǎ́	kábhā	ki-pótí	ní	kí-da	kplǎ́
table	top	CM-cloth	DEF	SM-be.covered	table
‘The table-cloth covers the table.’ (TRPS 29)					

- 58b. Kókúń áda tompán ’únú.

kókí	ní	á-da	tompá ní	bu.nú
cork	DEF	SM-be.covered	bottle DEF	mouth
‘The cork covers the bottle.’ (TRPS 62)				

da ‘be.covered’ can also be used in agentive constructions to give a caused locative meaning. Thus, if someone covers a pot with a lid, it can be described as in (59a) involving a comitative prepositional phrase or with a take-SVC as in (59b).

- 59a. Áda kitsikpĩ ni ádida.
á-da ki-tsikpĩ ni á-dida
 3SG-cover CM-pot COM CM-lid
 ‘S/he covered the pot with a lid.’
- 59b. Áyíko ádidań áda kitsikpín.
á-yíko á-dida ní á-da ki-tsikpĩ ní
 3SG-take CM-lid DEF SM-cover CM-pot DEF
 S/he took a lid and covered the pot.’

In this section, the use and meaning of 13 verbs available to speakers of Tafi for spatial descriptions have been discussed. Tafi has been shown to be a multiverb language, i.e., a language that uses a comparatively large set of verbs in the Basic Locative Construction (BLC). As we have seen in this section also, in addition to the BLC, there are two other main types of locative constructions that are used in response to the “where-search” question. The verb in all these constructions are obligatory whereas the postposition may be left out under certain conditions such as when the search domain is inherently locative or when it can be deduced from the meaning of the verb or from the noun referring to the reference object. One of the features of multiverb languages is that they tend to have only one (locative) preposition. Tafi also has just one locative preposition.

6.7 Information structuring constructions

The order of constituents in a basic clause can be rearranged for information packaging purposes. In Tafi, this involves preposing elements to the clause and fronting some clause constituents. The effect of these processes is the creation of three positions in the left periphery of the clause. Like in other Kwa languages (Ameka 2010), the leftmost position is filled by scene-setting topic constituents and left dislocated constituents typically marked by the topic marker **ní**. The second leftmost position is for contrastive topics usually modified by intensifiers and the immediate position to the left of the subject is the focus position. While all the positions are not obligatorily present in a clause they can all be filled in one clause. (60a) schematically represents the extended basic clause structure while (60b) is an illustration of a clause with a fully expanded left periphery.

- 60a. (Frame Topic) (Contrastive Topic)(Focus) Subject Verb (Dative Object)
 (Object1) (Adjunct)

- 60b. obón ní mī tsyí fufuo mí baṅá
 [o-bón ní] [mī tsyí] fufuó mí ba-ṅá
 CM-today TOP 1SG.IND too fufu 1SG.IND FUT-eat
 ‘Today, I too, FUFU I will eat.’

There are distinct morpho-syntactic properties associated with the positions and the constructions in which they are involved. For instance, frame topics are marked by a topic marker and contrastive topics are signalled by intensifiers. These constructions are described in subsequent sections.

6.7.1 Frame topic constructions

Frame or scene-setting topics are the leftmost constituents in the left periphery of the clause. They provide the framework within which the rest of the clause is to be understood. They can be the entities which the clause is about or they may provide the temporal or locative setting for the situation characterised in the clause. The frame topics are optionally marked by the topic marker **ní**. As is the case in Ga and Ewe, the topic marker is in a heterosemic relation with the definiteness marker (see Dakubu 1992, Ameka 1991). The definiteness marker and the topic marker can both occur on the same constituent (see (62b) for an example). A preposed frame topic in a simple sentence can be an NP, an adverbial phrase or a connective (see below). The topic marker is also used to mark preposed clauses in complex sentences that set the scene for the main clause, and it is also used to mark embedded relative clauses as background information to the rest of the clause (see Chapter 9 on Clause combinations). The topic marker can be doubled on a constituent (see 66a) and it can also be lengthened for emphasis (see 61c).

