The multifunctionality of *-o* in Rukiga: pronoun, contrastive topic, and mirative marker
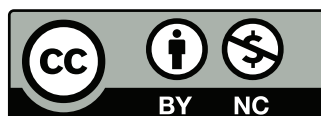
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Abstract

This paper discusses the particle *-o* in Rukiga (Bantu JE14, Uganda), aiming to establish its origin and function. At first sight, the particle appears to be an independent pronoun agreeing in noun class, reported in previous studies as an emphatic pronoun. Based on an extensive analysis of the particle, we argue that, through grammaticalisation, it has developed from a medial demonstrative via the independent pronoun to become a contrastive topic marker. This analysis is supported by various topic and focus tests carried out, which indicate that it combines with topics and is incompatible with focalised referents. We discovered that the particle is also used in exclamative/mirative contexts, expressing (a degree of) unexpectedness and surprise. Our findings indicate that independent morphological topic markers are present in East African languages just as they are in the more analytical West-African languages, and that exclamatives and miratives, which are extremely understudied in Bantu languages, may be associated with the morphological particle *-o*.

Keywords: focus, contrastive topic, information structure, mirativity, exclamative

1 Introduction[*]

West African languages are known to have dedicated topic or focus particles in their grammar, such as the topic marker *lá* in Ewe (Ameka 1991) as illustrated in (1), the focus maker *wè* in Gungbe (Aboh and Dyakonova 2009), and the Akan focus marker *na* (Ofori 2011; Titov 2019), among others.[1]

Ewe (Ameka 1991, 145)
(1)   *Đeví-á-wó*   ***lá***   *ŋútsu má*   *ɸo*   *wó.*
      child-DEF-PL   TOP   man   DEM   beat   3PL
      'The children, that man beat them.'

Such topic and focus particles are not common in the eastern and southern Bantu languages. However, Rukiga,[2] a Bantu (JE14)[3] language of Uganda, has a morphological particle *-o* that seems to behave in a way comparable to the behaviour of West African topic and focus particles. As illustrated in (2), its presence in a phrase triggers an interpretational difference: the clause with the particle in (2b) (as compared to (2a)) results in a contrastive interpretation such that among all relevant referents that could potentially have been seen, I saw the moon (not the sun or stars, for example).

Rukiga
(2)   a.   *O-kw-éézi*   *n-áá-kú-reeb-a.*
           AUG-15-moon   1SG.SM-N.PST-15OM-see-FV
           'I have seen the moon.'

       b.   *O-kw-éézi*   ***kw-ó***   *n-áá-kú-reeb-a.*
           AUG-15-moon   15-CM   1SG.SM-N.PST-15OM-see-FV
           'The moon I have seen (the sun and/or the stars maybe I have not seen)'.

In Taylor's (1985, 127–131) grammar of (Runyankore-)Rukiga, the particle is said to encode "contrastiveness or mere emphasis". Taylor adds that the particle is optional and is not used in non-emphatic environments. A similar particle is attested in other Bantu languages such as

[1] Numbers refer to noun classes, unless followed by SG or PL, in which case they refer to 1st or 2nd person. High tones are marked by an acute accent; low tones remain unmarked. An apostrophe indicates vowel elision. Further abbreviations used: APPL = applicative; AUG = augment; CAUS = causative; CM = contrastive marker; COP = copula; DEM = demonstrative; DEF = definite; DM = discourse marker; F.PST = far past; FV = final vowel; IMP = imperative; MED = medial (demonstrative); MET.DEM = metarepresentational demonstrative; NEG = negative; N.FUT = near future tense; NMLZ = nominaliser; N.PST = near past tense; OM = object marker; PFV = perfective; PL = plural; PRO = pronoun; PROG = progressive; PROX = proximal (demonstrative); PST = past; REL = relative; REL.PRO = relative pronoun; RM = relative marker; SBJV = subjunctive; SG = singular; SM = subject marker; TOP = topic; STAT = stative.
[2] Rukiga is closely related to Runyankore (JE13) (Simons and Fennig 2017) and the two are often clustered to form Runyankore-Rukiga. Unless otherwise indicated, the data come from fieldwork in Kabale, January 2019, and introspection of the first author.
[3] Bantu classification is according to Maho (2009).

Luganda (JE15), and according to Ashton et al. (1954, 44), just as Taylor (1985) observes for (Runyankore-)Rukiga, in Luganda it is used for "emphasis" (3).

Luganda (JE15, Ashton et al. 1954, 44)
(3)   *E-bi-tabo*   **by-ó** *bí-buz-e.*
         AUG-8-book 8-CM 8SM-lose-PFV
         'As for the books, they are lost.'

Asiimwe (2014) also discusses the Rukiga particle *-o* and argues that it triggers a contrastive reading in a sentence. She adds that it has an inherent semantic feature of definiteness; that is, there is a particular referent the speaker has in mind that s/he assumes to be familiar to the hearer (and which at the same time is contrasted with another familiar referent). The notions of topic and definiteness are different but may also be seen to relate, in the sense that a topical element is typically definite, and cannot be non-specific indefinite.

   Both authors thus highlight the contrastive meaning this particle brings about. In this paper, we want to establish the precise function and interpretation of the particle *-o*, specifically targeting the following questions:

   A.   Is the particle in this use an underspecified marker of contrast, combining with both topics and foci? If not, what is its function?
   B.   The same *-o* form also appears as an independent pronoun. Assuming that this was its original use, we want to explore the development of the particle. Is the particle synchronically a dedicated discourse marker (which warrants an analysis as homophony), or does it still function only as an independent pronoun (arguing for an analysis of polysemy)?
   C.   The particle is also found in contexts where it does not seem to serve as a marker of contrast or a pronoun. What is the particle's function if it is not used as a contrastive marker?

In order to answer these questions, we first describe the morphosyntactic properties of the particle in Section 2. We then show that the particle relates to topics but not focus elements in Sections 4 and 3, respectively, coming to the hypothesis that the particle *-o* is a contrastive topic marker, that is, that it triggers alternative topics. The alternative topics may be overtly stated or implied. The precise interpretation is investigated in more detail in Section 5. In order to establish the origin of the particle, in Section 6 we unravel the grammaticalisation path and argue that the particle developed from an independent pronoun; the pronoun in turn has its source in the medial demonstrative. In Section 7, we show how the particle can function on a different pragmatic level, covering mirative and exclamative aspects of interpretation, as illustrated in (4).

(4)   *E-n-júra*   **y-ó**   *y-áâ-gw-a.*
         AUG-9-rain 9-CM   9SM-N.PST-fall-FV
         'It has really rained (heavily or for a long time, more than expected).'

