

THE BONDEI OBJECT PRONOUN IN
CLEFTS AND PSEUDO-CLEFTS*

Elizabeth G. Weber
UCLA

Verbs in Bondei, a Bantu language spoken in East Africa, have crossreferencing pronouns which agree in noun class with the subject and object of the clause. This paper will examine the distribution of the syntactic category object pronoun in four grammatical constructions: (a) basic affirmative declarative clauses; (b) relative clauses; (c) clefts; and (d) pseudo-clefts. In declarative and relative clauses, the presence of the object pronoun does not require a definite interpretation of the object noun; the absence of the object pronoun does not preclude a definite interpretation of the object noun. In both cleft and pseudo-cleft constructions, however, the object pronoun obligatorily functions to grammatically mark clefted and pseudo-clefted objects as definite. In the cleft constructions, the definiteness of the clefted NP forces a contrastive interpretation. Thus, a judgement concerning the function of this grammatical construction with regard to contrastive function will be made on the basis of the distribution of the syntactic category object pronoun. In the pseudo-cleft constructions, it is not possible to make the same judgment. Contrastive function is unambiguously signaled by the relative morphology on the verb of the pseudo-cleft. In this construction, the object pronoun serves only to force a definite interpretation of the NP.

0. Introduction

This paper will examine the relation of the syntactic category object pronoun and cleft and pseudo-cleft constructions in Bondei, a Bantu language spoken in East Africa. Bondei, classified G24 by Guthrie [1948], is

*I would like to thank Vicky Carstens, Tom Hinnebusch, Russ Schuh, Sandy Thompson, and Benji Wald for their comments.

a member of the Seuta sub-group of northeast coastal Bantu [Nurse and Philippson 1980; Hinnebusch, Nurse and Mold 1981]. In addition to Bondei, this sub-group includes Seuta, Shambala, Zigula, and Ngulu. There are approximately thirty to thirty-five thousand Bondei speakers in Tanzania in an area southwest of the northwest coastal town of Tonga, north of the Pangani River. In Bondei, subject and object pronouns appear as quasi-agreement affixes on the verb, i.e. these pronouns agree in noun class with the lexical subject and object of the clause. Subject pronouns exhibit more variation in form than object pronouns because they interact with other morphemes which appear as prefixes on the verb, e.g. morphemes coding tense/aspect and polarity. The form of the subject pronoun also depends upon whether the verb exhibits main clause or relative clause morphology. (See the appendix for the forms of subject pronouns.)

In this paper, I will examine the distribution of the syntactic category object pronoun in four grammatical constructions: (a) basic affirmative declarative clauses; (b) relative clauses; (c) clefts; and (d) pseudo-clefts. It has been noted that, in the languages of the world, cleft and pseudo-cleft constructions show structural similarities to relative clauses [Takisala 1972, Schachter 1973]. All three constructions are highly presuppositional.¹ Clefts and pseudo-clefts, as opposed to relative clauses, however, are focusing constructions, i.e. they present new or previously inactive information in conjunction with a presupposed clause which presents given or already activated information.²

I will show that in Bondei the object pronoun in cleft and pseudo-cleft constructions obligatorily functions grammatically to mark clefted NP's as definite. An NP which is marked as definite is coded by the speaker as identifiable by the recipient. In the cleft constructions, the definite-

¹The terms "presupposition" and "assertion" are relevant on a logico-semantic level of analysis, while the terms "new" and "given" or "identifiable" refer to the information status of NP's and are relevant on a discourse level of analysis.

²See Chafe [1984] for a discussion of previously inactive, already activated, and semi-activated information.

ness of the clefted NP forces a contrastive interpretation. In short, I will show that the syntactic category object pronoun in the environment of cleft constructions correlates indirectly with contrastive function through the mediation of the definiteness of the clefted NP. In pseudo-cleft constructions, the same correlation does not obtain. Contrastive function does not correlate through the mediation of the definiteness of the NP with the presence of the syntactic category object pronoun in pseudo-cleft constructions. Contrastive function is unambiguously signaled by the relative morphology on the verb of the pseudo-cleft. In other words, pseudo-clefts without the object pronoun may be contrastive.

The task of demonstrating the correlation between object pronouns, definiteness, and contrastive function in clefts and pseudo-clefts must be distinguished from an examination of the functional distribution of the object pronoun in discourse, i.e. the way Bondei speakers actually use the object pronoun. In conversation, speakers make communicative choices with regard to the appearance of the object pronoun on the basis of discourse factors [Wald 1979]. In order to discover which discourse factors are relevant for speakers' decisions and what functions the object pronoun serves, it is necessary to look at conversational data. Since this paper is based upon elicited data from a single Bondei speaker, no claims can be made as to how the object pronoun functions in discourse.³ In contrast, this paper involves an examination of the syntactic environments in which the grammar allows or disallows the presence of the object pronoun. A speaker's choice to use or not use the object pronoun in a clause is conditioned by discourse factors. Such a choice, however, is only relevant in some environments. This paper will examine the syntactic environments in which such speaker choice is relevant and the relation of these environments to definiteness and contrast.

