Aspects of Information Structure

in Richtersveld Nama

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I am also grateful to Andries J. Joseph and Seth Domorough and to my other Richtersveld Nama consultants for their patience, support and practical assistance.
**Abbreviations:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>first person singular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>second person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>third person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADV</td>
<td>adverb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPL</td>
<td>applicative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASSERT</td>
<td>assertative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASSOC</td>
<td>associative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUX</td>
<td>auxiliary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>common</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMPL</td>
<td>complementizer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COND</td>
<td>conditional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DECL</td>
<td>declarative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIM</td>
<td>diminutive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DU</td>
<td>dual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DUBIOUS</td>
<td>dubious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>feminine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FUT</td>
<td>future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HORT</td>
<td>hortative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMPF</td>
<td>imperfective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INT</td>
<td>interrogative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>masculine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OBJ</td>
<td>object</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OBL</td>
<td>oblique</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORD</td>
<td>ordinal (numeral)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PASS</td>
<td>passive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POSS</td>
<td>possessive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRS.COP</td>
<td>present copula</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PST.COP</td>
<td>past copula</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RECP</td>
<td>reciprocal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REL</td>
<td>relative (clause)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REFL</td>
<td>reflexive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUOT</td>
<td>quotative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RD</td>
<td>referential distance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBJ</td>
<td>subject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SG</td>
<td>singular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PL</td>
<td>plural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PST</td>
<td>past</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REC.PST</td>
<td>recent past</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STAT.PART</td>
<td>stative particle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1 Introduction

This thesis was written as part of Project P7 “Expression of Focus in Southern African Languages” at ZAS (Center for General Linguistics, Berlin), funded by the German Science Association (DFG). The project was primarily designed to investigate the prosodic and grammatical expressions of focus in Southern African languages. A special emphasis was paid to documentation and description of understudied languages and language varieties, Richtersveld Nama being one of them.

The aims of this thesis are twofold. On the one hand, I will give an analysis of information structure in Richtersveld Nama based primarily on elicitations, narrative and conversational discourse. As it lies beyond the scope of this thesis to cover the whole range of phenomena related to information structure, I will primarily concentrate on the interaction of constituent order and information structure. Issues concerning the relevance of prosody will be dealt with only in passing; all comments made should be understood as starting points for further investigation and are in no way meant to represent any substantial analysis. The second major aim of this thesis is to highlight particular points of interest for future research on the language.

The thesis is organized as follows: Chapter 2 provides general information on Richtersveld Nama, its geographical, historical, and sociolinguistic context, as well as previous investigations. Chapter 3 presents a grammatical sketch, covering the phonology, morphology and syntax of the language. Chapter 4 outlines the theoretical background against which the analysis of information structure is carried out. Chapter 5 discusses relevant methodological issues. Chapter 6 describes the corpus used for this thesis. Chapter 7 provides the analysis of information structure: in the first part an account of topic is presented, whereas in the second part the focus structure of the language is described; besides, a number of relevant assumptions are discussed. Chapter 8 summarizes the findings and outlines the areas for further investigation.
2 Richtersveld Nama

2.1 Genealogical classification

Richtersveld Nama is a heretofore undescribed variety of the Nama language spoken in the Richtersveld (the Northern Cape province of South Africa). Nama belongs to the Khoekhoe branch of the Khoe language family, also known as Central Khoisan (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Genetic classification of the Khoe languages
(adopted from Güldemann and Vossen 2000: 102).

2.2 Alternate names

Nama is also known as Khoekhoe, Khoekhoegowab or Nama/Damara. Such a variety of names owes to the fact that Nama is spoken by at least two ethnic groups: the Nama and the Damara. What makes the issue particularly sensitive is the assumption that the Negroid Damara shifted to the Nama language while they were slaves of the Nama. This claim is not only confined to popular and non-scientific literature, but was expressed as recently as 1981 by the famous Africanist Oswin Köhler:

Les Bergtama ont adopté la langue nama. (Köhler 1981: 469)

To prevent any discord between the two groups, the term *Nama/Damara* was introduced for official purposes. Later it was replaced by *Khoekhoegowab* (or *Khoekhoe* for short).

In my paper I prefer to keep to the term *Nama*, as this is the way the Nama in the Richtersveld call their language. Speaking of the Nama variety spoken in the Richtersveld, I will use the term *Richtersveld Nama*. I will refer to the standardized variety of Nama spoken in Namibia as *Standard Nama* or *Namibian Nama.*
2.3 Geographical and historical context

The Richtersveld (Figure 2) is situated in Namaqualand, Northern Cape, in the northwest corner of South Africa and has a semi-arid climate.

Figure 2: The Richtersveld (adopted from Berzborn 2004: 18)

According to archaeological evidence, this area has been inhabited by pastoralists for at least 2,000 years (Webley 1997: 81-83). Before colonization, the Nama language used to be widespread in the Cape region as can be seen on Figure 3.
Richtersveld Nama is the most southern variety of the language. It used to be spoken in the areas of contact with now-extinct undocumented Cape Khoekhoe varieties. This fact partially influenced the choice of the Richtersveld Nama variety for the investigation, as it might provide some clues to the typological profile of Cape Khoekhoe varieties.

Figure 3: The distribution of South African Khoisan in the pre-colonial times (adopted from Güldemann and Vossen 2000: 100).
Due to its remoteness and harsh climate Namaqualand served as a refuge for Khoekhoe and other groups who fled from European settlers in the Cape during colonial times. The only Europeans visiting the area from the middle of the 17th century were members of a few expeditions. Only as late as the middle of the 19th century they were followed by missionaries.

From approximately 1830 the descendents of European men and Khoekhoe women, the so-called “Bastards” or “Coloureds”, came into the Namaqualand. This intrusion led to conflicts with the Nama living in the area. In the Richtersveld, however, the number of Coloureds was initially relatively low and they were partially assimilated (Berzborn 2004: 49).

**Figure 4:** The village Kuboes

Missionary work in Namaqualand was done from 1805 onwards, first by the London Missionary Society, and later by the Rhenish Mission Society. In 1842, the Rhenish Mission Station Richtersveld was established, around which the village Kuboes developed
Mission stations established in the 19th century were granted ‘tickets of occupation’ for the surrounding lands to be used by local people exclusively. With that, the pastoral Nama had the opportunity to graze their stock on the communally used land, which was not possible in many other areas of the Cape, because they were occupied by white settlers. This land was later transformed into ‘Reserves’.

In December 1847, Namaqualand was incorporated into the Cape Colony. In 1930, a certificate of reservation was issued, reserving the Richtersveld for the use of ‘the Hottentots, Bastards and other Coloureds’. Under the Population Registration Act and the Group Areas Act of 1950, the Richtersveld people, who were mostly of Nama origin, were forcibly classified as Coloureds and were restricted to reside in the ‘Richtersveld Coloured Reserve’. However, due to the Richtersveld’s remoteness and comparably minor external contact, the transformation from a Nama to a Coloured identity remained incomplete (Berzborn 2003: 342).

Today, there are four villages in the Richtersveld (Eksteenfontein, Kuboes, Lekkersing, Sanddrif). The approximate 3,000-3,500 inhabitants (Berzborn 2004: 19) of the former Coloured reserve Richtersveld live mainly from wage labor in diamond mines in the area, stock farming and pensions provided by the state.

### 2.4 Sociolinguistic situation

Under the Apartheid regime there was a hierarchy among people based on racial classifications that distinguished Whites from Coloureds and Blacks. Together with free Blacks and people of mixed descent, the Nama were forcibly classified mainly as Coloureds. Their identity was denied and their language was suppressed by the government. They became de facto invisible, merged in the Coloured category and were forced to adopt a Coloured identity, which included the use of Afrikaans. This resulted in the marginalized status of the Nama language and in the dominance of Afrikaans (Berzborn 2003: 335).

Nowadays, the two languages commonly spoken in the Richtersveld are Nama and Afrikaans, the knowledge of English is still limited. Afrikaans came into the region with the colonists, settlers and missionaries. Missionaries played a particularly important role in imposing a Coloured Afrikaans Christian identity on the people in the Richtersveld, and, for example, did not use the Nama Bible, which was available and used in Namibia, but instead promoted the use of Afrikaans (Berzborn 2004: 343).
Under the influence of the Apartheid government Nama was even more systematically suppressed, chiefly through education policy, and it started to diminish. Whereas in the 1930s, Nama was still prominent at school and at least one teacher held classes in Nama, Afrikaans became the dominant language in the 1940s. The teachers who came from the Cape region did not speak Nama and physically punished the children if they spoke their mother tongue. That induced parents of this generation to speak Afrikaans to their children, as they did not want them to suffer from ignorance of Afrikaans at school as they did. Therefore they taught them Afrikaans as the first language. Nama was also banned from workplaces and the public sphere, and people were ashamed to speak this ‘backward and uncivilized’ language, which had so many negative connotations outside the reserve (Berzborn 2004: 343).

Nowadays, only people over 70 are still predominantly Nama-speaking. Those between 40 and 70 are bilingual, whereby the command of the two languages varies to a great extent depending on education, time spent outside the Nama-speaking community and family situation. Among people under 40, only those who spent their childhood with their grandparents, what implies that they grew up at stockposts, have a good command of Nama. Teenagers and children are said to understand the language but to be too ‘lazy’ to speak it. From my personal observation, only few of them seem to understand and speak Nama, whereas in most other cases it remains doubtful.

As a language, Nama is not endangered as it has many speakers in Namibia. In South Africa, however, Nama is spoken only in two remote areas (the Richtersveld and Riemvasmaak) and can be regarded as an endangered language as it is losing more and more speakers. There are no exact figures of Nama speakers for the area. According to some very optimistic estimates, there are 5,000 to 10,000 Nama-speaking people living in the Northern Cape (ILO 1999). According to my personal observations, in Kuboes, a village with some 1,000 inhabitants (Berzborn 2004: 19), which is regarded as the center of Namaness in South Africa, only every fourth or fifth speaks Nama more or less fluently.

2.5 Previous studies

Already in 1717 Leibniz devotes nine pages in *Colectanea Etymologica* (pp. 375-84) to the discussion of Cape Hottentot, a now extinct language closely related to Nama.

Interest in the description of the Nama language experienced a real boom in the second half of the 19th century, after Europeans settled on the territory of present-day Namibia. In this period a number of grammars, grammatical sketches and dictionaries were published
(Tindall 1857, Wallmann 1854, Wallmann 1857, Hahn 1870, Krönlein 1889, etc). These first attempts of grammatical description were followed by more serious analyses in Meinhof’s *Lehrbuch der Nama-Sprache* (1909) and in three articles by Dempwolff in *Zeitschrift für Eingeborenen-Sprache* (1934-35). An important milestone in the phonological analysis of Nama was Beach’s *The Phonetics of the Hottentot Language*, published in 1938. This description is especially important in connection with clicks, which remained a phonological puzzle before Beach.

The modern period in the description of Nama begins with Hagman’s *Nama Hottentot Grammar*, published in 1977. This publication presents a broad descriptive survey of the Nama grammar and remains the only reliable full description of the language until now. Hagman’s major consultants were two Damaras (1977: 4) and it is not quite clear to what extent other dialectal varieties were included into his analysis.

Beginning with his MA thesis in 1976, Haacke has been working on the language. His major contributions are *A Khoekhoe dictionary* (2002) and *The tonology of Khoekhoe (Nama/Damara)* (1999). Besides, he wrote a few papers on syntax in the tradition of Transformational Grammar (Haacke 1992), two papers on compounding (for instance, Haacke 1992, 1995) and a survey of Khoekhoe dialects of Namibia (1997), the varieties spoken in South Africa were not included into the survey.

To summarize, among the Khoisan language, Nama is the best described one at the moment. However, a modern descriptive grammar is still missing.
3 Phonological and grammatical preliminaries

In this chapter I will give a short introduction into the Richtersveld Nama grammar. I do not intend to cover all aspects of the grammar, but rather to provide enough background information to deal with aspects related to information structure. First, I will give a brief account of the phonological system of the language. Then, I will proceed to the morphological aspects of the grammar covering nominal and verbal morphology. Finally, in the section on syntax, I will outline the structure of the noun phrase and describe the constituent order.

3.1 Phonological preliminaries

3.1.1 Consonants

The Nama consonant inventory includes pulmonic (Table 1) and non-pulmonic (Table 2) consonants.

Table 1 Pulmonic consonants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Bilabial</th>
<th>Labiodentals</th>
<th>Alveolar</th>
<th>Palatal</th>
<th>Velar</th>
<th>Glottal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stops</td>
<td>p</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>k</td>
<td>(7)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affricates</td>
<td>ts (d自救)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fricative</td>
<td>(f)</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>h</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approximant</td>
<td>(w)</td>
<td>(l)</td>
<td>(j)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nasal</td>
<td>m</td>
<td>n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trill</td>
<td></td>
<td>r</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 Non-pulmonic consonants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Dental</th>
<th>Alveolar</th>
<th>Palatal</th>
<th>Lateral</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Influx</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Efflux</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glottal stop</td>
<td>l</td>
<td>!</td>
<td>†</td>
<td>ll</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voiceless</td>
<td>l</td>
<td>!</td>
<td>ǂ</td>
<td>ll</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspirated</td>
<td>l</td>
<td>!</td>
<td>ǂ</td>
<td>ll</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uvularized</td>
<td>lk</td>
<td>!</td>
<td>ǂ</td>
<td>ll</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nasal</td>
<td>l</td>
<td>!</td>
<td>ǂ</td>
<td>ll</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be concluded from Table 1 voice is not a distinctive feature of Nama plosives, the use of letters p/b, t/d and k/g in the standard orthography was introduced to refer to
different tones: lower tones are preceded by letters b, d and g, whereas higher tones are preceded by p, t and k. [p] is often realized as /w/ or /β/ in an intervocalic position: in this position it is written as w in the Standard Nama orthography. The phonemes [f], [l], [dʒ] and [j] occur only in loanwords. [?] is not reflected in the orthography and is not phonemic, it precedes all words beginning with vowels in the Standard Nama orthography.

3.1.2 Vowels
The Nama vowel inventory is given in Table 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Front</th>
<th>Back</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>i i:</td>
<td>u u:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid</td>
<td>e e:</td>
<td>o o:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>a a:</td>
<td>ā:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nama vowels can be either short or long, though length is not phonemic independent of root and tone structure. Four of the five vowels have both oral and nasal long forms. Long vowels are written with a macron in the standard orthography, nasal vowels are written with a circumflex.

The inventory of diphthongs is summarized in Table 4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Diphthongs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oral</td>
<td>[ai], [ae], [ao], [au], [oe], [oa], [ui]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nasal</td>
<td>[äi], [äū], [ōā], [ūi], [īã]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nasal vowel and nasal diphthongs developed due to the elision of a nasal consonant between two vowels. Nasal diphthongs are written with an accent circumflex on the first letter of the diphthong in the Standard Nama orthography.

3.1.3 Tone
Standard Nama has lexical tone. Each root is associated with one of six tone melodies, which have been analyzed in a number of different ways by different researchers (cf. Beach 1938; Haacke 1976; Hagman 1977; Haacke 1999). In this paper, I adopt the most
recent analysis by Haacke (1999). According to this analysis, each root is associated with a melody that is composed of two separate tones, each of them docks to a different mora. The tones are 1 (super low), 2 (low), 3 (high) and 4 (super high). Examples of the six melodies resulting from the combination of the four tones are given in Table 5.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5</th>
<th>Tone melodies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘hit’</td>
<td>‘udder’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I have not made any attempt to check whether Richtersveld Nama is different from Namibian Nama in this respect. For the purpose of this thesis I will tentatively assume that there are no differences.

3.2 Morphology
3.2.1 Nominal morphology
3.2.1.1 Person-gender-number markers

One of the essential features of the Nama nominal morphology is the presence of person-gender-number markers (PGNs) listed in Table 6. As can be seen in Table 6, Nama distinguishes three genders: feminine, masculine, and common. Nouns denoting human beings can be of either feminine or masculine gender depending on sex. All other nouns are assigned to either feminine or masculine gender. There is a strong tendency to assign round, concentric, short, small or weak objects to feminine gender, whereas long, big or strong objects are predominantly of masculine gender. Common gender is assigned to nouns in dual and plural, if they refer to a group of entities of different lexical gender. Besides, common gender is used to indicate indefinites of nouns in singular.
Table 6: PGN markers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>masculine</td>
<td>-ta</td>
<td>-ts</td>
<td>-b/-Ni</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>feminine</td>
<td>-s</td>
<td>-s</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>common</td>
<td>-i</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>masculine</td>
<td>-kho</td>
<td>-kha</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>feminine</td>
<td>-ro</td>
<td>-ra</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>common</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>masculine</td>
<td>-ge</td>
<td>-go</td>
<td>-gu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>feminine</td>
<td>-so</td>
<td>-di</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>common</td>
<td>-da</td>
<td>-du</td>
<td>-n</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The PGN markers occur in two different contexts. On the one hand, they are suffixed to every noun and, apart from a few exceptions, they follow every noun phrase ending not in a noun. On the other hand, the same PGN markers obligatory occur as clitics in the clause second position and function as pronominal markers of the subject. The two contexts are differentiated in glossing. For instance, -ta is glossed as ‘1SG’ in the first context and as ‘1SG.SBJ’ in the second one. Below, I will discuss the distribution and function of the PGNs in greater detail.

