

Negation within the scope of focus activation in Yorùbá Language

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Abstract: Focus construction is a syntactic process where sentence constituents are given prominence by fronting and marked with a marker. Within the domain of the specifier of Focus Phrase (FocP) in the Yoruba language, the focused constituent moves to the specifier (spec) of FocP and is demarcated from the rest of the clause for attentional state and word order requirements. The focused constituent can be negated by *kó* in negative focus construction. The hierarchical interaction of *kó* and focused constituent has not received adequate attention from scholars working on Yoruba focus domains. Thus, this paper adopts Rizzi's Cartographic Analysis to resolve the interpretation and hierarchical anomaly found in existing literature. The research is qualitative, and primary data were collected from five purposively selected competent native speakers of Yoruba while secondary data consisted of strings of sentence constructions collected from the markets and extant works. The paper discovered that the scope of negation determines the structural architecture of spec-FocP; topicalized and interrogated items cannot be negated, hence both the spec-InterP and spec-TopP are opaque to the so-called constituent negation scope *kó*, and that the complement domain of Neg⁰ houses an XP (DP, CP, PP, or TP) before being moved for the purpose spec-head valuation. The negator seems to induce a hierarchical order of dominance in interpretation. Hence, scholars depict the negator wrongly in the domain thereby providing wrong interpretation and wrong structural representation of the domain. The implication of this finding shows that there are still more works on the grammar of the Yoruba language.

Keywords: Cartographic analysis, Focus construction, Negation, Yoruba languages

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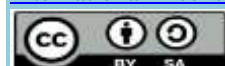
1. Introduction

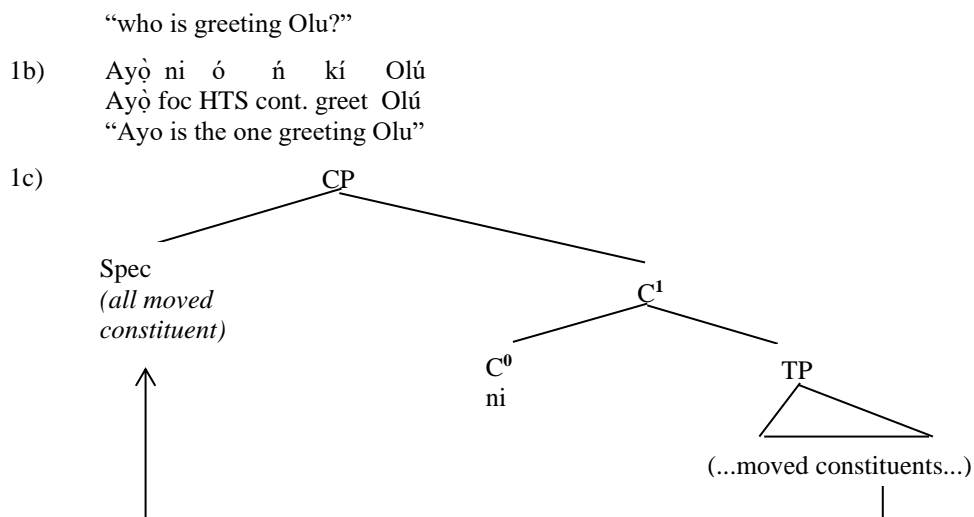
The Yoruba language exhibits a syntactically interesting focus construction despite having just an invariable focus marker's form in the language in terms of structural hierarchy between the focused constituent and the focus marker. There are several studies on the derivation of focus construction in the Yoruba language. Based on the nature of the weak theoretical frameworks adopted by scholars in the derivation of the construction certain wrong notions were postulated. Some of the postulations in early works like Awoyale (1995), Yusuf (1997a & b, 2010), Awobuluyi (2013), and Olaogun (2016 & 2017) among others include:

- i. Using the focus marker as the interrogative marker in content word questions (Yusuf, 2007a&b. Focus constructions are responses of interrogative construction in Yoruba because interrogative constructions induce focus domain hence, there is interference between the two constructions (Aboh, 20007; Abimbola, 2019). If you consider the construction given below;

- 1a) Ta ni ó ñ kí Olú
Who foc HTS cont. greet Olu

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Observe the position where “Ta” is located in the clause is similar on the surface representation to the position occupied by “Ayò”. Hence, scholars who have used the early generative syntax models often represent the structures as seen in (1c). But there are problems when two or more constituents are proposed in the clause. This issue was addressed in Rizzi (1997) split CP analysis. Rizzi argues that the standard practice is defective and should be split.

