A SYNTAX OF FOCUS AND INTERROGATIVES IN CENTRAL YORÙBÁ DIALECTS

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CERTIFICATION

I certify that this work was carried out under my supervision by Mr. Emmanuel Ọmọniyì Ọláńrewájú in the Department of Linguistics and African Languages, University of Ìbàdàn, Ìbàdàn, Nigeria.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to ALMIGHTY GOD.

In His unfailing and unfading grace I sailed through

when it was seemingly impossible.

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ABSTRACT

Focus refers to the part of a clause which provides the most relevant or salient information in a given discourse situation, while interrogatives are conventionally associated with the act of requesting information. Previous studies on the syntax of Central Yorùbá dialects have focused on verb phrases, pronouns, relativisation and negation, with little attention to focus and interrogatives. This study was, therefore, designed to investigate the syntax of focus and interrogatives in Central Yorùbá dialects, with a view to determining their forms, strategies and variations.

Noam Chomsky's Minimalist Program served as the framework, while the interpretive design was used. Forty-eight native speakers aged 60 and above were purposively selected for structured oral interview based on their proficiency, 12 each from Ilé-Ifẹ̀, Ilẹ́ṣà, Adó-Ékìtì and Ọ̀tùn Mọ̀bà, which are the major areas where Central Yorùbá is spoken. Data were elicited using the Ìbàdàn 400 Worldlist and Syntax Paradigm. Data were subjected to syntactic analysis.

Central Yorùbá dialects employ three focus markers: *ni*, *li* and *ri*, which are optionally dropped in constituent interrogatives. Six interrogative nouns referred to as Question Nouns (QNs) were identifed: *yèsí/yè/ìsí* (who), *kí* (what/how), *èló/eélòó* (how much), *mélóó* (how many), è*kelòó* (what number), *kà (ka ibi)* (where). *Kí* is used either to source information on a non-human referent: *Kí i yè é?* (What is this?) or about manner: *Kí è é ṣe dún?* (How did it sound?). Central Yorùbá dialects operate a resumptive pronoun *ọ/ẹ* whenever DP extraction occurs at subject position. The high tone on the resumptive pronoun cliticises with focus marker *li* after dropping the resumptive pronoun; *Ayọ̀ lí ra ẹran* (*Ayọ̀ li ẹ́ ra ẹran*) (It was Ayọ̀ who bought meat). The QNs are also base-generated at the subject position when the dialects operate either *kà: Kà tún rí Adé*? (Where is Adé again?) or the copula *ni*: (*Yèsí ni ọ́*? (Who are you?). Other interrogative methods were identified: question verb (*síkọ́*)*;* interrogative qualifier (sí); yes/no question markers (*ṣé*, *ǹjẹ́*, *ṣebí/ṣèbí/mbî*); abstract yes/no question marker and intonational accent with great loudness or pitch rising. There were dialectal variations. *Ni* and *li* are in free variation except in Ifẹ̀. Some parts of Ékìtì and Mọ̀bà use *ìsí* (who): *Ìsí ọn rí*? (Who did we see?) in the place of *yèsí,* which is attested by the Ifẹ̀ and Ìjẹ̀ṣà dialects: *Yèsí ó mí pè mí?* (Who was calling me?). Some parts of Ékìtì use the question phrase, *ọ̀kàn sí* (which): *Ọ̀kàn sí ọ fẹ̀?* (Which one do you want?), while the Ifẹ̀ and Ìjẹ̀ṣà dialects use *yèé sí*: *Yèé sí wọ̀ a mú kò mí níbẹ̀?* (Which one will you give me among them?).

Central Yorùbá dialects use the same focus and interrogative strategies, although with some dialectal variations in their forms.

Keywords: Central Yorùbá dialects, Focus and interrogatives, Dialectal forms and variations

Word count: **4**54

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LIST OF SYMBOLS, CONVENTIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADV	=	Adverb
AdvP	=	Adverbial phrase
ACP	=	Attract the Closest Principle
ASP	=	Aspect
AUX	=	Auxiliary
C	=	Complementizer
CED	=	Condition on Extraction Domain
CNPC	=	Complex Noun Phrase Constraint
CONJ	=	Conjunction
CP	=	Complementizer phrase
CPL	=	Copula
CSC	=	Coordinate Structure Constraint
CY	=	Central Yorùbá
D	=	Determiner
DO	=	Direct object
DP	=	Determinal Phrase
D-Structure	=	Deep structure
EC	=	Empty category
EF	=	Edge feature
Emph	=	Emphasis
EmphP	=	Emphasis phrase
Emph’	=	Emphasis bar
$Emph^0$	=	Emphasis head
EPP	=	Extended Projection Principle
FOC	=	Focus marker
FocP	=	Focus Phrase
Foc’	=	Focus bar
Foc^0	=	Focus head
EXPL	=	Expletive
Fut	=	Future tense marker
GEN	=	Genitive position
HTS	=	High tone syllable

iff	=	If and only if.
IQ	=	Interrogative qualifier
IO	=	Indirect object (position)
InterP	=	Interrogative phrase
Inter’	=	Interrogative bar
$Inter^0$	=	Interogative head
LBC	=	Left Branching Constraint
LF	=	Logical form.
MP	=	Minimalist Program
N	=	Noun
NOM	=	Nominative
NOML	=	Nominalization
NEG	=	Negative
NegP	=	Negative phrase
Neg^I	=	Negative-bar
Non-Fut	=	None future tenses (past and present tenses)
P	=	Preposition
PIC	=	Phase Impenetrability Condition
PP	=	Prepositional phrase
PERF	=	Perfect aspect
PF	=	Phonetic form
PISH	=	Predicate Internal Subject Hypothesis
pl	=	Plural pronoun
PN	=	Proper noun
POSS	=	Possessive Pronoun
PSM	=	Post-modifier
PP	=	Prepositional phrase
PRM	=	Pre-modifier
PROG	=	Progressive aspect
+Q	=	Question feature
QM	=	Question marker
QN	=	Question noun
QUAL	=	Qualifier
QV	=	Question verb