3.2.1.2 Oblique marker

The oblique marker -a, called so due to the lack of a better term (cf. subordinative in Hagman 1977), follows the PGN marker and occurs on any noun phrase, except for two major contexts specified below.

When the oblique marker follows a consonant final PGN marker, it is simply added to the marker and no morphophonemic changes take place. When, however, the PGN marker has the form CV, reduction take place. The forms of the PGN markers with the oblique marker are given in Table 7. Information on tonal changes of the PGN marker can be found in Hagman (1977:16).
Table 7  PGN markers with the oblique marker -a

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>singular</td>
<td>masculine</td>
<td>-ta</td>
<td>-tsa</td>
<td>-ba/-a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>feminine</td>
<td>-sa</td>
<td>-sa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>common</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-e</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dual</td>
<td>masculine</td>
<td>-khoma</td>
<td>-kho</td>
<td>-kha</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>feminine</td>
<td>-ma</td>
<td>-ro</td>
<td>-ra</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>common</td>
<td>-ge</td>
<td>-go</td>
<td>-ga</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>feminine</td>
<td>-se</td>
<td>-so</td>
<td>-de</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>common</td>
<td>-da</td>
<td>-do</td>
<td>-na</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The two contexts in which noun phrases occur without the oblique marker are, on the one hand, the subjects in the prefield of a declarative sentence (to be defined below) as in (1) and, on the other hand, noun phrases before all the postpositions except xu ‘from’ as in (2).

(1) honder -gu  go  ā.
hen -3M.PL.SBJ  REC.PST  cry

‘Hens cried.’ (Pears_MariaSw.03)

(2) tsī  lurihā -b  ai  !não.
and  bicycle -3M.SG  on  load

‘ … and loaded on the bicycle.’ (Pears_Sophie.32)

In all other cases noun phrases are followed by the oblique marker -a, thus, morphologically, subjects do not differ from direct or indirect objects in the middlefield. For instance, in (3) all three arguments carry an oblique marker.

(3) tsī -b  go  llnā  khoe -b -a
and -3M.SG.SBJ  REC.PST  that  man -3M.SG -OBL

!nona  apel -de  llkhaba  llnā  khoe -b -a  må.
three  apple -3F.PL.OBL  again  that  man -3M.SG -OBL  give

‘And that man gave that man again three apples.’ (Pears_Lidia.35)
3.2.1.3 Independent pronouns

Table 8 Independent pronouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Person 1 exclusive</th>
<th>Person 1 inclusive</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>masculine</td>
<td>ti -ta</td>
<td>sā -ts</td>
<td>lī -b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>feminine</td>
<td></td>
<td>sā -s</td>
<td>lī -s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>common</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>lī -i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>singular</td>
<td></td>
<td>masculine</td>
<td>sī -da</td>
<td>sā -da</td>
<td>lī -gu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>feminine</td>
<td>sī -se</td>
<td>sā -se</td>
<td>lī -di</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>common</td>
<td>sī -ge</td>
<td>sā -ge</td>
<td>lī -n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dual</td>
<td></td>
<td>masculine</td>
<td>sī -m</td>
<td>sā -m</td>
<td>lī -kha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>feminine/common</td>
<td>sī -khom</td>
<td>sā -khom</td>
<td>lī -ra</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Independent pronouns are built by means of combining four pronominal stems with the PGN markers. The pronominal stems are ti ‘1SG’, sī ‘speaker’, sā ‘addressee’ and līn ‘3’.

The interaction of the semantics of the pronominal stems and PGNs provide for inclusive/exclusive distinction of independent pronouns. The full paradigm of independent pronouns is given in Table 8, where they are written with a hyphen to show the morpheme break.

3.2.2 Verbal morphology

3.2.2.1 Verbal suffixes

Two types of inflectional suffixes can appear on the verb. On the one hand, the verb can be followed by one of the four valence-changing suffixes (applicative -ba, reflexive -sen, passive -e, and reciprocal –gu). On the other hand, it can be followed by one of the pronominal object suffixes indexing person, gender and number (Table 9). If suffixes of both types co-occur, the valence-changing suffixes precede the pronominal object suffix.
Table 9  Object suffixes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>singular</td>
<td>masculine</td>
<td>-te</td>
<td>-tsi</td>
<td>-bi/Ni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>feminine</td>
<td>-si</td>
<td>-si</td>
<td>-si</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>common</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dual</td>
<td>masculine</td>
<td>-khom</td>
<td>-kho</td>
<td>-kha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>feminine</td>
<td>-m</td>
<td>-ro</td>
<td>-ra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>common</td>
<td>-ge</td>
<td>-go</td>
<td>-gu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-se</td>
<td>-so</td>
<td>-di</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plural</td>
<td>masculine</td>
<td>-da</td>
<td>-du</td>
<td>-in/-an</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>feminine</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>common</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sentences (4)-(6) illustrate the use of three suffixes of the first type.

(4)  tsǐ-b  go  axa -b-a  
and -3M.SG.SBJ  REC.PST  boy -3M.SG.OBL  
and -3M.SG.SBJ  REC.PST  slam.down -REFL

‘And the boy fell down (lit. slammed himself down)’ (Pear_MariaSw.25)

(5)  tsǐ  go  baisikel -i  ei  !nəo -ba -bi.  
and REC.PST bicycle -3M.SG on load -APPL -3M.SG.OBJ

‘... and loaded it onto the bicycle for him.’ (Pears_Saharia.37)

(6)  tsǐ -b  ge  go  ʰnam -e.  
and -3M.SG.SBJ  DECL REC.PST  whistle -PASS

‘And he was whistled to.’ (Pears_Anna.54)

The object suffixes can mark both direct (7a) and indirect (7b) objects.

(7) a:  xabe -n  go  llnā -n  lgōa -n -a  lkhēi  
but -3C.PL.SBJ  REC.PST  that -3C.PL child -3C.PL.OBL come  
tsǐ  go  hā  hui -bi.  
and REC.PST come  help -3M.SG.OBJ

‘But those children came and helped him.’ (Pears_Elizabeth.27-28)
3.2.2.2 Tense and aspect markers

The tense and aspect markers differ for active and stative verbs. The tense and aspect markers of active verbs are given in Table 10.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 10</th>
<th>Tense and aspect markers of active verbs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Past</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctual</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperfective</td>
<td>rV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perfective</td>
<td>hà</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Standard Nama, the tense-aspect markers immediately precede the verb, whereas in Richtersveld Nama, they can be placed before the verb (8a), in the clause second position (after the declarative marker if there is one) (8b), in both positions (8c), or, in case of a longer sentence, also somewhere within the middlefield of the clause (8d).

(8) a. tsī -n gum llnā -n pir -n -a
    and -3C.PL.SBJ ASSERT that -3C.PL pear -3C.PL -OBL
    go llnā.
    REC.PST fall
    ‘And those pears fell down.’ (Pears_Kaaitjie.17)

b. xabe -n go llnā -n lgōa -n -a lkhī.
    but -3C.PL.SBJ REC.PST that -3C.PL child -3C.PL -OBL come
    ‘But those children came.’ (Pears_Elizabeth.28)
c. tsē-n go līnā -n -a go !glû.
and -3C.PL.SBJ REC.PST that -3C.PL -OBL REC.PST depart

‘And those ones departed.’ (Anna.59)

d. tsē-b ge lī -b -a ge hana līnā
and -3M.SG.SBJ DECL 3 -3M.SG -OBL PST indeed that
xū -n -a ge lharu -s !nà ge hā tsoro.
thing -3C.PL –OBL PST basket -3F.SG in PST come pour.out

‘And he indeed came and threw out those things into the basket.’
(Pear_GertaSw.09)

The marker a in punctual tenses does not occur in Standard Nama. More investigation is needed to figure out its function and distribution in Richtersveld Nama.

The number of stative verbs in Nama does not exceed a dozen, however, a handful of frequently used verbs are stative, for example, #an ‘know’, lū ‘not know’, hā ‘be present’, līkhā ‘be able’. The tense markers used with stative verbs are given in Table 11. In (9) an example of a sentence with a stative verb is given.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 11</th>
<th>Tense markers of stative verbs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Past</td>
<td>Recent Past</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ge ī</td>
<td>go ī</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(9) hoa bur -ga -b ge #anoalan līkhā i.
all Boer -3M.PL.OBL -3M.SG PST shoot.dead be.able STAT.PART

‘He was able to shoot all the Boers.’

3.3 Syntax
3.3.1 The noun phrase
A noun phrase consists minimally of a noun or an independent pronoun. Noun phrases may include additional modifiers such as possessive pronouns, numerals, adjectives and deictic determiners as in (9a-d).
As can be seen in (10d) demonstratives can agree in person, gender and number with the nouns they modify. This phenomenon is not found in Standard Nama, but is reported for some other Khoe languages (Heine, 1997). More research should be conducted to find out what determines the distribution of the two forms such as those in (10d).

Possessive noun phrases may be of several types. The major distinction is between head-final and head-initial possessive noun phrases.

The head final noun phrases are formed either with the help of the two possessive pronouns ti ‘my’ and sa ‘your’ as in (10a), or with the possessive particle di placed between the modifier and the head as in (11a), or by means of juxtaposition of the dependent and head as in (11b).

With pronominal possessors head-initial possessive noun phrases are possible; they are formed with the help of the so-called “associative particle” â as in (12).
In the examples like the one in (12) there are no PGN markers at the end of the noun phrase coreferential with the head noun.

### 3.3.2 Constituent order

In this part I will present variations of the constituent order in Richtersveld Nama, whereas later, in the chapter on information structure, I will show the interaction of different constituent order types with different pragmatic relations. Though constituent order may vary in Richtersveld Nama, it is undoubtedly an SOV language. The structure of the Richtersveld Nama clause can be best described in terms of fields or linear positions as schematically presented in examples (13) and (14).

(13)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prefield</th>
<th>Clause second</th>
<th>Middlefield</th>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Postverbal position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ti 1SG</td>
<td>-ta ge go</td>
<td>lâ -s -a go</td>
<td>mû</td>
<td>see</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>settlement -3F.SG.OBL REC.PST</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

‘I saw a settlement.’ (Pears_Anna.01)

(14)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prefield</th>
<th>Clause second</th>
<th>Middlefield</th>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Postverbal position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tśi and</td>
<td>-b ge go</td>
<td>ao -b -a go</td>
<td>khâi</td>
<td>get.up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>man -3M.SG.OBL REC.PST</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

‘And a man got up.’ (Pears_Elizabeth.04)

The positions found in every main clause are the prefield, the clause second position, the middlefield, and the verb. Besides, in some clauses constituents appear after the verb as in (15), so it might be of relevance to distinguish also the separate postverbal position.

(15)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prefield</th>
<th>Clause second</th>
<th>Middlefield</th>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Postverbal position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tśi and</td>
<td>-b ge go</td>
<td>lora</td>
<td>pîr</td>
<td>-de pear -3F.PL.OBL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>man -3M.SG.OBL REC.PST</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

‘And he plucked pears.’ (Pears_Anna.04)

Apart from these clause-internal positions, referential constituents may also occur outside the boundaries of the clause, either to its left or to its right. Following Lambrecht (2001), I
will call such structures left-dislocation and right-dislocation respectively (cf. ‘left-detached position’ and ‘right-detached position’ in Van Valin’s (1997) terminology).

Below, I will give a brief description of each position and specify what kinds of constituents can occur in which position.

The clause second position in Richtersveld Nama is in a certain way the axis of the clause. It is present in every main clause and is filled with the subject PGN clitic, the sentence-type marker (declarative ge, assertive gum or interrogative kha) and often tempus and aspect markers as in (13) above. The subject PGN clitic is the only obligatory element of the clause second position. The use of the sentence type markers is optional and depends to a great extent on the speaker.

The prefield is by far the most interesting position of the Nama clause. It can be occupied by a number of elements: noun phrases, postpositional phrases, verb with or without tempus and aspect markers, verb phrases, adverbs, adverbial clauses, and conjunctions. Traditionally, the constituent order as in (13) with the subject in the prefield is defined as basic (Hagman 1977: 61). This is the constituent order one gets eliciting sentences in isolation or as an answer to the most general wh-question What happened? However, in coherent discourse conjunctions tsi ‘and’, as in (15), and o ‘and then’ are statistically, by far, the most frequent elements in this position. Tables 12 and 13 show the ratio of three types of elements in the prefield in two different types of discourse.

**Table 12** The prefield in the Pear Stories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Nr. of tokens</th>
<th>% of sentences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conjunction</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>80,5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (object NP, PP, adverb, adverbial clause, etc.)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>13,5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject noun phrase</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sum</td>
<td>183(^{4})</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

\(^{1}\)The situation is slightly different in subordinate clauses. Not every subordinate clause has a subject PGN clitic. Further investigations are required to find out which factors determine the distribution of subject PGN clitics in subordinate clauses.

\(^{2}\) In Namibian Nama, tempus and aspect markers occur only before the verb.

\(^{3}\) The calculation of the use of the three sentence type markers in 10 Pear stories shows that 2 speakers do not use them at all, 2 other use them in every sentence, whereas the percentage for 6 other speakers covers the range from 9% to 91% of all sentences.

\(^{4}\) The number of clauses used for this or that analysis may vary within this thesis. Primarily, it is determined by the fact that not every clause can be used in every analysis, for instance, adverbial clauses are included into sum counts, but are excluded from others.
Concerning the position of subject noun phrase, apart from the prefield, it may occur in the middlefield, usually immediately following the clause second position. As Table 14 shows the position of the subject noun phrase depends to a great extent on the type of discourse. Whereas subjects are relatively rare in the prefield in the narrations, they are more frequent in this position as in the middlefield in the collected dialogues.

### Table 13  
The prefield in the dialogues

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Nr. of tokens</th>
<th>% of sentences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conjunction</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject noun phrase</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (object NP, PP, adverb, adverbial clause, etc.)</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sum</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finally, to give an idea of the variety found in the prefield Table 15 is provided. It shows that apart from conjunctions and subject noun phrases, in the prefield of the analyzed texts such elements as postpositional phrases, wh-words, adverbs, verbs, and object noun phrases are found. The pragmatic status of these constituents will be discussed in Chapter 7.

### Table 14  
Subject noun phrase in the prefield and in the middlefield in two types of discourse

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pear stories</th>
<th></th>
<th>Dialogues</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tokens</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>tokens</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject NP in the prefield</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>56.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject NP in the middlefield</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>43.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 15 The prefield in the dialogues

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Nr. of tokens</th>
<th>% of sentences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conjunction</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject noun phrase</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adverb</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wh-word</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object noun phrase</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adverbial clause</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postpositional phrase</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verb</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sum</strong></td>
<td><strong>123</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The middlefield may include the subject of the sentence, direct and indirect objects and all types of adjuncts. The subject usually immediately follows the clause-second position with only temporal adverbs and sometimes adjuncts intervening between the two. The indirect object mostly precedes the direct one, though the reverse order is also common.

It has been claimed for Namibian Nama that objects can precede subjects in the middlefield (Hagman 1977: 115), however, the collected corpus of Richtersveld Nama contains no examples of such an order, moreover, such sequences were not accepted by the consultants.

Thus, the major constituent order variations with respect to the prefield can be schematically presented as in Table 16.