- ii. Another one is the inability to distinguish between questioned items and question marker in WH-questions or content word interrogative interfacing with focus constructions (Abimbola, 2019; Aboh, 2007; Yusuf, 1999b). Items like; *ta, kí, èlò, èwo*, etc roughly interpreted as; who, what, how much, which, etc respectively were often confused for interrogative markers in some works (Bamgbose, 1990; Adewole, 2016; Awobuluyi, 2013). Yet, the analysis of such discussions often makes the focus marker *ni* head of CP and put the so-called interrogative marker in spec-CP.
- iii. A notable problem in the interpretation of focus construction has to do with the various wrong derivations ascribe to predicate focus (Awoyale, 1995, Yusuf, 2010). There are several attempts to resolving this issue in the literature on how a predicate is left in the clause and its duplicate is partially reduplicated as nominal. Thus, a nominal item c-command a verb in Yoruba predicate focus constructions.
- iv. In works like Yusuf (1999b: 76–87), the negative element and the focused constituent were fused under the specifier of the Focus Phrase (hence, FocP) among many others. In most cases, discussions on negation in focus constructions often avoid representation and discussion of this very case (Yusuf, 2006; Olaogun 2016 & 2017; Olanrewaju and Taiwo, 2020). Some works did not even reflect the interaction of focus and interrogation, that is, the two were assumed as unrelated constructions (Awolaoye, 2022; Ilori, 2023). As far as the present paper is concerned, this issue remains unresolved in the grammar of Yoruba language.

The issues raised in (i), (ii) and (iii) above are outside the scope of the present work. But the first two, that is (i) and (ii) were addressed in detail in Abimbola (2019) but the issue in (iii) was discussed partially in the work. In Abimbola (2023), the third case was given adequate discussion. The last one which is the problem highlighted in (iv) above is the focus of the present paper.

2. Aim of the study

This work aims at resolving the interpretive and structural dominance between the negative item and the focused constituent in negative focus construction, and the scope of negation in negative focus construction.

3. Research questions Let your research question be taken directly from the aim.

In line with the aforementioned aim, this work seeks to proffer answers to these questions:

- i. What is the hierarchical dominance relationship between the focused constituent and the negative marker in negative focus construction?
- ii. What is the scope of negation in negative focus construction?

4. Theoretical framework

The aforementioned analytical problems were created as a result of lack of descriptive adequacy power of the previous versions of the grammar employed by the previous works. Thus, this work adopts Rizzi’s (1997) cartographic analysis of the left periphery and other related works on split-CP hypothesis for the analysis presented in this work as the theoretical framework. Rizzi (1997) was construed on the ground that the standard practice in CP is defective and does not provide adequate representation of the native speaker’s intuition about his language. Apart from that, the CP structure allows only one functional item as the head of the CP irrespective of the number of heads licensed in the left periphery of the clause.

As a corollary to the last argument, the CP structure in previous generative grammar allows only one specifier item. In cases where there is a structure like (2a) below where topic item iterates and there is also a focus projection and in

(2b) where both the interrogative and the focus are licensed cannot be given an accurate analysis. Hence, the practice in CP syntactic analysis is defective and must be unbundled. In parlance with Rizzi's (1997) representation, heads can project independently; hence, (3a) and (3b) represent the split projection of (2a) and (2b) respectively.

- 2a) Olú, Tolú, Olá ni wón n pè
 Olú ø Tolu ø Olá foc 3sgH cont. call
 "Olú, Tolú, Olá is the one being called"
- 2b) Bólá, kí ni Adé rà____
 Bólá ø what foc Adé buy ____
 "Bólá, what exactly did Adé buy"
- 3a) [_{TopP} [_{spec} Olú] [_{Top}¹ [_{Top} Ø] [_{TopP} [_{spec} Tolú] [_{Top}¹ [_{Top} Ø] [_{FocP} Olá] [_{Foc}¹ [_{Foc} ni] [_{TP} wón n pè]]]]]]]]
 3b) [_{TopP} [_{spec} Bólá] [_{Top}¹ [_{Top} Ø [_{InterP} [_{spec} kí] [_{Inter}¹ [_{Inter} Ø [_{FocP} Olá] [_{Foc}¹ [_{Foc} ni [_{TP} Adé rà____]]]]]]]]]]

All existing analyses of focus constructions in Yoruba have failed to capture these facts. These has led to pedagogical problems in teaching and understanding of the focus domain.

5. Research method

The type of research adopted in this work is the qualitative research approach. According to Parkinson and Drislane (2011), qualitative research is a research using methods such as participant observation or case studies which result in a narrative, descriptive account of a setting or practice. In qualitative research, researchers are interested in understanding the meaning people have constructed, that is how people make sense of their world and the experiences they have in the world (Merriam, 2009: 13). Qualitative studies are by their name inductive (Lewis, 2018). Yoruba speakers in southwest Nigeria are the target population. Five competent native speakers were purposively selected. The same speakers were used to validate data collected speakers in the market and from extant works. Hence, both observation and interview method were used.