RES	=	Resumptive pronoun
sg	=	Singular pronoun
SOV	=	Subject object verb
Spec	=	Specifier.
S-Structure	=	Surface structure
ST	=	Standard Theory
SCC		Subject Constraint Condition
SVO	=	Subject verb object
SY	=	Standard Yorùbá
t	=	Trace
TP	=	Tense projection
T’	=	Tense bar
T^0	=	Tense head
UG	=	Universal Grammar
UTAH	=	Uniform Theta Assignment Hypothesis
V	=	Verb
VMH	=	Vacuous Movement Hypothesis
V′	=	V-bar
VP	=	Verb phrase
v	=	Light performative verb
v’	=	Light performative verb bar
*v*P	=	Light verb phrase
WH	=	Question word
+wh	=	Wh-question feature
X^O	=	Head
XP	=	Phrasal category
X′	=	X-bar (Intermediate)
X″	=	X-double bar
X^n----------X^{n-1}	=	X is a bar lower
YNQM	=	Yes or no question marker
α	=	Alpha
ß	=	Beta
ɣ	=	Gamma
+	=	Positively specified for

-	=	Negatively specified for
Ø	=	Phonetically and morphological unrealised element
-->	=	Re-write
*	=	Ungrammatical
{ }	=	Braces /Disjunctive choice
[ ]	=	Square /Constituent bracket
( )	=	Parenthesis /Optional
Δ	=	Individual constituent not exposed in details
ϴ	=	Theta
ϴ	=	Non-theta
i, j, k	=	Index marks

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Preliminaries

This chapter discusses the preliminaries of the study, such as background information on CY people and phonology of their dialects. The chapter also focuses on aim, objectives, significance, scope of the study and so on.

1.1 Background to the study

A considerable amount of research works have been carried out on the phonology ans syntax of Yoruba. Among these are Crowther (1852), Delanọ̀ (1865), Bámgbóṣé (1966, 1990, 2000), Awóbùlúyì (1967, 1978; 2008, 2013), Awóyalé (1985), Adéwọlé (1988; 1991a, 1991b, 1992) and Yusuf (1989, 1990). The afore-mentioned scholarly works have identified many features exhibited by standard Yorùbá, particularly in the areas of syntax and phonology. Interestingly, scholars are still giving adequate attention to all the branches of the language.

Yorùbá dialects unlike standard Yorùbá began to attract the interest of language scholars in the last two decades. Therefore, adequate attention is still needed to be paid to research studies of Yorùbá dialects. This prompted Awóbùlúyì (1998) to call the attention of Yorùbá scholars to take the advantage of exploring Yorùbá dialects as quoted below:

> Ìmọ̀ nípa àwọn ẹ̀ka-èdè ni ìmọ̀ tí ó jẹ mọ́ orúkọ wọn, àdúgbò àti agbègbè wọn, irú àwọn ìró tí ó wà nínú wọn, àwọn ìpèdè wọn... Irú ìmọ̀ bẹ́ẹ̀ tí a tîì rí kó jọjú rárá... Bí a bá fẹ́ kí irú ìmọ̀ bẹ́ẹ̀ ó pọ̀ sí i, àwa àti àwọn akẹ́kọ̀ọ́ abẹ́ wa gbọ́dọ́ ṣíjú sí àwọn ẹ̀ka-èdè wa. Kí a sì bẹ́rẹ̀ sí í tú wọn palẹ̀ lọ́nà tí ìmọ̀ yóò fi tètè kún dọ́gba nípa ìró inú wọn àti ìpèdè wọn.
>
> (Awóbùlúyì, 1998: 10)

A research on dialects comprises the study of their names, areas, speech sounds and types of expressions in

them... These types of research studies are still not adequate... If

> we want to allow this kind of knowledge to increase, we therefore, need to shift our attention to our dialects with our students, and begin to analyse their phonological and syntactic features to be able to have detailed knowledge about them.

As remarked by Olúmúyìwá (2006), any endeavour in line with Awóbùlúyì's appeal above will invariably have immediate and long-term benefits for Yorùbá studies, especially on things that these dialects can teach us about the structure of standard Yorùbá. Many of the items operated in standard Yorubá take their sources from its dialects. For instance Adétúgbọ̀ (1982: 214) claims that vowel system of CY areas represents better than others the early stage of Yorùbá. According to him all the dialects had full system of vowel harmony at the earlier stage, but this has been eliminated in some other dialects and the standard Yorùbá. Therefore, researching more into Yorùbá dialects will unveil many things about the structures of the language. In line with this, the present study investigated the syntax of focus and interrogatives in CY dialects. Apart from being of immediate and long-term benefits for Yorùbá studies, it reveals some common features and variations between CY dialects and standard Yorùbá.