2 The morphosyntax of the particle

Like other Bantu languages, Rukiga divides its nouns into noun classes, each taking a noun class prefix that triggers concord or agreement on other words in the phrase and clause. The particle occurs as a free-standing morpheme and takes an agreeing prefix, as shown in Table 1.[4,5]

Table 1: Morphological structure of the particle *-o*, adapted from Asiimwe (2014, 236)

noun class and prefix	example noun	gloss	particle
1 *mu-*	*omuhara*	'girl'	*we*
2 *ba-*	*abahara*	'girls'	*bo*
3 *mu-*	*omuyembe*	'mango'	*gwo/gwe*
4 *mi-*	*emiyembe*	'mangoes'	*yo/ho/mwo/mwe*
5 *ri-/i-*	*eihuri*	'egg'	*ryo*
6 *ma-*	*amahuri*	'eggs'	*go*
7 *ki-*	*ekihumi*	'granary'	*kyo*
8 *bi-*	*ebihumi*	'granaries'	*byo*
9 *n-*	*ente*	'cow'	*yo*
10 *n-*	*ente*	'cows'	*zo*
11 *ru-*	*orushare*	'calabash'	*rwo/rwe*
12 *ka-*	*akatare*	'market'	*ko*
13 *tu-*	*oturo*	'sleep'	*two/twe*
14 *bu-*	*obumanzi*	'bravery'	*bwo/bwe*
15 *ku-*	*okuguru*	'leg'	*kwo/kwe*
16 *ha-*	*aheeru*	'outside'	*ho*
17 *ku-*	*okuzimu*	'hell'	*yo*
18 *mu-*	*omwiguru*	'in heaven'	*yo/ho/mwo*

Syntactically, the particle typically follows the noun it refers to, as in (5a), but can assume the prenominal position as well, as in (5b). It can also be separated from the preverbal noun and follow the verb, still showing concord with the noun in the preverbal position that it refers to, illustrated in (5c). In addition, the particle can be used 'by itself' when the referent is encoded as a subject or object marker (5d). The particle generally bears a high tone. The examples also illustrate that the particle occurs with both subject (5b) and non-subject (5a,c,d) constituents.

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[4] For nouns in class 1, the shape of the particle is *-e*. For nouns in classes 3, 11, 13, 14 and 15, the particle takes the shape of either *-o* or *-e* depending on the language variety one speaks.

[5] The independent forms for 1st and 2nd person are *nyowe* (1SG), *itwe* (1PL), *iwe* (2SG) and *imwe* (2PL). These likely include the *e* also found in the other forms in Table 1, but we will not concentrate on them here.

(5) a. *E-n-te* **z-ó** *Ámos* *n-aa-zá* *ku-zi-ríis-a.* [Post-N]
AUG-10.cow 10-CM 1.Amos PROG-1SM-go 15-10OM-feed-FV
'As for cows, Amos will graze them.'

 b. *...kwónka* **z-ó** *e-n-taama* *z-áa-nyw-a.* [Pre-N]
 but 10-CM AUG-10-sheep 10SM-N.PST-drink-FV
'…but as for the sheep, they drank.'

 c. *E-n-te* *ni-n-zá* *ku-zi-ríis-a* **z-o**. [Post-V]
AUG-10-cow PROG-1SG.SM-go 15-10OM-feed-FV 10-CM
'I will graze the cows.'

 d. **Z-ó** *ni-n-zá* *ku-zi-ríis-a.* [pronominal]
10-CM PROG-1SG.SM-go 15-10OM-feed-FV
'As for them, I will graze them.'

A phrase with *-o* can occur with preverbal and postverbal NPs. For arguments, it always re-quires the coindexing of the argument on the verb by means of a subject or object marker, as exemplified for the fronted object in (6a), and the right-peripheral object in (6b). In-situ objects that are not object-marked cannot be modified by *-o* (6c).

(6) a. *O-mu-céeri* **gw-é** *n-áá-*(gu-)téek-a.*
AUG-3-rice 3-CM 1SG.SBJ-N.PST-3OM-cook-FV
'As for the rice, I have cooked it.'

 b. *N-áá-*(gu-)téék-á* *o-mu-céérí* **gw-e**.
1SG.SBJ-N.PST-3OM-cook-FV AUG-3-rice 3-CM
'I cooked (the) rice.'

 c. *N-aa-teek-á* *o-mu-céérí* **(*gw-e)**.
1SG.SBJ-N.PST-cook-FV AUG-3-rice 3-CM
'I cooked it, (the) rice.'

The particle not only occurs with arguments but with adjuncts as well. As shown in (7), the adverb *nyomwebazo* 'yesterday' exhibits nominal properties determining concord in noun class 14. No coindexing is necessary here and the particle can only occur with adjuncts in the left-peripheral position.

(7) *Nyómwébazó bwé nyizíre.*[6]
nyomwebazo **bu-e** n-ij-ire
14.yesterday 14-CM 1SG.SM-come-PFV
'Yesterday I came (other days I did not come).'

It is also interesting to note that one referent can occur with two particles, one in the prenominal position and another in the postnominal position. Doubling of the particle is possible with pro-

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[6] When the underlying morphology is obscured by surface phonological processes, we have added a fourth line in the example.

nominal (8a) and full NPs (8b). We will return to this example and the exclamative interpretation in Section 7.

(8)   Situation: Mother is amazed by the love and special care her two-year-old twins show each other.

  a.   *Mbwénu* ***b-ó***   *a-bó*   ***b-o…!***
         DM   2-CM   DEM-2.MED   2-CM
         'As for those ones…!'

  b.   *Mbwénu* ***b-ó***   *a-ba-rongó* ***b-o…!***
         DM   2-CM   AUG-2-twin   2-CM
         'As for the twins…!'

In conjoined clauses expressing a contrast, as in (9), the particle is inserted either in the first clause or the second clause, with or without a conjunction 'and' or 'but', but rarely in both clauses.

(9)   *Omushíijá akwasir' ékigíikó, (kándi) (wé) omukázi akwasiré omúsyo.*
        o-mu-shaija a-kwat-ire   e-ki-giiko   kandi   **w-e**   o-mu-kazi
        AUG-1-man   1SM-hold-PFV   AUG-7-spoon   and   1-CM   AUG-1-woman

        a-kwat-ire   o-mu-syo
        1SM-hold-PFV   AUG-3-knife
        'The man is holding a spoon and as for the woman, she is holding a knife.'

Now that we have seen the main formal and distributional properties of the particle, we will turn to its effect on interpretation. We start by examining whether the particle is compatible with focus strategies, in Section 3, and then examine contrastive topics in Sections 4 and 5.

3 The particle is incompatible with focus strategies

We assume with Umbach (2004), Krifka (2006), and Repp (2016), among others, that contrast is a distinct notion of information structure which combines with both topic and focus. If *-o* is a mere marker of contrast, as suggested in Taylor's (1985) description, it is predicted to combine with both topic and focus (see also Neeleman et al. 2009). If, on the other hand, *-o* is a topic marker, as suggested by Asiimwe's (2014) analysis in terms of definiteness, it is expected that the particle will turn out to be unacceptable in a focus construction. For current purposes, we take a definition of focus as unpresupposed or new information. The particle is tested in commonly known environments or strategies in which focus is expressed (following Van der Wal 2016).

A first focus diagnostic are wh-questions, which are inherently focused. As shown in the examples in (10), the particle is incompatible with wh-questions, whether in a cleft (10a) or in situ (10b).

(10) a. *N' ó-ha (*w-é) o-raa-shashúr-ir-é e-byókúnywa?*
          COP 1-who 1-CM 1SM.REL-N.FUT-pay-APPL-SBJV AUG-8.drink
          'Who will pay for the drinks?'

      b. *Sauda y-aa-teek-á ki (*ky-o)?*
          1.Sauda 1SM.SG-N.PST-cook-FV what 7-CM
          'What has Saudah cooked?'