Left dislocated arguments may be marked by the topic marker and referred to in the rest of the clause showing the relationship between the external topic and the rest of the clause. In (61a), the independent pronoun **balí** ‘3PL.IND’ representing the subject argument is left dislocated and it is cross-referenced on the verb with a subject marker in the rest of the clause. In (61b) the numeral **tedjipó** ‘one’ which occurs in the object position in the rest of the clause agrees with the external topic, bamboo. Similarly in (61c), the address term ‘Madam’ is preposed and represented in the rest of the clause with an agreeing pronoun in object position.

- 61a. Balí xúń ní badíba butsiniesí?
balí xúń ní ba-di-bá bu-tsí ní ke.sí
 3PL.IND as.for TOP 3PL-NEG2-come CM-death DEF under
 ‘As for them, they did not come to the funeral.’
- 61b. Pamprò xúń ní, óbotéjúdú tedjipó kó idru tutá aloo tulí.
pamprò xúń ní ó-bo-téjú-dú te-djipó kó
 bamboo as.for TOP 2SG-FUT-can-erect AM-one DAT

i-dru **ti-tá** **aloo** **ti-lí**
 CM.PL-mound AM-three DISJ AM-four
 ‘As for the bamboo sticks, you can erect one for about three or four yam
 mounds.’ (Yam cultivation)

61c. Madam ní ímóé ’ishūín.⁴⁸

Madam **ní** **í-mó** **yí** **kíshūi ní**
 Madam TOP 1SG-see 3SG Friday DEF
 ‘Speaking of Madam, I saw her on Friday.’

61d. ...so kǐnǐ ní, kúdaazhĩá sí budayíko kasí abrewa.

so **kǐ-ní** **ní** **ki-daa-zhĩá** **sí**
 so CM-PROX TOP 3SG-NEG:PSTPROG-need COMP
bu-da-yíko **kasí** **a-brewa**
 1PL-ITIVE-take show CM-old.woman
 ‘... so concerning this one, it was not necessary to seek counsel with (the)
 old lady.’ (Butsiugu)

Examples (61a), (61c) and (61d) also show that items that are inherently definite such as personal pronouns, demonstrative pronouns and address terms can occur as topics and be marked by the form **ní** ‘TOP’.

When an adjunct phrase such as a temporal noun phrase or a locative phrase is preposed to the clause, there is no anaphoric relation marker in the rest of the clause to it. There must be a relevance relation between them. Thus a temporal adjunct can occur juxtaposed to the subject of the clause representing the temporal frame for the interpretation of the rest of the clause. Consider the following examples:

62a. Kípā ɔwólagó búkpí ɔkóniésí.

kípā **ɔwólagó** **bú-kpí** **ɔ-ko** **ní** **kesí**
 Saturday evening 1PL-put.in CM-custom DEF under
 ‘Saturday evening we start with the ceremony.’

62b. Kípā ní ní bowa kúnú, kwesrá búdí kúsòlimi ɔnání ’íwaló.

[kípā **ní** **ní** **bó-wa** **kúnú** **]** **[kwesrá** **bú-dí**
 Saturday DEF TOP 1PL-do funeral Sunday 1PL-attend
kú.sòlimi **ɔ-nání** **kíwaló]**
 burial.service 2SG-reach Monday
 ‘On Saturday, we perform (the) funeral rites, on Sunday, we attend the
 burial service till Monday.’ (Butsiugu)

⁴⁸ The topic marker may sometimes be lengthened as in this sentence.

63. ...dén'ots⁵⁵ ní ridjiđi ɔ́dónánī 'ibe n̄ n'ibe gɪ lɔ́ba yɪkɪ kitukún...
 [dénī ɔts⁵⁵] ní ridjiđi ɔ́-dɔ́-nánī ki-be n̄
 from now TOP continuously 2SG-ITIVE-reach CM-time wh.ever
 ní kí-be gɪ lɔ́-ba-yɪkɪ ki-tukú ní
 DEF CM-time REL 1PL.DEP-VENT-receive CM-load DEF
 '... from now until whenever we receive the load.' (load = corpse)
 (Butsiugū)

The frame topic phrases in the examples in (62) are temporal phrases with similar reference; in (62a) the temporal noun phrase is not marked for definiteness nor is the topic marker used. In (62b) however, the temporal noun is definitised and then marked as topic. This example shows that the definiteness marker and the topic marker can co-occur on the same constituent. Example (63) illustrates the preposing of a temporal phrase made up of a preposition and temporal nominal. Note that the preposition is pied-piped with it.