1.2 Central Yorùbá: The people and the dialects[1]

In this study, the Ifẹ̀, Ìjẹ̀ṣà, Èkìtì, Mọ̀bà are identified as Central Yorùbá (CY), adopting Awóbùlúyì (1998). Central Yorùbá (CY) people share many common features linguistically and ethnographically (Adétúgbọ̀, 1982, Awóbùlúyì, 1998 and, Adéníyì and Òjó, 2005).

i. Location of Ilé-Ifẹ̀ and people

The indegenes of Ilé-Ifẹ̀ are referred to as the Ifẹ̀. It is geographically located on Latitude 7^{o} 28^{1} ON (7.466667) and Longitude 40^{o} 34^{1} OE (4.566667). The town is in Ọ̀sun, one of the south-western states in Nigeria.

There are different versions of history about Ilé-Ifẹ̀, and they are essentially mythical. One of the prominent traditional beliefs about Ifẹ̀ is that it is the common origin of all Yorùbá towns. All the various tribes within Yorùbá trace their origin

[1]. This work adopts Awóbùlúyì (1998) which identifies Ifẹ̀, Ìjẹ̀ṣà, Èkìtì, and Mọ̀bà under CY dialects, Àkúrẹ́ is considered as a sub-dialect of Èkìtì in this study.

from Òdùduwà and therefore believe that they migrated from the city of Ilé-Ifẹ̀[2]. According to Abraham (1958:278), Ilé-Ifẹ̀ is accepted as the parent city of all Yorùbá people. According to him, these traditional beliefs are reflected in the derivation of the noun *Ifẹ̀* meaning the *act of spreading*. Ifẹ̀, a nominalized word comprises two morphemes: the nominalising prefix ***i*** and the verb *fẹ̀* (root morpheme) meaning *to spread*, as shown (in 1) below:

1. i + fẹ̀= Ifẹ̀
   Prefix spread 'act of spreading' or 'where a thing begins to spread'
   (Ọlámrewájú, 2017: 1)

Ilé-Ifẹ̀ is not only considered as the origin of the Yorùbá but also as the place where every humankind was created.

Ilé-Ifẹ̀ is a major collecting point for farm products like cocoa, cotton, oranges, pumpkin, kola nuts, palm oil, kernels and so on. Food crops like yams, cassava, plantains, corn (maize) and so on are also cultivated for local markets. Ilé-Ifẹ̀'s inhabitants are primarily town-dwelling farmers. The sub-dialects under Ifẹ̀ are Ifẹ̀wàrà and Ìfẹ́tẹ̀dó[3].

ii. The location of Ilẹ́ṣà and people (Ìjẹ̀ṣà)

Ijẹ̀ṣà people are the native speakers of the Ijẹ̀ṣà dialect. They occupy Ijẹ̀ṣà-land located in the
Obòkun Àdìmúlà of Ijẹ̀ṣàland. Some other towns in Ijẹ̀ṣàland are: Ìbòkun, Ẹ̀rìn, Ìpetu-Ijẹ̀ṣà, Ìjèbú-Jẹ̀ṣà, Ìlokò-Ijẹ̀ṣà, Ẹ̀ṣà-Òkè, Ìpolé, Èrìnmọ̀, Ìwàrá, Ìwárája, Ìlásẹ̀, Ìgbómìnàsi, Ìgànyán, Ìkeji-Ilé, Ìmẹ̀sí-Ilé, Ọ̀tan-Ilé, Ọ̀wẹ̀nà- Ìjẹ̀ṣà, Kájọlà and so on. All these surrounding cities virtually speak Ijẹ̀ṣà dialect[4].

Just like the Ifẹ̀, Ijẹ̀ṣà people are mainly cocoa, palm oil, kolanut, and cotton farmers. They als

iii. Location and people of Èkìtì[5]

The Èkìtì people also known as *Èkìtì parapọ̀* "Èkìtì altogether" are found in the present Èkìtì state located between Longitude 40^0 5^1 and 50^0 45^1 East of Greenwich Meridian and Latitude 70^0 $15^1$and 80^0 5^1 North of the Equator. It is

---

2. See Johnson (1957) for more details.
3. Ifẹ̀wara is a town under Àtàkúmọ̀sà Local Government Area in Ilẹ́ṣà. Therefore, Ifẹ̀wàrà as a sub-dialect of ifẹ̀ has been greatly influenced by Ìjẹ̀ṣà dialect. Ifẹ̀ dialect is also spoken in Òkè-Igbó in Onḍó state.
4 Some of these Ìjẹ̀ṣà towns also exhibit dialectal variations, which are unnoticeable unlike that of Èkìtì.
5. Some parts of Èkìtì are also found in Kwara state.

situated in the South-west Nigeria. Èkìtì shares the same boundary with the south of Kwara and Kogi states. It is also bounded in the east and south by Onḍó State. The towns are mainly characterised by a number of hills and valleys from which they take their names. Actually, it is the word *òkìtì* **"**highland" that transforms to *Èkìtì*.

Èkìtì people also believe that their ancestral fathers migrated from Ile-Ifẹ̀. Though there are noticeable dialectal differences among the Èkìtì towns, however, there is mutual intelligibility. These variations are caused by their spatial locations which mainly affects the border communities. All Èkìtì towns take the suffix *Èkìtì* after their names. These towns are up to thirty-two. Amongst them are: Adó, Arámọkọ, Ìkọ̀lé, Ìkàrẹ́, Igógo, Ìjerò, Èfọ̀n-Alààyè, Ayétòrò, Ìpotì, Ìṣẹ̀, Ìtàpà, Ùsi, Ìdó, Emùré, Ìyìn, Ìgèdè, Ìlawẹ̀, Ode, Ọyẹ, Ọgọ̀tún, Òmùò, Ìlúpéjú, Ikóro, Ìyè, Ìjẹ̀ṣà-Ìṣu, Ayédùn, Òkèmèsí and so on.