Data were sourced primarily from native speakers through interview with structured sentences which were created specifically targeting focus, interrogative and topic constructions. Secondary data were collected through strings of speakers' interactions in the markets and in the neighbourhood. Other data were generated from extant works. The data were subjected to interlinear glossing which is the one-on-one gloss. A word is given with its interpretation aligning under it. The logical glossing is the interpretation or meaning of the data. This follows the inter-linear gloss. On theoretical ground, data were illustrated using the label bracket and the cartographic tree diagrams where necessary.

6. Extant works on Yoruba focus

Extant works have focused on whether focus construction is a noun phrase or sentence (Awobuluyi 1992, 1987, Owolabi 1987) among others on the one hand. On the other hand, focus was seen as the licenser of emphatic phrase (Awoyale 1990; Arokoyo 2004, 2018), while Abimbola (2019) among others argued against it. In works of Ilori (2010) and Olaogun (2016) among others, the status of the spec-FocP was construed as a nominal phrase licenser because one of the predicate focus which requires nominalization.

Again Abimbola (2019) argues that that was not the case. Apart from these, there are a number of works on the derivation of the clause. However, as far as the present writer knows, there is no work which has addressed the issue regarding the status of negation in the specifier domain of focus phrases in the language. With the behaviour of negation in such constructions, one begins to wonder about the scope of negation and its effects in the clause. Does the negator scope over the focused constituent such that negative phrase (hence, NegP) dominates the focused constituent's nominal phrase (hence, DP)? Or, the DP dominates the NegP in specifier of focus phrase (hence, spec-FocP)? Thus, this work will provide answers to the question asked under the research question by presenting the right interpretation of the spec-FocP position for appropriate interpretation and representation of the domain in the clause architecture. Two things are fundamental here: a quick survey of focus processes in Yoruba and Yoruba negation. These are discussed in the next sections before moving to the analysis.

7. Focus processes in Yoruba

Usually, a focused constituent is delimited from the rest of the structure by first, moving the said constituent to the leftmost part of the sentence or the left periphery of the clause because the language does not permit a focused constituent to remain at the point where it used to be before focus mapping. Second, the focused constituent is immediately followed by a focus marker *ni* in non-negative focus clauses. Data (4) is taken as the base structure from which the focus counterparts in (5a-d) are derived.

4. Omọ náà jí owó bàbá ní ọsán
 Child Def. steal money father prep afternoon
 "The child stole Baba's money in the afternoon"
- 5a. Omọ náà ni ____ ó jí owó bàbá ní ọsán
 Child Def. foc ____ HTS steal money father prep afternoon
 "It was the child who stole Baba's money in the afternoon"
- 5b. Owó bàbá ni omọ náà jí ____ ní ọsán
 money father foc child Def. steal ____ prep afternoon
 "It was Baba's money that the child stole in the afternoon"

- 5c. Jíjì ní ọmọ náà jí owó bàbá ní ọsán
steal foc child Def. steal money father prep afternoon
“As a matter of fact, the child stole Baba’s money in the afternoon”
- 5d. Ní ọsán ní ọmọ náà jí owó bàbá ____
prep afternoon foc child Def. steal money father ____
“In the afternoon, the child stole Baba’s money”

For every speaker of the language, the constructions in (5a-d) are understood as non-negative induced focus constructions. Also, those constituents on the left of the focus marker are the focused constituent. In the language, irrespective of the constituent that undergoes focus, no in-situ focus is licensed. Hence, the need to front focus marked constituent to the left side of the clause. And such is followed by the focus marker. Data (5a-d) show the non-negative focus construction where strict adjacency is observed between the focused constituent and the focus marker. Hence, for the constituents focused in (5a-d) above, that is the subject, object of the verb, the verb, object complement of the preposition, nothing may come between them and the focus marker otherwise, the construction becomes anomalous. Also note that, all the constituents were preposed to the spec-FocP. Structurally, the adjacency rule is upheld. In negative clauses however, the strict adjacency rule between the focus marker and the focused constituent is broken by the presence of the negative marker *kó* which occurs immediately after the focused constituent as shown in data (6a-c) below.