Locative prepositional phrases can also occur in the scene setting topic position. In the examples below, the preposition is pied-piped with its complement and preposed to the clause to indicate the place where the event described in the rest of the clause occurs; in (64a) it is the market and in (64b) it is the school.

- 64a. Ní kedziním ní, Ám'edzí bladyō.
 [ní ke-dzi ní kɪmɪ ní] Ámā e-dzí bladyō
 LOC CM-market DEF inside TOP Ámā SM-buy plantain
 'In the market, Ama bought plantain.'
- 64b. Ní sukū ní, Agoé átsánī Mensah.
 [ní sukū ní] Agoé á-tsá-nī Mensah
 LOC school TOP Agoé SM-meet-COM Mensah
 'At the school, Agoe met Mensah.'

In some cases where the complement of a locative prepositional phrase is preposed, the preposition may be elided. This is the case in the following example where a complex postpositional phrase is preposed to the clause and there is nothing in the rest of the clause referring back to the constituent the utterance is about.

65. Olizatɔ́ ónúgbúíṃ lólǎnīm̄ ebúítibúí edekóéyī.
 o-lizatɔ́ o-nugbu kɪmɪ ló-lǎ ní kɪmɪ
 CM-dawn CM-mouth inside RED-smell DEF inside
 e-búítibúí e-de-kóéyī
 CM.PL-word.of.wisdom SM-ITIVE-exit
 'Out of the smelly mouth of early dawn good counsel flows.'
 (Proverb #12)

Thus when locative prepositional phrases are preposed to the clause, the preposition may either be pied-piped with its complement or it may be elided. There is nothing in the rest of the clause that will be coreferential to this initial phrase.

Connectives can also occur in the frame topic slot. The examples in (66) illustrate this. (66a) also shows that the topic marker can be doubled on one constituent.

- 66a. ... so ní ní badıgo ʼédɔŋɔ́n kó gbaxáǎĩ?
 so ní ní ba-di-go kí-dɔŋɔ́n ní kó gbaxáǎĩ
 so TOP TOP 3PL-NEG2-leave CM-food DEF DAT striped.mouse
 ‘... for that reason, they did not leave any food for striped mouse.’
 (Gbaxáǎĩ)

- 66b. Alasí ní élē otroeleté ovutó ní ní bétítsú ɔlí ʼífú bupui lápoi ɔlí?
 alasí ní élē o-tro.eleté o-vutó ní ní
 because TOP CFM CM-lie.owner CM-roof DEF TOP
 bé-tí-tsú ɔlí kí-fú bu-pui lá-pui ɔlí
 3PL-NEG1-set 3SG CM-fire CM-scatter 3PL.DEF-scatter 3SG
 ‘The reason is that the roof of a dishonest man’s hut is never burnt, it is dismantled piece by piece.’ (Gbaxáǎĩ)

6.7.2 Contrastive topic constructions

The second position in the left periphery is the contrastive topic position. In examples (61a) and (61b) we have contrastive topics marked by the intensifier **xúń** ‘as for’ and marked by the frame topic marker. We also saw in (60b) that a frame topic constituent and a contrastive topic constituent can be different. The main thing about the contrastive topics is that the dimension of the contrast is signalled by an intensifier (see Chapter 4 on noun phrases and nominal modifiers). Typically, the discourse elements that are so marked are presupposed. Examine the following discourse fragments.