Modern Èkìtìland is a major collecting point for export products like cocoa, palm oil, pumpkin

iv. Location and people of Mọ̀bà

The Mọ̀bà people are found in the North-western part of Èkìtì. They share the same boundary with the South-western part of Kwara state and North-eastern part of Ọ̀sun state. Parts of the towns in Mọ̀bà Local Government Area like Ìyémọrọ̀, Òkè-Àkó and Ìpàọ̀ have their sub-dialects influenced by Yàgbà dialect spoken in Kwarà state. Other towns in Mọ̀bà Local Government Area are Ọ̀tùn Mọ̀bà, Gógo, Ìkùn, Ìkòsù, Ìsà-Oyè, Ẹ̀pẹ́, Irà, Ọsàn, Òsún, Ìró, Aaye, Ẹ̀rìnmọ̀pé and Iràrẹ́ and so on. Ọ̀tùn Mọ̀bà and its neighbouring towns also believe that their ancestral fathers migrated from Ilé-Ifẹ̀. Mọ̀bà (Ọ̀tùn) dialect is closer to Èkìti than the other two dialects in the group (Ifẹ̀ and Ijẹ̀ṣà), though, there are noticeable dialectal variations between the two. It is also discovered that the dialectal variations among the various towns in Mọ̀bà Local Government Areas are more noticeable than that of Èkìtì. However, they understand one another very well. People of Mọ̀bà are predominantly farmers. They cultivate crops like maize, potatoes, caschew, pumpkín, cotton, rice, plantains, yam, cassava, corn (maize) and so on.

1.2.1 The sound systems of CY dialects

CY dialects comprises the Ifẹ̀, Ìjẹ̀ṣà, Èkìti and Ọ̀tùn Mọ̀bà dialects. The dialects share some linguistic features in common. These features cover the areas of

segments and sequence structures. We also have areas of pronominal and numeric systems (Adétúgbọ̀, 1982; Awóbùlúyì, 1998 and, Adeníyì and Òjó, 2000).

The consonant systems of CY dialects[6]

The consonant chart below showcases the consonant phonemes of CY dialects.

[6]. Olúmùyìwá (2006:8) identifies twenty consonant phonemes in CY dialects. Apart from the nineteen consonant sounds identified by Ọláńrewájú (2017), he identifies voiceless bilabial plosive stop [p]. We did not come across this particular sound, [p] during the fieldwork.

Place → Manner ↓	Bilabial	Labio-dental	Alveolar	Post-alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Labio-vlar	Glotal
Plosives	b		t d			k g	kp gb	
Nasals	m		n					
Fricatives		f	s	ʃ		ɣ		h
Africates				ʤ				
Approximants Lateral			l					
Central			r		j	w		

Chart 1.1: Consonant chart of CY dialects

Adapted from Ọláńrewájú (2017: 7)

Distribution of CY consonants

Just like the normal convention in standard Yorùbá, consonants occur in word-initial, word-medial or inter-vocalic positions in CY dialects. Also, CY dialects do not operate consonant clustered, and consonants do not occur word-finally because only open syllables are attested in the dialects just like its standard Yorùbá counterpart. Below are some data showing CY consonant phonemes and their distributions:

	Consonant	Ifẹ̀	Ìjẹ̀ṣà	Èkìtì	Mọ̀bà	SY	Gloss
2	.[b]	bàbá	Ààbá	àábá	àábá	bàbá	Father
	[d]	dún	dún	dún	dún	dún	to sound
	[f]	fẹ́	fẹ́	fẹ́	fẹ́	fẹ́	to love
	[g]	gé	gé	gé	gé	gé	to cut
	[gb]	gbọ́	gbọ́	gbọ́	gbọ́	gbọ́	to hear
	[h]	hó	hó	hó	hó	hó	to boil
	[ɣ]	ghá	ghá	ghá	ghá	wá	to come
	[dz]	jẹun	jẹun	jẹun	jẹun	jẹun	to eat
	[k]	ké	ké	ké	ké	ké	to shout
	[l]	lé	lé	lé	lé	lé	to chase
	[m]	mọ̀	mọ̀	mọ̀	mọ̀	mọ̀	to know
	[n]	nà	nà	nà	nà	nà	to beat
	[kp]	pa	pa	pa	pa	pa	to kill
	[r]	ọ̀rẹ́	ọ̀rẹ́	ọ̀rẹ́	ọ̀rẹ́	ọ̀rẹ́	friend
	[s]	sùn	sùn	sùn	sùn	sùn	to roast
	[ʃ]	iṣu	uṣu	uṣu	uṣu	iṣu	yam
	[t]	tì	tì	tì	tì	tì	to push
	[w]	èwù	èwù	èwù	èwù	ẹ̀wù	shirt
	[j]	yèyé	èèye	èèye	èèye	ìyá	mother

The vowel systems of CY dialects

Each of the CY dialects attests seven oral and four nasal vowels,[7] as shown in the chart below:

[7] According to Adétúgbọ̀ (1982: 212-215), CY dialects operate nine oral vowels and seven nasal vowels as shown below:

[ì,ɪ, u,ʊ̀, e, ɛ, o, ɔ, a, ĩ, ī, ũ,ũ ɛ̃, ɔ̃,ã]

He claims that CY dialects operate both tense and lax vowels as shown below:

Tense:

i	u
e	o

Lax:

ɪ	ʊ
ɛ	ɔ

a

His examples below show the distributions of [ɪ] and [ʊ] in CY dialects:

[ɪ]	[ɪta]	outside
	[ɪlɛ̀]	soil
	[ʊʃɛ́]	work
[ʊ]	[ʊgà]	marshy land
	[ʊɟàrɛ́]	name of a town
	[ʊjî]	name of a town

Adétúgbọ̀ (1982: 214) asserts that 'the vowel system of CY area still represents better than others the earlier stage of the language. That is, all Yorùbá dialects had this system of vowel harmony which is preserved still by CY dialects'. However, Adétúgbọ̀ (1982) fails to provide examples showing the distributions of the nasal counterparts of this short vowels (ɪ, ʊ). It was discovered that most of the native speakers of CY area use the examples below in the place of Adétúgbọ̀'s examples above.