Table 16 Constituent order variations in the declarative sentence with respect to the prefield

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Prefield</th>
<th>Clause second</th>
<th>Middlefield</th>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Postverbal position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>S</td>
<td><em>SBJ.PGN</em></td>
<td>ge&lt;sup&gt;5&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>(O–PGN &lt;i&gt;-a&lt;/i&gt;) (O–PGN &lt;i&gt;-a&lt;/i&gt;)</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>CONJ</td>
<td><em>SBJ.PGN</em></td>
<td>ge</td>
<td>(S–PGN &lt;i&gt;-a&lt;/i&gt;) (O–PGN &lt;i&gt;-a&lt;/i&gt;) (O–PGN &lt;i&gt;-a&lt;/i&gt;)</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>X&lt;sup&gt;7&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td><em>SBJ.PGN</em></td>
<td>ge</td>
<td>(S–PGN &lt;i&gt;-a&lt;/i&gt;) (O–PGN &lt;i&gt;-a&lt;/i&gt;) (O–PGN &lt;i&gt;-a&lt;/i&gt;)</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>5</sup> Following the traditional point of view I assume that the subject PGN markers in sentences of Type I belong to the same series as subject PGN markers in sentences of other types. However, it remains open whether they are really subject PGN clitics occurring in the clause second position or PGN markers like the ones occurring on any noun phrases.

<sup>6</sup> ge stands here for any sentence type marker.

<sup>7</sup> X stands for any elements other than subject noun phrases and conjunctions.
Constituent order of Type I with a subject noun phrase in the prefield is illustrated in (16).

(16)  honder -gu       ge       go       â.  
      hen -3M.PL.SBJ  DECL  REC.PST   cry

‘The chickens cried.’ (Pears_Elizabeth.03)

(17) and (18) bellow illustrate constituent order of Type II with a conjunction in the prefield. (17) has a subject noun phrase in the middlefield, whereas (18) has none.

(17)  tsĩ -b      ge       go             ao -b -a  
      and -3M.SG.SBJ  DECL  REC.PST   man -3M.SG -OBL

      go          kêi.  
      REC.PST     get.up

‘And a man got up,’ (Pears_Elizabeth.04)

(18)  tsĩ -b      ge       go       pîr -n -a       !ora.  
      and -3M.SG.SBJ  DECL  REC.PST   pear -3C.PL -OBL   pick

‘And he was picking the pears.’ (Pears_Sophie.04)

(19) is an example for the constituent order of Type III with an object noun phrase appearing in the prefield.

(19)  nê       ū -n -a -b        ge       nê     ao -b -a  
      this   fruit -3C.PL -OBL -3M.SG.SBJ  DECL  this   man -3M.SG -OBL

      go       hana    !ora.  
      REC.PST   indeed   pick

‘This man was picking these fruits.’ (Pears_Saharia.10)

Finally, in any of the constituent order type presented above object noun phrases may also occur in the postverbal position as in (20). The discussion on the differentiation of postverbal object noun phrases from right-dislocations follows.

(20)  tsĩ -b      ge       go       !ora      pîr -de.  
      and -3M.SG.SBJ  DECL  REC.PST   pick   pear -3F.PL.OBL

‘And he picks pears.’ (Pears_Anna.04)
As mentioned earlier, apart from intra-clausal positions referential constituents can also occur in the two extra-clausal positions in Richtersveld Nama. Following Lambrecht (2001) I assume the following definition of a dislocation construction:

A dislocation construction (also called detachment construction) is a sentence structure in which a referential constituent which could function as an argument or an adjunct within a predicate-argument structure occurs instead outside the boundaries of the clause containing the predicate, either to its left (left-dislocation, henceforth LD) or to its right (right-dislocation, henceforth RD). (ibid.: 1050)

Instead of dislocation, various other terms have been proposed in the literature. The left dislocated constituent has been called “theme” (Dik 1997a) or “topic” (Lambrecht 1994), whereas the right-dislocated constituent has been named “tail (Dik 1997a) or “antitopic” (Lambrecht 1994).

Lambrecht (2001: 1050) suggests four criteria for determining a dislocation construction. They include:

(i) extra-clausal position of a constituent,
(ii) possible alternative intra-clausal position,
(iii) pronominal coindexation,
(iv) special prosody.

Of the four criteria only (i) is obligatory for a sentence construction to qualify as an instance of dislocation.

(21) is an example of a left-dislocated construction.

(21) gowa -e uhã tama khoe -i,
language -3M.SG.OBL have NEG man -3C.SG
llî -i ge lhû -e uhã tama.
3 -3C.SG.SBJ DECL ground -3C.SG.OBL have NEG

‘A man who has not got a language, he cannot have ground.’ (AG.105)

(22) is an example of a right-dislocated noun phrase coreferential with a zero object anaphora.

---

8 Against considering constructions as in (21) as instances of subject relative clause speaks the fact that subject relative clause in the middlefield is never separated by a pause from the noun it modifies.
(22) tsī -b ge lgam -lī lharu - llohā -s ā -b and -3M.SG.SBJ DECL two -ORD basket - bag -3F.SG ASSOC -3M.SG

lnā go hā ġgā, lnā -di pīr -di -a.
in REC.PST come put.in that -3F.PL pear -3F.PL -OBL

‘And he came and put into his second basket, those pears.’ (Pears_Anna.19)

The majority of supposedly right-dislocated noun phrases refer to objects, however, in none of the cases a pronominal object suffix on the verb is found. This fact does not necessarily present a problem for the right-dislocation analysis, as Lambrecht admits that the coreferential pronominal in sentences with right-dislocation can be a null element (2001: 1056) and objects are in fact frequently coded by zero anaphora as will be shown in Chapter 7. Therefore, the only way to differentiate between right-dislocated noun phrases coindexed with a zero object anaphora and postverbal objects is intonation, and mostly pausation. In the present work I rely exclusively on this criterion. This analysis is justified in as far as other dislocated elements to be discussed below mostly do have a particular intonation pattern (a pause, a drop in pitch and intensity). Chapter 7 contains a more in-depth discussion on the differentiation of these two phenomena.

To summarize, in this section I gave an account of major linear positions of the Richtersveld Nama clause and of possible variations of constituent order. In Chapter 7, I will show in which way these variations are relevant to the expression of topic and focus.

3.4 On glossing

The examples provided in this thesis are glossed following the Leipzig Glossing Rules where possible. The majority of the examples are written using the Standard Nama orthography as in Haacke (2002).

Tone is not marked in my corpus of transcribed texts, as it is not marked in the Standard Nama orthography, however, in a few examples where the pitch track is provided, for comparative purposes I also mark the lexical tones according to the dictionary (Haacke 2002). In such sentences the long vowels (including the nasal ones) are written as double vowels.

If an example contains a number of sentences, each sentence is additionally marked with a letter. Small letters (for instance, 70b) are used for the sentences produced by the same speaker; capital letters (for instance 71B) are used for the sentences produced by different speakers in dialogues or as if they were produced by different speakers in the elicitations.
4 Theoretical background

Before coming to the analysis of information structure in Richtersveld Nama, it is necessary to give some background information on the subject. In this section, I will first give an outline of the main ideas and concepts of information structure in general. This review of the literature on information structure is not meant to be exhaustive; rather it is intended to give a general idea on the subject and to put the present analysis into a context.

The question of the distribution of information within a clause or a sentence is an essential question for linguistic research on the interaction of form and function in language. Investigation on this topic has a long history and is couched in different terms and definitions. It goes back to the work of Prague School linguists such as Mathesius in the 1920's (Mathesius 1928, 1929). In recent years, a number of linguists made huge advances in understanding how information structure affects the linguistic form, among them Kuno (1972a, 1972b, 1975), Firbas (1964), Halliday (1967, 1985), Chafe (1976, 1987), Lambrecht (1986, 1987, 1994), and Dik (1989, 1997a, 1997b).

The approach used in my analysis of information structure in Richtersveld Nama builds largely on a synthesis of Lambrecht (1994), Dik (1989, 1997a) and to a lesser extent Givón (1983, 1990). They all assume a kind of dichotomy between topic and focus in the domain of information structure and to a great extent base their approaches on these two notions. In contrast to the majority of other approaches which are largely based on and applied to the analysis of European languages, these three approaches have been applied to typologically different languages.

I will first present an overview of different approaches on topic, then on focus, and, finally, I will discuss the differences between thetic and categorical statements.

4.1 Topic

Basically, most studies of topic can be categorized into two distinct approaches. One group of linguists focuses on discourse topic, with topic then taken as a concept related to what the discourse is about. For them, the focus is on what the complete multi-sentence utterance is all about (Van Dijk, 1977; Brown & Yule, 1983; Callow, 1998). The other group focuses more on clause topic (Dik (1989, 1997a), Givón (1984, 1990), and Lambrech (1994)). Finally, some linguists try to combine the two approaches. The most prominent among them is Talmy Givón (1990).

4.1.1 Lambrecht (1994)

Lambrecht (1994) has proposed that information structure mediates between sentence meaning and form by creating a pragmatically structured proposition. The pragmatic structure of a proposition, on the one hand, reflects the speaker’s assumptions about the addressee’s state of knowledge at the time of an utterance, and, on the other hand, about the representations of discourse referents in the addressee’s mind.

Assumptions of the first type motivate the structuring of a proposition into pragmatic presupposition and pragmatic assertion:

Pragmatic presupposition: The set of propositions lexicogrammatically evoked in a sentence which the speaker assumes the hearer already knows or is ready to take for granted at the time the sentence is uttered. (ibid.: 52)

Pragmatic assertions: The proposition expressed by a sentence which the hearer is expected to know or take for granted as a result of hearing the sentence uttered. (ibid.: 52)

The distinction between pragmatic presupposition and pragmatic assertion is crucial because it underlies the definitions of focus and topic adopted by Lambrecht:

The topic of a sentence is the thing which the proposition expressed by the sentence is ABOUT. (ibid.: 118)

Since the topic is the ‘matter of current concern’ about which new information is added in an utterance, for a proposition to be construable as being about a topic referent this referent must evidently be part of the pragmatic presupposition, i.e. it must already be ‘under discussion’ or otherwise available from the context. We can say that the proposition ‘x is under discussion’ […] is evoked by the presuppositional structure of a sentence containing x as a topic. (ibid.: 150)

Lambrecht makes a useful distinction between topic referent and topic expression. A topic expression (also called topic phrase or topic constituent) is a linguistic expression designating a topic referent in a sentence.

TOPIC: A referent is interpreted as the topic of a proposition if in a given situation the proposition is construed as being about this referent, i.e. as expressing information which is relevant to and which increases the addressee’s knowledge of this referent.
TOPIC EXPRESSION: A constituent is a topic expression if the proposition expressed by the clause with which it is associated is pragmatically construed as being about the referent of this constituent (ibid.: 131).

When speaking of particular syntactic categories with topic functions such terms as *lexical topical expression* versus *pronominal topic expression* are distinguished.

Lambrecht (1994) takes the prevalence of the topic-comment sentence type and the strong correlation between subject and topic to be a universal feature of natural language:

> Across languages, the subject of a sentence will be interpreted as its topic and the predicate as a comment about this topic unless the sentence contains morphosyntactic, prosodic, or semantic clues to the contrary. The subject can therefore be characterized as the UNMARKED TOPIC EXPRESSION and the topic-comment structure as the UNMARKED PRESUPPOSITIONAL STRUCTURE of a sentence. (ibid.: 136)

Not only subjects can be topical. When non-subject arguments become topical and are fronted, the process is called *topicalization* (ibid.: 201). What is crucially important here is Lambrecht's observation that not all cases of fronting are necessarily topicalization; fronted constituents can also be focused. However, where the constituent is already presupposed and discourse-active, the fronting can be considered as an instance of topicalization.

Topic does not need to be unique: more than one referent can be under discussion at the time of the utterance, so that the utterance simultaneously increases the addressee's knowledge about all of them. Therefore, Lambrecht distinguishes the primary topic and the secondary topic. Consider the discourse in (23):

(23)  
  a. Whatever became of John?  
  b. He married Rosa,  
  c. but he didn’t really love her. (ibid.: 148)

In (23b) the subject *he* is topical, and the utterance is not about the object referent *Rosa*. (23c) is different in this respect: although it is construed primarily as information about John, it also increases the addressee's knowledge about Rosa. In (23c), both Rosa and John are salient and under discussion. Thus, the corresponding noun phrases may both be characterized as topics, and the sentence conveys information about the relation that exists between them as arguments in the proposition (ibid: 148).

Finally, Lambrecht introduces the notion of *contrastive topic*. An example of contrastive topic is given in (24).

(24)  
  I saw Mary and John yesterday. SHE says HELLO, but HE’s still ANGRY at you.
The two accented pronouns she and he in the two clauses code two active topical referents, which are contrasted with each another. Though Lambrecht discusses the phenomenon in length, apart from giving a number of examples from various languages, he does not provide any reasonable definition or criteria of contrastive topic. Moreover, he concentrates mostly on differentiation of contrastive topic from contrastive focus, whereas information on what differentiate non-contrastive topic from contrastive one is missing. What comes closest to suggesting a criterion is mentioned when criticizing Chafe’s (1976) criteria of contrastive topic. According to Lambrecht, the only applicable criterion of the three proposed by Chafe is the existence of a set of possible candidates (Lambrecht 1994: 295). With this, I will largely rely on this criterion and my intuition when deciding whether a constituent is contrastive or non-contrastive topic.

I now turn to the second aspect of information structure, namely, the speaker’s assumptions about the representations of discourse referents in the addressee’s mind. In this domain, Lambrecht distinguishes two relevant statuses: identifiability and activation. The term identifiability was initially proposed by Chafe (1987) to substitute such terms as known or familiar:

[…] what counts for the linguistic expression of the cognitive distinction in question is not that the addressee know or be familiar with the referent in question […] but that he be able to pick it out from among all those which can be designated with a particular linguistic expression and identify it as the one which the speaker has in mind. (ibid.: 77)

The concept of activation is also adopted from Chafe. Activation brings the conveying of information from knowledge (or long-term memory) to consciousness (or short-term memory) (Lambrecht 1994: 93). Once a referent is assumed to be identifiable, it is in one of the three activation states, namely inactive (unused but still in long term memory), semi-active (in person’s peripheral consciousness, a concept of which a person has a background awareness, but which is not being directly focused on), and active (or currently lit up, a concept in person’s focus of consciousness) (ibid.:106). The activation state finds its reflection in coding devices: for instance, active referents are often coded with unaccented or pronominal expressions.

Lambrecht admits that his notion of active is in principle identical to a frequently used notion of given (ibid.: 106), but he avoids the latter term, as he finds it ambiguous. Within the realm of unidentifiable referents, Lambrecht follows Prince (1981: 236) and distinguishes two types of unidentifiable (or brand-new) items, namely anchored brand-
new items, which are linked to some other discourse entity, and *unanchored* brand-new items, which do not have such a link. Unanchored brand-new items typically appear in the form of an indefinite noun phrase (e.g. *a guy, a bus*), whereas anchored brand-new items are syntactic combinations of indefinite and definite phrases (*a guy I work with, a friend of mine*). The discussed terms belonging to the systems of identifiability and activation are summarized in Figure 5.

**Figure 5:** Identifiability

```
IDENTIFIABILITY
  \  /  unidentifiable
  |  anchored
  \  /  identifiable
      ACTIVATION
        \  /  inactive
          accessible
            \  /  active
              \  /  textually
                accessible
                  \  /  situationally
                    \  /  inferentially
```

(Lambrecht 1994: 109)

### 4.1.2 Dik (1997)

Dik's Functional Grammar is another influential functional approach to the description of topic. Dik defines topicality and topic in the following way:

> Topicality concerns the status of those entities "about" which information is to be provided or requested in the discourse. The topicality dimension concerns the participants in the event structure of the discourse, the "players" in the play staged in the communicative interaction. (Dik 1997a: 312)

He proposes several topic types. The term Discourse Topic (D-Topic) refers to those entities about which a certain discourse is. A discourse can have several D-Topics, and they can be structured hierarchically or sequentially. Some D-Topics are short-lived, while others are more continuous. At some point, a D-Topic has to be introduced for the first time. Such topic is called New Topic (NewTop). Once introduced topics are considered as Given Topics (GivTop). Finally, topics reintroduced after a while are called Resumed Topics (ibid.: 315).

Dik then proposes four different *topicality strategies* according to their functions (ibid.: 315-326).

Strategies to introduce a NewTop include an explicit mega-linguistic statement of what is going to be the topic (e.g. *I am going to tell you a story about an elephant called Jumbo*),
object position, an existential or locative-existential construction, and finally, the presentative strategy (e.g. On the horizon there appeared a car).

Major strategies to maintain a Discourse Topic in a so-called topic chain include anaphoric reference devices (like pronouns, zero anaphora, generic words which are of the same class with the topic) and syntactic parallelism (topics appear in similar syntactic positions) (Dik 1997a: 318-319).

A Given Topic can be maintained by reference to it by means of a Sub-Topic, an entity that can be inferred from a Given Topic “on the basis of our knowledge of what is normally the case in the world” (ibid.: 323).

