I. **Focus and topic** (cf. DiCanio et al. 2018)

1. Information structure refers to those components of the linguistic system that interlocutors use to negotiate shared knowledge of entities and states in discourse (Lambrecht, 1994).

2. Languages utilize different strategies for expressing whether an entity is new/old, topical/focal, or recently identifiable (or not) in the discourse.

3. **Focus** refers to “*the speaker’s assessment of the relative predictability or unpredictability of the relations between propositions and their elements in a given discourse situation.*” (Lambrecht, 1994, p. 6).
   a. **Broad focus**: the entire sentence or predicate conveys pragmatically unpredictable information, e.g. What's up? *Leah came to Buffalo for the eclipse.*
   b. **Narrow focus**: a single argument or state is pragmatically unpredictable, e.g. Who came to Buffalo? *LEAH came to Buffalo for the eclipse.*

4. Languages utilize one of three possible tactics for marking focus: morphosyntactic marking, focus particles, and prosodic marking (Ladd, 2008).

5. Additionally, languages like Northern Sotho may mark only pragmatically predictable (non-focal) information via backgrounding and pronominalization, leaving focus entirely unmarked (Zerbian, 2008).

6. In many tonal and non-tonal languages, the focused units are marked morphosyntactically. Kalinowski (2015) discusses many morphosyntactic strategies for focus marking across different African language families - almost 1,000 different strategies are used!

7. English also uses morphosyntax to mark focus - it's not always prosodic, e.g. *It was Mario who thought about this first.* **cleft construction**

8. There is a stronger tendency for morphosyntactic strategies to be used in tonal languages than in non-tonal languages (Torreira et al. 2014).

9. **Topic**: that element of the sentence that is presented as already existing in the discourse and which the rest of the sentence is, in some sense, about. (Trask 1993).
The notions of foregrounding and backgrounding are also related, respectively, to the distinction between focused and topicalized constituents.

Useful for the discussion of Triqui information structure is the idea of a scale of foregrounding/backgrounding - possibly a scale of discourse prominence.

Focused constituents are obligatorily fronted in Triqui.

Cnan\textsuperscript{43} ki\textsuperscript{3}-sij\textsuperscript{4} ku\textsuperscript{i}ki\textsuperscript{3} Answer to: Un\textsuperscript{3}s\textsuperscript{1} ki\textsuperscript{3}-sij\textsuperscript{4} oh\textsuperscript{1}? brother.1s PERF-arrive yesterday who PERF-arrive WH.PART 'My brother arrived yesterday.'

Ki\textsuperscript{3}-sij\textsuperscript{4} cnan\textsuperscript{43} ku\textsuperscript{i}ki\textsuperscript{3} Answer to: Un\textsuperscript{3}s\textsuperscript{1} ka\textsuperscript{3}-bin\textsuperscript{3} oh\textsuperscript{1}? PERF-arrive brother.1s yesterday what PERF-be WH.PART 'My brother arrived yesterday.'

This also typically extends to pronouns - they must be fronted but they need a "host" as they are clitics. It is necessary to use the Triqui word for 'self' ma\textsuperscript{2}han\textsuperscript{3} and attach the pronoun to these.

a. Se\textsuperscript{4} ma\textsuperscript{2}hanj\textsuperscript{5} ki\textsuperscript{3}-ranj\textsuperscript{3}, Jwan\textsuperscript{43} ki\textsuperscript{3}-ranj\textsuperscript{3} chu\textsuperscript{3}che\textsuperscript{32} NEG.EXIST self.1s PERF-buy, Juan PERF-buy chicken 'It wasn’t me who bought (it), Juan bought the chicken.'
b. Se\textsuperscript{4} ma\textsuperscript{2}hanj\textsuperscript{5} kwej\textsuperscript{3} rian\textsuperscript{32} chi\textsuperscript{3}nga\textsuperscript{4}, ma\textsuperscript{2}han\textsuperscript{4}=reh\textsuperscript{1} kwoj\textsuperscript{3} NEG.EXIST self.1s PERF.jump face fence, self=2s PERF.jump rian\textsuperscript{32} chi\textsuperscript{3}nga\textsuperscript{4} face fence 'It wasn’t me who jumped over the fence, you jumped over the fence.'
c. "Tin\textsuperscript{5} ka\textsuperscript{2}-ne\textsuperscript{4}=reh\textsuperscript{1} si\textsuperscript{2} k-a\textsuperscript{2}hmin\textsuperscript{2} ma\textsuperscript{2}hanj\textsuperscript{5} oj\textsuperscript{3}. Si\textsuperscript{2} Quietly POT-sit=2s because POT-speak self.1s PART.command. Because ma\textsuperscript{2}hanj\textsuperscript{5} k-a\textsuperscript{2}hmin\textsuperscript{2} nga\textsuperscript{1}=sij\textsuperscript{3} aj\textsuperscript{5} a\textsuperscript{3}taj\textsuperscript{2}=sij\textsuperscript{3} ni\textsuperscript{2}. self.1s POT-speak with=3M PART.TAG, say=3M and. "Sit quietly because I will speak. Because I will speak with him, eh?", he says.'