- 6a. Ọmọ náà kó ní ____ ó jí owó bàbá ní ọsán
Child Def. Neg. foc ____ HTS steal money father prep afternoon
“It was not the child who stole Baba’s money in the afternoon”
- 6b. Jíjì kó ní ọmọ náà jí owó bàbá ní ọsán
stealing Neg. foc child Def. steal money father prep afternoon
“It was not the fact that the child stole Baba’s money in the afternoon”
- 6c. Ọsán kó ní ọmọ náà jí owó bàbá (ní)
afternoon Neg. foc Child Def. steal money father (prep)
“It was not in the afternoon that the child steals Baba’s money”
- 7a. Tólá, ọúnjẹ tí ẹe tán
Tólá, food perf. do finish
“Tolá, the food is ready”
- 7b. *Tólá kó, ọúnjẹ tí ẹe tán
Tólá Neg. food perf. do finish
- 7c. *Tólá kó, ọúnjẹ ní ó tí ẹe tán
Tólá Neg. food foc HTS perf. Do finish

From the data above, the focused constituent in negated focus constructions requires the focused constituent to move from the it base generated position to the leftmost part of the clause followed by the focus marker and the negator *kó* which is the only invariable form of the negator used in negative focus construction. The subject constituent and the verb were focused and negated in (6a) and (6b) respectively. In (6c) however, the object DP of the preposition is focused and negated. In (6a-c), the data show that the presence of negative marker may break the adjacency rule between the focused constituent and the focus marker. *kó*, the negative marker used in focus construction must come immediately after the focus constituent.

In a related construction, topicalization, the negator is ruled out. Hence, no topical construction may induce negation of the constituent topicalized as observed in (7a-c) above. If the focused constituent occupies the spec-FocP position and the focus marker occupies head of FocP position, where would the negative marker which poses to be head of negative phrases occupy? Why is the negator able to break the strict adjacency rule observed between the focused constituent and the focus marker? How can the structure be represented cartographically.

7.1. Yoruba negators

Following earlier works on Yoruba negators like Awobuluyi (1978, 2013), Owolabi (1995), Bamgbose (1990), and Yusuf (2006), Yusuf (1999b), Fabunmi (2013), and Ogbeifun and Abimbola (2020) among others, Yoruba negators may be classified into three types based on what is negated in a given construction: lexical, clausal and constituent negation. Consider the following data which illustrate the first two types.

		Verb/VPnegative form	derivatives
8a.	i.	jẹun àì ¹ -	→ àìjẹun
	ii.	kú àì-	→ àìkú
	iii.	sùn àì-	→ àìsùn

¹ There are lots of arguments on the nature of the composition of this morpheme. Some argued that “àì-” is composed of two different morphemes, that is *à-* and *-ì-*, where *à-* is a prefix used in nominalizing the derivation and *-ì-* is the negative marker remnant of the morpheme found in some dialects of the language today as *rì*, e.g. *-à-rì-jẹ* (interested reader may read further on the argument in Awobuluyi (2005).

- 8b. i. Àìjẹun rẹ **kò**² dáa
 ii. A ò lọ → A à lọ
- 9a. Bàbá nàà fẹ̀ràn ọmọ rẹ obìnrin
 Father Det. like child poss. girl
 “The man loves his girl child”
- 9b. Bàbá nàà **kò** fẹ̀ràn ọmọ rẹ obìnrin
 Father Det. neg. like child poss. girl
 “The man did not love his girl child”
- 9c. wọn **òn** fẹ̀ràn ọmọ wọn obìnrin
 3sg neg. like child poss.H girl
 “They did not love their girl child”
- 9d. A **à** fẹ̀ràn ọmọ wọn obìnrin
 1pl neg. like child poss.H girl
 “We did not love their girl child”

As observed from (8a) i-iii, the item **àì-** is used to derive new words from verbs or verb phrases in the language. The derivatives can be used in sentence formation as seen in (8b) i-ii. In data (9b) which is the negated form of (9a), the whole clause is negated with the marker **kò** negating the ascertain made in the clause. In negating a clause, **kò** is the negative form employed as in (9a). The negative marker **kò** may undergo consonant deletion and may change form whenever the consonant is deleted, and thus and ultimately assimilation to the vowel of the preceding segment as in (9b-c). This is similar to what is observed in (ii) of (8b) above. In (9d), a pronominal is the subject of the clause and it has just a vowel form. The negator assimilates its form to the form of the pronominal element. In other words, whenever the initial consonant of the negator is dropped, the vowel may assimilate to the form of the vowel before it. This works well for the clause or sentence negation. In negating a focused constituent however, the negative marker is different in form and position.