³I am grateful to Rose Lügembe not only for her patience with my ignorance and her acute linguistic insights, but for many hours of good company.

1. The Origin and Development of the Bantu Object Pronoun

Givón [1976] has suggested that the Bantu object pronoun originated in a preverbal pronoun in left-dislocation constructions, i.e. in referent-proposition constructions. This hypothesis is supported by the function of the object pronoun as an anaphor of an NP previously mentioned in the discourse. As an anaphor, the object pronoun, like any pronoun, is interpretable as identifying the referents of given NP's or identifiable NP's. Givón further suggests that right-dislocations, i.e. afterthought-topic constructions, played an important intermediate step in the development of the object pronoun. It is suggested that right-dislocations gave rise to the pattern of an object pronoun appearing with a post-verbal lexical object. Wald [1979: 511] suggests an alternative hypothesis, namely, that this distributive pattern of the object pronoun most plausibly originated in the use of the object pronoun to agree with given postverbal object NP's. He suggests that it was the object pronoun, and not the lexical object, which was the original unusual element in discourse productions. In any case, like Swahili [Wald 1979:512], Bondei has further innovated in its use of the object pronoun to include indefinite, nonreferential, and generic objects.

2. The Object Pronoun in Declarative Clauses

2.1. The object pronoun as an anaphor. The object pronoun can serve as an anaphor of an NP previously mentioned in the discourse.

- (1) a. mumangu pengine enda eze, ...
 my husband maybe 3Ps FUT come⁴
 'my husband might be coming, ...'

⁴The following abbreviations are used in the examples.

1Ps	first person singular	subject person/number
2Ps	second person singular	pronoun person/number
3Ps	third person singular	
1Pp	first person plural	
2Pp	second person plural	
3Pp	third person plural	

- b. nenda ni-mw-one
 1Ps FUT 1Ps-OP-see
 'I will see him'
- (2) a. Jessie, wa-manyanya vigano vyovyose?
 Jessie 2Ps PRES-know stories any
 'Jessie, do you know any stories?'
- b. nki-vi-jaa
 1Ps PERF-OP-forget
 'I have forgotten them'

The object pronoun can serve as an anaphor of a left-dislocated NP. It is obligatory in this construction.

- (3) wana na- {wa-} kunda
 children 1Ps PRES-OP-love
 'the children I love them'
- (4) vikombe nki- {vi-} tua
 cups 1Ps PERF-OP-break
 'those cups I broke them'

PRES	present	verb tense/aspect
PAST	past	
PERF	perfect	
FUT	future	
IND	indicative	verb mood
INF	infinitive	
SUBJUNC	subjunctive	
PART	participle	
COP	copula	verb type
APPLIC	applicative	
NEG	negative	verb polarity
OP	object pronoun	
EMP	emphatic	
REL	relative	
#1, #2, etc.	noun class	
DEM	demonstrative	
PL AN	plural animate	
SG AN	singular animate	

No intonation break is noticeable between the left-dislocated NP and the rest of the clause.

2.2. The object pronoun and postverbal objects. Example (5) demonstrates that a definite human object can appear with or without the object pronoun.

- (5) ka- $\left\{ \begin{smallmatrix} wa^- \\ \emptyset \end{smallmatrix} \right\}$ ona wana wada
 3Ps PERF-OP-see children those
 'he saw those children'

Example (6) demonstrates that a definite inanimate object can appear with or without the object pronoun.

- (6) baadae nki- $\left\{ \begin{smallmatrix} i^- \\ \emptyset \end{smallmatrix} \right\}$ pata kae ida tiket
 at last 1Ps PERF-OP-get already DEM ticket
 'at last, I finally got the ticket'

Examples (7) through (10) demonstrate that the object pronoun can serve to definitize an NP.

- (7) ka- \emptyset -ona wana
 3ps PERF-OP-see children
 'he saw some children'
- (8) ka-wa-ona wana
 3Ps PERF-OP-see children
 'he saw the children'
- (9) a-ka- \emptyset -kunda kitabu, ...
 3Ps-PART-OP-want book
 'when she wants a book, ...'
- (10) a-ka-ki-kunda kitabu, ...
 3Ps-PART-OP-want book
 'when she wants the book, ...'

Example (11) demonstrates that an indefinite human object can appear with or without the object pronoun.

- (11) wa- $\left\{ \begin{smallmatrix} wa^- \\ \emptyset \end{smallmatrix} \right\}$ ona wanafunzi washano
 3Pp PERF-OP-see students five
 'they saw five students'

Example (12) demonstrates that an indefinite inanimate object can appear with or without the object pronoun.

- (12) wa- $\left\{\begin{smallmatrix} ya- \\ \emptyset \end{smallmatrix}\right\}$ gua machunga mashano
 3Pp PERF-OP-buy oranges five
 'they bought five oranges'

Examples (13) through (15) demonstrate that nonreferential objects can appear with or without the object pronoun.