- 67a. Balí xúń étínyí ásí ní kánā sáhwĩ édékpu kó alí énú bal’enyí gı le klú?
 balí xúń bé-tí-nyí bá-sí ní ká-nā
 3PL.IND as.for 3PL-NEG1-know SM-COMP TOP CM-manner
 sáhwĩ é-dé-kpu kó balí é-nú balí
 CM-spider SM-ITIVE-hide DAT 3PL 3SG-hear 3PL.IND
 e-nyí gı le-klú
 CM.PL-name REL 3PL.DEF-call
 ‘As for them, they did not know that spider was hiding from them and had heard the names they mentioned.’ (Sáhwĩ)

- 67b. Kásālā bǒǒ ébuso aábá o.
ká-sālā **bǒǒ** **é-buso** **a-á-bá** **o**
 CM-tortoise rather SM-do.first 3SG-PRSPROG-come UFP
 ‘Tortoise is rather the one who is arriving first.’ (Kásālā)
- 67c. Balí tsyí be-tsiré blǒ sí ní ɔwashui ba-vubó
balí **tsyí** **be-tsiré** **blǒ** **sí** **ní** **ɔwashui** **ba-vubó**
 3PL.IND too SM-tell 1PL COMP TOP tuesday 3PL-bury
a-nǒ **békē** **ko** **ní** **ká** **bá-wa** **kúnú**
 CM-person COMPL just TOP then 3PL-do funeral.rites
zi **ɖeká**
 times one
 ‘They too said that on Tuesday after burying the person, they will perform the funeral rites at once.’
- 67d. ... sáhwĩ tsyí évu aló ádákpasí kumanumí ééyu ’ívú plínǒ bekusi edziniín.
[sáhwĩ tsyí é-vu a-ló á-dá-kpasí kɪ-ma
 spider too SM-catch SM-get.up SM-ITIVE-be.in CM-dancing.ring
ní kumí é-é-yú ki-vu plínǒ be-kusí
 DEF inside 3SG-PRSPROG-dance CM-dance add CM.PL-chief
e-dzini ní]
 CM-wife DEF
 ‘... spider also got up he went inside the dancing ring dancing with the queens.’ (Sáhwĩ)

In the examples in (67) the contrastive topics marked by various intensifiers are used. It appears that the contrastive topic tends to be the subject of the clause and it is cross referenced on the verb. When some of the intensifiers that are more focal in their semantics, e.g. **ko** ‘only’, are used to mark the preposed contrastive topic, they are treated morpho-syntactically like focus constructions. Thus, in (68a) the contrastive topic item is the subject argument in the clause. Because of this, there is an independent pronoun referring back to it and it is further cross-referenced on the verb by the appropriate subject marker. In (68b) also the contrastive topic **kú** ‘death’ bears an object relation in the clause and as it has been fronted and marked with **ko** ‘only’, the subject pronoun is realised as the dependent form. In this example also, a postverbal topic marker occurs to mark an out-of-focus part of the clause (see §6.7.4 for further details). These patterns are the same as those for subject focus and object focus constructions (see §6.7.3).

- 68a. édzýúí ko y’ébékóéyí ní ozinúñ ...
é-dzyúí **ko** **yí** **é-bé-kóéyí** **ní** **o-zi** **ní**
 CM-rat just 3SG.IND SM-VENT-exit LOC CM-hole DEF
kumí ...
 inside
 ‘A MOUSE just popped/came out of the hole’ (FS)

- 68b. Kú ko létsi kó lóañ.
kú ko lé-tsi kó blš aní
 death just 3PL.DEP-tell DAT 1PL TOP
 ‘Only the DEATH was announced to us.’ (Butsiugū)

6.7.3 Focus constructions

Any of the constituents in a clause can be highlighted for focus. Focusing involves fronting of the constituent to a position immediately adjacent to the subject and applying further measures depending on the role of the constituent in the clause. Unlike neighbouring Kwa languages like Ewe, Ga, Akan and Logba, Tafi does not employ a particle to mark such a fronted constituent for focus. The focus subconstructions are discussed in the subsequent sections below.

6.7.3.1 Subject focus constructions

When a subject argument is focused, it occurs clause initially in the immediate pre-subject position. It is marked as being in focus by an independent pronoun that agrees with it in class and number. This subject form is cross referenced on the verb by an appropriate subject marker. There is thus a marker in the rest of the clause that refers to the subject argument in focus. Consider the following examples.