- 10a. Fọlá gé ẹ̀ran ńlá fún àlejò
 Fola cut meat big prep visitor
 “Fola cut a big chunk of meat for the visitor”
- 10b. Fọlá **kó** ní ọ́ gé ẹ̀ran ńlá fún àlejò
 Fola neg. foc HTS cut meat big prep visitor
 It was Fola who cut a big chunk of meat for the visitor”
- 10c. ẹ̀ran ńlá **kó** ní Fọlá gé _ fún àlejò
 meat big neg. foc Fola cut _ prep visitor
 “it was not a big meat that Fola cut for the visitor”
- 10d. Àlejò **kó** ní Fọlá gé ẹ̀ran ńlá fún _
 Visitor neg. foc Fola cut meat big prep _
 “it was not the visitor that Fola cut a big chunk of meat for”
- 10e. Gígẹ́ **kó** ní Fọlá gé ẹ̀ran ńlá fún àlejò
 Cutting neg. foc Fola cut meat big prep visitor
 “the fact is that Fola cut a big chunk of meat for the visitor”

The data shown in (10b) to (10e) above are used to illustrate constituent negation and the construction involved is focusing. The form of the negator whenever the focused constituent is negated is **kó**. As observed from the data presented in (10b-e) above. (10a) is a declarative form of the sentence. In (10b), the subject is focused while the object is focused in (10c). The object complement of the preposition is focused (10d), while the verb is focused and (10e). As observed from the data, only the negative marker form **kó** is used to negate the focused constituent.

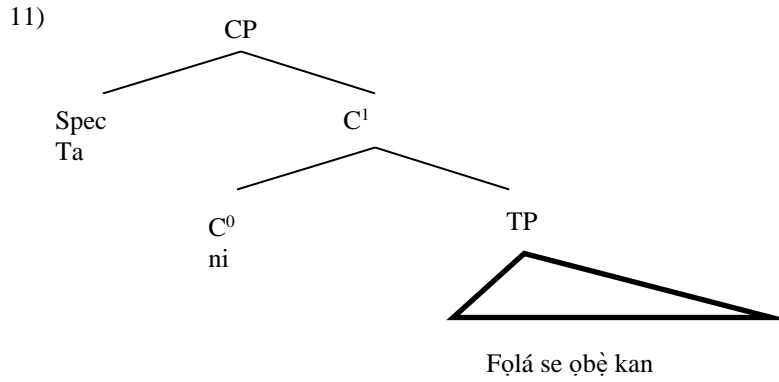
7.2. Internal architecture of Yoruba negativized focus specifier

For the purpose the discussion here is set to achieve, the discussion is divided into sections with the aim of addressing issues one after the other the misconception set in by CP structure of Government and Binding model.

i. The position of focus and interrogative and their specifiers

In most syntactic analysis available on the language prior to Minimalist Program, where content word questions and focus are interfaced, focus marker is usually taken as interrogative marker. This owes largely to the shortcomings of the CP in Government and Binding theory. Hence, the head is usually the focus marker while the content words are said to move to the spec-FocP as shown below.

² There are several other forms of negation in the language used in negating the clause. **kì** is a variant of **ko** use before the continuative marker **ń** whose form changes to **í** e.g. **Adé kò ń lọ* → *Adé kì í lọ*; **má** is used in imperative sentences for example *Adé lọ* → *Má lọ*. The subject of the clause is deleted in the process of turning it to negative imperative sentence. Oduntan (2000) likens the inflectional change in form of the tense and aspectual markers influenced by the negator **kò** as morphological dependency.