(Line 126, Derechos de mujeres triquis; 06/9/2015; Carmen López González and Nieves López Guzmán)

However, note that in (13c), the focused pronoun occurs in-situ, meaning it is in the position where a subject normally occurs (post-verbally). Ex-situ focus (pre-verbal position) is only required for full NPs, not pronouns.

Triqui does not have a morphophonological or phonetic strategy for prosodically-marking a focused constituent, but it does have several strategies for marking additional distinctions, in particular topic and disjoint reference.
II. Topic-marking strategies and backgrounding in discourse

(16) If we take Trask's notion of *topic*, then anything that is pronominal is necessarily *topical*. That's unhelpful for Triqui. It does not help us to distinguish between what are four different types of patterns all involving seemingly involving *topical* pronouns in Triqui.

(17) Once a referent is mentioned, it is of course possible to use a pronoun to refer back to that entity.

  a. Un³sin³ k-a³taj² *sinj⁵ ta³ oh¹?*
     what PERF-say man DEM WH.PART
     'What did *that man* say?'

  b. Tu⁴hbej⁴=sij³ sa⁴na⁴³ k-a³taj²=sij³ rianj⁴
     sell=3M apple PERF-say=3M face.1S
     'He is selling apples, he said to me.'

(18) It is possible to place a pronoun in a pre-verbal position where it is still topical though - it must be preceded by *be⁴*, which marks topic, or perhaps a *new topic* or *contrastive topic*.

(19) Ka³gah³ oh³=nih²=sij³ ni² be⁴=sij³ ba¹ mman¹
     bullet/metal hit=PL=3M and TOP=3M already POT.exist.plural
     FOCUS VERB=TOPIC NEW.TOPIC VERB

     ni² be⁴-ta³-ni² baj³.
     and then go.TOP
     VERB.TOPIC

     '(With) *bullets* they were hitting (them) and they (the townsfolk) were already there and so then they (the townsfolk) were leaving.'

Line 89 from *Sobre la guerra de San Martin Itunyoso y Chicahuaxtla*, 6/16/15, Crispin Celestino Martinez

(20) In this text, Celestino is previously describing how the townsfolk were attacked - with *bullets*. This is under focus in the previous sentences and the topical subject are the attackers. He then shifts to a new topic - marked in red. This is still pronominal but he needs to distinguish that he is referring to a new entity. By using *be⁴*, the listener is aware that he is talking about a new group of people that have already been identified in the larger discourse.

(21) So, even though =sij³ and be⁴=sij³ mean 'he' and even though they are both *topics*, only the latter is marked as a new topic.

(22) Interestingly, this example also shows us a *third* strategy for marking a topic - the use of the topical clitic which involves toggling morphology (DiCanio et al. 2020).
Where does this type of clitic get used? It is specifically used to mark a recently mentioned 3rd person entity - something like an aforementioned entity. It is most often used when there are at least two 3rd person entities that have to be marked - multiple 'hes', 'shes', or 'theys.'

It may also be used to refer to inanimate subjects and to generic entities, e.g. "one might think that..."

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So far then, we have three unique strategies for marking what would be a topical referent:

a. be⁴ + NP Usually ex-situ New referent
b. clitic pronoun In-situ Subject referent
c. topical clitic In-situ Aforementioned referent

As it turns out, there is one more strategy that Triqui uses and it involves an additional tonal clitic! I have so far just coded this as emphatic, but I believe it is only used as a way to mark contrastive topics or disjoint reference.

When a single 3rd person needs to be distinguished from another 3rd person for clarificational purposes in the discourse, it is possible to mark the pronoun with tone /4/ and a final glottal stop, e.g.

'she' unh⁴ [ũʔ] 'SHE'
'they' neh⁴ [neʔ] 'THEY'

Though related to the pronominal clitics, these pronouns are independent/free - they do not need to attach to a preceding word.

In the text sample above by Crispin, he previously discusses a hero in the story - Señor Naseto. He accompanies the Triquis into the conflict with those from the neighboring Triqui town of San Andrés Chicahuaxtla.
'(So he, he tried to approach (them) without fear. He tried to approach the Hill of Salt.)