- 69a. Otsrí kəkulš ol’óvə aput’ otiti ədzyudzycó ní.
ɔ-tsrí kəkulš olí ó-və a-putš o-titi
 CM-foot crooked 3SG.IND SM-besmear.with CM.PL-mud SM-smear
ɔ-dzyu-dzyo ní
 CM-RED-straight DEF
 ‘THE CROOKED LEG besmears the straight one with mud.’ (Proverbs #1)
- 69b. Age ’etukú kulí d’iepí.
a-ga ki-tukú kulí di ke-pí
 CM-animal CM-load 3SG.IND go CM-home
 ‘A FOOL’S LOAD reaches home.’ (Proverbs #56)
- 69c. Ámā y’ésí édékpú.
Ámā yí é-sí é-dé-kpú
 Ama 3SG.IND SM-run SM-ITIVE-hide
 ‘AMA ran and hid.’
- 69d. Ekusí tédqkpó y’áaŋa bal’íabhā.
e-kusí te-díkpó yí á-a-ŋa balí kábhā
 CM-chief AM-one 3SG.IND SM-PSTPROG-eat 3PL.IND top
 ‘ONE CHIEF was ruling over them.’ (Kásālā)

In example (69d), for instance, the focused NP belongs to the **a**¹ class, the independent pronoun that is used to mark it belongs to that class. It is also cross-referenced on the verb by the appropriate subject form. In (69b), the focused NP is a possessive phrase whose head belongs to the **ki**- class and is therefore marked by the independent pronoun **kí** that agrees with it in class and number. In this case, it is not cross referenced on the verb with the **ki**- subject marker because agreement between a **ki**- class noun subject and the verb is no longer robustly marked. The strategy for signalling subject focus is different from that of non-subject arguments. Thus Tafi also manifests the crosslinguistic tendency of asymmetry between subject focus and non-subject focus (see e.g. Lambrecht 1994).

6.7.3.2 Object focus constructions

When an object is in focus, it is fronted and placed immediately adjacent to the subject position. A gap is left in the object position in the rest of the clause. If the subject argument is expressed as a pronoun it is realised as the dependent form as the examples in (70) illustrate. In (70a), the object of the second verb in the SVC **ókó todjúkpó** ‘one place’ is focused and the subject pronoun of the SVC is realised as the dependent form on the first verb. Similarly, the object of the first verb in the SVC in (70b) is in focus and the subject of the SVC is expressed as the subject dependent form on the first verb. Note, however, that in (70c) even though the object is in focus, because the subject is realised as the independent form of the pronoun and cross referenced on the verb, there is no dependent form used.

- 70a. **Ókó** **tódjúkpó** **lá-shṣ** ’elú g’lòbè ’efṣ.

[o-kó	tó-djúkpó	lá-shṣ	be-lú]	gí
CM-place	AM-one	3PL.DEP-urinate	SM-put.down	REL
lu-bá	kí-fṣ			
3SG.DEP-come	CM-lather			

‘It is by urinating at ONE PLACE that lather is formed.’ (Proverbs #7)

- 70b. **Osí ní gí lólí aṣ ahóú olí layíko** ’ehu éblidzya.

o-sí	ní	gí	lò-lí	a-nṣ	a-hòu	ní
CM-stick	DEF	REL	3SG.DEP-be.at	CM-person	CM-hand	TOP
[olí	la-yíko	be-hu	é-blidzya]			
3SG.IND	3PL.DEP-take	SM-hit	CM-snake			

‘It is THE STICK one has in hand that one uses to hit a snake.’

(Proverbs #23)

- 70c. **Kokó y’anyádè** ’égbā.

kokó	yí	a-nya-dà	kí-gbā
cocoa	3SG.IND	SM-CERT-plant	CM-truth

‘COCOA, he truly did plant (it).’

- 70d. An⁵ shishe átínyunyā 'mī kúbhūm y'ányunyā?
a-n⁵ **shi-she** **á-tí-nyunyā** **ā-mī** **[kú-bhūm]**
 CM-person RED-grow SM-NEG1-frown CM-face CM-anus
yí **á-nyunyā]**
 3SG.IND SM-frown
 'An elder does not frown his face; he contorts his ANUS'. (Proverbs #44)

A postpositional phrase can also be focused as shown in (71). In this example, the postpositional phrase represents the object of the clause and so it is fronted. The subject argument of the clause is expressed as an independent pronoun and cross referenced on the verb.