Finally, the strategy of resuming a Given Topic is by indicating that a topic shift is now taking place, or by means of anaphoric reference, or referring to the Resumed Topic as an entity that has been mentioned before, so that it is somehow accessible to the hearer, or by any combination of these three means.

4.1.3 Givón (1983, 1990)

Like Dik, Givón also attempts to lift the study of sentence topic to the level of including discourse topic. According to Givón

> [...] ‘topic’ is a relevant functional notion only at the discourse level, minimally at the chain or paragraph level. Put plainly and in operational terms, the topic is only ‘talked about’ or ‘important’, if it remains ‘talked about’ or ‘important’ during a number of successive clauses. (Givón 1990: 902)

The two essential and quantifiable aspects of topicality according to Givón are:

a) referential accessibility in terms of the preceding discourse context,
b) thematic importance in terms of the subsequent discourse context.

Of particular importance for a number of studies is Givón’s (1983b) methodology of quantitative measurement of topicality in discourse. I will discuss this methodology in Chapter 7.

Another important contribution of Givón to the study of topic is the whole chapter in his second volume on syntax devoted to what he calls “marked-topic constructions” (Givón 1990: 739-778). He discusses in great detail seven constructions used to code topics with non-canonic constituent order. They include existential-presentative constructions, topic-coding morphology, Y-movement, left dislocation, right dislocation, dative shift, and raising.
4.1.4 Conclusion

In my analysis of topic in Richtersveld Nama I will largely keep to the definitions and
categories proposed by Lambrecht (1994) as presented above. Dik’s (1997a) topic types
and topicality strategies will not play a role in my analysis.

Apart from notions and terms defined above, I would like to introduce two more categories
proposed by Herring (1990), which I will apply in my analysis. In the realm of non-
contrastive topics, she differentiates continuous and shifted topics in the tradition similar to
Givón (1983b):

Continuous topics I define as those which carry over from the immediately
preceding discourse. They are often pronominalized, or, in, some languages
omitted altogether. Shifted topics, on the other hand, are discontinuous, and are
often signaled by full lexical NPs and/or by topicalizing expressions such as as for
X, … or X, on the other hand, …, etc. (Herring 1990:164)

Besides, following Lambrecht (1994: 148) and Givón (1990: 902) I will distinguish primary
(or main) and secondary topic, whereby primary topic is the subject and secondary topic is
the direct object.

Finally, what concerns the applied quantitative methodology, Givón’s approach (1983b,
1990) will also play an essential role I my analysis.

4.2 Focus

In this part I will present two approaches to the second essential component of information
structure, namely, focus. Of the abundance of approaches to focus I will look in details at
two functional theories, namely, that of Lambrecht (1994) and Dik (1997a).

4.2.1 Lambrecht (1994)

As well as his definition of topic, Lambrecht’s definition of focus is based on the notions of
pragmatic presupposition and pragmatic assertion introduced above:

The focus of the proposition expressed by a sentence in a given utterance context,
is seen as the element of information whereby the presupposition and the assertion
DIFFER from each other […]. It is the UNPREDICTABLE or pragmatically NON-
RECOVERABLE element in an utterance. The focus is what makes an utterance
into an assertion. (Lambrecht 1994: 207)

Also:
FOCUS: The semantic component of a pragmatically structured proposition whereby the assertion differs from the preposition. (ibid: 213)

Commenting on focus-newness correlation view shared by many linguists, Lambrecht admits the following:

[…] we can conclude that there must be a strong discourse tendency for referential focus constituents to have “new” referents. (ibid: 262)

However, he stresses a number of times that there is no necessary correlation between focus and the activation state of the referents (ibid: 262). For instance, in (25a and b) the referent is active but nevertheless focused.

(25) Who did Felix praise?
    a. He praised HIMSELF.
    b. He praised YOU. (ibid.: 262)

This distinction between new and focused is a very important aspect of Lambrecht’s theory, because it makes it possible to account for contrastiveness of active or accessible referents.

Commenting on contrastiveness, Lambrecht underlines that it is not seen as directly correlating to the structural focus domain, but rather as a pragmatic overlay on both topical and focal expressions. Lambrecht argues that “[c]ontrastiveness is not a category of grammar but the result of the general cognitive processes referred to as ‘conversational implicatures’” (ibid.: 291).

An important component of Lambrecht’s theory of focus structure is his taxonomy of focus types. He distinguishes three major focus types: predicate focus, sentence focus, and argument focus. Below, a short description of the three focus types is given.

Predicate focus as in (26) is claimed to be a universally unmarked type of focus (ibid.: 296) correlating with the topic-comment structure as the unmarked pragmatic articulation.

(26) Question: What happened to your car?
    Answer: My car/It broke DOWN.

In cases of sentence focus the entire clause is in focus, so there is no topic at all as in (27).

(27) Question: What happened?
    Answer: My CAR broke down.
In cases of argument focus any constituent of a clause, be it subject, object or oblique can be focused. For instance, in (28) the subject of the sentence is focused.

(28) Question:  I heard your motorcycle broke down.  
Answer:  My CAR broke down.

Moreover, argument focus is not restricted to the syntactic argument as a whole. A part of an argument can also be in focus as in (29).

(29) Question:  I heard your motorcycle broke down.  
Answer:  PAT’S motorcycle broke down.

Interestingly, in the above examples of the different focus structures the answer “My CAR broke down” stands for both sentence focus and argument focus. Lambrecht underlines that the argument-focus structures and the sentence-focus structures are often homophonous or near-homophonous across languages (ibid.: 336).

Contrary to a popular view that topic and focus are unable to correspond to the same element in a given sentence (Nikolaeva 2001), Lambrecht suggests that the focus domain can include some topic expressions with discourse-active referents (1994: 248-250).

What is problematic about Lambrecht’s approach is the absence of verb focus as in Dik’s (1997a) taxonomy and the fact that contrastiveness in general and contrastive focus in particular are not really integrated into the theory.

4.2.2 Dik (1997)

Dik defines focality as a clause-internal pragmatic function:

The focal information in a linguistic expression is that information which is relatively the most important or salient in the given communicative setting, and considered by S[peaker] to be most essential for A[ddressee] to integrate into his pragmatic information. The focal information will thus concern the changes that S[peaker] wishes to bring about in the pragmatic information of A. Such changes may take different forms: S may wish to ADD pieces of information to A’s pragmatic information, or he may wish to REPLACE some piece of information X which he assumes A possesses by some piece of information Y which he possesses himself. In either case, there must be some difference between the pragmatic information of S, and S’s picture of the pragmatic information of A, in other words, between P_S and (P_A)_S, and the focal information is thus presented as being "new" to A. (Dik 1997a: 326)

But focal information does not necessarily have to be new:
It may include information already (assumed to be) available to A, but focused on by virtue of some implicit or explicit contrast (ibid.: 326).

Dik further distinguishes four focalizing devices: prosodic prominence or emphatic accent, special constituent order, special focus markers, and special focus constructions (ibid.: 327).

Dik introduces a very elaborate subcategorization of focus types to a large extent based on investigations of Watters (1979) who described focus in Aghem, a Bantoid language spoken in Cameroon, and Thwing & Watters (1987).

On the one hand, Dik distinguishes different scopes of focus depending on what part of the clause is in focus. As can be seen from the examples in (30) and Figure 6 below focus may be assigned to any part of the clause:

(30)  a. *What have you done with the meat?* – I FRIED it.
     (Focus on the predicate)

     b. John has bought meat. - No, he has bought FISH.
     (Focus on direct object)

     c. John hasn’t bought any meat. – He HAS.
     (Focus on polarity)

Figure 6: Scopes of focus

-operators predicates terms
(tense, mood, aspect, polarity) Subj. other

It should be specified here that *predicate* in Dik’s terminology is roughly synonymous to the verb and not to the verb phrase (ibid: 50).

Apart from different scopes of focus, Dik differentiates various communicative points of focus, which reflect the pragmatic reasons underlying the assignment of focus. The major split is between information gap focus and contrastive focus. Furthermore, contrastive focus can be of a number of subtypes. A few examples and a scheme illustrating the classification are given below, more examples and their discussion can be found in Dik (ibid.: 330-335).

(31)  a. *WHAT have you done with the meat?* – I FRIED it.
     (Questioning focus) (Completive focus)
b. John boiled the chicken. – No, he FRIED it.  
   (Replacing focus)

c. Have you fried or boiled the chicken? – I FRIED it.  
   (Selecting focus)

Figure 7: Communicative point of focus

Focus

Information gap

Contrast

Questioning  Completive

Parallel  Counter-presuppositional

Rejecting  Replacing  Expanding  Restricting  Selecting

(4bid.: 331)

There are two major problems with Dik’s typology of focus scope. On the one hand, it is the absence of a verb phrase focus corresponding to comment in the traditionally recognized topic-comment organization of information in a sentence. According to Dik, for a sentence like (32) there is no focus scope type which would encompass both the verb was riding and the direct object his bike, though such a focus type would be the most universally unmarked type of focus (Lambrecht 1994: 296).

(32) I met John yesterday. He was riding his bike.

The second problem is the absence of a counterpart to what Lambrecht defines as sentence focus.

Finally, as well as Lambrecht (1994), Dik (1997a) illustrates his focus taxonomy mostly on question-answer pairs, and, methodologically, it remains not quite clear in how far and in which way it is transferable onto other contexts.

4.2.3 Summary and evaluation

Both theories presented above have their pros and cons. For the purpose of this thesis I will try to synthesize the two approaches. Specifically, on the one hand, I will adopt Lambrecht’s typology of focus according to scope (predicate focus, sentence focus, and argument focus). However, I will use Van Valin’s (1997) term narrow focus instead of argument focus as it seems to be more suitable if one wants to include verb focus following Dik (1997a: 331) into this category. On the other hand I will integrate Dik’s
typology of communicative point of focus into my analysis of focus in Richtersveld Nama and will differentiate completive focus and contrastive focus. Dik’s taxonomy of focus types implies that contrastive focus is limited to narrow focus and is not applicable to predicate and sentence focus (1997a: 330-335). Though this might be still a controversial issue, for the purpose of the present thesis I will assume that this is the case.

4.3 Thetic vs. categorical

As has been noted earlier, the discussed approaches to information structure assume a kind of dichotomy between topic and focus in the domain of information structure. With this partition into two informational units the question arises whether it is possible to have an utterance without such a partition. From a purely informational point of view, focus-less (or comment-less) utterances do not make much sense since they do not provide any information. More interesting is the contrast between topic-comment and topic-less sentences (or in another terminology: focus-background and all-focus sentences). This contrast is related to the distinction between what has been known as thetic vs. categorical judgments.

The distinction between thetic and categorical sentences was first proposed by the philosopher Brentano and his student Marty in the end of the 19th century and introduced into linguistics by Kuroda (1972). The first serious attempt to place the thetic/categorical distinction in the general context of the typology of clause structure was made by Sasse (1987) and I will follow his approach in the present work.

Sasse (1987, 1995) claims that the distinction between thetic and categorical utterances has to do with predication and assertion. Categorical utterances are bipartite predications, involving a predication base, the entity about which the predication is made, and a predicate, which says something about the predication base. In contrast to categorical utterances, thetic utterances are simple assertions: the entire situation is asserted as a whole, without distinguishing an argument as a predication base. In other words, thetic sentences are of a homogeneous nature with no sentence-internal information structure.

According to Sasse (1987: 566) typical domains for thetic expressions are the following:

1. EXISTENTIAL STATEMENTS (in a wider sense; presence, appearance, continuation, etc., positively and negatively)
2. EXPLANATIONS (with or without preceding questions such as ‘what happened?’; ‘why did it happen?’)
A few examples of thetic sentences are given in (33).

(33) a. *It is raining.* (weather expression)

b. *There is a dog running.* (existential statement)

c. A: *What happened?*
   B: *My CAR broke down.* (explanation)

Lambrecht (1994), who adopted Sasse’s approach, makes the following comment:

> It is not the absence of any topic relation that characterizes thetic sentences but the absence of a topic relation between the proposition and that argument which functions as the topic in the categorical counterpart. […] It is in principle possible for non-subject constituents to have topic status in thetic sentences […] (ibid.: 144)

What counts for the definition of the formal category “thetic sentence” is that the constituent which would appear as the subject (or distinguished argument) NP in a corresponding categorical allosentence gets formally marked as non-topic, resulting in a departure from the unmarked pragmatic articulation in which the subject is the topic and the predicate the comment. (Lambrecht 1994: 145)

Interestingly, Lambrecht emphasizes that at least for English the difference between the two types of sentences is not always unambiguous (1994: 137).

Further, Lambrecht (1994: 144) distinguishes two major types of thetic sentences: *event-reporting* and *presentational* sentences. They correspond to Sasse’s “event central” and “entity central” thetic sentences. In the event-reporting sentence the newly introduced element is an event, whereas in the presentational sentence the newly introduced element is an entity, a discourse referent.
5 Methodology

The data for this project were collected during two fieldtrips to the village of Kuboes in the Richtersveld in August-October 2004 and 2005. In sum, I spent over 15 weeks in the village. During the first trip Rebecca Voll and me spent time figuring out the sociolinguistic situation in the area, looking for suitable consultants and establishing infrastructure. We recorded four dialogues and a few short stories and started to transcribe and gloss them. My second field trip I made alone. I spent most of the time recording, transcribing and glossing the Pear Stories, further glossing the dialogues recorded during the first field trip, and eliciting on information structure and other aspects of the Richtersveld Nama grammar.

The stories and dialogues were recorded either with a DAT-recorder or with a HiMD device (Sony MD Walkman MZ-NH700). The records were then transferred onto the laptop, transcribed together with the consultants using the Standard Nama orthography, and translated into Afrikaans by them. In a number of cases two versions of the translation (done by two consultants) were provided, which proved to be very useful when glossing. For the morphemic translation I used the Khoekhoegowab dictionary (Haacke 2002). After glossing in Toolbox, we went through the texts to clarify ambiguities.

I worked mainly with two male consultants, who had no previous experience as language consultant and were illiterate in Nama. One of them (58 y. o.) was sufficiently bilingual in Nama and Afrikaans; the other one (33 y. o.) had a good command of English, but was slightly less fluent in Nama because of his younger age.

There exist a few competing methodological approaches to the analysis of information structure. The major split is between elicitation-based and text-based approaches.

In the elicitation-based approach question-answer pairs play the central role. This fact is based on the assumption that

[…] if a language has special strategies for the expression of Focus constituents, these strategies will typically be also used for question words. (Dik 1997a: 329)

Thus, the question and answer method is often used in field linguistics to investigate focus (Payne 1997: 267). However, it is not without its critics. For instance, Bearth (1999: 141) comments on focus in Somali:

The optimistic view of a straightforward correspondence between form and information status, however, is not shared by those who, rather than relying on elicitation primarily by means of the question-answer test, have looked at the behaviour of these focus markers in a wider range of occurrences in natural text.
The major advantage of the elicitation-based approach is obvious: the analysis of controlled sentences is much easier and faster than looking through texts. The disadvantages are obvious as well: this method operates on ‘unnatural’ speech, the researcher has to rely heavily on consultants’ judgments, certain forms or constructions seldom occur in elicitation, etc. Moreover, the possibility that a contact language can affect the nature of data being elicited is enormous. Another huge disadvantage of the elicitation-based approach is a **fatigue effect** (Wray et al., 1998: 164) referring to the deterioration of the performance of the consultants as the task progresses, due to boredom or tiredness.

Contrary to the elicitation-based approach, the text-based approach operates on ‘natural’ data. It provides a larger context for the use of particular forms and constructions, besides, it often produces a wider range of constructions than one gets during elicitation. The major disadvantage of this method is the absence of control on the content of the data, which makes comprehension and analysis difficult for the investigator. Moreover, one needs a larger corpus to come across certain contexts or forms.

The use of prompted texts and stimuli can be seen as a way to overcome some of the disadvantages of the text-based approach. The use of such prompts as for instance ‘The Pear Stories’ film or ‘The Frog Story’ allows a much faster analysis of larger portions of text in comparison to collection of narrations or experience reports, moreover such texts are more natural if compared to oral folklore, as they are deprived of fixed formulas and fossilized usages.

Taking into account all pros and cons presented above, I decided to benefit from the advantages of both approaches. A detailed description of the corpus can be found in Chapter 6.
6 Corpus

The corpus used for the analysis consists of four types of texts described below.

The Pear Stories

The Pear Stories were produced in response to a standardized stimulus known as The Pear Story film, a 6 minute long film in color, with sound effects but without words, produced in the mid-1970s by Chafe for cross-cultural and cross-linguistic research (Chafe 1980).