- (13) ka-onda ku- $\left\{\begin{smallmatrix} m- \\ \emptyset \end{smallmatrix}\right\}$ toa mtu
 3Ps PERF-want INF-OP-hit person
 'he wanted to hit somebody'
- (14) nke-ku $\left\{\begin{smallmatrix} vi- \\ \emptyset \end{smallmatrix}\right\}$ ona viti vyovyose
 NEG 3Ps PAST-INF-OP-see chairs any
 'he didn't see any chairs'
- (15) nke-ku- $\left\{\begin{smallmatrix} wa- \\ \emptyset \end{smallmatrix}\right\}$ ona wana wowose
 NEG 3Ps PAST-INF-OP-see children any
 'he didn't see any children'

When there is no lexical object, the object pronoun precludes any indefinite or nonreferential interpretation. It must be interpreted as a definite NP.

- (16) nke-ku-wa-ona
 NEG 3Ps PAST-INF-OP-see
 'he didn't see $\left\{\begin{smallmatrix} \text{them} \\ *any \end{smallmatrix}\right\}$ '

Example (17) demonstrates that a generic object can appear with or without the object pronoun.

- (17) wantu wa- $\left\{\begin{smallmatrix} mw- \\ \emptyset \end{smallmatrix}\right\}$ ogha simba
 people 3Ps PRES-OP-fear lion
 'people fear the lion'

3. The Object Pronoun and Pronominal Objects

The object pronoun is obligatory for pronominal human objects, which, of course, are both human and definite. Animate nonhumans and inanimates do not require the object pronoun.

- (18) ka- $\left\{ \begin{smallmatrix} ni- \\ * \emptyset \end{smallmatrix} \right\}$ toa mie 'he hit me'
3Ps PERF-OP-hit 1Ps
- (19) na- $\left\{ \begin{smallmatrix} ku- \\ * \emptyset \end{smallmatrix} \right\}$ toa wewe 'I am hitting you'
1Ps PRES-OP-hit you
- (20) nki- $\left\{ \begin{smallmatrix} m- \\ * \emptyset \end{smallmatrix} \right\}$ toa yuda 'I hit him'
1Ps PERF-OP-hit 3Ps DEM
- (21) ka- $\left\{ \begin{smallmatrix} di- \\ \emptyset \end{smallmatrix} \right\}$ toa dida 'he hit it' (dog)
3Ps PERF-OP-hit #5 DEM
- (22) ka- $\left\{ \begin{smallmatrix} ki- \\ \emptyset \end{smallmatrix} \right\}$ toa kida 'he hit it' (chair)
3Ps PERF-OP-hit #7 DEM

4. Multiple Objects

Bondei allows multiple objects and multiple object pronouns for three argument verbs.

- (23) nki-ki-mw-enka mdee kitabu
1Ps PERF-OP #7-OP #1-give girl (#1) book (#7)
'I gave the girl a book'

Only a single object pronoun can appear for compound direct objects of two argument verbs. If direct objects can take different concord, the object pronoun agrees with the first NP.

- (24) nki- $\left\{ \begin{smallmatrix} m- \\ *ki- \\ *m-ki- \end{smallmatrix} \right\}$ toa mwana na kitabu
1Ps PERF-OP $\left\{ \begin{smallmatrix} (\#1) \\ (\#7) \\ (\#1-\#7) \end{smallmatrix} \right\}$ -hit child (#1) and book (#7)
'I hit the child and the book'

- (25) nki- $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} ki- \\ *m- \\ *ki-m- \end{array} \right\}$ toa kitabu na mwana
 1Ps PERF-OP $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} (\#7) \\ (\#1) \\ (\#7-\#1) \end{array} \right\}$ -hit book .and child
 'I hit the book and the child'

Compound objects which take the same concord can be marked by a plural object pronoun. In example (26), where the objects both take animate concord, the object pronoun which agrees with plural animate objects can appear.

- (26) nki-wa-wisha mdee na mbwanga
 1Ps PERF-OP-feed girl and boy
 'I fed the girl and the boy'

In example (27) the object pronoun *di* agrees with the first lexical object *kui* 'dog', and the object pronoun *wa* is the plural animate object pronoun which agrees with both lexical objects. The sequence of object pronouns *di-m* which are the agreement markers for *kui* 'dog' and *mbwanga* 'boy', respectively, can only be interpreted as the direct and indirect objects, giving the interpretation 'I fed the dog to the boy'.

- (27) nki- $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} di- \\ wa- \\ *di-wa- \end{array} \right\}$ wisha kui na mbwanga
 1Ps PERF-OP-feed dog and boy
 'I fed the dog and the boy'

Applicative or prepositional verb forms are restricted as to which lexical object can be crossreferenced by the object pronoun. Only the object of the prepositional meaning can be marked by the object pronoun, as demonstrated in examples (28) and (29).