71. Búvūnūm y'ágbā.
bú-vū **ní** **kum** **yí** **á-gbā**
 CM-house DEF inside 3SG.IND SM-sweep
 'THE ROOM he swept.'

A Dative object of a V2 in an SVC can also be focused like any other object as illustrated in (72).

72. Anóvōn Ám'edzí bawin akó.
a-nóvō **ní** **Ámā** **e-dzí** **ba-wi** **ní** **á-kó**
 CM-child DEF Ámā SM-buy CM.PL-dress DEF SM-give
 'THE CHILD Ama bought the dress for.'

Similarly, a copula complement constituent can also be focused. Like other objects, a focused copula complement is also fronted and there is nothing left in its original site. In the examples in (73) the copula subject is realised as an independent pronoun and cross-referenced on the copula.

- 73a. Sáhwi y'áglō y'enū.
sáhwi **yí** **á-glō** **yí** **e-nū**
 spider 3SG.IND CM-lover 3SG.IND SM-COP
 'SPIDER'S LOVER she is.' (i.e. 'she is SPIDER'S LOVER') (Sáhwi)
- 73b. Kofi ádumí Doxwě 'íbúí alasí adzinóvōē dzyōgō y'enú.
Kofi **á-dumí** **Doxwě** **ki-búí** **[alasí** **a-dzinóvōē** **dzyōgō**
 Kofi SM-like Doxwě CM-matter because CM-girl good
yí **e-nú]**
 3SG.IND SM-COP
 'Kofi loves Doxwě because she is A GOOD GIRL.'

6.7.3.3 Verb focus constructions

Verbs can also be focused. Tafi employs a strategy in which the verb is nominalised and fronted with the original verb left in situ. The verb is nominalised by prefixing the class marker **bu-/bu-** to it. The examples in (74) illustrate verb focus. As is evident from the examples the subject in such clauses can be expressed as the independent form and cross-referenced with an appropriate subject marker on the verb, as in (74a) or as a dependent pronoun marked on the verb as in (74b) and (74c).

74a. Boshĩ y'áshĩ ãv'uyem.

bu-shĩ	yĩ	á-shĩ	a-vĩ	bu-ya	kĩmĩ
CM-leave	3SG.IND	SM-leave	SM-go	CM-farm	inside

'LEAVE s/he DID leave for the farm.'

74b. Bétĩtsũ oturoeleté ovutó 'éfũ bopui lápui olĩm?

bé-tĩ-tsũ	o-turo	e-leté	o-vutó	ki-fũ
3PL-NEG1-set	CM-lie	CM-owner	CM-roof	CM-fire

[bu-pui	lá-pui	olĩ	kĩmĩ]
CM-scatter	3PL.DEP-scatter	3SG.IND	inside

'We do not set fire to the dishonest person's roof, we TEAR it apart.'

(Proverbs #32)

74c. Ónúgĩ ñeke évuwó ní y'eyíalĩ butĩ látĩ ní anō 'evuabhā.

ónú.gĩ	ñeke	é-vu-wó	nĩ	yĩ	e-yĩ-alĩ
COND	crocodile	SM-catch-2SG	TOP	3SG.IND	CM-child-PL

[butĩ	lá-tĩ	nĩ	a-nō	ki-vu	kabhā]
CM-crawl	3PL.DEP-crawl	LOC	CM-person	CM-stomach	top

'When a crocodile has captured you (even) baby crocs will CRAWL on your belly.' (Proverbs #33)

Any constituent in a basic clause in Tafi can be focused. The strategies for focusing subjects and other term constituents are different. Verbs are also focused using a slightly different strategy. These devices afford Tafi speakers to structure information they wish to communicate effectively.