[i]	ìta]	outside
	[ilɛ̀]	soil
	[iʃɛ́]	work
[u]	[ùgà]	marshy land
	[ùɟàrɛ́]	name of a town
	[ùjî]	name of a town

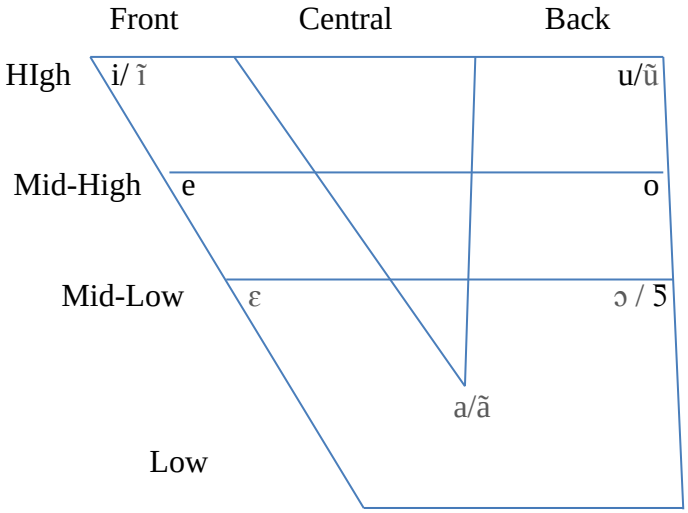

Chart 1.2: Vowel chart of CY dialects
Adapted from Ọláńrewájú (2017: 9)

The distribution of each of the seven oral and four nasal vowels in the chat above is shown (in 3) below:

3.

Vowel	**Ifẹ̀**	**Ìjẹ̀ṣà**	**Èkìtì**	**Mọ̀bà**	**SY**	**Gloss**
[i]	Igi	ugi	ugi	ugi	ugi	tree
[e]	èsì	èsì	èsì	èsì	esì	reply
[ɛ]	ìjẹ̀	ìjẹ̀	ìjẹ̀	ìjẹ̀	ẹ̀jẹ̀	blood
[a]	ọ̀tìtà	ọ̀ìtà	ọ̀ìtà	ọ̀ìtà	ọ̀tìtà	stool
[ɔ]	ọwọ́	ọọ́	ọọ́	ọọ́	ọwọ́	hand
[o]	owó/oó	eó	eó	eó	owó	honey
[u]	iṣu	uṣu	uṣu	uṣu	iṣu	yam
. [ĩ]	ìyìn	ùyìn	ùyìn	ùyìn	ìyìn	praises
[ã]	ìyàn	ùyàn	ùyàn	ùyàn	ìyàn	femine
[ɔ̃]	ọgbọ́n	ọgbọ́n	ọgbọ́n	ọgbọ́n	ọgbọ́n	wisdom
[ũ]	oyún	oyún	oyún	oyún	oyún	pregnancy

Apart from Ifẹ̀, and some parts of Mọ̀bàland like Ayédé and Isán that do not allow the high back vowel [u] at word initial position, all other dialects of CY attest [u] at word initial positions as shown (in 4) below:

4.	**Ifẹ̀**	**Ijẹ̀ṣà**	**Èkìtì**	**Mọ̀bà**[8]	**SY**	**Gloss**
	ìwé	ùwé	ùwé	ùwé[9]	ìwé	book
	iṣu	uṣu	uṣu	uṣu	iṣu	yam
	igi	ugi	ugi	ugi	igi	tree
	iná	uná	uná	uná	iná	fire
	igbá	ugbá	ugbá	ugbá	igbá	calabash
	iṣẹ́	uṣẹ́	uṣẹ́	uṣẹ́	iṣẹ́	work
	ilé	ulé	ulé	ulé	ilé	house

18. This is also referred to as *Mọ̀bà Ọ̀tùn* by some native speakers of this dialect, but for the sake of consistency, we will employ *Ọ̀tùn Mọ̀bà* in this study.

9 It was discovered that Ọ̀tùn Mọ̀bà operates both vowels i/u (ìwé/ùwé) at word initial position.

Vowel harmony system in CY dialects

It was also discovered that CY dialects operate important harmonic differences involving high vowels. In CY dialects unlike in standard Yorùbá, a mid-vowel preceding a high vowel can only be advanced, not retracted, e.g., *èbi* 'guilt'. Other manifestations of vowel harmony in CY are shown below:[10]

5.