- (28) nki- $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} wa- \\ *i- \end{array} \right\}$ do-e-a nkande mdee na mbwanga
 1Ps PERF- $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} OP (PL AN) \\ *OP (SG\#9) \end{array} \right\}$ -take-APPLIC-IND food(#9) girl and boy
 'I took food from/to the girl and the boy'

amba Coding

- (32) mvyie amba-e ka-gwa 'the woman who fell down'
 woman say-REL 3Ps PERF-fall down

5.2. Object relatives. Although object relatives can be formed without an object pronoun, the consultant consistently included them in elicited relatives of definite NP's. No meaning difference was noted for constructions with and without the object pronoun. The head of the relative which the object pronoun crossreferences is in preverbal position.

5.2.1. Inanimate objects.Verb Coding

- (33) kiti n-e-ku- $\left\{ \begin{smallmatrix} ki- \\ \emptyset \end{smallmatrix} \right\}$ gua-cho 'the chair which I bought'
 chair 1Ps-PAST-INF-OP-buy-REL
- (34) tonte ni- $\left\{ \begin{smallmatrix} di- \\ \emptyset \end{smallmatrix} \right\}$ da-do 'the banana which I am eating'
 banana 1Ps PRES-OP-eat-REL

amba Coding

- (35) kiti amba-cho nki- $\left\{ \begin{smallmatrix} ki- \\ \emptyset \end{smallmatrix} \right\}$ gua 'the chair which I bought'
 chair say-REL 1Ps PERF-OP-buy
- (36) tonte amba-do n-a- $\left\{ \begin{smallmatrix} di- \\ \emptyset \end{smallmatrix} \right\}$ da 'the banana which I am eating'
 banana say-REL 1Ps-PRES-OP-eat

5.2.1. Animate objects.Verb Coding

- (37) mwana n-e-ku- $\left\{ \begin{smallmatrix} m- \\ \emptyset \end{smallmatrix} \right\}$ toa-e 'the child whom I hit'
 child 1Ps-PAST-INF-OP-hit-REL
- (38) mwana ni- $\left\{ \begin{smallmatrix} m- \\ \emptyset \end{smallmatrix} \right\}$ toa-e 'the child whom I am hitting'
 child 1Ps PRES-OP-hit-REL

amba Coding

- (39) mwana amba-e nki- $\left\{ \begin{smallmatrix} m- \\ \emptyset \end{smallmatrix} \right\}$ toa 'the child whom I hit'
 child say-REL 1Ps PERF-OP-hit

- (40) mwana amba-e n-a- $\left\{ \begin{matrix} m^- \\ \emptyset \end{matrix} \right\}$ toa 'the child whom I am hitting'
 child say-REL 1Ps-PRES-OP-hit

5.3. Ambiguity in relative clauses. Because the object pronoun can appear in a relative construction but is not obligatory, some relatives are ambiguous. The following examples without the object pronoun can be interpreted as subject or object relatives.

- (41) mwana mwe-ku-ona-e
 child $\left\{ \begin{matrix} 3Ps \\ 2Ps \end{matrix} \right\}$ REL-INF-see-REL
 'the child who saw' (SUBJECT RELATIVE)
 'the child whom you saw' (OBJECT RELATIVE)
- (42) mwana e-ku-ona-e
 child 3Ps PAST-INF-see-REL
 'the child who saw' (SUBJECT RELATIVE)
 'the child whom he saw' (OBJECT RELATIVE)

The following examples with the object pronoun can be interpreted as subject or object relatives.

- (43) mwana mwe-ku-mw-ona-e
 child 3Ps REL-INF-OP-see-REL
 'the child who saw him' (SUBJECT RELATIVE)
 'the child whom he saw' (OBJECT RELATIVE)
- (44) mwana e-ku-mw-ona-e
 child 3Ps PAST-INF-OP-see-REL
 'the child who saw him' (SUBJECT RELATIVE)
 'the child whom he saw' (OBJECT RELATIVE)

Although the grammar permits these interpretations, some are more felicitous than others in context. The choice of the subject marker (e vs. mwe) and the presence or absence of the object pronoun are both relevant factors for the contextual interpretation of the clause.

6. Clefts

Givón [1979] states that it is well known that in cleft constructions of the world's languages, one element, usually a nominal, is the asserted

focus, while the rest of the material, which often resembles a relative clause, is presupposed (p. 217). These constructions are strong disruptions of the neutral syntax in terms of the presence of the focused constituent at the beginning of the clause as well as the presence of a focus-marking morpheme and relative clause morphology and syntax (p. 78).

Hetzron [1971] classifies clefts as emphatic constructions. He calls emphasis "the phenomenon where all but one (of the) components of a sentence are known to be combined together within the proposition in terms of a presupposition, and the emphasized element is filling the only slot left open in the previous knowledge" (p. 84).