6.7.4 Post-verbal topic marker **anĩ**

In example (68b), repeated for convenience here as (75a), there is a form **anĩ** glossed as 'TOP' which occurs in the predicate part of a clause. It can occur immediately after the verb as in (75b) and (75c), or after a prepositional phrase as in (75a). It seems to mark the part of the clause to its left as a kind of topic. In example (75b), for instance, the form seems to mark 'what you are doing' as topic to what follows 'in vain'.

- 75a. Kú ko létsi kó lóañ.
kú ko lé-tsi kó blš aní
 death just 3PL.DEP-tell DAT 1PL TOP
 ‘Only the death was announced to us.’ (Butsiugū)
- 75b. Kigi w’óóbhutíañ buwǎ/ tǔwǎ.
ki-gi wó ó-ó-bhuti aní buwǎ/ tǔwǎ
 3SG-REL 2SG.IND SM-PRSPROG-do TOP in.vain
 ‘What you are doing is in vain.’
- 75c. Kílēm ’iyo w’óóbīañ.
kí-lē kumi yiyo wó ó-ó-bī aní
 CM-air inside cry 2SG.IND SM-PRSPROG-cry TOP
 ‘In vain you are WEEPING.’

The form **aní** ‘TOP’ is similar to the proximal demonstrative form **aní** ‘PROX’, that modifies nouns belonging to the **a¹-**, **ba(a)-**, **a²-** and **ka-** classes (see § 4.6.3), and the negative cleft **aní** ‘NEGCL’ (see § 7.3.5.1). These forms must be related as they have related functions. However, the nature of the relationship is not clear. Further investigation is needed to clarify it.

6.7.5 Topic-comment only constructions

Topic-comment only constructions in Tafi are verbless predications. They have the structure [NP_{TOPIC} NP_{COMMENT}] where the two NPs are simply juxtaposed. Some of these structures are used to express simile-like propositions where the topic NP is likened to the comment NP. For example,

- 76a. Adzī kigba.
a-dzī ki-gba
 CM-woman CM-falling.trap
 ‘A woman is a trap.’
- 76b. Banódzýrámi telí ’ídi ozi oo.
ba-nódzýrámi te-lí kí-dí o-zi oo
 CM.PL-human.being AM-INDEF CM-type CM-hole UFP
 ‘Some human beings are deep pits.’

Some tautologies are expressed using such structures but in this case the first NP contains an intensifier as shown in 77 - 79.

77. Kibenýee’be tsýí kibe.
ki-be-nyáá-ki-be tsýí ki-be
 CM-time-DISTR-CM-time also CM-time

‘Any time is (good) time.’

- 78a. Kepí ko kepí.

ke-pí **ko** **ke-pí**
CM-home only CM-home

‘Home is home.’ (i.e. There is no place like home)

- 78b. Butsí ko butsí.

bu-tsí **ko** **bu-tsí**
CM-death only CM-death

‘Death is death.’

- 79a. Anóvõ ko anóvõ kwã.

a-nóvõ **ko** **a-nóvõ** **kwã**
CM-child only CM-child INT

‘A child is always a child.’

- 79b. Adzĩ/ányí ko adzĩ/ányí kwã.

a-dzĩ/á-nyí **ko** **a-dzĩ/á-nyí** **kwã**
CM-woman/CM-man only CM-woman/CM-man INT

‘A woman/man is only a woman/man.’

In (77), the first NP is marked by the additive intensifier **tsyí** ‘too, also’ and the second NP made up of a noun with the same referential meaning as the head of the first NP. In (78a) and (78b), the intensifier used is the focusing one **ko** ‘only’ and the head noun is as it were repeated. (79a) and (79b) are similar to (78a) and (78b) where the topic NP is modified by **ko** but different from them in that the comment NP is modified by **kwã**. Interestingly, the nouns involved in this subconstruction are all human category nouns.

The verbless predications discussed in this section are used to drive home a point. They are used to state general truths. For instance, the statement in (76b) can be made to emphasise the fact that one cannot understand human beings or see through their motives while (78a) stresses the point that there is no place like one’s home and that no matter where a person travels to s/he will always come back home.⁴⁹

⁴⁹ This is comparable to a pop song, parts of which go like: There is no place like home, home sweet home; when I go south, west, east and north I will always come back home.