The particle is equally infelicitous in a constituent containing an answer to a wh-question, as shown in (11). An answer to a wh-question contains new information and is therefore in focus. Instead, the presence of the particle *we* in (11) would suggest that the referent *omwana* is already given information.

(11)   Situation: Who broke the cup?
        #Omwána wé akyasíre.
        o-mw-ana **w-e** a-ki-at-ire
        AUG-1-child 1-CM 1SM.SG-7OM-break-PFV
        'The child broke it.'

The focus-sensitive particles *-onka* 'only' and *na* 'even/also' (see Krifka 2006; Beaver and Clark 2008) similarly do not combine with the particle *-o*, as the examples in (12) show. These focus-sensitive particles associate with the focus on the noun phrase they modify, and *-o* cannot be added to such a focused phrase.

(12) a. *Abakúru bónka (*bó) bagiir' ómu rurêmbo.* [exclusive *onka*]
          a-ba-kuru b-onka **b-o** ba-z-ire o-mu ru-rembo
          AUG-2-old 2-only 2-CM 2SM-go-PFV AUG-18 11-town
          'Only the elders went to town.'

      b. *N' ákáro (*kó) Jéin yáákatéeka.* [scalar/additive *na*]
          na a-ka-ro **k-o** Jane a-aa-ka-teek-a
          and AUG-12-millet.bread 12-CM 1.Jane 1SM-N.PST-12OM-cook-FV
          'As for even/also millet bread, Jane prepared it.'

      c. *Omushomésa ná ábáána (*bó) ábahiir' ékarámu.* [scalar/additive *na*]
          o-mu-shomesa na a-ba-ana **b-o** a-ba-h-iire e-karamu
          AUG-1-teacher even AUG-2-child 2-CM 1SM-2OM-give-PFV AUG-10.pencil
          'The teacher, even the children, he gave them pencils.'

Hence, on the basis of the data presented in this section, we can conclude that the particle *-o* is infelicitous in focus environments. In the next section, we show that the particle does occur with topic referents.

4 The particle *-o* combines with topics

In this section, we show that the particle combines with topics, and specifically that the particle agrees with a constituent that forms the topic of the sentence. A topic is taken to identify what the rest of the sentence comments upon (see also Reinhart 1981), which is typically information which the speaker assumes to be accessible in the mind of the hearer (Chafe 1976; Givón 1984; Lambrecht 1994). In Rukiga, topics predominantly occupy the preverbal domain. In the SVO sentence in (13a), the particle agrees with the sentence-initial subject 'Jane'. Topical objects are typically left-dislocated and cross-referenced on the verb by an obligatory object marker, as in (13b), where the particle *ko* modifies the left-dislocated object *akahunga* 'posho'.

(13)   a.   *Jéin* ***w-é*** *y-aa-teek-á*   *á-ka-húnga.*
                  1.Jane 1-CM   1SM-N.PST-cook-FV   AUG-12-posho
                  'As for Jane, she has cooked posho.'

          b.   *A-ka-húnga*   ***k-ó***   *Jéin*   *y-áá-ka-téek-a.*
                  AUG-12-posho   12-CM   1.Jane 1SM-N.PST-12OM-cook-FV
                  'As for the posho, Jane has cooked it.'

To further illustrate the association with topics, consider the locative inversion construction in (14a).[7] Here, the locative phrase in the preverbal position agrees with the verb and constitutes the topic of the construction. The postverbal logical subject is presented as non-topical or focal information (see Marten and Van der Wal 2014 for a cross-Bantu overview of subject inversion properties). The particle in this construction refers to the locative phrase which occupies the sentence initial position. The examples in (14b) and (14c) are ungrammatical because the particle refers to the postverbal phrase, which presents new information.

(14)   a.   *Omu rufûnjo mwó hamezirey' ébihîmba.*
                  o-mu   ru-funjo   ***mu-o***   ha-mer-ire=yo   e-bi-himba
                  AUG-18   11-swamp 18-CM   16-sprout-PFV=23   AUG-8-bean
                  'As for the swamp, there have germinated beans.'

          b.   *Ebihímba bimezir' ómu rufûnjo (*mwo).*
                  e-bi-himba   bi-mer-ire   o-mu   ru-funjo   ***mu-o***
                  AUG-8-bean   8-sprout-PFV   AUG-18   11-swamp   18-CM
                  'Beans have germinated in the swamp.'

          c.   *Omu rufûnjo hamezirey' ébihîmba (*byo).*
                  o-mu   ru-funjo   ha-mer-ire=yo   e-bi-himba ***bi-o***
                  AUG-18   11-swamp 16-sprout-PFV=23   AUG-8-bean 8-CM
                  'In the swamp have germinated beans.'

Similarly, *-o* is infelicitous in existential constructions (15). Existential constructions present a referent in a postverbal position as a non-topic, new to the situation (Lambrecht 1994).

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[7] Rukiga uses the class 16 prefix *ha-* as the default locative agreement marker. In a locative inversion construction, the preverbal locative phrase, in addition to the locative prefix, requires a locative enclitic *-yo, -ho, -mu*.

(15)   *Hiin' ómuntu (*wé) owaayéshongora.*
         ha-ine   o-mu-ntu   **w-e**   o-u-a-eshongor-a
         16SM-have   AUG-1-person   1-CM   AUG-1SG.SM.REL-N.PST-sing-FV
         'There is a person who sang.'
         'There is somebody who sang.'

Topic referents are highly accessible and therefore are typically expressed with less material (Givón 1983; Gundel et al. 1993; Ariel 2001). Rukiga is a pro-drop language. Therefore, a topic can be expressed with only a subject marker or an object marker on the verb, and the particle *-o* can be used in combination with just these markers, as in (16). The referents that the particle and the subject or object marker refer to are accessible from the immediately preceding discourse.

(16)   a.   *Bó baateek' ómucéeri.*   [CM + SM]
                ba-o   ba-aa-teek-a   o-mu-ceeri
                2-CM   2SM-N.PST-cook-FV   AUG-3-rice
                'As for them (the women), they have cooked rice.'

         b.   *Gw' ábakázi báágutéeka.*   [CM + OM]
                gu-e   a-ba-kazi   ba-aa-gu-teek-a
                3-CM   AUG-2-woman   2SM-N.PST-3OM-cook-FV
                'As for it (the rice), the women have cooked it.'

Although topics typically occupy the preverbal position, a topic expression can also occur in a postverbal position. When a construction contains two topics, a primary topic and a secondary topic (which refers to given information but which the sentence is not about (Dalrymple and Nikolaeva 2011)), the primary topic occurs sentence-initially, and a secondary topic is right-dislocated. To illustrate, in (17a), *amaizi* 'water' is right-dislocated, as can be deduced from the pronominal object marker *ga* on the verb. When the particle *-o* follows the noun it refers to, the object NP is optional as long as the agreement prefix is present, as in (17b), which suggests that the NP is presented as an afterthought. The construction is rendered ungrammatical when the particle is present but the object marker is absent, as in (17c). This is further evidence in support of the claim that the particle relates to topics, considering that topics need to be coindexed on the verb. For completeness, we mention that the particle referring to a secondary (object-marked) topic can occupy a preverbal position while the same referent is resumed in an afterthought, like *amaizi* 'water' in (17d). In all the grammatical examples in (17), the NP referring to the secondary topic can be omitted.