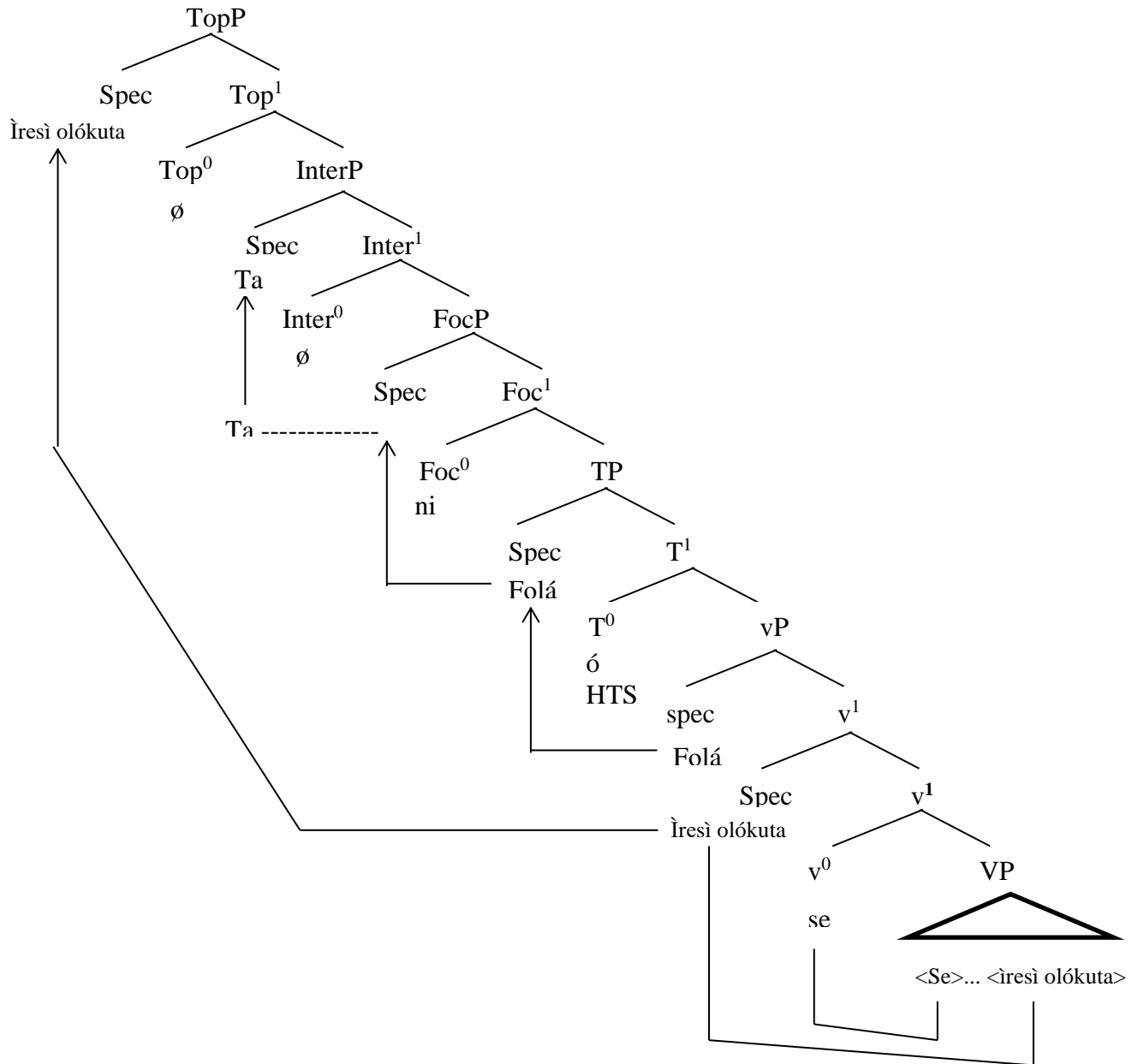


Interrogative heads are force heads which depending on the type of interrogation initiated as the case is in content word questions, the head has strong specifier feature in Yoruba; but the specifier feature is weak in polar questions. Hence, there is no triggering of the interrogated item to spec-InterP. The same is applicable to focus and topic heads. These heads require their specifier positions to be filled by interrogated, focused and topicalized constituents, due to strong specifier feature. Following Rizzi (1997) cartographic analysis, interrogative dominates focus but topic dominates the two as evident in the following constructions.

- 12a) Olú se ìrẹ̀sì olókuta.
Olú cook rice one-with-stones
“Olu cooked stone filled rice”
- 12b) Ìrẹ̀sì olókuta, Olú sè é
Rice one-with-stones, Olu cook it
“stony rice, Olu cooked it”
- 12c) Ìrẹ̀sì olókuta, ta ni ó sè é
Rice one-with-stone, who foc HTS cook it
“stony rice, who cooked it?”
- 12d) Ta ni ó se ìrẹ̀sì olókuta?
Who foc HTS cook rice-with-stone
“Who cooked the stony rice?”

In (12a), the items are still in their base positions. The (12b) is a topicalized expression where the object DP undergoes topicalization and nothing else is involved. To topicalize a constituent, the topicalized items must be preposed just as it is in focus. However, the topic does not have overt head. In (12c) however, the object DP is topicalized and another item *Ta* is questioned after being focused. In contrast to (12c) above, (12d) involves interrogative and focus heads. But the same item that was focused is the same which had to go through interrogative scope. Thus, the positions for interrogated, focus and topicalized items are carefully spelt out in specifiers of their heads. This is illustrated as given below (13).

(13)



As established based on language internal evidence above that the spec-InterP, spec-FocP and spec-TopP are not the same, and that negation effect induced by *k'ó* in spec-FocP affects only focused constituent, it is imperative to see the internal structure cartographically towards an appropriate representation of the domain.

i. Scope, negation and focus

Hierarchically, negation scopes over the focused constituent as shown in various data presented in the work so far. Hence, it is a strong head. Oduntan (2000) argues that NegP is the maxima projection above TP in negative constructions. As a corollary to Oduntan (2000), and Ajongolo (2005) also proposed that in Ào dialect of Yoruba (and by extension in Standard Yoruba), the NegP dominates TP within the clause architecturally. Following the claim, the NegP dominates TP cartographically in the clause structure because the scope is over the whole clause as in (9a) to (9d) above.

