<u>*Nana*-constructions in Reunion Creole: distinguishing broad focus clefts from related constructions</u>

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In this talk, I present an analysis of *nana*-constructions in Reunion Creole (RC), a French-based Creole spoken on Reunion Island. I focus on the broad focus construction illustrated in (1), which is functionally comparable to the *avoir* clefts of French, illustrated in (2).

(1) *Hier   soir   nena un   num   privé   la   tel   amwin*
    yesterday night have INDF number private PRF phone 1SG
    'Last night a private number phoned me' (Cougnon 2012)

(2) *Y'a   le   téléphone   qui   sonne* !
    PF-have.3SG   DEF telephone   REL   ring.3SG
    'The phone's ringing!' (Lambrecht 1988: 137)

Avoir clefts are similar to the well-studied *c'est*-clefts in that they are bi-clausal constructions that express a single proposition, but they are typically associated with broad focus rather than narrow focus. Their function is presentational or event-reporting: they introduce a new referent into the discourse and then predicate something about that referent, or they report an event (Lambrecht 1988). Based on a corpus of written and oral materials, I argue that RC's *nana*-construction in (1) was once a bi-clausal cleft but has developed into a monoclausal construction, where *nana* is a broad focus construction marker rather than a copula. I present a Role and Reference Grammar (cf. Van Valin & LaPolla 1997; Van Valin 2005, 2008; Bentley et al. 2023) analysis of both the monoclausal construction and the bi-clausal cleft from which the former has developed. A key feature of the broad focus cleft analysis is that the relative clause is in focus and contains the main assertion of the sentence, so it does not behave like a true subordinate clause.

    When analysing broad focus *nana* constructions like those in (1), I distinguish it from two closely related constructions: narrow focus *nana* clefts (equivalent to English narrow focus *there*-clefts) **Error! Reference source not found.** and existentials with a relative clause **Error! Reference source not found.**.

(3) *Na   ali   i   sava*
    have 3SG   FIN   go
    'There's him that's going'

(4) *Dann la   komine   Bras Panon nana in   zoli lékol i   apèl* Ma Pensée
    in   DET commune   Bras Panon have INDF   nice school FIN   call my thought
    'In the commune of Bras Panon, there is a nice school that is called *Ma Pensée*'

Although the three constructions in (1), **Error! Reference source not found.** and **Error! Reference source not found.** are at first sight similar in form, involving *nana* and, in the case of **Error! Reference source not found.** and **Error! Reference source not found.**, an (often zero-marked) relative clause, they have different semantic and discourse-pragmatic properties, which I outline in the talk. A crucial difference lies in their discourse function: the monoclausal *nana* construction in (1) is presentational or event-reporting, whereas narrow focus *nana*-clefts serve to assert the existence of a value for a variable (cf. Pavey's (2004) analysis of narrow focus *there*-clefts), and existentials "express a proposition about the existence or presence of someone or something in a context" (Bentley, Ciconte and Cruschina's 2015: 2). This talk aims

to address an important gap in our understanding of this family of related constructions, namely, the distinct analysis of broad focus clefts.

References

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