(17)   Context: The cows were expected to drink water and eat food (both water and food are provided for them in their kraal). They drank the water but they did not eat the food.
         a.   *Ente záágányw' (ámíízi) go.*
                e-n-te   zi-a-**ga**-nyw-a   a-ma-izi   **g-o**
                AUG-10-cow   10SM-N.PST-6OM-drink-FV   AUG-6-water   6-CM
                'The cows, as for the water, they drunk it.'

b.   _Ente záágánywa gó (, ámíizi)._

e-n-te	zi-a-**ga**-nyw-a	**g-o**	a-ma-izi
AUG-10-cow	10SM.SG-N.PST-6OM-drink-FV	6-CM	AUG-6-water

'The cows, as for it, they have drunk it, the water.'

c.   *_Ente záanywa g' ámíizi._

e-n-te	zi-a-nyw-a	**g-o**	a-ma-izi
AUG-10-cow	10SM.SG-N.PST-drink-FV	6-CM	AUG-6-water

int. 'The cows have drunk it, the water.'

d.   _Ente gó záágánywa, (amíizi)._

e-n-te	**g-o**	zi-a-**ga**-nyw-a	a-ma-izi
AUG-10-cow	6-CM	10SM.SG-N.PST-6OM-drink-FV	AUG-6-water

'The cows, as for the water, they have drunk it.

In summary, we have seen that the particle _-o_ cannot mark focused elements, and may accompany topic expressions. However, it does not combine with all kinds of topics: it is incompatible with plain aboutness or familiar topics and only takes contrastive topics (as we elaborate on in Section 5). Aboutness topics identify a referent, and then allow the speaker to add information to them; these can be tested using Reinhart's (1981) "tell me about x" questions. In a "tell me about x" topichood test, the question instructs the hearer to continue and provide information about the topic introduced. Hence, aboutness topics do not induce alternatives. In (18), Amos is the topic introduced in A's utterance, seeking information about Amos. In B's response, the particle _we_ is infelicitous when used with this aboutness topic.

(18)   A: _Ngambír' ebiríkukwát' áhari Ámos._

N-gamb-ir-a	e-bi-riku-kwat-a	a-hari	Amos
1SG.OM-tell-APPL-IMP	AUG-8-PROG-concern-FV	AUG-about	1.Amos

'Tell me about Amos.'

         B: _Amos (#wé) naakundá kureeb' ómupíira._

Amos	**w-e**	ni-a-kund-a	ku-reeb-a	o-mu-piira
1.Amos	1-CM	PROG-1SM-like-FV	15-see-FV	AUG-3-ball

'(As for) Amos, he likes to watch football.'

Considering the clear contrastive interpretation given in earlier literature and its incompatibility with simple aboutness topics, our hypothesis is then that the particle _-o_ is not just a topic marker, but a _contrastive_ topic marker. The next section provides further evidence for this hypothesis.

5 The particle _-o_ as a contrastive topic marker

The concept of contrastive topic, according to Repp (2016), applies when a clause contains a topic that is understood to contrast with an element contained in a second clause, which serves as an alternative to the element in the first clause. Relatedly, Vermeulen (2012) observes that there is at least one member of a set of relevant alternatives that is selected. In English, the contrast may be indicated by a connector, such as 'but' (Umbach 2001; Repp 2016), although this

is not necessary. The example in (19) illustrates a contrastive topic in English. The topic 'Mary' in the second clause is contrasted with 'John', the topic in the first clause, and this contrastive topic is marked by a sentence-initial position and a prosodic topic accent (indicated as capitals).

English (Givón 2001, 263)
(19)   I saw John there. MARY I never saw.

In Rukiga, such contrastive topics are thus hypothesised to be marked by the particle *-o*. The alternative referent that the particle triggers is accessible, either from the previous discourse or because the hearer is assumed to have knowledge of it. In addition, the alternative topic may be explicitly or implicitly stated. We illustrate this in a number of different environments.

The particle was naturally used with explicitly mentioned alternatives when describing a picture adapted from the Questionnaire on Information Structure (QUIS, Skopeteas et al. 2006). The stimulus picture is of a woman eating an apple and a man eating a banana, and the question introduced the woman and the man as active topics. The speakers would use the particle in either the first or the second clause, as illustrated for the answers of two different speakers in (20).[8]

(20)   Context: What is the woman eating and what is the man eating?
   a. *Omukázi arikuryá ápo, kándi wé omushííjá arikuryá omunekye.*
       o-mu-kazi   a-riku-ri-a   apo   kandi **w-e** o-mu-shaija
       AUG-1-woman   1SM-PROG-eat-FV   9.apple and   1-CM   AUG-1-man
       a-riku-ri-a   o-mu-nekye
       1SM-PROG-eat-FV   AUG-3-banana
       'The woman is eating an apple while the man is eating a banana.'

   b. *Omukázi wé arikuryá ápo, omushííjá arikury' ómúnékye.*
       o-mu-kazi   **w-e** a-riku-ri-a   apo   o-mu-shaija a-riku-ri-a
       AUG-1-woman   1-CM   1SM-PROG-eat-FV   9.apple AUG-1-man   1SM-ROG-eat-FV
       o-mu-nekye
       AUG-3-banana
       'The woman is eating an apple, the man is eating a banana.'

Implicit alternatives are illustrated in (21), which comes with the clear implication that they have not weeded, for example, the beans.

(21)   *Orutookye rwó báárubágara.*
       o-ru-tookye   **ru-o**   ba-aa-ru-bagar-a
       AUG-11-banana.plantation   11-CM   1SM-N.PST-11OM-weed-FV
       'As for the banana plantation, they have weeded it.'

As predicted, the particle is infelicitous in a context where no alternative referents are expected, as in (22). Here, the presence of *zo* would imply that there are other animals which did not drink water. Without the particle *zo*, the utterance does not presuppose the existence of other relevant referents to which the proposition would also apply.

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[8] There seems to be no difference in terms of interpretation as to whether the particle is in the first or second clause.

(22)   Context: You only have sheep and perhaps you have come back from shepherding.
            Entaama (#zó) zaanyw' ámíízi.
            e-n-taama   **z-o**   zi-aa-nyw-a   a-ma-izi
            AUG-10-sheep   10-CM   10SM-N.PST-drink-FV   AUG-6-water
            'The sheep drank water.'

What is also characteristic of contrastive topics is their use in situations where only a subset is mentioned. The question in (23) is about food, generally. In the response, the speaker indicates that it is not the case that all the food expected to be served is ready; some food (sauce) is ready but what there is to eat with the sauce, *endiiso* (e.g., plantain, rice, potatoes etc.), is not ready. The particle therefore appropriately contrasts relevant members within a given set of food.

(23)   Q   *Ebyókuryá byáhíire?*
                 e-byokurya   bi-a-sy-ire
                 AUG-8.food   8-PST-burn-PFV
                 'Is food ready?'