Line 90 from *Sobre la guerra de San Martín Itunyoso y Chichahuaxtla*, 6/16/15, Crispin Celestino Martínez

(32) During this discourse, Triqui listeners are evaluating changes of topic, one party of attackers, one party of defenders, and a hero. Since most of the entities here are males, they would otherwise take the equivalent 3M pronoun =*sij*³. Yet, Triqui speakers do not confuse the entities.

(33) The entity here is clearly the established hero since he is without fear, but he needs to be distinguished from both the attackers and the defenders we see in the previous line (19).

(34) Now take a look at another context - one you've seen before.

\[a^4{\text{n}}\text{go}^{43} \text{tfj}^2{\text{k}}\text{o}^3{\text{t}}\text{o}^{32} \text{ni}^2 \text{u}^1{\text{t}}\text{u}^1{\text{t}}^1 \text{ta}^3{\text{n}}\text{ih}^5 = \text{s}^3 \text{n}^2 \text{nu}^1{\text{k}}\text{we}^1 \text{ni}^3{\text{k}}\text{a}^{32} = \text{s}^3 \text{p}^3 \text{tt}^\text{u}h^2\]

Another brother.1s and five child.of=3M and pair.of spouse=3M be eight

'Another of my brothers, his five kids, and their pair of spouses make eight (of us).'

(from Line 13; *Testimonio de su familia grande*; 06/10/2015; Carmen López González)

(35) The pronoun =*sij*³ is used to refer to the first set of brothers above, but now that a different set of brothers is identified, *sih*⁴ is used instead.

\[\text{ni}^2 \text{n}^\text{n}^\text{n}^\text{i} \text{ni}^2 \text{a}^4{\text{n}}\text{go}^{43} \text{chi}^2{\text{k}}\text{o}^3{\text{h}}\text{o}^{32} \text{ni}^2 \text{nu}^1{\text{k}}\text{we}^1\]

and mother.1s and another brother.opp.1s and both

\[\text{ni}^2\text{ka}^2=\text{sih}^4 \text{ni}^2 \text{sa}^1\text{ni}^2 \text{ta}^3 \text{ba}^2, \text{ba}^2 \text{ria}^3{\text{n}}^{32} \text{a}^4\text{toj}^1=\text{unj}^4\]

spouse=3M.EMPH and but this exist exist face/where sleep=1.EXCL

'and my mother and another one of my brothers and both of THEIR spouses, but there is a space where we (each) sleep.'

Line 14; *Testimonio de su familia grande*; 06/10/2015; Carmen López González

(36) This type of pronominal marking appears to encode something called *disjoint reference*. With two entities which have the same number and gender marking, it is used to clarify which entity is being referred to, e.g.

"Yeah, even though John never has any money, when he saw Fred at the bakery, he gave him money for pastries."
(37) When you wish to distinguish one entity from another, this morphology is also used.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{An}^{32}, \text{sinj}^5 & \quad \text{nu}^1\text{kwa}^1\text{han}^1 \quad \text{ka}^2\text{-bin}^3=\text{sih}^4 & \quad \text{yu}^3\text{be}^{32}. \\
\text{Uuhh, person joining} & \quad \text{PERF-be}=\text{3M.EMP} \text{ then.} \\
\text{‘Uuhh, HE had been the representative then.’}
\end{align*}
\]

(Line 45; Sobre la guerra de San Martín y Chicahuaxtla; 06/16/2015; Crispin Celestino Martínez)

(38) \begin{align*}
\text{sa}^3\text{nto}^1 & \quad \text{ba}^2 & \quad \text{ta}^3\text{-ne}^{32} & \quad \text{tsih}^1 & \quad \text{sinj}^5 & \quad \text{nanh}^4 & \quad \text{si}^3\text{si}^2 \\
\text{Santos!} & \quad \text{exist} & \quad \text{POSS'D-water} & \quad \text{sweet man} & \quad \text{DEM.EMP} & \quad \text{if} \\
\text{sno}^3\text{ho}^{32} & \quad \text{sih}^4 & \quad \text{ka}^2\text{che}^2 & \quad \text{sih}^4 & \quad \text{ta}^1\text{hninj}^1 & \quad \text{unj}^5? \\
\text{man} & \quad \text{3M.EMP} & \quad \text{POT.walk} & \quad \text{3M.EMP} & \quad \text{son.VOC} & \quad \text{IS.VOC}
\end{align*}

'Holy moley! That man will have (a lot of) soda if he is the man that will walk (serve in political office), my son.'