Ifẹ̀	**Ìjẹ̀ṣà**	**Èkìtì**	**Mọ̀bà**	**SY**	**Gloss**
èrí	èrí	èrí	èrí	ẹ̀rí	testimony
emí	emí	emí	emí	ẹ̀mí	live/soul
èrín	èrín	èrín	èrín	ẹ̀rín	laughter
èmú	èmú	èmú	èmú	ẹ̀mú	pliers
ebi	ebi	ebi	ebi	ẹbi	guilt
èrù	èrù	èrù	èrù	ẹ̀rù	fear
eyìn	eyìn	eyìn	eyìn	ẹyìn	fresh palm kernel
èyìn	èyìn	èyìn	èyìn	ẹ̀yìn	back

Tone

Similarly to what is obtainable in standard Yorùbá (SY), CY dialects operate three level tonemes: high [◌́], mid [–] and low [◌̀]. These tones are phonemic as shown in the examples below:

6.

erú (MH)	' a slave'
êrù (LL)	'fear'
èrú (LH)	'cheat'
erù (LH)	'load'

1.2 Statement of the problem

Various aspects of phonology, morphology and syntax of standard Yorùbá and CY dialects have been examined by extant works like Bámgbóṣé (1966, 1967, 1990, 2000), Awóbùlúyì (1978, 2008, 2013), Awóyalé (1985), Adéwọ́lé (1988, 1991a, 1991b, 1992), Yusuf (1988, 1990) Olúmúyìwá (2006, 2009), Ajíbóyè (2006), Ọláńrewájú (2008, 2017) and so on. However, the syntax of focus and interrogatives in CY dialects has not been given adequate attention, especially from the perspective of the latest theoretical requirements, hence, there is need for a detailed analysis within the requisites of a more recent hypothesis to give a

[10]. Vowel harmony manifests in disyllabic words in CY dialects.

satisfactory account of how CY dialects form their focus and interrogatives. Apart from not giving adequate attention to the in-depth analysis of focus and interrogatives in CY, the existing scholarly works only focus on how some syntactic processes operate in individual dialects classified under CY dialects without giving enough consideration to the linguistic features that these dialects pertinently share in common. With this, it is still impossible to identify some linguistic features commonly exhibited by CY dialects as a group, which also set the group apart from other dialects classified under other Yorùbá dialect groups. Therefore, this study was designed to fill this existing gap by holistically investigating the syntax of focus and interrogatives in CY dialects (as a group) with a view to identifying the common linguistic features they exhibit and how they are set apart from some dialects in other groups with respect to how they form their focus and interrogatives. As remarked by Ọláńrewájú (2017), it is not very impossible for each dialect group members to at least have some features that set them apart from some other groups. Therefore, there is a need to carry out in-depth analyses of the syntactic processes like interrogatives, focusing, negation and so on in CY dialects. This will invariably expose not only some common features that CY dialects as a group similarly exhibit but also some other features that set them apart from some other groups. This will go a long way in helping us harness the divergent scholarly views on the classifications of Yorùbá dialects[11].

1.3 Aim and objectives of the study

This work investigated the syntax of focus and interrogatives in CY dialects within the requisite of MP. In order to achieve this, the following objectives were set up for the study:

1. To discuss the strategies of focus and interrogatives in CY dialects.
2. To identify different markers of focus and interrogatives with their distributional properties in CY dialects.
3. To identify the common features and dialectal variations exhibited by CY dialects with respect to how they form their focus and interrogative constructions.

[11]. This research work does not discuss the comparative analysis of Yorùbá dialects. It only focuses on the syntax of focus and interrogatives in CY dialects.

4. To determine the relevance of the theoretical approach to the structural analysis of focus and interrogatives in CY dialects.

1.4 Research questions

To achieve the aim and objectives above, the study was guided by the following questions:

1. What are the strategies employed to form focus and interrogatives in CY dialects?
2. What are the focus and interrogative markers, and their distribution in CY dialects?
3. What are the common features and dialectal variations exhibited by CY dialects in their focus and interrogative constructions?
4. How will minimalist approach account for focus and interrogatives in CY dialects?

1.5 Scope of the study

This study only discusses the syntax of focus and interrogatives in CY dialects. It was discovered that there are some noticeable variations, which unavoidably affect the interpretation of our data, particularly,in the Èkìtì sub-dialects. These are identified and discussed. However, the study does not discuss the comparative and contrastive studies of the sub-dialects in each of the dialect areas. It only discusses the dialectal variations that surface among these four dialects of our study (Ifẹ̀, Ìjẹ̀ṣà, Èkìtì and Ọ̀tùn Mọ̀bà) with respect to how they form their focus and interrogative constructions. The study is carried out within the confiner of Minimalist Program (MP). Other syntactic processes like negation, relativisation in CY dialects are not the focus of this study.

1.6 Significance of the study

This research work discusses the in-depth analysis of the syntax of focus and interrogatives in CY dialects. It does not only reveal the common features and dialectal variations among these dialects at the levels of phonology, morphology and syntax, but also clearly identifies some common and peculiar features that set Central Yorùbá dialects apart from standard Yorùbá via focus and question formation. It also helps researchers (particularly the different schools of thought on

the classifications of Yorùbá dialects) in the correct alignment of a group or regrouping of Yorùbá dialects.

1.7 Summary

This chapter was able to provide the background information on this study. It discussed CY people, their geographical locations, phonology of their dialects and so on. The aim and objectives, research questions, significance and scope of the study were also discussed. The theoretical framework and some relevant extant works on focus and interrogatives are discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Preliminaries

This chapter discusses the theoretical apparatus adopted for data analyses before reviewing some extant works on focus and interrogatives in standard Yorùbá and CY dialects. Relevant scholarly works on some other human languages will also be discussed.

2.1 Theoretical framework

Generative approach to the analyses of natural languages began to attract the interest of structural linguists[12] in the 1950s. Generative grammar began to wear an entirely different outlook with the publication of *Aspect of the Theory of Syntax* in 1965. This is known under the labelled *Standard Theory* which later allowed much rethinks and several modifications. Trends[13] in generative syntax involved the development of techniques and devices for advancing linguistic analyses. This also invariably influenced the development of other fields of studies. The development in these theories of grammar concerned itself with some (different) analytical methodologies of handling syntactic structures of natural languages. The Standard theory was intensively criticised and evaluated because it was characterised by multiplicities of rules amongst many other inadequacies.