            A   *Emboga zó zááhíire konk' éndíiso nihó twagit' áha mahéga.*
                 e-m-boga   **z-o**   zi-a-sy-ire   konka   e-n-ri-is-o
                 AUG-10-sauce 10-CM   10SM-PST-burn-PFV   but   AUG-9-eat-CAUS-NMLZ

                 ni-ho   tw-a-git-a   a-ha   ma-hega
                 COP-16.REL.PRO   1PL.SM-N.PST-put-FV   AUG-16   6-cooking.stone
                 'The sauce is ready but we have just put on fire what to eat the sauce with.'

The same subset reading also holds in (24), where the referent *ebitookye* is a member of a set of foodstuffs. Here, the relevant alternative referents are not mentioned by name but are simply referred to as 'the rest, the others'. Note that, for contrastive topics, it is not necessary for the alternatives to be negated or excluded (as is the case for exhaustive focus), as the speaker can choose to say 'others I don't know'.

(24)   *Ebitookye byó yáábitéeka, ebíndi tíyaabiteeka / ebíndi tindíkumanya.*
            e-bi-tookye   **bi-o**   a-a-bi-teek-a
            AUG-8-plantains 8-CM   1SM-N.PST-8OM-cook-FV

            e-bi-ndi   ti-a-aa-bi-teek-a
            AUG-8-other   NEG-1SM-N.PST-8OM-cook-FV

            / e-bi-ndi   ti-n-riku-many-a
            AUG-8-other   NEG-1SG.SM-PROG-know-FV
            'As for the plantains, she has cooked them, the rest she has not/I do not know.'

Idioms are another diagnostic for testing information-structural categories. Since parts of idioms are not referential but form part of the idiomatic reading, they are predicted to lose their idiomatic reading when functioning as topics. Furthermore, parts of idioms cannot be contrasted in their idiomatic reading because the alternatives are only triggered for the literal meaning. As contrastive topics require alternative topics, we predict the idiomatic reading to be lost if the particle *-o* is added. We show this for the idiom 'a snake is snoring', meaning 'to be hungry'. Indeed, in (25) the idiomatic reading is lost after the particle *yo* has been inserted. The presence

of *yo* in the clause means that there are alternatives to the referent *enjoka* 'snake'. Without the particle, this idiomatic phrase is used when one's stomach makes a rumbling sound, for example, when one is hungry.

(25)   *Enjoka **yó** neegona.*
         E-n-joka   **y-ó**   ni-e-gon-a
         AUG-9-snake   9-CM   PROG-9SM-snore-FV
         'A/the snake is snoring.'
         *'You're hungry.'

The universal quantifier *-ona* 'all' (26) and the indefinite quantifier *-ngi* 'many' (27) are equally incompatible with the particle. These quantifiers do not refer to specific referents and neither referent allows for alternatives to be generated.

(26)   *Abashomésa bóôna (*bó) baayet' ábéegi.*
         a-ba-shomesa   ba-ona   **ba-o**   ba-a-et-a   a-ba-egi
         AUG-2-teacher   2-all   2-CM   2SM-N.PST-call-FV   AUG-2-student
         'All the teachers, as for them, they have called the students.'

(27)   *Enjw' ényîngi (*zó) zitiir' érángi.*[9]
         e-n-ju   e-n-ingi   **z-o**   zi-teer-ire   e-rangi
         AUG-10-house   AUG-10-many   10-CM   10SM-beat-PFV   AUG-colour
         'The majority of the houses, as for them, they are painted.'

The particle is also seen to mark shift topics. A shift topic is a topic whose referent is different from the topic referent of the previous sentence (van der Wal and Skopeteas 2019). The particle enables the speaker to switch to a new topic in discourse. This particular use of the particle has been observed both in Luganda and Runyankore-Rukiga news anchoring on television. At the start of a new story, the news anchor uses the particle *-o* to indicate the shift to a different news item, particularly when there is no interruption from advertisements. It is also observed that, in this use, the particle occurs in the prenominal position. The example in (28) was recorded on TV West, which broadcasts exclusively in Runyankore-Rukiga. The use of *bo* is to show a shift to a different news story.

Recorded on TV West (May 8, 2020, from the 8pm news)
(28)   *Bó abanyamakúru omurí Mbarara baatung' óbuhwezi bw'óbuhúnga...*
         b-o   a-ba-nyamakuru   o-mu-ri   Mbarara   ba-a-tung-a
         2-CM   AUG-2-journalist   AUG-18-be   23.Mbarara   2SM-N.PST-get-FV

         o-bu-hwezi   bw-a   o-bu-hunga
         AUG-14-help   14-CONN   AUG-14-posho
         'Journalists in Mbarara have received assistance in the form of *posho*…'

Similarly, in response to the question in (29a), B does not continue the topic introduced in the question but shifts to a new topic. This new topic is accompanied by the particle. We assume a context where Amos and Peter's mother assigns each of the boys a specific job to do: Amos is

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[9] The reading "majority" is due to the presence of the augment on the quantifier.

to graze the animals and Peter to dig. Later, the mother asks whether Amos has grazed the cows; perhaps it appeared as if he would not do the job. In the response, the speaker does not seem to have any knowledge as to whether Amos did the job assigned to him, but s/he has information about Peter. Note that (29B') is infelicitous as a response to (29a) because it does not assume an alternative referent (similar to (22) above).

(29)　　　A:　　*Ngambíra yáába Ámosi yaaríisa.*
　　　　　　　　n-gamb-ir-a　　　　　yaaba　Amos　a-a-riis-a
　　　　　　　　1SG.OM-talk-APPL-IMP　if　　　1.Amos　1SM-N.PST-feed-FV
　　　　　　　　'Tell me whether Amos has grazed.'

　　　　　　B:　　*Ámos, tindíkumanya kwonká wé Píta yááhínga.*
　　　　　　　　Amos　ti-n-riku-manya　　　kwonka　**w-e**　Pita　　a-a-hing-a
　　　　　　　　1.Amos　NEG-1SG.SM-PROG-know　but　　　1-CM　1.Peter　1SM-N.PST-dig-FV
　　　　　　　　Well, Amos, I do not know, but as for Peter, he dug.

　　　　　　B'　　#*Amos wé yaariisa.*

We further note that the particle can be used in predicate doubling constructions. In predicate doubling, the same predicate occurs twice in the same clause, once in a non-finite form and once in a finite form. The phenomenon of predicate doubling is well attested in various Bantu languages as expressing predicate-centred focus (truth focus, state of affairs focus, and TAM focus (Güldemann and Fiedler to appear)). In Rukiga predicate doubling, the infinitive form functions as the topic, with the resulting basic interpretation being one of truth focus, as in situation 1 in (30). At the same time, predicate doubling constructions can be interpreted as contrastive, as in situation 2.

