A corpus-based definition of clefts in Kabyle (Berber)

Morphosyntax & Prosody

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Introduction

• I already worked on clefts (2002-2004) and provided analyses I still consider mostly valid,
  – Why this re-examination of the topic ?
• New perspective based on concrete issue that has theoretical implications:
  – Automatically retrieve equational predications in a corpus excluding clefts (CorTypo)
  – Automatically retrieve clefts in a corpus excluding equational predications and other formally similar structures (Labex EFL, GD1)
Retrieval and Theory

• Different ways of searching a corpus
  – Entering the annotations one is looking for (i.e. ‘clefts’) on the basis of what we (intuitively?) consider as clefts
    • Aimed at counts/statistics
    • High risk of circularity
  – Using non-aprioristic formal annotations (morphemes) in order to construct a query that will retrieve the relevant data
    • E.g. a sequence ‘COP + N + REL’
    • Aimed at qualitative accuracy
    • No circularity, but consistency and accuracy are essential
you will be the ones who pressured me
Relevance of the non-aprioristic search

• Heuristic: systematically tests the formal characterizations we make
  – If we cannot retrieve all and only the clefts in the corpus, then the query is inaccurate
    • False
    • Incomplete
• Has theoretical implications: if the query is inaccurate, then the formal characterization is wrong
  – We are not actually analysing the language properly
    • Although we state that our ‘function’ is based on ‘form’, we have no supporting evidence for that
Running ‘COP + N + REL’

• Leaves out structures that are functionally close to ‘prototypical clefts’ but:
  – Are realized over two different intonation units
  – Have no COP because their clefted constituent is not nominal
  – Have no COP because they are preceded by a restrictive marker
  – Have an ‘elided cleft clause’

• Inaccurately (?) retains structures that are formally close to ‘prototypical clefts’ but functionally different:
  – Equational predications whose noun is modified by a relative clause
  – Some wh- questions
  – Structures with sentence focus rather than topic/comment articulation
Theoretical issue

• Clefts are often defined according to a Prototype approach (typical vs non-typical) where the prototypical nature of the ‘typical cleft’ is not explicitly discussed.

• Is it possible instead to define them in more Aristotelician terms, using necessary and sufficient conditions?
Hypothesis

• A Cleft in Kabyle is a complex structure – involving several components of meaning
  • Focus (assertion/presupposition)
  • Activation state (inactive / semiactive / active → active = new / accessible / given)

• Discourse function (speaker/listener cognitive/pragmatic adjustment)
– and marked by several formal means
  • Morphological material (copula, relator)
  • Linear ordering
  • Prosody (contour, prominences (F0))

• Exact definition will be given as a conclusion, based on exploration of corpus data
• Prosody often seen as superimposed: ‘the highlighting effect [of clefts], though carried by syntactic form, is usually reinforced through additional coding devices, such as particles, inflectional morphology, or prosodic features which may combine in various ways’ (Drubig & Schaffar 2001:1080)
  – More or less strong bias due to:
    • Underlying written/read model
    • Traditional separation between phonology / syntax / semantics / pragmatics ...

• My approach : prosody as a formal means interacting with others, at the same level
CLEFTS IN FOLKTALES

• Highlighting argument underlying the folktale: here responsibility of the daughters in their father’s remarriage/their own fate.

fatima tuhrif't ayrum // 456 BI-477 vonna# tfk# nti# ##
manages to reach the bread on the shelf*.

na/'ja isens babasnni mi iruh ad joiks / isens akka ayrum /
and him, when he went to take his herd to pasture, he put / he put the bread thus,

anda f'laj // 135 BI-253 j0najas / ma tekksitidd // 260 fa'tima / ad zwogv // 343 BI-303
where it was high, he said "if Fatima can grab it, I will get married'.

truh tekksitidd / d tamctutnni n babatsent / tonnajas mo'na urs gqarrnt ara / The woman got up and grabbed it/ their stepmother, she said "however don't tell your father

i babatknnt d nakk itidd ikksen // 388 BI-388 tonnajas inimtas / d fa'tima // 388 BI-391
that I was the one who grabbed it'. she said "tell him that it was Fatima”

imidd jowaad / gagsant / annay a baba / fa'tima tuhrif't tekksidd ayrum g d0kk'an //
When they were laughing. "Please come back, Clever Fatima grabbed the bread from the shelf"

1203 innajas in a jelli dbebrom tiqurrajnk'nt / hata d kunamti ijidd ifernan // 175 ma txadmakk'nt lxir / He said 'yes my daughters, do as you wish, you will be the ones to choose, if she is good to you

300 d kunamti / ma txadmakk'nt tama nnidan / d kunamti iji hersen // 408 arammi zwogv // it will be your doing, if not, you are the ones who pressured me into marrying”.