The next theoretical modification in the realm of syntax is the Extended Standard theory which ushered in syntactic constraints and generalised phrase structure rules,

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[12]. Exanples are Bloomfield, Sapir, Chomsky and so on.

[13]. The modifications from Extended Standar Theory (EST) through Principles and Parameters (P&P).

but one of the problems of this model of transformational grammar is that it does not have intermediate categories. Revised Extended Standard theory was later introduced to simplify the grammatical models. Principles and Parameters (P&P) also known as Government and Binding Theory[14] came up after the Pisa lectures (Chomsky 1980). It is in the assumption of this theory that there are wide spread universal principles across languages. That is, a large portion of the grammar of any particular language is common to all languages, and is therefore part of Universal Grammar. It is in the P&P Theory's view that Universal Grammar can be broken down into two main components: levels of representation and a system of constraints. Principles and Parameters Theory is effectively organized into four levels of representation, namely; the logical form (LF), phonetic form (PF), D-structure and S-structure. All the idiosyncratic properties of lexical items that constitute the atomic units of the syntax are listed in the lexicon. These properties include the arguments that each item subcategorizes. Lexical items are combined at D-structure (underlying structure). D-structure, by Projection Principle is mapped into S-structure, which is the syntactic representation that most closely reflects the surface order of a sentence. The interpretation at S-structure is factored by Phonetic Form (PF) and Logical Form (LF). The PF is the interface with the Phonology where shapes, sounds, and groupings of items are directly represented. The LF is the interface with the Semantics, where predication, scope of quantifiers and operators of various kínds are explicitly represented (Riemdijk and Williams 1986, Black 1999).

2.1.1 The Minimalist Program (MP)

Minimalist Program (MP) as a prominent reformulation in the trend of generative grammar is proposed and developed by Chomsky (1993 & 1995). Under MP, human cognitive system is viewed as a computational system which operates a limited set of mechanism and constraints to provide adequate explanations to language structures, and consequently reduces the complexities in the grammar of human languages. MP uniquely advocates economy, simplicity and uniformity. Lamidi (2000:61) sees it as not only being motivated by the quest for explanatory adequacy in grammar, but also 'as a progression towards minimalism i.e. to reduce the expressive power (complexity) of syntax'. The MP

[14]. The Government and Binding Theory is also known as Principles and Parameters Theory. GB Theory was coined from two sub-theories of P&P Theory: government and binding. GB originated from P&P Theory. Read Lasnik and Uriagareta (1988), Haegeman (1991) and Black (1999). Henceforth, P&P Theory will be adopted in the place of Government and Binding Theory for uniformity sake.

according to Ouhalla (1999: 403) is not initially regarded as a theory in itself, but a more natural and general approach to natural languages.

One of the most interesting assumptions spawned against the Principles and Parameters theory by the Minimalist Program is that the D-structure and S-structure levels of representation are both undesirable and dispensable (Hornstein, Nunes and Grohmann 2005:20). With this, the Minimalist Program adopts only LF and PF as the interface levels. It also motivates the need to provide empirical sound basis to simplify the apparatus for describing the acquisition of natural languages by a child.

2.1.2 Minimalist machinery and architecture

The organisation of grammar in the MP as diagramatically captured by Marantz (1995: 357) is shown (in 1) below:

1.

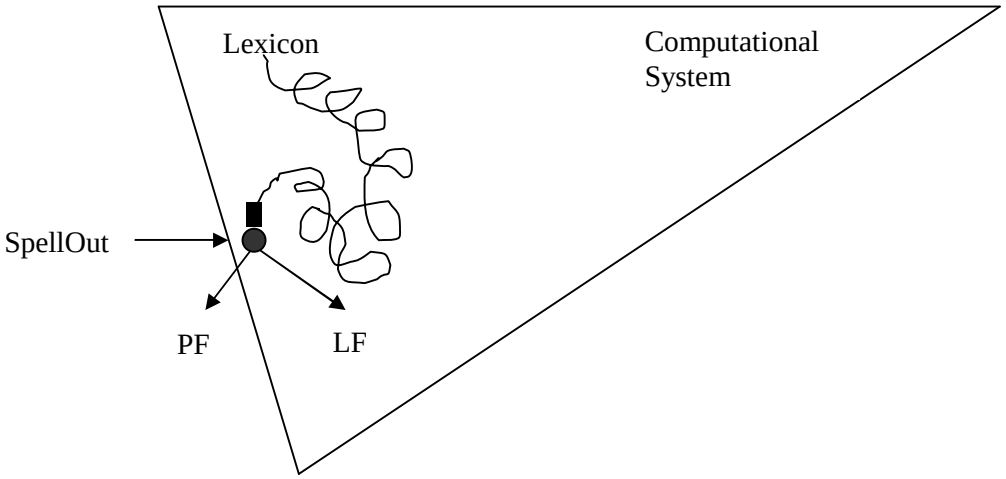


Figure 2.1: The organisation of grammar in the MP

Radford (2004: 5) captures 1 above as shown (in 2) below:

2.