It should be noted that the description of cleft constructions as being composed of an asserted NP and a presupposed relative clause is not based on any specific discourse studies of conversational or written data. Rather, it is the result of typological observations which capture the logico-semantic structure of the cleft construction as it exists in the languages of the world. When Prince [1978] examined clefts in spoken and written English, she found instances of clefts in which the focused NP represents new information and the *that*-clause represents old or known information, i.e. information which can be described as presupposed given the prior discourse. In addition, however, she found clefts in which the information in the logically presupposed *that*-clause constitutes new information in the discourse. She labeled these clefts "informative-presupposition clefts". These informative-presupposition clefts have a general function of presenting statements as facts, as well as a number of various sub-functions. In conversation, then, the NP which is asserted on the logico-semantic level may be given in the discourse, and the information represented in the relative clause, which is presupposed on the logico-semantic level, may be new information in the discourse. During the elicitation of the following cleft examples, however, the consultant was always given a context in which the asserted NP would constitute new information and the presupposed relative clause would represent given or known information.

In Bondei, clefts are formed with the general copula *ni* and the em-

phatic particle *ne*. A relative clause serves to restrict the clefted NP, which is new or previously inactive information. The relative clause presents given or already activated information. The NP is in preverbal position with regard to the verb of the relative clause.

6.1. Subject clefts. In examples (45) and (46) the already activated information is that someone or something fell or is falling. The new information consists of the identity of the entity which fell or is falling. There are, of course, no object pronouns in these examples.

(45) *ni mvyie ne mwe-ku-gwa*
 COP woman EMP 3Ps REL-INF-fall down
 'it's a woman who fell down'

(46) *ni kiti ne ki-gwa-cho*
 COP chair EMP #7-fall down-REL
 'it's a chair that is falling down'

6.2. Object clefts. In example (47), the already activated information is that the speaker wants something, and the new information is that what she wants is a child. In example (48), the already activated information is that something was eaten, and the new information is that what was eaten was a banana. There is no object pronoun in these examples.

(47) *ni mwana ne ni-kunda-e*
 COP child EMP 1Ps-want-REL
 'it's a child that I want'

(48) *ni tonte ne n-e-ku-da-do*
 COP banana EMP 1Ps-PAST-INF-eat-REL
 'it's a banana that I ate'

The object pronoun cannot appear without changing the interpretation of the cleft. When the object pronoun appears, the NP must be interpreted as definite. The definiteness of the NP forces a contrastive interpretation, as in example (49).

(49) *ni tonte ne n-e-ku-di-da-do*
 COP banana EMP 1Ps-PAST-INF-OP-eat-REL
 'it's the banana that I ate'

Hetzron [1971] calls contrast

"another type of stressing element, with a primarily corrective function: to replace an element wrongly used in a previous utterance, or to show additional elements which may appear in exactly the same slot, surrounded by the same elements. Thus, a contrastive element always replaces another concrete one, or several of them,—which is not the case for emphasis" (p. 34).

Chafe [1976] discusses three factors which are involved in contrastiveness: shared background knowledge, a set of possible candidates, and the assertion of the correct candidate. He calls the asserted alternative the focus of contrast. In this paper, it is assumed that simple focus and contrastive focus are distinct functions.

In example (49), the banana is understood as being one member of a set of possible edibles which was, in fact, eaten, while the others were not eaten. Thus, the already activated information is that something was eaten. The cleft conveys the new information that "what was eaten was the banana as opposed to the other possible edibles, e.g. the mango and the papaya." The new information is not the identity of the banana per se, but the relation "the banana and not the other possibilities." The assertion of the banana is serving a corrective function.

Note that the object pronoun cannot serve as an anaphor in clefts, as demonstrated in example (50).

- (50) *ni ne n-e-ku-di-da-do
 COP EMP 1Ps-PAST-INF-OM-eat-REL
 'it's it which I ate'

Pronouns can be focused, but not with the cleft construction, as in examples (51) and (52). In these examples, the pronoun is focused with the emphatic particle *ne*.

- (51) mie ne mwe-ku-da-e tonte
 1Ps Pro EMP 1Ps REL-INF-eat-REL banana
 'I'm the one who { is eating
 ate } the banana'
 will eat }

- (52) mie ne amba-e nkina-n-id-e
 1Ps PRO EMP say-REL NEG 1Ps FUT-1Ps-eat-SUBJUNC
 'I'm the one who won't eat'

The emphatic particle *ne* can also focus lexical NP's in other than cleft constructions. Example (54), with the particle *ne*, is the focused counterpart of example (53).

- (53) wana we-se-o-ku-da
 children 3Pp-NEG-REL-INF-eat
 'the children who are not eating'
- (54) wana ne we-se-o-ku-da
 children EMP 3Ps-NEG-REL-INF-eat
 'those are the children who are not eating'

While these *ne* examples resemble clefts in that the verb must take relative morphology, they differ in that there is no copula. It is not clear how *ne* constructions and clefts differ with regard to their meaning or discourse function. A satisfactory answer to this question would require an examination of both clefts and *ne* constructions in Bondei discourse.