The film was shown twice to the consultants. Some 5-10 minutes later they were asked in Nama by my major consultant to retell what they had seen. He was very zealous in his role of interviewer and was asking the consultants questions and sometimes prompting Nama words instead of the Afrikaans ones used by the consultants.

Of 16 recorded stories I chose 12 for transcription and glossing. In sum, they comprise some 500 clauses. The stories were produced by elderly speakers in the age between 55 and 65. The other four stories were either of poor sound quality as the battery in the microphone was low, or they were produced by people under 40, who turned out to be less fluent in Nama. The examples from the Pear Stories are labeled with the word ‘Pears’, the name of the speaker and the number of the clause.

Dialogues

Although four dialogues were recorded, two of them have proven to be either inconsistent because the speakers were too old or to contain a lot of instances of code switching as the discussed topics were related to issues usually discussed in Afrikaans. Because of time shortage, only one of the other two recorded dialogues (235 clauses) was properly transcribed, translated, glossed and finally used in the analysis. This dialogue is a talk of two male speakers Andries (58 years old) und Gert (62 years old) discussing current problems in the Richtersveld, the language situation, the history of the villages in the area, and our work on the language. The examples from the dialogue are labeled with A/G and the number of the clause.

Narrations of past events

This type of data includes two short texts (some 30 clauses in sum): a miraculous story, which happened to the consultant’s grandfather, and a description of how bread used to
Elicitation

During my first field trip most of the elicitation was done in order to pinpoint the differences and similarities between Namibian Nama and Richtersveld Nama. The results of a few attempts to elicit question-answer pairs seemed not very reliable to me, as I had the impression that the consultants are too much primed by the constituent order in Afrikaans sentences.

During my second field trip I elaborated the elicitation technique. Besides, my consultants got a better idea of what I expected from them. Two different elicitation tasks were applied. The first task was a translation task: a situation was described for the consultants in the contact language (Afrikaans), including a question, then they were asked to translate the question and respond in the target language. The second task was aimed at investigating the prefield in particular and obtaining more question-answer pairs. It was based on the sentences produced in narrations, whereby the consultants were asked to form as many questions to the sentence as possible and to answer them. In cases when the consultants could not provide more questions, I provided questions myself and asked for grammaticality judgments and possible answers. The examples from the elicitations are labeled with the letter E and the initials of the consultants and the interviewer.
7 Information structure in Richtersveld Nama

7.1 Previous studies

It would be unfair to say that information structure in Nama is an untouched ground. However, if any comments on the information structure were made, they were made almost exclusively about the prefield.

The role of the prefield for information structure was noticed already by Dempwolff (1927), who claimed that what is placed into the sentence initial position is translated as stressed. In Hagman (1997), there are a number of comments on the use and function of different constituent orders. Speaking of what he calls “permutations”, which in the first line include initialization of an element, he makes the following comment:

Permutation is by no means restricted to answers to questions; it is just more likely in such cases. Permutation may often be used in other contexts, such as narrative or description, to emphasize or de-emphasize a particular element in a sentence. (ibid.: 108)

The idea of the initial position being the focus position is also supported by Haacke:

Primary focus position normally is in the initial slot. (Haacke 2005)

This assumption was the starting point for my analysis of information structure in Richtersveld Nama.

Concerning intonation, Hagman (1997) makes a few observations on what he calls “contrastive stress” in the Damara variety of Nama:

[...] contrastive stress raises all of the tones contained in the word upon which it falls, as well as increasing loudness and quantity. Actually, contrastive stress is rarely used. It is usually possible to manipulate constituent order in order to place emphasis on contrasting words. (ibid.: 15)

However, apart from a number of comments on the role of the prefield and a few sentences on intonation, there has not been any profound discussion of information structure in any variety of Nama.

7.2 Topic in Richtersveld Nama

In this chapter I will give an account of the expression of topic in Richtersveld Nama. I will begin with a presentation of the results of the quantitative measurements of topic continuity in Richtersveld Nama narrative discourse. Then, partially on the basis of this measurement, I will proceed to the discussion of different types of morphosyntactic coding
of topic. I will first look at non-contrastive topic, and then at contrastive topic. The present analysis is based on prompted texts (the Pear Stories) and natural dialogues.

7.2.1 Quantitative measures of topicality in discourse

In this section, I intend to answer the question how discourse-pragmatic factors affect the choice of topic/participant-coding devices in Richtersveld Nama narrative discourse. In attempting to answer this question I tentatively adopt the framework set out by Givón (1983) for assigning quantitative topicality values to the various coding devices. This approach rests on the assumption that the use of all coding devices can be explained in terms of topic continuity.

According to Givón, the clause is the basic information processing unit in human discourse; discourse, in turn, is multi-propositional, it is made up of chains of clauses, which are combined into larger units called (paragraphs, sections, chapters etc.) (1983: 7). In order to qualify as a discourse, a chain of clauses must ‘hang together’ in a certain demonstrable way, i.e. it must exhibit continuity (in different terminology ‘cohesion’ (Halliday (1967), Halliday and Hasan (1976)) or ‘coherence’ (Givón (1990))). According to Givón (1983b), discourse is most naturally continuous, i.e. continuity (or coherence) from one clause to the next in real discourse is the most expected, unsurprising and unmarked situation, whereas discontinuity is unexpected, surprising and marked. This observation suggests an iconicity principle of topic/participant continuity in particular:

The more disruptive, surprising, discontinuous or hard to process a topic is, the more coding material must be assigned to it. (Givón 1983b: 18, emphasis in the original)

Characteristically, then, continuity is either not marked morphologically, or is encoded with minimal morphological marking. Discontinuity, on the other hand, is encoded with more substantial morphological marking, or with otherwise more “marked” morphosyntactic structure.

My primary goal was to test how this hypothesis works in Richtersveld Nama and to look for deviations, which might point to other factors affecting the choice of coding devices, thereby defining the areas for further investigation.

Givón (1983) suggests three different measurements of topic continuity:

- Referential distance - assesses the gap between the previous occurrence in the discourse of a topic/referent and its current occurrence in a clause, where it is marked by a particular coding device;
• *Potential interference* (‘ambiguity’) - assesses the disruptive effect of other referents within the immediately preceding register;

• * Persistence (‘decay’) - assesses topic persistence in the subsequent discourse. Of the three measurements suggested by Givón (1983b) I applied the measurement of Referential Distance (RD). RD is one of the few quantitative measurements extensively discussed in Givón (1983a, 1990) and used frequently for text analysis of anaphoric reference in a variety of languages (Givón 1983a, Payne 1992). Besides, it has proven to give valuable insights into certain aspects of information structure (cf. Shimojo 2005).

RD is a linguistic distance in clausal units measured backward to the most recent representation of the coreferential expression, including the ones encoded as zero anaphora. What this measurement suggests is the level of activation of a particular referent in one’s consciousness. Though it is not only the linguistic distance that influences the level of activation, as Givón himself notes (1993: 184), the method has been employed for the measurement of anaphoric saliency as the only quantifiable measurement currently available for such purposes.

To justify the application of this measurement within the analysis of information structure, it is essential to remind here of what Lambrecht says about activation. Commenting on the relationship between topicality and activeness, he states that there is no one-to-one correspondence between pragmatic relations (topic and focus) and pragmatic properties of referents (activation); however, there is a general correlation between the activation states of topic referents and the pragmatic acceptability of sentences. This correlation can be expressed in the form of a Scale of Acceptability as given below.

**THE TOPIC ACCEPTABILITY SCALE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>active</th>
<th>most acceptable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>accessible</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unused</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>brand-new anchored</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>brand-new unanchored</td>
<td>least acceptable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Lambrecht 1994: 260)

What follows from the Topic Acceptability Scale is that if a constituent has a referent which is clearly not accessible in the context and if the sentence is nevertheless acceptable, there is a good chance that the constituent is not a topic expression of the sentence. This
prediction is of particular relevance for subject as unmarked topic, as acceptable
sentences with subjects with inaccessible referents are common for thetic sentences.
Commenting on focus-newness correlation, he points out that

[… ] any claim concerning a correlation between focus and the cognitive state
“inactive” can be made only for focus constituents to which the focus parameter
can be applied, i.e. to referential constituents […] (Lambrecht 1994: 260)

Although Lambrecht stresses that there is no necessary correlation between focus and the
activation state of the referent, he admits the following:

The theoretical observation that pragmatically inaccessible discourse referents are
most likely to be coded as focal constituents is strongly confirmed by statistical
observations concerning the distribution of topic and focus constituents in texts.
[…] Given the necessary correlation between pronominal coding and activeness on
the one hand and object and focus on the other, we can conclude that there must
be a strong discourse tendency for referential focus constituents to have “new”
referents. (ibid: 262)

With all these considerations in mind, I applied the measurement of Referential Distance
following Givón’s methodology to the Richtersveld Nama discoursed as specified below.
As proposed by Givón (1983b) and applied in a number of studies (for instance, Payne
1992) I counted the number of clauses to the left between the present appearance of a
referent and its previous appearance in the discourse, regardless of what device marked
the previous appearance. Thus an RD of 1 indicates that the participant was last
mentioned in the immediately preceding clause and is therefore maximally continuous. In
the extreme cases of discontinuity, where a participant has not been mentioned at all in
the present discourse, the RD index is technically infinite. But as it is impossible to deal
satisfactorily with infinite values I follow Givón (1983b) in imposing the arbitrary limit of 20
on the RD index. Thus, participants introduced into discourse for the first time, or absent
from the discourse for more than 20 clauses receive an RD index of 20. Non-appearance
inside quotations was not counted as a gap, while appearance was counted as an
instance of occurrence. Relative clauses with their heads were counted as NPs,
regardless of their internal structure. All other types of clauses were treated as main
clauses.

The measurement of referential distance is illustrated in (34). For instance, for the suffix -bi
(3M.SG.OBJ) in clause (d) of this portion of text the referential distance index is 3, as the
last reference to the boy is in clause (a), whereas for -gu (3M.PL.SBJ) in (c) the referential
distance index is 1, because the referent three boys was mentioned in the immediately preceding clause.

(34)

a. tsī -b ge go lğa -b -a llnā and -3M.SG.SBJ DECL REC.PST child -3M.SG -OBL fall llnā -b lurihā -b -a xu. that -3M.SG bicycle -3M.SG -OBL from ‘And the boy fell from that bicycle.’

b. tsī -gu ge nēba !noma axa -g -a go and -3M.PL.SBJ DECL here three boy -3M.PL -OBL REC.PST hana lhuru mā. indeed play stand ‘And three boys were playing here.’

c. tsī -gu ge go lkhî. and -3M.PL.SBJ DECL REC.PST come ‘And they came.’

d. tsī -gu ge go hà hui -bi. and -3M.PL.SBJ DECL REC.PST come help -3M.SG.OBJ ‘And they helped him.’ (Pears_Sophie 39-46)

The discourse studied for the count was produced in response to a standardized stimulus (The Pear Story). The corpus consists of 10 narratives (some 450 clauses) produced by elderly speakers (55-65 years old). In preparation for the analysis I have divided each text into clauses. In the actual analyses I ignored all “backchannel” expressions, like “… were these really pears?”

Table 17 and 18 illustrate the quantitative distribution of subject and direct object coding devices according to position with the clause. From these tables it can be induced that, at least in this type of discourse, subject NPs in the middlefield are much more common than those in the prefield. Remarkably, the number of direct objects marked by independent pronouns is very low (only 2).
Table 17: Distribution of subjects over grammatical devices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Subject</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>subject NP in the prefield</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subject NP in the middlefield</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subject pronoun in the middlefield</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subject PGN&lt;sup&gt;9&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zero anaphora</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 18: Distribution of direct objects over grammatical devices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Direct Object</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>direct object NP in the middlefield</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>direct object NP in the postverbal position</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>object suffix</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>direct object pronoun in the middlefield</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zero object anaphora</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The average values for the Referential Distance for the various types of subject and direct object coding devices irrespectively of position are presented in Graph 1 and Graph 2.

Graph 1: Referential Distance for subjects

![Graph 1](image)

<sup>9</sup> Counted only when subject PGN is the only device used to mark subjects and ignored if there was a full noun phrase as well.
As might be predicted on general grounds and was indeed shown in a number of studies on other languages (Givón 1983a), a continuum behavior nicely reflecting the iconicity principle\(^\text{10}\) can be observed. The zero-anaphora has the lowest RD value, subject PGNs, object suffixes and independent pronouns come next, and full NP’s have the highest RD value.

Graphs 3 and 4 reflect the interaction of constituent order and the RD index of subjects and direct objects expressed by NPs. A remarkable difference in the RD index of subject NPs in the middlefield and in the prefield can be observed (10.8 against 14.4). Even more remarkable is the difference between the RD index of direct object NPs in the middlefield and in the postverbal position.

\(^{10}\)“The more disruptive, surprising, discontinuous or hard to process a topic is, the more coding material must be assigned to it.” (Givón 1983b: 18)
The results of the measurements will be evaluated and discussed in more details in Chapter 7.

7.2.2 Non-contrastive topic

On the basis of the preceding theoretical considerations and the overview of different theories on the subject, I proceed to propose an account of topic in Richtersveld Nama. I will first look at non-contrastive and then at contrastive topics. In the realm of non-contrastive topics I will first look at continuous and then at shifted topics following Herring’s (1990) classification.

I will begin with the evaluation of Table 17 and Graph 3 reproduced for convenience below.

Table 17: Distribution of subjects over grammatical devices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Type</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>subject NP in the prefield</td>
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<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subject pronoun in the middlefield</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subject PGN</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zero anaphora</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Taking into account that the strong correlation between subject and topic is a universal feature, Graph 3 shows that the most continuous topics/subjects are zero anaphors and subject PGN with independent pronouns coming next. Besides, at least for the type of discourse used for the quantitative analysis, together, these two devices are the most frequent ones as can be deduced from the Table 11.

The sentences in (35) show how different devices are used to code subject/topic. Examples (35b-e) illustrate how the topic reintroduced in (35a) is continued in the following four clauses and is coded by zero anaphora. Example (35a) shows how a continuous topic is coded by the subject PGN clitic. Finally, example (35h) shows the independent pronoun *ilīga* ‘they’ used to code a slightly less continuous topic reintroduced after two clauses.

Shifted subject-topics are expressed by full noun phrase either in the middlefield or in the prefield. In the example (35f) after a number of clauses with the topic referent *three boys*, the topic is shifted to *boy* in (35g) and is coded with full noun phrases in the middlefield.

(35) a. tšī -gu ge go lkī ‘And they came,’

and -3M.PL.SBJ DECL REC.PST come
b. tṣi go hā hui -bi,
and REC.PST come help -3M.SG.OBJ

līnā -gu xū -ga ūkhāi,
that -3M.PL thing -3M.PL.OBL pick.up

līnā -di pīr -de ūkhāi,
that -3F.PL pear -3F.PL.OBL pick.up

‘and came to help him to pick up those things, to pick up those pears,’

c. tṣi līnā lharu -s -a ūkhāi,
and that basket -3F.SG -OBL pick.up

‘and picked up that basket,’

d. tṣi go ṭnūi -ba -bi lurihā -b ai,
and REC.PST put.down -APPL -3M.SG.OBJ bicycle -3M.SG on

‘and put it down on the bicycle for him,’

e. khoa!gā go Igōa -b -a hui khāi llkhātī
afterwards REC.PST boy -3M.SG -OBL help get.up also

‘afterwards also helped the boy to get up.’

f. tṣi -b ge go Igōa -b -a līnāi
and -3M.SG.SBJ DECL REC.PST boy -3M.SG -OBL then

a !nari.
REC.PST drive

‘And then the boy drove away.’

g. tṣi -b Igōa -b -a !nari gau hīa,
and -3M.SG boy -3M.SG -OBL drive be.on.the.way while

‘And while the boy was driving,’

h. gu ge līi -ga go !gū.
3M.PL.SBJ DECL 3 -3M.PL.OBL REC.PST leave

‘they left.’ (Pears_Sophie.51-57)
Whether the topic/subject coded by a noun phrase occurs in the prefield or in the middlefield (constituent order Types I and II as defined in section 3.3.2) depends on the coherence of the text: the more coherent the text is the more sentences have a conjunction in the prefield. This fact is obvious comparing the counts for the prefield in narrations and dialogues in Table 12 and 13. The constituent order does not depend on RD index of topic/subject coded by a noun phrase. On the basis of Graph 3 one can get a deceptive impression that topics/subjects in the prefield are less continuous than the ones in the middlefield (RD 14,4 vs. 10,8). However, in the analyzed narrative discourse the majority of subject noun phrases in the prefield occur in the first sentence of the text and are part of thetic sentences, thus, they are not topics in the sense understood here.