Line 7, Cómo le da palabras a las autoridades, 10/10/14, Marcelino Hernández Bautista.

(39) If the root tone is upper register, it is replaced with high level tone /4/ and a glottal stop is appended to the right edge (replacing any final glottal consonant). However, only the final syllable tone of lower register tone roots (/1, 2, 32, 31/) is replaced with tone /4/, identical to the topical 3rd person mentioned above (examples to follow).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Non-emphatic</th>
<th>Emphatic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nan³</td>
<td>nanh^4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>this (proximal)</td>
<td>this (prox)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ta³</td>
<td>tah^4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>this (discursive)</td>
<td>this (disc)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>=sij³</td>
<td>sih^4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'he'</td>
<td>he</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>=unj³</td>
<td>unh^4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'she'</td>
<td>she</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>=nej³</td>
<td>neh^4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'they'</td>
<td>they</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>=chuj³</td>
<td>chuh^4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'animal (pron)'</td>
<td>animal (pron)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chu^be</td>
<td>chu^beh²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'dog'</td>
<td>Dog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cha^to³</td>
<td>cha^toh²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'rabbit'</td>
<td>Rabbit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(40) This emphatic marking is extended to contexts where a noun might refer to a character in a story, e.g. "The Rabbit" as opposed to a generic rabbit.

(41) These are still apparently topical, it seems, but this is obviously a new category having to do with distinguishing among similar entities within a set. Triqui is very careful to make such distinctions.

(42) And just in case things were not complicated enough, it turns out that you can apply the morphology above to verbs when the subject is either of unknown gender or inanimate, but either needs to be disambiguated from another entity or is not being backgrounded.
(43) a. ka³-hnah³=sij³
   PERF-come=3M
   'They came'

   ka³-hnah⁴
   PERF-come.EMPH
   'They came'

b. ka³-hnah⁴
   PERF-come.EMPH
   'They came'

c. ka³-hnah⁴
   PERF-come.TOP
   'They (mentioned) came'

(44) a. ka²-hnah²=sij³
   POT-come=3M
   'They will come'

   ka²-hnah²⁴
   POT-come.EMPH
   'They will come'

c. ka²-hnah²⁴
   POT-come.TOP
   'They (mentioned) will come'

(45) Ni³taj²
    si³
    bah⁴ (ba³²)
    roh⁴
    ba³²
    Culiacán
    yoj³²
    o⁴nej⁴.
    NEG.exist
    COMP
    exist.EMPH
    like
    exist
    Culiacan
    PERS.EVID
    comadre.
    IS
    'It (living in Yurécuaro) is not similar to being in Culiacán, my comadre.'

Line 66, Cómo se cuidó a sus niños trabajando en Sinaloa, 6/14/15, Elena Eugenia Martínez

Yya¹³
    a³manh³
    ni³
    ngo²
    ko³no³ho³²
    ni³hin³-ih⁴
    ka³hanj²
when
rain
and
at.once
be.cooked
PL.EMPH
PERF.go

Yya¹³
    chi³hninj⁴,
    ki³-na³bin³
    nu¹kwa¹-ah³
    ni³
    oh³⁴
    ru³ne³²
when
be.clear
PERF-become
hard.EMPH
and
hit/give.EMPH
bean/blister

ta³koh⁴.
    Binh⁴
    sinj⁴
    ni³ki³
    ka³hanj³.
foot.1DU.
    be.1DU
person
poor/indigenous
perf.go.

'When it would rain, then they (our leather sandals) would be cooked/tender. When it was clear, they would get hard and (they) give us blisters on our feet. We have been poor, indigenous people.'

Lines 26 - 27, Sobre el tiempo de hambruna, 10/10/14, Marcelino Hernández Bautista

(47) In the example above, the elder speaker is discussing the ways in which people suffered during a famine in the Triqui region. The process of making your own sandals from bull leather is difficult and these types of sandals are uncomfortable to wear because they can give you blisters.

(48) In sum, you must be maximally clear to distinguish between pronominal entities in Triqui discourse while still using pronouns.
In English, we might just decide to re-use full NPs, but that does not seem to be a strategy that is utilized much in Triqui - once a full NP is used, it gets pronominalized throughout the conversation.

Four unique strategies for marking what would be a "topical":

a. be⁴ + NP  Usually ex-situ  New referent
b. clitic pronoun  In-situ  Subject referent
c. topical clitic  In-situ  Aforementioned/inanimate referent
d. emphatic clitic  In-situ  Disambiguated/inanimate referent

This makes tracking information structure and referents in Triqui discourse very interesting but also quite challenging.

References