In cleft constructions, the relativizing morphology must agree with the clefted NP, as demonstrated in example (47) repeated here as (55). This is not the case for pseudo-clefts, as will be seen below (p. 13). In the case of pseudo-clefts, the relative morphology can agree either with the noun class of the focused NP or with the general concept "the thing".

- (55) ni mwana ne ni-kunda- $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} e \\ *cho \end{array} \right\}$ 'it's a child that I want'
 COP child EMP 1Ps-want-REL $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \#1 \\ \#7 \end{array} \right\}$

6.3. The relation of the object pronoun, definiteness, and contrastive focus in clefts. In summary, I have shown that the appearance of the object pronoun in clefts forces a definite interpretation of the focused NP. The definiteness of the NP precludes a simple focus interpretation of the cleft, since the definiteness of the NP forces a contrastive interpretation. When no object pronoun appears, however, the focused NP is interpretable as indefinite. A contrastive focus is not forced; the cleft can receive a simple

focus interpretation. Because of these relations between the presence or absence of the object pronoun and the definite or indefinite interpretation of the clefted NP, there exists a correlation between the presence of the object pronoun and contrastive function in clefts. This is not to say that the object pronoun marks contrastive function. The relation between the presence of the object pronoun and contrastive function is mediated by the definiteness of the NP.

7. Pseudo-clefts. Pseudo-cleft constructions are formed by a relative clause, the general copula *ni*, and an NP. The relative clause constitutes the given or already activated information, while the NP which follows the copula constitutes the new information. The NP is in postverbal position with regard to the verb of the relative clause.

Hetzron [1971] classifies the pseudo-cleft as a presentative construction. He says,

"... at issue is not the novelty of the element, but what the speaker intends to build up in the discourse. ... The element which is meant to represent a special contrast to all possible other elements susceptible to appear in the same slot, i.e., the element whose individual and specific presence is the most important in the sentence, comes last" (p. 79).

Presentative constructions serve a cataphoric function. The element they present will be relevant in the subsequent discourse.

7.1. Subject pseudo-clefts. In Bondei, pseudo-clefts differ from clefts in that the relative morphology can agree either with the noun class of the pseudo-clefted NP or with the general concept "the thing". Examples (56) and (57) exhibit the two possible agreements for pseudo-clefted subject NP's.

(56) che-ku-bonda-cho tindi ni mpeho
 #7 PAST-INF-break-REL #7 banana plant COP wind
 'what broke the banana plant is the wind'

(57) ye-ku-bonda-yo tinde ni mpeho
 #9 PAST-INF-break-REL #9 banana plant COP wind
 'what broke the banana plant is the wind' (not the rain, not the hail)

In example (56), the subject pronoun and the relative suffix agree with the noun class of the "what", i.e. the concept of "the thing". This agreement gives no information about the pseudo-clefted NP. In example (57), the subject pronoun and the relative suffix agree with the noun class of mpeho 'wind'. This agreement, therefore, is cataphoric and points ahead to the specific pseudo-clefted NP by identifying its noun class.

The use of the specific noun class agreement morphology necessitates a different interpretation of the pseudo-cleft from the more general class #7 agreement. The pseudo-cleft with specific noun class morphology signals a contrastive meaning. In example (56), the presupposition is that something broke the banana plant, and the new information is that it was the wind. In example (57), the presupposition is that it was one of a set of known possibilities which broke the banana plant. The new information is that "it was the wind and not the other possibilities (the rain, the hail) which broke the banana plant."

7.2. Object pseudo-clefts. Object pseudo-clefts can also take two different kinds of relative agreement morphology, as demonstrated in examples (58) and (59). There is no object pronoun in these examples.

- (58) mvyie a-kunda-cho ni tonte
 woman 3Ps PRES-want-REL #7 COP banana
 'what the woman wants is a banana'
- (59) mvyie a-kunda-do ni tonte
 woman 3Ps PRES-want-REL #5 COP banana
 'what the woman wants is the banana'

These two forms force different interpretations. In example (58), the presupposition is that the woman wants something, and the new information is that what she wants is a banana. In example (59), the presupposition is that the woman wants one of a set of known possibilities. The new information is that "it is the banana and not the other possibilities which, in fact, the woman wants."

In examples (60) and (61), a pronoun which refers to a human referent is clefted.

(60) ni-onda-cho ni wewe
 1Ps-want-REL #7 COP 2Ps
 'what I want is you'

(61) ni-onda-ye ni wewe
 1Ps-want-REL #1 COP 2Ps
 'what I want is you', 'the one I want is you' (not him, not her)

The presence of a human referent in these examples clearly demonstrates the difference in the information activated by the different morphology on the verbs. In (60) the *cho* gives no information about what is wanted, since it agrees with the general concept 'the thing'. In (61) the *ye* signals that what is wanted belongs to noun class #1, which consists of nouns that are human or divine. Thus, the set of possibilities has been delineated by the relative morphology, and a contrastive interpretation is forced.

7.3. The object pronoun in pseudo-clefts. The object pronoun cannot appear in a pseudo-cleft which has only class #7 concord, as demonstrated in example (62).