In constituent negative construction however, the scope of the negation covers the constituent on the left and not the whole clause. That is, the effect of negation covers only the item being focused. In (10b), the same constituent item which has undergone focus interpretation is the same item which is negated. The effect of that negation did not cover all the item in the clause but the focus constituent only. That is, it covers only the item in spec-FocP. Even if the focus interacted with topical item as in (14a) or interrogative as in (14b) below, the effect of negation can only negate or scope on the constituent focused. Both topicalized and interrogated constituents are opaque to negation in the left periphery in Yoruba language. Negation cannot be induced on such constituents; hence, the ill-formedness of the constructions in (15a) to (15d). Again, in (14a), the topicalized item cannot be negated like focus as shown in (15a) where both focus and interrogative cannot interact let alone interrogated constituent being negated. In (14b) both focus and interrogative force interacted without any overt head marker for the interrogative phrase. Yet, the same is grammatical in the language. But (15c) cannot be so licensed even though the interrogated constituent must first be

focused before being interrogated at spec-InterP. (15d) does not allow negation of topicalized constituent. In order words, there is no negative licensing in spec InterP/TopP.

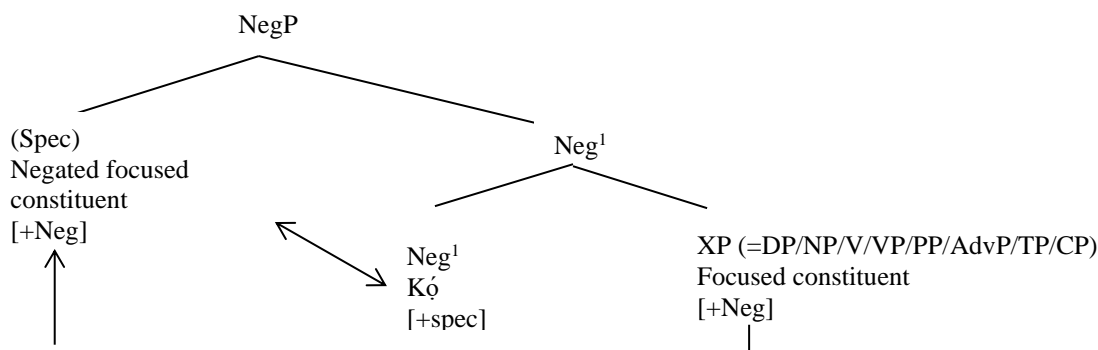
- 14a. Mummy, Fòlá *kó* ni ó gé ẹran òlá fún àlejò
Mummy, Fola neg. foc HTS cut meat big prep visitor
“Mummy, it was not Fola who cut a big chunk of meat for the visitor”
- 14b. Ta ni Fòlá gé ẹran òlá fún _
Who foc Fòlá cut meat big prep. _
“Who did Fola cut the big chunk of meat for?”
- 15a. *Mummy, ta *kó* ni ó gé ẹran òlá fún àlejò
Mummy, who Neg Foc HTS cut meat big prep visitor
- 15b. *Mummy, ta Fòlá *kó* ni ó gé ẹran òlá fún àlejò
Mummy, who Fola Neg Foc HTS cut meat big prep visitor
- 15c. *Ta *kó* ni ó gé ẹran òlá fún àlejò
who Neg Foc HTS cut meat big prep visitor
- 15d. *Mummy *kó* Fòlá ni ó gé ẹran òlá fún àlejò
Mummy, Neg Fola Foc HTS cut meat big prep visitor

As shown above, the negator *kó* scopes over the focused constituent in spec-FocP as the head of the negative phrase and it may not co-occur with any other constituent as already established.

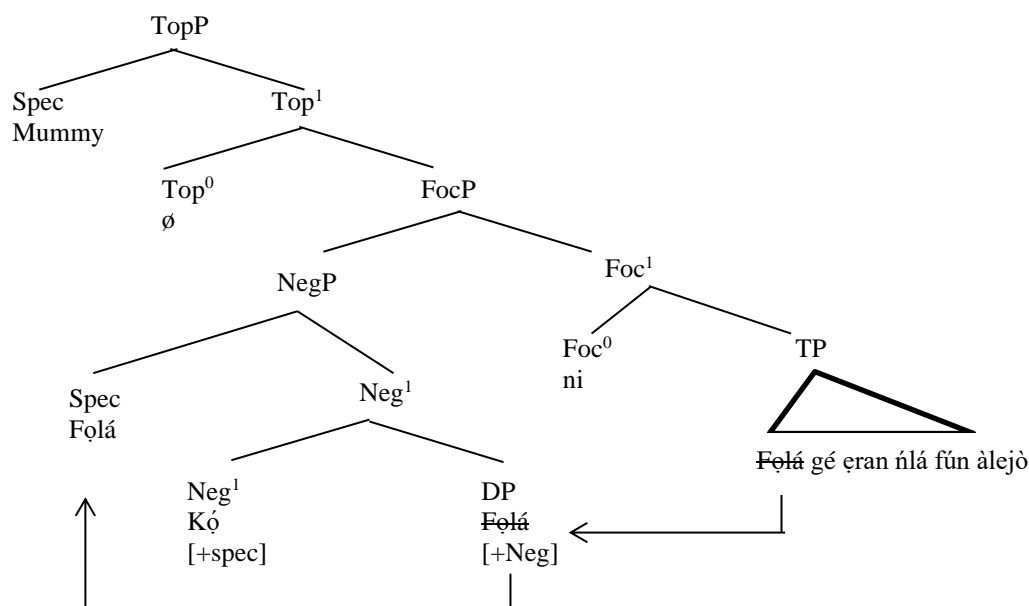
ii. The architecture of focus phrase specifier in negative focus constructions