1142 BI-420 ajan a amina / 80 tidda tmequtnni / 583 ar kra n wussan / 139 fnar / Here it was, Amina. The father married the woman, until a few days later, a month

nay jafrran / 196 tonnajas aj argas tura jassikagi / 524 ur zaddvav ara jidsent // 530 or two, she said "my husband, now those daughters of yours, I’m not living with them,
we rescued ourselves, she said your wife told you to get rid of us completely, she said "we left, 321 BI-469 and now what are you expecting of us? What do you want to do to us again?"

She talked to him Amina, and the ground swallowed him, she talked to him, the ground swallowed him,

She said, "you know, father, if it had not been us

who had put pressure on you, for you to remarry, I would have let the ground swallow you entirely.

But since what happened is our responsibility, it's our fault, we did it"

she did like that to her father, [gesture of the finger] she pulled him up, he ate, he drank,

he stayed for a while, she went to her stepmother, they put for her

they filled them with butter,
Clefts in conversation

• cognitive/pragmatic inter-speaker adjustment assuming divergence on presuppositions
They say he married seven,
he did!

KAB AM CONV 01 SP2 041 | KAB AM CONV 01 SP2 042 | KAB AM CONV 01 SP2 043 | KAB AM CONV 01 SP2 044 | KAB AM"

axestar # #

axestar # #

axestar # #

bacana # #

CONJ # #

because,

Hadj Tahir did not marry seven,

he too married seven!

KAB AM CONV 01 SP2 047 | KAB AM CONV 01 SP2 048 | KAB AM CONV 01 SP2 049 | KAB AM CONV 01 SP2 050 | KAB AM CONV 01 SP2 051

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<td>326</td>
<td>a jaxif / ula d nodga ad illa sabTa /</td>
<td>a jaxif / ula d nodga ad illa sabTa /</td>
<td>VDC sister / seven COM IP-3SG, POT SBJ hap, seven /</td>
<td>PTCL, NINJ / ADV PREP PRO PTCL PR V1, N, INDEF NUM /</td>
<td>hey sister! he too married seven!</td>
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<td>your grandfather Hajj Tahar, he's three that he married.</td>
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<td>so</td>
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<td>my grandfather</td>
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<td>your grandfather Hajj Tahar, you are the one who knows your grand</td>
<td>your grandfather Hajj Tahar, you are the one who knows your grand</td>
<td>your grandfather Hajj Tahar, you are the one who knows your grand</td>
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<td>father, those ones finally, Hajj Rabah.</td>
<td>father, those ones finally, Hajj Rabah.</td>
<td>father, those ones finally, Hajj Rabah.</td>
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Clefts in hybrid narrative

- Intertwined personal memories and general comparison of life in the old days vs. now
- All clefts implicitly oppose life now/life in the past

nsa takanna / axxam n lqbalj / we had an attic, in the traditional Kabyle house, there would be an attic, the husband’s mother,

ow / d neqqat i d ṭraaj n wexxam / d neqqat i n tkannani / i tøme? i# kullaj // it was she who was the chief of the house, it was her, in this attic, who would assemble everything.

BI_724 ma tøbya admidd tøfk add tøya’lad / d neqqat aramdj jøfken / if she wanted to give you things to do, she was the one who would give them to you,

ma tøbya admidd tøfk ihbuben / d neqqat aramdj jøfken // ma tøbya / BI_386 tura / if she wanted to give you dried figs, she would be the one to give them to you, if she wanted now,

ulaf timyarin / ur swant ara msakit // 654 this status does not exist anymore they have lost their worth, poor women,

tura timyarin / sìnant idrimøn // sìnant <num>lero</num> / 225 jørna ur ñøddant ara // 909 now those husbands’ mothers, they have money, they have euros, but they have no power.

Now is fridges which are the storage zone. 647 çœardd aƒriçidar / n# m# aœn im jøhwan / Fill the fridge, and take what you like,

kksitidd // BI_470 mi <lgu>nni / maççi am ziknni i jølla // BI_236 but the taste, it’s not like in the past.
Discourse-pragmatic function of clefts

• Built on expected divergence
• enforce convergence between listener and speaker in discourse
• On discourse topics (non-local)

– Structuring potential for the overall argumentation / underlying demonstration

• The ‘equivalent’, for argumentation, of topical chains, and other discourse-level structuring strategies in discourse (Mettouchi 2015) for Kabyle
**Zoom on local features**

- **Focus structure, articulating assertion and presupposition**

  - **A= Hadj Rabah married seven women**
  - **P = someone married seven women**

- But this is true also of other structures, what is characteristic of clefts?
Prosody

- F0 peak on the cleft pronoun: 340 Hz
- Lower XP (224-209 Hz)
- Cleft clause also lower (217 → 165 Hz (terminal))
Cf. Mettouchi (2003a (Kabyle) ; 2003b (Kabyle and Tachelhit) Louali & Mettouchi 2002 (Rif Berber) Mettouchi, Smail & Louali 2004 (Kabyle & Rif Berber) PDFs available on http://llacan.vjf.cnrs.fr/pers/mettouchi/publication.html
• Prosody: Peak on Wh // Peak on XP
Bipartite structures and clefts