Speaking of secondary topics, I will return to Graph 4. It shows that active topical referents are coded by zero anaphora or pronominal object suffixes on the verb. Interestingly, there is a considerable difference in the RD index between object noun phrases in the middlefield and in the postverbal position (RD index 10,3 vs. 4,8 respectively). The RD index and the analysis of the contexts show that the referents coded by object noun phrases in the postverbal position are topical as *husa* ‘hat’ in example (36b).

![Graph 4: Referential Distance for direct objects](image)

(36) a. tsī -b ge go ‡nam -e, and -3M.SG.SBJ DECL REC.PST whistle -PASS

‘And he was whistled to,’

```latex
tsī hū -s -a llgau -e. and hat -3F.SG -OBL show -PASS
```

‘and was shown the hat.’

58
b. tsí -b ge go mā -e sī
   and -3M.SG.SBJ DECL REC.PST give -PASS arrive

   hũ -s -a lgui lhõsa -b xa.
   hat -3F.SG -OBL one friend -3M.SG by

   ‘and he was given the hat to by one friend. (Anna.55-57)

Secondary topics can also appear in the prefield as in (37). Such constructions are traditionally known as topicalization (cf. Lambrecht 2001).

(37) o nee gowa -e -ta ge kai
    and this language -3C.SG.OBL -1SG.SBJ DECL big

   khoe -n -a xu ge lumi.
   man -3C.PL -OBL from PST inherit

   ‘And I inherited this language from the grandparents.’ (A/G.106)

Apart from direct objects, other topical constituents may occur in the prefield, for instance, in sentence (38b) a topical postpositional phrase appears in the prefield, whereas (39) is an example of topicalized adjunct.

(38) a. tsí duister -i xa -b pedro -b -a
    and German -3C.SG about -3M.SG brother -3M.SG -OBL

   tare -n -a ge llnão?
   what -3C.PL -OBL PST hear

   ‘And what has the brother heard about the Germans?’

b. duister -i xa -ta ge ūgui xū -n -a
   German -3C.SG about -1SG.SBJ DECL many thing -3C.PL -OBL

   ge llnão.
   PST hear

   ‘About the Germans I've heard many things.’ (A/G.136-138)
As mentioned earlier, apart from occurring within the clause, referential constituents can also occur outside the boundaries of the clause. What concerns the discourse functions of the dislocation, there is a general consensus in the literature that they are topic-marking construction. The referents in the dislocated constructions must be identifiable for the hearer, therefore, for instance, in languages which have a grammatical category of definiteness, the dislocated constituents must be coded by a definite expression or allow for a generic interpretation (Lambrecht 2001: 1073).

In Richtersveld Nama both left and right dislocated constructions are found. In the collected corpus of Richtersveld Nama left-dislocated noun phrases coindexed with subject pronominals are quite common. In (40) a noun modified by a relative clause is left-dislocated. The resumed anaphoric pronoun is ìììi ‘he/she’. The topic constituent gets generic interpretation and is thus identifiable.

(40) gowò-è  uühà-à  támà  khôë-ìììi
group -3M.SG.OBL have  NEG man -3C.SG

líììi-ìììì  gé  lhûù-è  uühà-à  tama.
3 -3C.SG.SBJ DECL ground -3C.SG.OBL have  NEG

‘A man who has not got a language, he cannot have ground.’ (AG.105)

Though Lambrecht (2001) stresses that pause is not an essential feature of left-dislocation, all examples in the corpus have one. Concerning prosodic prominence, he claims that left-dislocated phrases have no clear difference in relative prominence in comparison to the rest of the sentence. As can be seen in Image 1\(^{11}\) of the example (38) the left-dislocated noun phrase forms its own intonation unit with a characteristic lowered unit final intonation and is separated from the rest of the clause by a long pause.

\(^{11}\) In the images of pitch tracks and intensity, pitch is indicated a the solid black line, whereas intensity is shown using a dashed blue line. Fluctuations of the intensity during pauses (as in Image 1) are due to the background noise. If pitch track is missing on a vowel (as in Image 3 below), it was pronounced in a whisper.
Below, one more example of a left-dislocated element coindexed with the subject pronoun is given. In (41), the resumed anaphoric pronouns is *lûb*, the dislocated constituents are modified by the demonstrative adjectives *lnâ* ‘that’ and *nê* ‘this’ and are identifiable.

\begin{verbatim}
(41) tûi lûnâ gowa -b , nê nama gowa -b ,
    and that language -3M.SG this Nama language -3M.SG
    lûb ge huka tsâbe hof -i lûnâ !hoâ -e tama.
    3 -3M.SG DECL never surely court -3C.SG in speak -PASS NEG

    ‘And this language, this Nama language, it is surely never spoken at the court.’
    (AG.108)
\end{verbatim}

The only instance of a non-subject being left-dislocated is given in (42). However, the example is problematic, as the presumably dislocated noun phrase *lnâ hais* ‘that tree’ has no pronominal coindexation, but is repeated in the clause instead.

\begin{verbatim}
(42) lûnâ hai -s , *guro -ta gum go
    that tree -3F.SG first -1SG.SBJ ASSERT REC.PST
    hai -s xa go mû
tree -3F.SG from REC.PST see

    ‘That tree, first I saw from the tree …’ (Pears_GertaSw.04)
\end{verbatim}

A larger corpus is needed in order to find out what other constituents can be left-dislocated in Richtersveld Nama and to explore their behaviour.
Besides being left-dislocated, topical constituents can also be right-dislocated. According to Givón, right-dislocation takes place when the speaker assumes (a) that the referent is fully accessible, and therefore codable as an anaphoric pronoun, (b) but later, after a brief reflection during the pause, decides that probably the referent was not fully accessible after all, and decides to re-code it as a full NP (Givón 1990: 761).

Lambrecht (2001) claims that, in contrast to left-dislocated phrases, right-dislocated phrases are prosodically relatively less prominent in comparison to the constituents within the clause. This intonation drop has often been described as a pause, though a pause is not a necessary feature of right-dislocated constituents according to Lambrecht (2001: 1071).

Though the number of right-dislocated elements in the collected corpus is low, they show certain diversity what concerns the role of the coindexed pronominals in the sentence. On the one hand, there is a group of right-dislocated phrases coindexed with subjects and adjuncts. (43) contains an example of a right-dislocated noun phrase coreferential with the subject PGN clitic -ra ‘3C./F.DU’ within the clause. This clause is the ninth clause in a long topic chain, the last overt coding of subject by the subject clitic lies some seven clauses back.

(43) tsī -ra ge go ñgâu -gu,
    and -3C./F.DU.SBJ DECL REC.PST bump.into –RECP

nē khoe -ra -a.
this man -3C./F.DU -OBL

‘And they clashed, these two people.’ (Pears_Sophie.39)

(44) contains an example of a right-dislocated postpositional phrase coindexed with the demonstrative adverb ilnāpa ‘there’ functioning as adjunct. It should be mentioned here that demonstrative adverbs like the one in (44) are also counted as atonic pronominals by Lambrecht (2001: 1005).
Image 2 shows that the preceding clause is separated from the dislocated postpositional phrase by a long pause and forms an intonation unit on its own with a characteristically lowered final intonation (cf. Hagman 1997: 55). However, on the basis of the collected corpus, I am reluctant to admit that there is any drop of prominence (in terms of pitch and intensity) on the right-dislocated phrases.

The majority of supposedly right-dislocated noun phrases refer to objects. However, in none of the cases an object suffix on the verb or an object full pronoun is found. This fact does not necessarily present a problem for the right-dislocation analysis, as Lambrecht admits that the coreferential pronominal in sentences with right-dislocation can be a null element (2001: 1056) and objects are in fact frequently coded by zero anaphora in Richtersveld Nama (cf. Table 12). Therefore, if one admits that it is possible to have right-dislocated noun phrases coindexed with a zero object anaphora in Richtersveld Nama, the only way to differentiate them from postverbal objects is intonation, and in the present work I relied exclusively on this criterion. This analysis is justified in as far as the majority of other right-dislocated elements in the collected corpus do have a particular intonation pattern with a longer pause and a sentence-final intonation on the element before the dislocated phrase.

(44) nēē ɪgām m-pātən-khā ụū iī tsī ɪlnāāpā lápā, 
this two bullet -3M.DU take and.HORT and there climb

ɪlgūrū -b ʹāî. 
mountain.ridge -3M.SG on

‘Take these two bullets, and climb up over there, on the mountain ridge!’
(Maria’s_grandfather.017)
Sentence (45) below is an example of a right-dislocated noun phrase coreferential with the zero object anaphora. The referent of the dislocated phrase was mentioned in the previous clause and is identifiable for the hearer. Image 3 shows that the dislocated noun phrase is separated from the clause by a long pause, here, again, it is difficult to speak of any considerable drop in prominence on the right-dislocated phrase.

(45) tsì’ì gō lìi’ì-gà à Igörågù, and REC.PST 3 -3M.PL.OBL REC.PST share

lnàà lnôná piir -dè.

that three pear -3F.PL.OBL

‘And they shared (them), those three pears.’ (Pears_Sophie.67)

Image 3

Thus, the only difference between objects in the postverbal position and right-dislocated noun phrases coindexed with objects is the presence of a pause. I differentiate these two constructions to avoid any premature lumping. However, I must admit that the two patterns do not differ from one another in terms of their discourse-pragmatic status: they both code topical discourse-active referents. For instance, in terms of RD index, there is only a slight difference between the direct object noun phrases in these two environments; while the RD index of the postverbal direct object noun phrases reaches 4.8 (cf. Graph 4), it is slightly higher than 3 for the right-dislocated noun phrases coindexed with the direct objects in the main clause. However, this minor difference can be traced back to the low number of tokens of right-dislocated noun-phrases. Therefore, it remains open for further investigation, whether these two constructions should be differentiated or not.
7.2.3 Contrastive topic

After having presented how non-contrastive topics are coded in Richtersveld Nama, I will look at contrastive topics in this chapter. Concerning constituent order, it is possible to identify two strategies of coding contrastive topics in the collected corpus.

On the one hand, contrastive topics can appear in the prefield. For instance, in (46b) *linā khoen* ‘those people’ is contrasted with *sakhom* ‘we’ in the preceding clause and appears in the prefield.

(46) **Context:** Speaking of language learning in Richtersveld in comparison to Namibia.

a. o -khom ge sa -khom mama -ra xu
and -1M.DU.SBJ DECL 1INCL -1M.DU mother -3C./F.DU from

Igui ge llnā'u.
only PST hear

‘And we heard it only from our mothers.’

b. llnā khoe -n ge llgū -di xu llnā'u
that man -3C.PL DECL parent -3F.PL from hear

tsī llkhaba skōl -i !nā ge llnā'u
and again school -3C.SG in PST hear

ntsī skōl -i !nā ra xoā.
and school -3M.SG in IMPF write

‘Those people (= Namibian Namas) heard it from their mothers, and heard it at school again, and write at school …’ (A/G.009-012)

Trying to explain why *sakhom* ‘we’ in the first sentence is not in the prefield, I would suggest that at this point no contrasting is yet planned by the speaker, and the intention to contrast the people in Namibia (*linā khoen* ‘those people’) to the people of the Richtersveld arises only during the pause after the first sentence.

The low number of tokens does not allow to make any statements concerning the effects intonation plays in marking contrastive topics; impressionistically, there is some particular prominence. A larger corpus is needed to make any statements on the issue.

The second frequent strategy of marking contrastive topics found in the corpus is left-dislocation, a common strategy for coding contrastive topics cross-linguistically according
to Lambrecht (1996: 183). In (47) the left-dislocated noun phrases are topical and contrasted with each other.

(47) a. tši gowa -e ūhâ tama khoe -b, and language -3C.SG.OBL have NEG man -3M.SG

llnâ -b ge lguâÎnâ -sa khoe.
that -3M.SG DECL disdain -ADJ man

‘And a man who hasn't got a language that one is a disdained man.’

b. lîl -b gowa -b -a ra !hoa khoe -b, 3 -3M.SG language -3M.SG -OBL IMPF speak man -3M.SG

llnâ -b ge rextê khoe.
that -3M.SG.SBJ DECL right man

‘A man who speaks his language that one is a right man.’ (A/G.111-112)

To summarize, in this chapter the major topic coding devices were presented. They range from subject zero anaphora, pronominal devices and full noun phrases to special constructions such as left and right-dislocations. Besides, I have shown that contrastiveness plays a role in the choice of topic coding strategies. Finally, as was mentioned above, in some cases a larger corpus is necessary to clarify the open questions and provide additional data for a more substantial analysis.

7.3 Focus in Richtersveld Nama

In this chapter, I will give an analysis of focus structure in Richtersveld Nama. I will first look at completive and then at contrastive focus. Within the realm of each focus type, I will link different constituent order types with different focus types. The analysis is based on three types of data: elicited question-answer pairs, prompted texts (The Pear Stories) and dialogues. Besides, at the end of the chapter, I will briefly discuss three relevant issues. Firstly, I will comment on the claim that the prefield is the primary focus position in Nama. Secondly, I will try to answer the question whether the popular claim that the primary focus positions in SOV languages is the preverbal one holds water in Richtersveld Nama. Finally, I will briefly discuss the status of particle the *hana.*
7.3.1 Completive focus

As question-answer pairs traditionally play an essential role in the description of focus (Payne 1997: 267), I will first present the results of the elicitation of question-answer pairs and then compare them with the examples of question-answer pairs from natural discourse. Finally, I will give an account of three focus types: predicate focus, sentence focus, and narrow focus.

7.3.1.1 Completive focus in question-answer pairs

Before coming to the evaluation of the data provided by question-answer pairs, it should be pointed out that there are two structural differences between the interrogative and declarative sentence. Firstly, the declarative and the assertive particles ge and gum never occur in the interrogative sentence, instead, the emphatic interrogative particle kha may occur as part of the clause second position, however, its distribution is limited to the contexts when the speaker expresses surprise or doubt. Secondly, when the subject is in the prefied, it is marked with the oblique marker -a.

7.3.1.1.1 Wh-questions

In elicited wh-questions, the wh-word always appears in the prefied. (48A) illustrates a standard question for elicitation of sentence focus. The obtained answer has the constituent order of Type I with the subject of the sentence maría 'Maria' in the prefied.

(48) A: tare -e  ra ñ?
    what -3C.SG.OBL  IMPF happen

    ‘What is happening?’

B: marías  ta lurihāb  ikha  ikhais  lî  Igabi.
    Maria -3F.SG.SBJ  IMPF bicycle -3M.SG with  Sanddrif -3F.SG to ride

    ‘Maria is riding by bicycle to Sanddrif.’ (EA_R)

(49B) illustrates predicate focus; here again, the constituent order corresponds to the constituent order of Type I with the subject in the prefied.
(49) A: tare -e -b
    ta gerda\textsuperscript{12} di?
    what -3C.SG.OBL -3M.SG.SBJ IMPF Gerd -OBL do

‘What is Gerd doing?’

B: gerd ge ra mariasa laba !khaiba mā.
    Gerd DECL IMPF Maria -3F.SG -OBL red scarf -3M.SG -OBL give

‘Gerd is giving a red scarf to Maria?’ (EA_R)

(50) is a subject wh-question with the respective answer. The question word tari ‘who’ and
the respective noun phrase in the answer maria ‘Maria’ are in the prefield.

(50) A: tari -e ra tsēkorobe pere -b -a llama?
    who -3C.SG.OBL IMPF daily bread -3M.SG -OBL buy

‘Who buys bread every day?’ (Eliz_MF.007)

B: maria -s ge tsē -s hoa -s -a
    Maria -3F.SG DECL day -3F.SG all -3F.SG -OBL

pere -b -a ra llama.
    bread -3M.SG -OBL IMPF buy

‘Maria buys bread every day.’ (Eliz_MF.007)

These examples show that, what concerns constituent order, subject-focus structures do
not differ from sentence-focus and predicate-focus structures.

(51a) is an example of a direct object wh-question, whereas (52a) exemplifies a question
to the object modifier.

(51) a: tare -e -s
ta þû ǂgao?
    what -3C.SG.OBL -2F.SG.SBJ IMPF eat want.to

‘What do you want to eat?’ (EA_R)

b: ti -ta ge ra pere -e þû ǂgao.
    1SG -1SG.SBJ DECL IMPF bread -3C.SG.OBL eat want.to

c: pere -e -ta ge ra þû ǂgao.
    bread -3C.SG.OBL -1SG.SBJ DECL IMPF eat want.to

‘I want to eat bread.’ (EA_R)

\textsuperscript{12} Loanword violating Nama phonotactic rules do not get any PGN suffixes.
The answers in (51) and (52) show that the constituent order in sentences with narrow focus on non-subjects can be of two types. On the one hand, it can correspond to the constituent order of Type I as in (51b) and (52b) with the subject of the sentence in the prefield. On the other hand, it can correspond to the constituent order in questions (=Type III), with the narrowly focused elements occurring in the prefield as in (51c) and (52c).