As the head of the preposed constituent in spec-FocP, the negative item dominates the preposed constituent. The phrasal architecture of the domain is represented as given below in (16a). When the negative marker head of NegP enters the derivation, it begins the computation of NegP which is then merged after convergence of the NegP domain to Foc¹ in the spec position to project the FocP. The phrase structure in (16a) shows the NegP projection, while (16b) shows NegP in spec-FocP position to map the negated constituent.

16a)



16b)



- ii. The spec-InterP and spec-TopP are opaque to such hierarchy because constituent interrogated or topicalized cannot be negated in the language. Thus, this hierarchy does not hold around this domain.
- iii. In negative focus constructions, the focused constituent is first moved into the domain of negative head, Neg⁰. The Neg⁰ is a probe head which attracts the focus constituent to spec-NegP for the purpose of valuation of its negative feature and linearization of the word order. This upholds the asymmetry observable with heads requiring items to be moved to specifier of the head.

10. Implications of the study

The present account shows that the varying analyses found in the literature can no longer be adhered to as far as focusing is concerned in Yoruba language. Cartographically, every projection has its own head and the heads are sole determinant of what can be moved into their domain in terms of interrogation, negation, topicalization and focusing. Apart from these, fronting a negated focus constituent induce a negative phrase in specifier of Focus phrase. Without the focus constituent there is nothing to negate at that point. Pedagogically, a negated constituent induces negative phrase and the negative phrase is within the scope of focus and not the focus within the scope of negation. Understanding and teaching of the domain will no longer ignore salient properties of the projection which previous analyses have stayed away from.

11. Recommendations

This work is recommended for linguists who are working on African languages. The nature of scope determines hierarchy of dominance. Hence, this must be taking into consideration for a proper account and discussion of the properties of the construction. It is also recommended for Yoruba grammarians and teachers of Yoruba language. They are encouraged to take into consideration the nature of the construction so that they will no longer shy away for explanations students often asked about the dominance of negative item in the domain of focus.

12. Conclusion

The interaction of the negative marker *kó* and focused constituent which may be a DP, complementizer phrase, preposition phrase, gerundive nominal and pronominal elements have long been ignored in terms of viable explanation required for the domain. This work has examined how the scope of negation determines the structural architecture of spec-FocP. It argues that topicalized and interrogated items cannot be negated, hence both the spec-InterP and spec-TopP are opaque to the so-called constituent negation scope *kó*. And it also argues that the domain of Neg⁰ houses an XP which can be lexicalised by a DP, CP, PP, etc in its complement domain before being moved for the purpose spec-head valuation. The negator does not license another NegP projection above FocP because it does not interact with TopP and InterP in the force domain.

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List of Abbreviations

FocP/Foc¹/Foc⁰ -Focus Phrase/ intermediate projection/ head of focus phrase; **spec**-specifier; **DP**- Determiner Phrase; **TopP/Top¹/Top⁰** -Topicalization Phrase/Intermediate projection/ head of topicalization phrase; **XP**- a variable phrasal projection; **CP /C¹/C⁰**-Complementizer Phrase/Intermediate category of CP/head of CP; **PP**- Preposition Phrase; **HTS**- High Tone Syllable; **cont.** – Continuative/Progressive; **TP**- Tense Phrase; **1/2/3sg** -First/Second/Third Person Singular; **H**- Honorific; **Ø**- null or empty; **Def.** – Definite article; **Prep** – preposition; **Neg**- negation; **perf.** – perfective aspect; **VP** – verb phrase; **poss.** – possessive; **InterP/Inter¹/Inter⁰** – Interrogative phrase/Intermediate projection/head of interrogative phrase; **vP/v¹/v⁰** – Light verb phrase/Intermediate projection/ head of light verb; **NP** – Noun Phrase; **AdvP** – Adverbial Phrase; **+Neg** – negative feature; **EPP** - Extended Projection Principle