(30)　　　*O-ku-hínga　　tu-hing-íre.*
　　　　　　AUG-15-dig　　1PL.SM-dig-PFV
　　　　　　Situation 1: Did you really plough?
　　　　　　'We actually ploughed.'　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　[truth]
　　　　　　Situation 2: We were expected to dig and feed the animals.
　　　　　　'Digging we did (but we didn't feed the animals).'　　　　　　[contrast]

Adding the *-o* particle here is never obligatory, but when it is present it brings out the contrastive reading on the predicate more explicitly or emphatically, as indicated in the sentence in (31a), or alternatively it has a counterexpectational reading; for example, in (31b) grazing cows is not a job you would expect Amos to do (see the discussion of exclamative and mirative interpretations in Section 7).

(31)　　　a.　　*Okuhínga kwé nimpínga.*
　　　　　　　　o-ku-hinga　**kw-e**　ni-n-hing-a
　　　　　　　　AUG-15-dig　15-CM　PROG-1SG.SM-dig-FV
　　　　　　　　'In the case of digging, I can dig.'/'Digging I can do…'

b.　　*Okuríísá kó Ámós naazá kuríisa.*
　　　o-ku-ri-isa　　　**kw-o**　　Amos　　n-a-za　　　　ku-riis-a
　　　AUG-15-eat-cause　15-CM　　1.Amos　PROG-1SM-go　15-eat-feed-FV
　　　'In the case of grazing, Amos will graze.'

In this section, we have provided evidence that the particle combines with topics and that it induces a contrastive topic reading. Nevertheless, in order to conclude that *-o* is a dedicated contrastive topic marker, we need to examine where else we find *-o* in the language. Therefore, in the next section we will examine the possible source of this particle, tracing it back to the demonstrative via the independent pronoun through grammaticalisation.

6 Possible origin of the contrastive topic marker

The *o* "particle" is also used as an independent pronoun, as seen, for example, after the preposition *na*, as in (32).[10]

(32)　　a.　　*A-ka-zin-a　　　ná=**we**.*
　　　　　　1SM-F.PST-dance-FV　with=1.PRO
　　　　　　'She danced with him.'

　　　　b.　　*Tu-gyend-é　　　ná=**bo**.*
　　　　　　1PL.SM-go-SBJV　　with=2.PRO
　　　　　　'Let us go with them.'

The same pronominal form *o* is found in the class 16 locative enclitic *=ho* on the verb, as in (33).

(33)　　*N-aa-bon-a=**hó**　　　　o-mu-terere.*
　　　　1SG.SM-N.PST-find-FV=16　AUG-3-mongoose
　　　　'I found there a mongoose.'

These independent pronouns in turn have their source in demonstratives, which is a well-known grammaticalisation path (Lehmann 2002). In Rukiga, the medial demonstrative is the most likely source of the pronoun, considering its similarity in form, as shown in Table 2.

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[10] Rukiga does not feature any other prepositions, and being a pro-drop language, it does not generally use independent pronouns in other environments (but see the discussion of (41) and (42) below).

Table 2: Similarity between the particle and the medial demonstrative

Noun class and prefixes	Example noun	gloss	(contrastive) particle 'as for him/her/it/them'	Medial demonstrative 'that'
1 *-mu-*	*omuhara*	'girl'	*we*	*ogwo/ogwe*
2 *-ba-*	*abahara*	'girls'	*bo*	*abo*
3 *-mu-*	*omuyembe*	'mango'	*gwo/gwe*	*ogwo/ogwe*
4 *-mi-*	*emiyembe*	'mangoes'	*yo*	*egyo*
5 *-ri-/-i-*	*eihuri*	'egg'	*ryo*	*eryo*
6 *-ma-*	*amahuri*	'eggs'	*go*	*ago*
7 *-ki-*	*ekihumi*	'granary'	*kyo*	*ekyo*
8 *-bi-*	*ebihumi*	'granarie'	*byo*	*ebyo*
9 *-n-*	*ente*	'cow'	*yo*	*egyo*
10 *-n-*	*ente*	'cows'	*zo*	*ezo*
11 *-ru-*	*orushare*	'calabash'	*rwo/rwe*	*orwo/orwe*
12 *-ka-*	*akatare*	'market'	*ko*	*ako*
13 *-tu-*	*oturo*	'sleep'	*two/twe*	*otwo/otwe*
14 *-bu-*	*obumanzi*	'bravery'	*bwo/bwe*	*obwo/obwe*
15 *-ku-*	*okuguru*	'leg'	*kwo/kwe*	*okwo/okwe*
16 *-ha-*	*aheeru*	'outside'	*ho*	*aho*
17 *-ku-*	*okuzimu*	'hell'	*yo*[11]	*okwo/okwe*
18 *-mu-*	*omwiguru*	'in heaven'	*mwo*	*omwo/omwe*

In Rukiga, demonstratives can easily be used pronominally and anaphorically, as in (34) (Asiimwe to appear). This provides a clear first step on the grammaticalisation path.

(34)   *Ekyo nookimánya?*
          E-ki-o   ni-o-ki-mány-a
          DEM-7-MED   PROG-2SG.SM-7OM-know-FV
          'Do you know that one?'

Furthermore, the contrastive particle can occupy either the prenominal or the postnominal position (35), just like the demonstrative (36). This again shows the connection between the two, but they are currently two distinct forms, as can be seen in the fact that the (pronominal) demonstrative and the particle synchronically can co-occur (37).

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[11] The regular form would be *k(w)o*; the form *yo* is likely to have originated as a class 23 form, which is also a locative class but only shows as a remnant in enclitics in Rukiga.

(35)   a.   *e-ki-humi*   *ky-ó*
                AUG-7-granary   7-CM

          b.   *ky-ó*   *(e)-ki-humi*
                7-CM   AUG-7-granary
                (both) 'as for the granary'

(36)   a.   *e-ki-hum'*   *ékyo*
                AUG-7-granary   DEM.7.MED

          b.   *ekyo*   *(e-)ki-humi*
                DEM.7.MED   AUG-7-granary
                (both) 'that granary'

(37)   *e-ky-o*   *ky-o*
        DEM-7-MED   7-CM
        'as for that one'

The grammaticalisation path discussed so far is the following:

        medial demonstrative > independent pronoun > contrastive topic marker

The step from demonstrative to pronoun is well-understood; the step from independent pronoun to contrastive topic marker might be motivated by the following bridging context. We know that topic expressions are typically placed in the left periphery, and that these are often resumed in the clause. How exactly they are resumed determines their interpretation as a contrastive or hanging topic (cf van der Wal & Skopteas 2019, 4) vs. a familiar topic: in Italian, the contrastive topic features a strong pronoun and the familiar topic a simple pro-drop (with subject agreement on the verb) or a clitic pronoun (for non-subjects). This is illustrated in the comparison of contexts for (38), with the strong pronoun *lui*, and (39), which features a simple pro-drop: the strong pronoun can only be used in a contrastive context, whereas pro-drop as in (39) results in a non-contrastive reading.

Italian (Cinque 1977, 406-407, boldface ours)

(38)   Speaker A: Sai che Maria e andata a stare da Giorgio a Roma? (Maria is topic)
        'You know that Maria has gone to live with Giorgio in Rome?'
        Speaker B: Ah, Giorgio, sapevo che **lui** voleva andare a stare in campagna.
        'Ah, Giorgio, I knew that HE wanted to go and live in the country.'