Examples of question-answer pairs from natural discourse support the results obtained from the elicitation. Concerning the constituent order in questions, examples like (53) with the question word in the prefield are numerous.

\[ (53) \ māba \ -n \ ta \ !khubu\ -s \ xa \ llnāu? \]

\[ \text{where} \ -3C.PL.SBJ \ IMPF \ Kuboes \ -3F.SG \ about \ hear \]

‘Where do they hear about Kuboes?’ (A/G.144)

The constituent order in answers also corresponds to the constituent order in the elicited question-answer pairs. Examples (54B1) and (54B2), where the speaker repeats the answer, show both options presented above: in (54B1) the focused object \textit{kaise }\textit{#gui xūna}‘many things’ appears in the prefield, whereas in (54B2) the same focused object occurs in the preverbal position in the middlefield.
A: tsī duitser -i xa -b pedro -b -a
   and German -3C.SG about -3M.SG brother -3M.SG -OBL
tare -n -a ge łaNâu?
what -3C.PL -OBL PST hear

‘And what has the brother (=you) heard about the German?’

B1: kaise ꚍguī xū -n -a -ta ge łaNâu.
   very many thing -3C.PL -OBL -1SG.SBJ DECL hear

‘I’ve heard very many things.’

B2: duitser -i xa -ta ge
   German -3C.SG about -1SG.SBJ DECL
   ꚍguī xū -n -a ge łaNâu.
   many thing -3C.PL -OBL PST hear

‘About the German I’ve heard many things.’ (A/G.136-138)

(54A) is also interesting in another respect: it shows that, contrary to what has been reported for Namibian Nama, question words can remain in situ. This is also the case when questions are not full sentences but build a coordinate clause with the preceding one as in (55B). In answers following such questions, the focused element appears in the middlefield as in (55A2).

   and REC.PST this man -3M.SG -OBL pick fill.up

   ‘… and this man picked full.’

B: tsī go tare -i !nâ hana !ora ouse -s.
   and REC.PST what -3C.SG in actually pick elder.sister -3F.SG

   ‘and in what (he) picked, elder sister?’
pick

‘Probably an apron or what. But he was picking into a thing, he was picking into a thing set in front, which had bags [=pockets].’ (Pears_Katrina.08-10)

It should be emphasized here again that in natural discourse the majority of answers and sometimes also the questions are limited to the wh-phrase and the respective answer as in (56).

(56) tarexú -i       ai?
    what.thing -3C.SG  on

‘On what?’

bicycle       on

‘On a bicycle.’ (Pears_Elizabeth.18-19)

To summarize, in questions, the wh-word either occupies the prefield or remains \textit{in situ}. The same is true for answers with narrow focus: the focused element can be either in the prefield or in the middlefield. In cases of broad focus and subject focus\textsuperscript{13}, the constituent order in the answers corresponds to the constituent order of Type I with the subject in the prefield. Thus, there are two possible focus positions (or domains): the prefield in case of narrow focus, and the middlefield in case of narrow and broad focus.

\textbf{7.3.1.2 Yes-no questions}

On the basis of the elicited data, two strategies can be differentiated in the domain of yes-no questions. On the one hand, the constituent order of Type I is used, whereby the

\textsuperscript{13} There are no examples of full sentence answers to questions to the subject and predicate in the natural discourse corpus.
subject remains in the prefield\textsuperscript{14}, but gets the oblique marker -a. According to the elicited data, the questions with the constituent order of Type I are ambiguous: they get either a broad-focus reading with the whole event being in question as in (57), or a narrow-focus reading, either as a question about the subject as in (58), or as a question about any other constituent of the clause, for instance, about the direct object as in (59)\textsuperscript{15}.

(57) A: lgui pîr-s-a !hû-b ai go llnã?
   one pear -3F.SG.SBJ -OBL ground -3M.SG on REC.PST fall

‘Did one pear fall on the ground?’

B: ì, lgui pîr-s go !hû-b ai llnã.
yes one pear -3F.SG.SBJ REC.PST ground -3M.SG on fall

‘Yes, one pear fell on the ground.’ (EA_L)

(58) A: vilem-a ra maria -s-a laba !khai-e mã?
   Willem -OBL IMPF Maria -3F.SG -OBL red scarf -3C.SG.OBL give

‘Does Willem give Maria a red scarf?’

B: hîi, gerd ta maria -s-a laba !khai-e mã.
no Gerd IMPF Maria -3F.SG -OBL red scarf -3C.SG.OBL give

‘No, Gerd gives Maria a red scarf.’ (EA_R)

(59) A: nê ao-b-a pîr-n-a go !ora?
   this man -3M.SG -OBL pear -3C.PL -OBL REC.PST pluck

‘Has this man picked pears?’

B: hîi pîr-n-a !ora tama, apel -n-a go !ora.
no pear -3C.PL -OBL pluck NEG apple -3C.PL -OBL REC.PST pluck

‘No, (he) hasn’t picked pears; (he) has picked apples.’ (EA_L)

The second strategy allows for unambiguous questioning of non-subject constituents. In this case, the constituent order of Type III with the wh-word in the prefield is used. For

\textsuperscript{14} One might doubt whether the subject with the oblique marker -a as in (57) is indeed in the prefield and not in the middlefield with this type of yes-no questions having no prefield at all. However, sentences with the interrogative marker \textit{kha} provide evidence in favor of the existence of the prefield; \textit{kha} occurs in the clause second position both when it follows the subject PGN clitic (example (62) below) and when it follows the subject with an oblique marker.

\textsuperscript{15} I have no examples of the same question with three different answers, as during the elicitation the informants were asked to provide only one answer.
instance, in (60A) the adjunct *thūb ai* ‘on the ground’ is in question and appears in the prefield; the answer is provided as a proof that the question is indeed about the adjunct.

(60) A: !hū -b ai -s lgui -s pīr -s -a
ground -3M.SG on -3F.SG.SBJ one -3F.SG pear -3F.SG -OBL
go llnā?
REC.PST fall

‘Has one pear fallen on the ground?’

B: hīi !hū -b ai llnā tama ,
no ground -3M.SG on fall NEG

flūr ai go llnā.
floor on REC.PST fall

‘No, (it) has not fallen on the ground; (it) has fallen on the floor.’ (EA_L)

The number of full yes-no questions in the corpus of natural speech is low, however, they partially support the results obtained during the elicitation. Moreover, they provide interesting examples not found in the elicited data.

Firstly, there are no examples of ambiguous questions like (57), (58) and (59), therefore, it remains unclear whether multiple reading is actually possible in natural discourse and if yes, what determines the reading (e.g. intonation). A larger corpus is needed to prove in how far the results obtained from the elicitation can be transferred to natural discourse.

Secondly, in coherent speech, the majority of yes-no questions are ‘integrated’ into the discourse: they begin with a conjunction and consequently have the constituent order of Type II with the subject in the middlefield as in (61). The only difference to declarative sentences is the absence of the declarative marker *ge* and sometimes the presence of the emphatic interrogative marker *kha* as in (62).

(61) A: tsī -b pedro -b -a *khani -i tsīn* llnā
and -3M.SG.SBJ brother -3M.SG -OBL book -3C.SG also in
llnāu tama lī -n xa?
hear NEG 3 -3C.PL about

‘Hasn’t brother (= you) heard about them also in a book?’
Sentences (63A) and (64) are further examples of narrow focus in yes-no questions. In these sentences the focused elements are in the prefield.

To summarize, in the realm of yes-no questions, a number of questions remain unanswered. On the one hand, it is not clear whether in case of questions with the constituent order of Type I multiple reading is possible in natural discourse as it is the case in the elicited examples. On the other hand, the collected corpus is insufficient to make any conclusions about the intonation of such interrogative sentences. What is certain is that the prefield is used for unambiguous narrow focus on non-subjects.

### 7.3.1.2 Predicate focus

As has been mentioned above, predicate focus is the universally unmarked type of focus structure. It coincides with the traditionally recognized ‘topic-comment’ organization of information in the sentence, with the subject functioning as the topic of the sentence and the predicate as the comment about the subject-topic. Of the constituent order types
presented above in Chapter 3, Type II with the subject in the middlefield and sometimes Type I with the subject in the prefield are used for the expression of predicate focus. (65) is a sentence with the constituent order of Type II, the focus is the predicate tare-Igôasa go mú ‘saw a girl’. The focus domain covers the whole middlefield and the verb.

(65) tsī -b\(^{16}\) !lgapi go hīa -b ge and -3M.SG.SBJ ride REC.PST while -3M.SG.SBJ DECL
go tara - lgôa -s -a go mú.REC.PST woman - child -3F.SG -OBL REC.PST see

‘While he was riding, he saw a girl.’ (Anna.33-34)

In (66) with the constituent order of Type II, the topic is the subject linā axaba ‘that boy’, the focus is the predicate, which encompasses the verb and the part of the middlefield behind the subject.

(66) tsī -b go llnā axa -b -a llnāba and -3M.SG.SBJ REC.PST that boy -3M.SG -OBL there

lurihā -b -a a lligui.
bicycle -3M.SG -OBL REC.PST put.down

‘And that boy put down the bicycle there.’ (Pear_MariaSw.17)

Sentence (66) is different from sentence (65) in that the focus domain includes the verb and only a part of the middlefield, namely, the one after the subject linā axaba ‘that boy’.

If any constituent occurs in the middlefield before the subject, it is out of focus. In the majority of cases, these are temporal adverbs, but other adjuncts are possible. For instance, in (67) the topical adjunct linā luisa xu ‘from that stone’ occurs before the subject.

(67) a:<…> tsī ge ge llnāba ge kō nēba ge kō -s llnā PST PST there PST look here PST look -3F.SG PST

lui -s ba ge sī !gabi llawo.
stone -3F.SG at PST arrive ride become.stuck

‘<…> and in looking there and here he drove against a stone.’

\(^{16}\) The sentence contains a temporal adverbial clause with its own subject PGN clitic.
If objects occur after the verb, either in the postverbal position or in right-dislocation, they are topical as was shown in Chapter 6.

Concerning intonation more research is needed to define what determines variations in prominence. At the present stage of research, it is impossible to make any generalizations, as contextually very similar sentences seem to be expressed differently prosodically. For instance, Image 4 shows the pitch track and the intensity in the second part of (65) duplicated below. The focus is on the predicate *tarelgəasa go mú* ‘saw a girl’. No part of the focused predicate seems to be more prominent than the other.

(65)  
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{tsi} &\quad \text{ge} \quad \text{línā} \quad \text{liu} - s - a \quad \text{xu} \\
\text{and} &\quad - 3 \text{M.SG.SBJ} \quad \text{DECL} \quad \text{that} \quad \text{rock} - 3 \text{F.SG} - \text{OBL} \quad \text{from} \\
\text{ge} &\quad \text{línā} - b - a \quad \text{ge} \quad \text{línā} \\
\text{PST} &\quad 3 \quad - 3 \text{M.SG} - \text{OBL} \quad \text{PST} \quad \text{fall}
\end{align*}
\]

‘And he fell off that stone.’ (Pear_GertaSw.23-24)

Image 5 shows the pitch track and intensity of (68) with predicate focus. The postpositional phrase seem to be slightly more prominent than the verb in terms of pitch and intensity;  

\[\text{Image 4}\]

\[\text{Image 5}\]

17 The sentence contains a temporal adverbial clause not discussed in this thesis with its own subject PGN clitic.
besides, in comparison with (65) the whole pitch range is broader on the focused predicate.

(68)  tsìi  llì’i -b -à  lûî -s  âì  lâpâ  
and  3 -M.SG -OBL  rock -3F.SG on climb

‘And he climbed on a stone. (Anna.39)

To conclude, what concerns constituent order, the domain of predicate focus includes the verb and the part of the middlefield following the subject, if there is one in the middlefield. Concerning prosody, more research should be done to make any generalizations.

7.3.1.3 Sentence focus (thetic statements)

As mentioned earlier, thetic utterances are simple assertions in which the entire situation is asserted as a whole, without distinguishing an argument as a predication base. In other words, thetic sentences are of a homogeneous nature with no sentence-internal information structure.

Characteristically, thetic sentences often open stories and narrations. Therefore, I looked through the collected corpus and picked out all such sentences. In terms of constituent order, the examples I found do not differ from what was observed in the case of predicate-focus sentences. Whereas the very first sentence of a story has the subject in the prefield, the following ones, no matter thetic or categorical, usually have a conjunction in the prefield with the subject appearing in the middlefield.

(69a) and (69b) are the first two sentences of a Pear Story. Following Sasse (1987), they correspond to the Background description domain.

(69) a: honder -gu  ge go  â.  
hen -3M.PL.SBJ  DECL  REC.PST cry

‘Chickens cried.’ (Pears_Elizabeth.03)
‘And a man got up.’ (Pears_Elizabeth.04)

(70) corresponds to Sasse’s Existential statements in a wider sense. Here again no peculiarities of constituent order can be observed.

(70) toro -b ge ge hà ī.
        war -3M.SG.SBJ DECL PST be PST.COP

‘There was a war.’ (Maria’s_grandfather.004)

The elicited examples of thetic statements show the same structure (e.g. (48) above). Thus, on the basis of the collected and elicited data I can conclude that thetic sentences are not different from predicate-focus sentences in terms of constituent order. Moreover, at least impressionistically, there seems to be no difference what concerns prosody. However, I would not exclude that a larger corpus might provide examples of constructions reserved for sentence-focus structures. For instance, in Stopa’s (1936) collection of Nama texts, the majority of stories begin with sentences with the impersonal passive as illustrated in (71). The syntactic subject is the PGN subject clitic -i ‘3C.SG.SBJ’ with no referential content, whereas the semantic actor is coded as a postpositional phrase hàb xa ‘by the horse’.

(71) hà -b18 xa -i gye goma lgui tsē
        horse -3M.SG by -3C.SG.SBJ DECL heresay one day

Inēra -b l interrogation gye mīi -he.
baboon -3M.SG to PST say -PASS

‘One day it was said by the horse to the baboon.’ (Stopa 1936: 38)

7.3.1.4 Narrow focus

Apart from narrow focus in question-answer pairs as demonstrated above, it is difficult to find examples of narrow non-contrastive focus in natural texts or, to be more precise, to

18 Orthography as in the original.
differentiate them from predicate focus\(^{19}\). That is why, in the account of narrow focus I have to rely largely on question-answer pairs.

As has been shown above and is repeated here, the wh-word in questions can occur either in the prefield (72) or remains \textit{in situ} in the middlefield (73).

\begin{verbatim}(72) A: mà lî -s ta !gabi lurihà -b lkha? \\
which to -3F.SG.SBJ IMPF ride bicycle -3M.SG with
\end{verbatim}

‘Where to is she riding by bicycle?’

\begin{verbatim}B1: maria -s ge lurihà -b lkha ra \\
Maria -3F.SG.SBJ DECL bicycle -3M.SG with IMPF
\end{verbatim}

‘Maria is riding to Sanddrif by bicycle.’

\begin{verbatim}B2: lkhai -s lî ra !gabi lurihà -b lkha. \\
Sanddrif -3F.SG.SBJ to IMPF ride bicycle -3M.SG with
\end{verbatim}

‘Maria is riding to Sanddrif by bicycle.’ (EA_R)

\begin{verbatim}(73) tsî ra tare ëû -n-a !ora ouse -s? \\
and IMPF what fruit -3C.PL -OBL pick elder.sister -3F.SG
\end{verbatim}

‘… and what fruit did (he) pick, elder sister?’ (Pears_Katrina.05)

The answer phrase to the wh-question can occur either in the middlefield as in (71B1) or in the prefield as in (71B2).

The few examples of narrow undoubtedly non-contrastive focus outside of question-answer pairs are given below. In (74) the direct object \textit{Igui xūdæ} ‘one little thing’ is in focus and appears in the prefield.

\begin{verbatim}(74) ai , igui xū -da -e -ta ge luru hà. \\
ai one thing -DIM -3C.SG.OBL -1SG.SBJ DECL forget AUX
\end{verbatim}

‘Ai, I have forgotten one little thing.’ (Anna.16)

In (75b) below the postpositional phrase \textit{lērī lkha} ‘with a ladder’ is in focus and also

\(^{19}\) This problem is commented upon in greater detail in Lambrecht (1994: 298-299).
occupies the prefield.