(62) mvyie a- $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \emptyset- \\ *m- \end{array} \right\}$ kunda-cho ni mwana
 woman 3Ps PRES-want-REL #7 COP child
 'what the woman wants is a child'

When this class #7 agreement is used, no information is given by the relative morphology about the identity of the NP which follows the relative clause. This type of pseudo-cleft cannot have a contrastive interpretation. Hence, it cannot focus an NP which is interpreted as definite, since definite NP's require a contrastive interpretation.

In contrast, the object pronoun can appear in pseudo-clefts which have the specific noun class morphology of the focused NP. The morphology of the specific noun class agreement provides some information about the noun. The NP is, in some sense, semi-active in this type of pseudo-cleft. The relative morphology serves as a cataphoric reference, invoking the semantic associations which accrue to the noun class to which the NP belongs. The following example with specific noun class morphology does not have an ob-

ject pronoun.

- (63) mvyie a- \emptyset -kunda-e ni mwana
 woman 3Ps PRES-OP-want-REL #1 COP child
- a. 'what the woman wants is (to have) a child' (as opposed to a career)
- b. 'what the woman wants is the child' (as opposed to the house, in the context of a divorce)'

Example (63) demonstrates that the specific noun class morphology forces a contrastive interpretation independently of the presence of the object pronoun. The NP need not be interpreted as definite, as in (a), as long as the contrastive sense can be maintained.

When the object pronoun appears with the specific noun class morphology, however, the NP must be interpreted as definite, as demonstrated in the following example.

- (64) mvyie a-m-kunda-e ni mwana
 woman 3Ps PRES-OP-want-REL #1 COP child
- 'what the woman wants is { the child } ,
 *a child }

In summary, the two possibilities for marking the noun class of focused NP's in the relative clause of pseudo-clefts correlate with the function of contrastiveness. Pseudo-clefts which take the general class #7 agreement morphology cannot function to contrast the focused NP. Consequently, the object pronoun is restricted from appearing in this syntactic environment since the appearance of the object pronoun in clefts or pseudo-clefts correlates with definiteness, and focusing a definite NP forces a contrastive interpretation. Pseudo-clefts which take the specific noun class morphology must be interpreted as contrastive (ex. 63). The object pronoun can appear in this syntactic environment, but when it does the NP must be interpreted as definite. The object pronoun in this construction correlates with definiteness, and definiteness requires a contrastive interpretation. The correlation, however, is not symmetrical. A contrastive interpretation of pseudo-clefts is possible without the presence of the object pronoun. The NP may be interpreted as definite or indefinite.

8. Conclusion

In this paper I have shown that the object pronoun in Bondei can appear in a wide range of syntactic environments. It can serve as an anaphor for previously mentioned NP's. It can mark left-dislocated NP's. It can appear with given and new postverbal NP's. It appears freely in relative clauses. It can appear in declarative and relative clauses without necessarily changing their meaning, i.e. without necessarily definitizing their objects.

When the object pronoun appears in the relative clause of a cleft, however, it definitizes the clefted NP. In other words, the presence of the object pronoun precludes an indefinite interpretation of the clefted NP. Thus, depending upon whether or not the object pronoun is present or absent in the cleft, the NP will be interpreted as definite or indefinite.

The definiteness of the clefted NP forces a contrastive meaning of the cleft. Thus, on the basis of the meaning change which the presence of the object pronoun effects (definite vs. indefinite), we can say that while new, indefinite NP's can be focused by cleft constructions without the syntactic category object pronoun, definite NP's can only be given contrastive focus. Focus and contrastive focus are distinct functions. In cleft constructions, the presence of the object pronoun signals a definite interpretation of the NP which, in turn, forces a contrastive function. In both the case of simple focus and contrastive focus, however, some new information is being communicated, either the identity of the referent or the contrastive relation.

The object pronoun can only appear in one of two possible pseudo-cleft constructions. It can appear in the relative clause of a pseudo-cleft which takes specific noun class concord. This morphology itself serves to require a contrastive interpretation for the NP which is being focused. The object pronoun in this construction forces a definite interpretation of the NP. The definiteness of the NP does not force a contrastive interpretation; it is, however, compatible with the contrastive interpretation signaled by the verb morphology.

In contrast to these two constructions, the object pronoun cannot appear in the relative clause of a pseudo-cleft which takes general class #7 concord. This construction cannot have a contrastive meaning. Thus, definite

pseudo-clefted NP's are not compatible with this construction, since definiteness forces a contrastive interpretation. Since it is the presence of the object pronoun which forces a definite interpretation of the pseudo-clefted NP, the object pronoun cannot appear in this type of pseudo-cleft. The two types of pseudo-clefts differ with regard to their interpretations, noncontrastive vs. contrastive. On the basis of this meaning difference, we can say that new, indefinite NP's are presented in class #7 pseudo-clefts which appear without the object pronoun.