(39)   Speaker A: Sai che tuo cugino mi ha telefonato ieri per dirmi che ha trovato un bell'appartamento a Roma? (cousin/Giorgio is topic)
        'Do you know that your cousin called me up yesterday to tell me that he found a nice apartment in Rome?'
        Speaker B: Ma guarda. Giorgio, sapevo che Ø voleva andare a stare in campagna, e invece…
        'But wait. Giorgio, I know that he wanted to stay in the countryside, and instead…'

In Bantu languages, a subject or object DP in the left periphery refers to a topical referent that is also picked up by a subject or object marker, respectively. As mentioned, the Bantu languages being pro-drop languages (similar to Italian), independent pronouns are rarely used, apart from after prepositions, and when contrasting and emphasising referents. And contrast is precisely the difference between a left-peripheral NP with a simple subject marker or object marker, and one with an additional independent pronoun, as in (40). An English equivalent could be the difference between 'Your book, I bought it' and 'Your book, *that* I have bought (but hers I haven't)'.[12]

(40) *Ezo sénte zó tizírího.*
  e-z-o   sénte   **z-o**   ti-zi-ri=ho
  DEM-10-MED 10.money 10-CM   NEG-10SM-be=16
  'That money, (it) is not there.'

Another possibly ambiguous example is the use of *-o* as in (16) above or (41) below: *zo* can be analysed here as an independent pronoun or as a contrastive topic marker, used together with the subject (or object) marker.

(41) **Z-ó**   *z-áa-nyw-a.*
  10-CM 10SM-N.PST-drink-FV
  'They have drunk.' (about animals)

While we have proposed that this is a bridging context in which the pronoun can be reinterpreted as a contrastive topic marker, we may ask whether the current *-o* has two functions (as a pronoun and a dedicated contrastive topic marker), or just one as an independent pronoun (the topic interpretation would then be due solely to the initial position of the DP, and the contrastive interpretation would come about pragmatically and not be encoded in the marker). For the [DP *-o*] examples, we can think of one argument in favour of analysing *-o* in its left-peripheral position as a functional marker of contrastive topic, rather than as an independent pronoun, and that is the lack of a clear prosodic boundary between the left-peripheral DP and the *-o* particle. If *-o* functioned as a pronoun in these constructions, we would expect a prosodic break between the DP and the pronoun, considering that they refer to the same referent and cannot both function as arguments in the same domain. While a pause would be possible after the DP *sente* 'money' in (40), it is not preferred.

While we argue that *-o* functions as a contrastive topic marker at least in some contexts, we also see that synchronically it also functions as a pronoun. One more context in which we can see *o* functioning as a pronoun is shown in (42). Although further prosodic and syntactic evidence is needed to establish the underlying form of this construction, at present the best analysis seems to be one in which 'Jane' is left-dislocated (considering that 'Jane' is optional and if present could be followed by an optional break), and the initial independent pronoun *we* is the focus expression in a reverse pseudocleft equivalent to 'Jane, SHE is the one who cooked posho'.

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[12] In a cartographic analysis one could posit the topical NP as an Aboutness topic or Hanging topic and the pronoun in a Contrastive topic position (see Frascarelli and Hinterhölzl 2007).

(42)   Context: There is an argument about who cooked posho. Some doubt it is Jane who cooked it.

(Jeini) ***w-é***   *ni=w-é*   *y-aa-teek'*   *á-ka-húnga.*
1.Jane 1-PRO COP=1-PRO 1SM-N.PST-cook AUG-12-posho
'As for Jane, SHE is the one who cooked posho (nobody else).'

We thus tentatively establish two current functions of *-o*: as an independent pronoun and as a contrastive topic marker, thereby answering our second research question, and drawing the preliminary conclusion that this is a case of homophony. We are now in the position to consider a further use of the particle, where it seems to be neither a pronoun nor a contrastive topic marker.

7 Multifunctionality: exclamative

In the same positions and still showing the same concord as the contrastive marker, but in quite different contexts, we find the particle expressing that the speaker is surprised by (one part of) the event, this typically being beyond expectation in scale or intensity. This extends over both the mirative interpretation (where something is marked as surprising or unexpected for the speaker, see e.g. Aikhenvald 2012), as well as an exclamative, defined as "a sentence type that conveys surprise with respect to a scalar extent that has surpassed the current expectations (e.g. How beautiful you are!)" (Garcia 2016, vii, referring to Michaelis 2001).
    To illustrate, the particle *bo* in (43) contributes the sense of surprise by the higher-than-expected turnout.[13]

(43)   Context: Someone has a function or has organised an event and sends out invitations. For one reason or another, s/he does not expect many guests to turn up. Many guests turn up, to the surprise of the host.

Abantu bó bíija.
a-ba-ntu ***ba-o*** ba-ij-a
AUG-2-person 2-CM 2SM.N.PST-come-FV
'People really came (many people turned up, more than those expected).'

In this function, the particle can occur with indefinites (which is impossible for the contrastive marker), as in (44). The presence of the particle here conveys the meaning that someone (specific but otherwise unidentified) sang well beyond expectation.

(44)   *O-mu-ntu*   ***w-é***   *y-áá-yéshongor-a.*
AUG-1-person 1-CM 1SM-N.PST-sing-FV
'Someone has indeed sung very well.'

Now recall the example in (8), repeated here as (45). Here, the mother of the twins is surprised, and at the same time expresses that the love her twins have for each other is beyond expectation.

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[13] Note that the same sentence could receive a contrastive topic reading if it is the case that humans turned up but non-humans did not.

(45)   Context: Mother is amazed by the love and special care her two-year-old twins show each other.

        Mbwénu ***b-ó***   *a-ba*   ***b-o…!***
        DM   2-CM   DEM-2.PROX   2-CM
        'As for those ones…!'

An exclamative reading can also be observed when the particle is used in pseudoclefts, which consist of a topical free relative and a copula, followed by a focused DP. If the particle functioned as a contrastive topic marker here, we would expect it to show concord with the (head noun of the) free relative *e-ki* 'what', as in (46b), agreeing in class 7. This is not the case, as shown in (46a) – the particle instead shows concord with the focused referent (in class 6), and the interpretation is exclamative.

(46)   a.   *Ekí twanywíre gó n' ámíizi.*
                e-ki   tu-a-nyw-ire   **g-o**   ni   a-ma-izi
                AUG-7RM   1PL.SM-F.PST-drink-PFV   6-CM   COP   AUG-6-water
                'We really drank water / We drank much water.'
                lit. 'What we drank is water.'

        b.   **Ekí twanywíre kyó n' ámíizi.*
                e-ki   tu-a-nyw-ire   **ki-o**   ni   a-ma-izi
                AUG-7RM   1PL.SM-N.PST-drink-PFV   7-CM   COP   AUG-6-water
                int. 'What we drank is (much) water.'

When used in a question, as in (47), the interpretation can have an ironic flavour. In a conversation between two football fans, one says that a foreign (African) team has vowed to beat the Uganda national football team, and, moreover, to beat them on Ugandan soil, in the African Nations Championship qualifiers. The other interlocutor wonders, as in (47). The purpose of the particle *bo* in this context may be to cast doubt on the possibility of what is contained in the proposition, the speaker feigning surprise. Note that, if the context allows, a contrastive reading is still attainable, contrasting one group of people with another identifiable group.