(75) a. tsí-b ge go !apa.
    and -3M.SG.SBJ DECL REC.PST climb

   ‘And he climbed up.’

b. lēr -i lkha -b ge go !apa.
    ladder -3M.SGwith -3M.SG.SBJ DECL REC.PST climb

   ‘He climbed up with a ladder.’ (Pears_Sophie.06-07)

If there are any non-contrastively narrow-focused constituents in the middlefield in other than question-answer contexts, there is a methodological problem to differentiate them from predicate focus.

To summarize, on the basis of the elicited sentences and natural discourse, it is possible to conclude that constituents in narrow focus occur either in the prefield or in the middlefield.

7.3.2 Contrastive focus

In this part I will give an account of contrastive focus in Richtersveld Nama. I will first summarize the results of the elicitations, and then proceed to the description of contrastive focus structure in natural discourse.

As has been mentioned earlier, Dik’s taxonomy of focus (1997a: 330-335) implies the existence of contrastive focus only in the realm of narrow focus. Though this is not a straightforward issue, I will limit my analysis of contrastive focus to instances of narrow focus.

The elicitation sessions were designed to find out how different types of contrastive focus according to Dik’s (1997a) taxonomy behave. During the elicitation sessions a situation was described to the consultants. It included two or more utterances, which the consultants were asked to translate. However, if not explicitly asked, in most of the cases they provided only short answers as in (76B) exemplifying rejecting and replacing focus, what was to expect, and only after explicit requests they gave full sentences. Therefore, the results of these elicitation sessions should be taken with a pinch of salt.
Similar as with question-answer pairs, an ambivalent behaviour of focused constituents can be observed independently of different types of contrastive focus according to the communicative point. In (77B) and (78B) rejecting and replacing foci are illustrated. In (77B1) and (77B2) the focused constituents are in the middlefield, whereas in (78B) the focused constituent *likhais Inå* ‘in Sanddrif’ is in the prefield.

(77) A: frederika -s ge nî nê lûi
Frederika -3F.SG.SBJ DECL FUT this evening
nêba llom.
here sleep
‘Frederika will sleep here tonight.’

B1: frederika -s ge nî nê lûi
Frederika -3F.SG.SBJ DECL FUT this evening
nêba llom tama.
here sleep NEG
‘Frederika won’t sleep here tonight.’

B2: frederika -s ge om -s à -s
Frederika -3F.SG.SBJ DECL house -3F.SG ASSOC -3F.SG
taba ra llom.
at IMPF sleep
‘Frederika sleeps at home.’ (EA_L)
Similar ambivalent behaviour concerning constituent order can be observed with any other contrastive focus type independently of its communicative point. For instance, (79B) is an example of restricting focus on the direct object. The object *peree lgui* ‘only bread’ occurs in the prefield, whereas in (80B) the focused object *xoas lgui* ‘only writing’ is in the middlefield.

(78) A: dʒoana -s ge llari go
         Johanna -3F.SG.SBJ DECL day.from.now REC.PST
Ilkhai -s lná há Ĭ.
         Sanddrif -3F.SG in be.present PTS.COP

‘Johanna was in Sanddrif yesterday.’

B: Ilkhai -s lná -s ge dʒoana -s -a
       Sanddrif -3F.SG in -3F.SG.SBJ DECL Johanna -3F.SG -OBL
       go há tama Ĭ.
       REC.PST be.present NEG PST.COP
baken -s lná go há Ĭ.
       Baken -3F.S in REC.PST be.present PST.COP

‘Johanna was not in Sanddrif, [she] was in Baken.’ (EA_L)

ha is used for coordination of noun phrases and follows the last coordinated phrase. In principle, the final PGN marker on this coordinated phrase should be -m 3C.DU reflecting the sum of two 3C.SG markers. However, speakers sometimes use plural instead of dual as in this example.

(79) A: llgan -ni tsī pere -i ha20 -n -a -ts
       meat -3C.SG and bread -3C.SG and -3C.PL -OBL -2M.SBJ
ra ū gao?
       IMPF eat want

‘Do you want to eat bread and meat?’

B: hīī, pere -e lgui -ta ra ū gao.
       no bread -3C.SG.OBL only -1SG.SBJ IMPF eat want

‘No, I only want to eat bread.’ (EA_L)
(80) A: lena -s ge ra nama gowa -b-a
Lena -3F.SG.SBJ DECL IMPF Nama language -3M.SG -OBL

!hoa tsī xoa.
speak and write

‘Lena speaks and writes Nama.’

B: nē, ama tama i,
no true NEG STAT.PART

lena -s ge ra xoa -s lguí -s -a
Lena -3F.SG.SBJ DECL IMPF write -3SG.F only -3F.SG -OBL

nama gowa -b -a ra hī , !hoa tama.
Nama language -3M.SG -OBL IMPF do speak NEG

‘No, it’s not true. Lena only writes Nama, she doesn’t speak.’ (EA_L)

Interestingly, in this example the focused constituent in focus is the nominalized verb xoa
‘write’ from the previous sentence. The actual verb is the semantically empty verb hī ‘do’.
This construction looks like a good candidate of a construction for contrastive focus on the
verb. However, this sentence is the only example of such a construction in the collected
corpus and more examples are needed to make any generalizations in this respect.
The data from natural discourse support the results obtained from the elicitation what
concerns constituent order. (81B) is an example of selecting focus with the focused
element lurihāb ikha ‘by bicycle’ in the prefield.

(81) A: lñā lğa -s -a go lñā -b ikha hā ĭ
that child -3F.SG.SBJ -OBL REC.PST leg -3M.SG with AUX PST.COP

of lurihā -b ikha -s go hā ĭ?
of bicycle -3M.SG with -3F.SG.SBJ REC.PST AUX PST.COP

‘Was that girl on foot or was she with a bicycle?’
B: lurihā -b ikha -s go līī -s tsīīn -a
   bicycle -3M.SG with -3F.SG.SBJ REC.PST 3 -3F.SG also -OBL

hā ĭ.

AUX PST.COP

‘She as well was with a bicycle.’ (Pears_Elizabeth.24-25)

(82) was produced in a very similar context, the focused element lurihāb ikha ‘by bicycle’ appears in the middlefield and not on the prefield as in (82).

(82) A: lnū -b ikha -s go !gūxa ĭ of
   leg -3M.SG with -3F.SG.SBJ REC.PST approach pass or

‘Has she come on foot or …?’

B: nē khoe -s ge go llkhātī
   this man -3F.SG.SBJ DECL REC.PST also

lurihā -b ikhā !gūxa ĭ.
   bicycle -3M.SG with approach pass

‘This woman came also by bicycle.’ (Pears_Sophie.37-38)

Contrastively focused constituents, in the prefield as well as in the middlefield, seem to be very prominent prosodically. Image 6 shows the pitch track and the intensity of the sentence in (82B) with the contrastively focused element in the middlefield, whereas Image 7 shows the sentence in (83) with the contrastively focused constituent līnā gowai ‘that language’ in the prefield. In both cases the pitch and the loudness of the focused elements seem to be higher than on other constituents of the sentence. Besides, particularly in (83), it is obvious that the vowel length of the constituents in focus is bigger than on the rest of the sentence. Thus, though Richtersveld Nama is a tone language, it also uses such cross-linguistically common devices to mark prominence as higher pitch, higher intensity and longer duration (Cutler 1983: 62).

Apart from the selective focus on lurihāb ikha ‘with a bicycle’, the sentence also contains expanding focus on līīs tsīīna ‘also she’. The theories presented in the chapter on Theoretical background do not deal with sentences containing two narrow contrastive foci, and I will leave this issue untouched for the time being.
(82) B: nèè khòë -s  gè  gò  Ilkhàâätī
this  man  -3F.SG.SBJ  DECL  REC.PST  also

Ilúrì háâ  -b  Ilkhàâ  Igúù  úxà  íí.
bicycle  -3M.SG  with  approach  pass

'This woman came also by bicycle.' (Pears_Sophie.37-38)

Image 6

(83) Context: Andries and Gert speak of learning different languages.
Ilnàá  gòwà  -í  tsiín-à  -í  khòë  -ë
that  language  -3C.SG  also  -OBL  -3C.SG.SBJ  man  -3C.SG.OBL

Ilkhàâllkhàásën  rë
learn  IMP

'A man should learn also that language.' (A/G.080)

Image 7

Thus, as has been shown above, the contrastively focused constituents appear either in
the prefield or in the middlefield of the Richtersveld Nama. Besides, such prosodic
phenomena as pitch, intensity and duration are used to mark contrastively focused
constituents. Thus, contrary to some other tone languages, for instance, Aghem (Watters
1997), Richtersveld Nama uses intonation as one of the focalizing devices.
7.3.3 On the prefield

As was mentioned above, the prefield is often claimed to be the primary focus position in Nama (Haacke 2005). However, it is not clear what exactly is meant by “the primary focus position”. Commenting on this issue, Herring (1995) notices:

A precise statistical criterion for preferred focus position has never been proposed – is something a ‘preference’ if it holds in 60% of the cases? 40%? 20%? (Herring 1995: 192)

The analysis of narrow completive and contrastive focus shows that focused constituents can occur either in the prefield or in the middlefield. Table 15, duplicated for convenience below, shows that the potential number of focused candidates in this position cannot be very high: postpositional phrases, wh-words, object noun phrases and verbs seem like good candidates. Together they amount to 18 tokens (14.5%), however, this sum can also include topical constituents.

Table 15  The prefield in the dialogues

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Nr. of tokens</th>
<th>% of sentences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conjunction</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject noun phrase</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adverb</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wh-word</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object noun phrase</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adverbal clause</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postpositional phrase</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verb</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sum</strong></td>
<td>123</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The analysis of these 18 tokens shows that all 4 postpositional phrases and 1 of 5 object noun phrases are topical, whereas all 3 verbs and 4 object noun phrases are in focus. The wh-words are inherently focal. Thus, of 18 tokens only 13 represent focused constituent, this amounts to 10.5%.

These results allow me to claim that, though being a possible focus position, the prefield is not the primary focus position.

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All 43 subject noun phrases in these dialogues are topics.
7.3.4 On the immediately preverbal position

It has been claimed in a number of studies that in SOV languages the so-called “primary focus position” is the immediately preverbal position (Kim 1988, Kuno 1978; cited in Kim 1988). Herring (1995), on the one hand, discusses the drawbacks of Kuno’s methodology, on the other hand, she verifies his claim and analyses a number of SOV languages. In her study she concentrates on the so-called “presentational focus constructions”, that is, constructions used to present referents that are new or otherwise informationally salient. Methodologically, what she does is count new mentions in different linear positions of the sentence and for different grammatical roles. Her findings provide limited support for the notion of preverbal focus: in the languages she investigates, new referents are presented more often preverbally than in any other position.

In this thesis, I am not going to accommodate Herring’s presentational focus within the focus typology adopted here. What I will do is tentatively adopt her approach and check whether the preverbal position in Richtersveld Nama is more specialized for presentational focus in Herring’s sense than any other position.

Before getting to the evaluation of the statistics, it is important to take into consideration a number of tricky aspects. Though on the surface the new mentions almost exclusively occur in the immediately preverbal position, this fact might have other motivations than the preverbal position being the primary focus position. On the one hand, the middlefield often contains only one argument. This single argument is then obviously in the immediately preverbal position. On the other hand, the majority of new mentions are grammatical objects that occur exclusively in the middlefield. These two facts are responsible for the immediately preverbal position being seemingly reserved for new mentions.

As it is syntactically conditioned that objects follow subjects in the middlefield, the analysis of sentences with a subject and an object in the middlefield cannot bring me any further in the investigation of the immediately preverbal position. The only contexts which can help to clarify the issue are sentences with two non-subject constituents in the middlefield. If in such contexts the new mentions will tend to occur in the immediately preverbal position it would speak for this position being a preferred focus position in Herring’s sense.

In the analyzed corpus of 548 clauses there are 28 clauses with two non-subject constituents. Though in the 10 analyzed Pear Stories some 12% of direct objects occur postverbally (not including the instances of right-dislocations, see the discussion above), none of the direct objects in this position is a new mention.

24 Though in the 10 analyzed Pear Stories some 12% of direct objects occur postverbally (not including the instances of right-dislocations, see the discussion above), none of the direct objects in this position is a new mention.

25 430 clauses from the 10 Pear Stories and 118 clauses from the dialogues.
constituents in the middlefield as in (84).

(84) tsī -b go llnā khoe -b -a  
and -3M.SG.SBJ REC.PST that man -3M.SG -OBL  

'Inona apel -de llkhaba llnā khoe -b -a mà. 
three apple -3F.PL.OBL again that man -3M.SG -OBL give 

‘And that man gave three apples to that man.’ (Pear_Lidia.35)

The sum of new mentions in these 28 clauses amounts to 21 tokens. Concerning the linear order, these 21 new mentions are almost evenly distributed between the immediately preverbal position (10 tokens) and other positions within the middlefield (11 tokens).

Besides, against the particular status of the immediately preverbal position speaks the fact that new subjects are much more often in the prefield than in the middlefield in general and the immediately preverbal position in particularly. Thus, though on the surface the immediately preverbal position indeed looks like a primary focus position, there are other reasons determining the fact that new mentions occur there. A more profound investigation shows that the immediately preverbal position does not seem to be different from the rest of the middlefield behind the subject and there is no motivation to define it as primary focus position in the sense intended by Herring (1995).

### 7.3.5 Focus particles and the status of hana

The three most common focus particles in Richtersveld Nama are tsīna ‘also’, llkhāli ‘also’, and lgui ‘only’. A few examples of their usage are given above, particularly in the chapter on Contrastive focus.

The analysis of distribution and scope of focus particles goes beyond the scope of this thesis. Besides, a profound analysis is anyway impossible without a larger corpus, and, unfortunately, a few attempts to elicit on the issue virtually failed. Therefore, I will leave the topic untouched until further investigations.

The only issue I would like to discuss in some detail is the status of the particle hana. On the first sight hana, translated in the dictionary as ‘indeed, actually’ (Haacke 2002: 47) looks like a good candidate for a ‘pure’ focus particle (König 1991: 28), i.e. a particle that associates with focus, but lacks lexical content. Examples like (85), where hana follows both the wh-question phrase and the respective answer, seem to speak for it.
Against considering hana as a focus particles speak at least two factors. On the one hand, the usage of hana varies from speaker to speaker, thus in three of the recorded Pear stories not a single hana occurs, whereas in one of the stories (Sarah’s story) the number of hana’s reaches 14. On the other hand, there may be multiple occurrences of hana in the same sentence as in (86).

Thus, hana does not look like a good candidate for a pure focus marker. What hana actually is has still to be investigated.
8 Conclusion

In this thesis I tried to explain the interaction of information structure and constituent order in Richtersveld Nama. In the section on Topic, I provided an account of different topic coding devices and demonstrated how referential distance affects their choice. It has been shown that coding devices range from subject zero anaphora, pronominals and full noun phrases to special constructions such as left and right-dislocations. Besides, I discussed the status of postverbal objects and showed that they are topical. Finally, I demonstrated that contrastiveness plays a role in the choice of topic coding strategies.

In the section on Focus, I demonstrated how different focus types interact with constituent order. It was shown that in case of predicate and sentence focus the constituent order is SOV with the subject occurring either in the prefield (Type I) or in the middlefield (Type II), depending on the position of the sentence in the discourse. Sentences with narrow focus (both completive and contrastive) allow for constituents other than the subject to occupy the prefield (Type III). However, the usage of this constituent order is not obligatory and focused constituents can alternatively remain in situ. Therefore, contrary to some claims (for instance, Haacke 2005) it is inappropriate to speak of the prefield as the primary focus position. Finally, though on the surface the immediately preverbal position seems to have some properties of the primary focus position, it was demonstrated that the issue is more complicated and this fact has other motivations apart from information structure. Thus, the two possible linear positions for narrow focus are the prefield and a preverbal position in the middlefield after the subject. Concerning intonation, I showed in passing that such prosodic phenomena as pitch, intensity and duration are used to mark (at least) contrastively focused constituents.

This thesis also outlined possible directions for further research on information structure in Richtersveld Nama. Many issues remain unresolved. Firstly, it was shown that further study of prosodic prominence is needed to give a profound account of the interaction of prosodic prominence and information structure. Secondly, an in-depth investigation of the distribution, scope and meaning of focus particles is yet to be conducted. Apart from these two larger issues, a number of smaller questions mentioned in the thesis remain unanswered. Presumably, a larger corpus can help to answer most of the open questions.
Ultimately, it would be important to conduct a comparative study of other Nama varieties to discover if there are any common or variety-specific constraints on the constituent order in the language.
9 References