- COP + NP + REL + clause

- Prosody
• No prominence on REL, COP+NP higher
• Relative clause low (active, afterthought)
• COP + NP = equational
  – Not a cleft despite the similar morphosyntax
  – Prosody (F0) discriminates between the two
    • Perhaps also the segmentation into two different IUs?
Relativization within same IU

- COP + NP + REL + Relative clause
• Highest F0 & Int on last part (focus)
• COP+NP higher than REL
• COP + NP higher than REL
**Bipartite structures and clefts**

- Prosody: prominence on REL despite two IUs $\rightarrow$ Cleft

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<td>tsamfiṣṭ-nni nziç /</td>
<td>i dāli //</td>
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<tr>
<td>d tamfiṣṭ-nni n zik /</td>
<td>i d dāli //</td>
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<tr>
<td>d tamfiṣṭ-nni n zik /</td>
<td>i d dāli //</td>
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<tr>
<td>COP lifeABS.S, CNS GEN long_ago /</td>
<td>REL.REAL COP good //</td>
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<tr>
<td>PRED N.OV DEM PREP ADV /</td>
<td>DEMPRO PRED ADJ //</td>
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It is life in those days, that was the good life.

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<td>219</td>
<td>72</td>
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<tr>
<td>COP life:ABS.SG.F-CNS GEN old_days</td>
<td>REL COP good</td>
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<tr>
<td>it’s life in those days</td>
<td>that was the good life</td>
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The graph indicates a sharp peak in prominence on the REL (REL.COP) in the cleft structure, showing a higher degree of prominence compared to other parts of the sentence.
Inside one unit

- However all other clefts are inside one IU
Even when the cleft is embedded, the contour and prominence on REL are there

Anda ʧalaj // 135 BI-253 jənəajas / ma təkksitidd // 260 fəṭima / ad zewğəy // 343 BI-303
where it was high, he said "if Fatima can grab it, I will get married".

Truh təkksitidd // d tamṭutnni n babatsənt / tənəajas məña urs qəramt ara /
The woman got up and grabbed it their stepmother, she said "however don’t tell your father

IB-388 tənəajas inimtas / d fəṭima // 388 BI-391
that I was the one who grabbed it". she said "tell him that it was Fatima"
• The higher the peak and the lower the cleft constituent is, the more polemical the cleft
• Various clefted constituents
• PP + REL + verbal cleft clause

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<tr>
<th>i lżajr</th>
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<td>LOCAL Algiers REL.REAL SBJ.3SG.F live\IPFV //</td>
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<td>PREP N.P DEMPRO PRO V24.PFX //</td>
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She lived in Algiers,

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<th>i lżajr</th>
<th>i lżajr</th>
<th>i tətɔfiʃ //</th>
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<tr>
<td>LOCAL Algiers</td>
<td>REL SBJ.3SG.F-live:IPFV</td>
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<td>it’s in Algiers that she lived</td>
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</table>
• QP+ REL + verbal cleft clause

at'sas llxilaf igəllan /

aṭas n lxaif i jəllan /

aṭas n lxaif i i- lla -n /

a_lot GEN preference\ABSPL REL.REAL RELSBJ.POS exist\PFV RELSBJ.POS /
ADV PREP N.COV DEMPRO CIRC1 V13% CIRC2 /

there has been a lot of injustice,
• QUANTIF + REL + cleft clause
Definition of Clefts in Kabyle

- A complex structure
- whose function is to enforce convergence between listener and speaker at the (non-local) level of discourse,
- regarding the establishment of a focus relating an assertion and a presupposition
- That focus is being activated by the F0 peak on REL
  - The locus of the prominence is language-dependent
    - Kabyle accentuation on grammatical morphemes/clitics + pronominal origin of the marker (see Mettouchi 2003b)
• It is marked by
  – the juxtaposition of
    • a phrasal constituent (NP, ADV, QNT+N, PREP+N, ...) preceded by a copula when its head is nominal,
    • and a clausal constituent introduced by the cleft pronoun $i$ (realis) or $ara$ (irrealis),
  – where the cleft pronoun bears the main prosodic prominence of the structure, and the relationship between the two parts of the cleft is marked by
    • An F0 peak on the cleft pronoun
    • A lowering of F0 on the cleft clause, proportional to the degree of prominence of the cleft pronoun, that proportion expressing degree of contrastiveness
    • A single intonational contour for both parts of the cleft, rarely spanning two intonation units
References


Don’t sit and wait. Get out there, feel life. Touch the sun, and immerse in the sea.

Jalal ad-Dīn Rūmī (1207-1273)