The following facts may be stated for the interpretation of contrast in clefts:

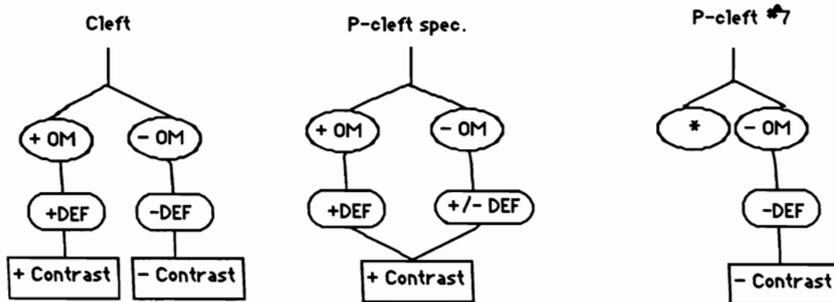
- (1) the presence of the object pronoun in clefts requires a definite interpretation of the NP;
- (2) the presence of a definite NP in a cleft construction forces a contrastive interpretation.

It is also possible that a cleft with an indefinite NP can receive a contrastive interpretation, given the appropriate context. This question must be left open, however, because a satisfactory answer can only be given after an examination of actual examples from Bondai discourse. That, however, is beyond the scope of this paper.

The following facts may be stated with respect to the interpretation of contrast in pseudo-clefts:

- (1) specific noun class pseudo-clefts force a contrastive interpretation independently of the presence or absence of the object pronoun; moreover, this contrastive interpretation is possible with an indefinite interpretation of the NP;
- (2) the presence of the object pronoun in specific noun class pseudo-clefts requires a definite interpretation of the NP;
- (3) class #7 pseudo-clefts do not permit a contrastive interpretation.

The relation between focus, contrastive focus, and definiteness may be represented as in the diagram opposite. In clefts, the object pronoun correlates with definiteness which, in turn, correlates with contrastive function. The relation between the object pronoun and contrastive function is mediated by definiteness.



In pseudo clefts, a different relation exists. Noun class morphology correlates with contrastive function. Class #7 pseudo-clefts correlate with noncontrast, while specific noun class pseudo-clefts correlate with contrast for both definite and indefinite NP's. In specific noun class pseudo-clefts, the object pronoun correlates with definiteness. The contrastive interpretation which the definiteness of the NP forces is compatible with the contrastive interpretation signaled by the verb morphology.

Appendix

The following surface forms are examples of the possible forms the subject pronoun can take in combination with tense/aspect and polarity morphemes.

	Singular	Plural
1P Pres	na	ta
1P Pres-Neg	nki	nka
1P Past/Perf	nki	ti
1P Continuous Past	ni	ti
1P Past-Neg	nce	nkate
1P Rel	mwe	we
2P Pres	wa	mwa
2P Pres-Neg	nku	nka
2P Past/Perf	ku	m
2P Continuous Past	u	m
2P Past-Neg	nkwe	nkamwe
3P Pres	a	wa
3P Pres-Neg	nka	nka
3P Past/Perf	ka	wa
3P 1Ps Continuous Past	a	wa
3P Past-Neg	nke	nkawe
3P Rel	mwe	we

Noun classes take secondary concord.

REFERENCES

- Chafe, W. 1976. "Givenness, contrastiveness, definiteness, subjects, topics, and point of view." In Charles Li (ed.), *Subject and Topic*, pp. 25-55. New York: Academic Press.
- Chafe, W. 1984. *Cognitive Constraints on Information Flow*. Berkeley Cognitive Science Report No. 26.
- Givón, T. 1976. "Topic, pronoun, and agreement." In Charles Li (ed.), *Subject and Topic*, pp. 149-188. New York: Academic Press.
- Givón, T. 1979. *On Understanding Grammar*. New York: Academic Press.
- Guthrie, M. 1948. *Classification of the Bantu Languages*. London: Dawsons of Pall Mall. Reprinted 1967.
- Hetzron, R. 1971. *Presentative Function and Presentative Movement*. In *Papers from the Second Conference on African Linguistics*, pp. 79-105. *Studies in African Linguistics*, Supplement 2.
- Hinnebusch, T.J., D. Nurse, and M. Mold. 1981. *Studies in the Classification of Eastern Bantu Languages*. Hamburg: Helmut Buske.
- Nurse, D. and G. Philippson. 1980. "Bantu languages of eastern Africa: a lexico-statistical survey." In E. Polomé and C.P. Hill (eds.), *Languages in Tanzania*, pp. 26-66. London: Oxford University Press.
- Prince, E. 1978. "A comparison of WH-clefts and it-clefts in discourse." *Language* 54:883-906.
- Schachter, P. 1973. "Focus and relativization." *Language* 49:19-46.
- Takizala, A. 1972. "Focus and relativization: the case of Kihung'an." *Studies in African Linguistics* 3:259-287.
- Wald, B. 1979. "The development of the Swahili object marker." In Talmy Givón (ed.), *Discourse and Syntax*, pp. 505-524. New York: Academic Press.