(47)   *Bó bíizire bíitu?*
        ba-o   ba-ij-ire   baitu?
        2-CM   2SM-come-PFV   DM
        'Have they even arrived (in the country)?'

In (48), the interpretation is not so much that of an exclamative (going beyond an expected degree), but more of a mirative. Although the referent *engagi* 'gorillas' in (48) is the topic of the construction, the particle *zo* does not provide a contrastive interpretation of the referent in this context. If the referent *engagi* were to be interpreted contrastively, it would mean that there are other referents who were expected to sing, such as baboons and monkeys (animals in the same set as gorillas), who did not sing. This is not the case, and instead, its use is licensed by the mirative effect (after all, it is indeed surprising when gorillas sing for you). Note also that the construction ends with a high tone, which is also an indication of surprise on the part of the speaker.

(48)   Context: Is it true that the gorillas sang for you?
         Engagi zó záátwéshongorerá!
         e-n-gagi   **z-o**   zi-aa-tu-eshongor-er-a
         AUG-10-gorilla   10-CM   10SM-N.PST-1PL.OM-sing-APPL-FV
          '(It is true) Gorillas have indeed sung for us!'

What is interesting to note in these mirative/exclamative uses is that the semantic-pragmatic scope of *-o* is wider than the referent it attaches to or agrees with: the unexpected interpretation in (43) concerns the arrival of the people, and in (44) it is the (situation of) singing that is surprising and not the person. Nicolle (2007, 2012) describes a very similar behaviour and process for the demonstrative -no in various Bantu languages, and in Digo in more depth. The original semantics of the demonstrative series with -no is considered to be "proximal", but over time, -no has developed what Nicolle calls "metarepresentational uses". The core function of these metarepresentational demonstratives, Nicolle argues, is "to make referents more manifest to addressees" (2007, 143), and to "help to convey the speaker's perspective concerning the entity or situation referred to" (2012, 202). This happens, for example, when a referent is not in the active consciousness of the addressee, or when the speaker wants to single out particular entities for comment. Since this happens frequently in interrogatives, imperatives, and exclamatives, the demonstratives would over time come to mark that wider interrogative or exclamative meaning, as for example in (49), where "The speaker cannot believe that a person who previously had been poor now has enough money to pay two hundred workers at ten times the going rate" (Nicolle 2007, 134). The demonstrative functions to express surprise about the whole situation.

Digo (Nicolle 2007, 134)
(49)   Mutu   yu-no,   zi-no   pesa   a-zi-phaha=phi?"
         1.person   1-MET.DEM   10-MET.DEM.10   10.money   1SM-10OM-get=where
         "Where did that man (of all people) get that (much) money from?"

It is very interesting to see the exact same aspects of meaning (highlighting a less-than-active referent and surprise)[14] for the proximal demonstrative (which is still formally a demonstrative), on the one hand, and the *-o* particle, which derives from the medial demonstrative and has developed via an independent pronoun, on the other. For the -no demonstrative, Nicolle (2012, 221) suggests that "the reason why the *-no* demonstrative form has undergone this development rather than any other demonstrative is because the 'basic' function of the *-no* demonstrative (proximal deixis (AA&JW)) is to refer to entities which are highly manifest to both the speaker and the addressee, and that this allowed *-no* demonstratives to occur in metarepresentational contexts to draw attention to particular referents".

   This explanation obviously cannot hold one-to-one for the exclamative uses in Rukiga, simply because the origin of the particle here is not the highlighting of proximal referents. Nevertheless, we can imagine how the particle can easily be used in situations where a contrasted referent is unexpected: by using a contrastive topic marker (or "extra" pronoun), the speaker indicates to the addressee that the topic is different from the previous topic, or is not the only candidate for being a topic. This makes the referent "more manifest", in Nicolle's terms, and that is precisely what is needed in a surprising/counterexpectational situation. Next, in a process of pragmaticalisation, we can imagine that the surprising/counterexpectational aspect of meaning,

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[14] Van Otterloo (2011) calls the Kifuliiru demonstrative -no a "proximal contrastive".

which holds for the whole clause, becomes associated with the marker (a case of hypoanalysis), resulting in a widening semantic-pragmatic scope of the particle.

This could thus be a way of understanding the exclamative/mirative use as an extension of the contrastive topic function. However, we cannot use it to claim that the particle *-o* is an underspecified marker of counterexpectation to capture its various uses under a uniform analysis. This would correctly cover the mirative, exclamative and contrastive topic functions, but also wrongly predict it to be compatible with foci. Further research into the exclamative/mirative function is necessary, for example testing whether it can be embedded to see whether it functions as a speech act (cf. Rett 2011), and the interpretations it yields when it combines with discourse particles like *baitu* (50a) and *nangwa* (50b). Preliminary observations seem to indicate that *baitu* 'but' and *nangwa* 'indeed' intensify the unexpectedness meaning introduced by the particle *-o*, with *baitu* seeming to convey a higher degree of intensity than *nangwa*. More research is needed to determine the precise interpretations when the particle combines with such discourse markers.

(50)   a.   *E-n-júra   y-ó   **baitu**   y-áâ-gw-a.*
            AUG-9-rain   9-CM   DM   9SM-N.PST-fall-FV
            'It has really rained (heavily/or for a long time).'

       b.   *E-n-júra   y-ó   **nangwá**   y-áâ-gw-a.*
            AUG-9-rain   9-CM DM   9SM-N.PST-fall-FV
            'It has really rained (heavily/or for a long time).'

Finally, we note that crosslinguistically, exclamatives are typically expressed by "information-question forms and anaphoric degree adverbs", according to Michaelis (2001, 1049), and independent pronouns are not mentioned as a source of exclamative marking. We thus add to the existing literature in showing another source from which languages develop exclamative meaning.

8 Conclusion

The aim of this paper was to establish the precise function and interpretation of the particle *-o* in Rukiga. We have proposed that, having developed from the pronominal use of the medial demonstrative, it currently functions as an independent pronoun and as a contrastive topic marker, with its use being extended to exclamative or mirative meanings (indicating an unexpected situation or degree). At this point in time, we do not see a way to unify these uses under a single analysis of the particle with underspecified semantics and polysemous usage.

Our findings are relevant in the broader picture in at least two respects. First, we have shown that independent morphological topic markers are present in East Africa too. The Bantu languages are known for their extensive agglutinative morphology, but Rukiga possesses an independent contrastive topic marker as well, comparable to the analytical West African languages mentioned in the introduction. Second, we have added to the description of the expression of mirative and exclamative marking, which is a vastly underdescribed linguistic area for Bantu languages (see Marten and Mous 2017, who touch on applicatives and expectations).

Further research could compare the position and function of the particle in Rukiga and related Bantu languages where the particle also exists, such as Luganda and Luwanga (Diercks

and Green 2018). We have observed in Luganda that the particle is commonly placed before the noun when introducing a new topic, as observed in the Luganda news anchoring, while in Luwanga the pronoun can double the subject to trigger a discourse-familiar interpretation. The comparison may in turn provide evidence for the syntactic status of the pronoun and the underlying sentence structure.

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