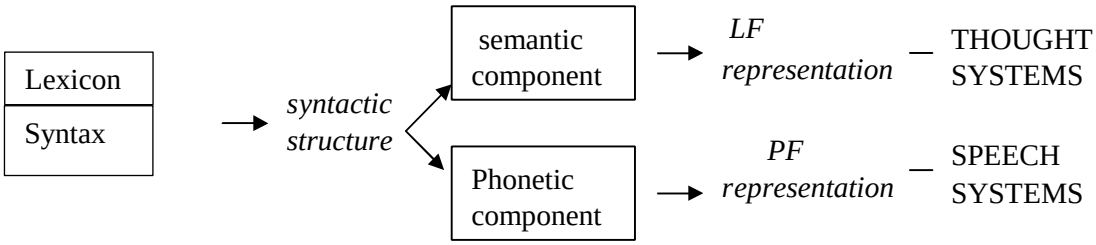


Figure 2.2: Radford's (2004: 5) representation of the components of grammar in the MP

The grammar, as shown (in 2) above, is organised as follows; (i) lexicon, (ii) the computation and (iii) the output component; LF and PF.

Lexicon: Lexicon contains familiar lexical entries. The lexicon is a mental dictionary which houses limitless number of fully formed lexical items. As in the previous theories of generative grammar, a lexical entry in MP is a complex bundle of phonological, grammatical, syntactic and semantic features. Lexical items are fully specified in form of bundles of features in the lexicon, and these bundles of features are the required properties that necessitate the projection of such items. These features are divided along the following four lines: formal vs substantive, interpretable vs uninterpretable, intrinsic vs optional, and strong vs weak. Empirically, the intent of strong/weak distinction is to distinguish overt from covert/logical movement. In this study, for example, bundles of feature distinguish interrogative items from other lexical items: interrogative nouns for instance, have some features that are conspicuously absent in other nominal types.[15]

The computational system: The computational system consists of structure building machinery (merge and move) and principle of derivational economy. Computation involves drawing words from the lexical resources by operation select. After this, syntactic objects are drawn from the numeration for subsequent or further computation. The numeration in the syntactic computation must be exhausted by **operation select** for a derivation not to crash, then **operation merge** is applied on them to form sentences. Operation merge applies to two items α and β and creates complex syntactic object {γ {α, β}}, where γ is the label of the resulting structure informing the computation of its relevant gramatical properties (Chomsky 1995). The principle of Inclusiveness Condition regulates the computational system in MP. Two types of Merge are identified in MP. They are internal and external merge. Selection of a constituent from the lexical array is referred to as external merge, while internal merge concerns itself with merger of constituents that have already entered the derivation from the numeration. The Computational System of Human Language ($\mathbf{C_{HL}}$) in MP is captured by Hornstein, Nunes and Grohmann (2005: 73) as shown in (3) below.

3. $N= \{A_i, B_j, C_k ...\}$

[15]. I will discuss on this further in chapter four of this study.

Select & Merge & Move

Spell-out ←

Select & Merge & Move ↓

Spell Out: Spell out refers to the point of interpretation. Under this operation, structural descriptions are split into two, whereby part of the information is sent to the PF and part to the LF. The LF is a representation of the meaning structure in terms of expression of proposition(s), a component of grammar which accommodates the meaning of the syntactic structures produced by operations merge and moved to the spell-out stage[16]. The PF concerns itself with the component of grammar at the sound end (the tone, intonation and so on). The PF component of grammar converts the syntatic structures produced by merger and movement operations into PF representations[17]. The spell-out applies freely and without restriction in the course of computation. A derivation crashes if it applies at the wrong point or sends wrong information to one of the interfaces. Spell-out unlike the PF and LF is never a level of representation.

Operation Move/Agree: Movement is feature-driven under MP. Therefore, syntactic derivations are strictly dependent on feature valuation and checking. **Agree** is the mechanism for the valuation of unvalued features, and hence deletes uninterpretable features. It is assumed in MP that some lexical items enter the computation with unvalued features, while some with valued features. According to Chomsky (2000) in Citko (2014: 58), the following conditions (in 4) must be met for Agree to be possible:

4a. The *probe* and the *goal* have to be active, where being active means having uninterpretable/unvalued features. (The activity condition)

b. The second one is Matching Condition. That is, the *probe* and *goal* have features that necessarily match, where matching refers to feature identity.

c. The *goal* has to be inside the domain of the *probe*, where the domain of the *probe* is its sister (The Domain Condition).

d. The *goal* has to be in a local relationship, where locality is the closest c-command (The Locality Condition).

---

16. The LF is where derivations are mapped unto the Conceptual-Intentional (C-I) system,
17. The PF is where derivations are mapped unto the Articulatory-Perceptual (A-P)system.

Agree is possible *iff* both the probe and the goal have unvalued features. Movement also employs *copy* and *delete* strategy because traces are non-lexical item, hence, they violate Inclussiveness Condition. All unpronounced copies are deleted by LF operation.

Greed/Self-enlightened Interest: This process is known as feature checking.[18] Under this principle, a constituent is allowed to move so as to check and satisfy its individual properties (self interest). For instance, a syntactic operation involving probe α must agree with goal β only to satisfy its selfish interest or value some of its unvalued features. Failure to strictly adhere to this principle will definitelly cause the derivation to crash. Accordintg to (Boskovic 2007), a constituent moves, only if it has a formal inadequacy, and if the movement will help rectify the inadequacy.

Procrastinate: This MP principle allows movement to be either blocked or suspended. This principle says that if valuation of features in some constituents via movement operation can wait let it wait. Procastinate as a principle in MP minimizes the number of overt operation necessary in any convergence because overt movement as a syntactic operation is more costly than covert (feature) movement. This principle is operated on weak features which never move to be checked overtly, particularly, when derivations require no appropriate movement before spell-out. Weak features are only relevant at the LF interface. .

Last Resort

The basic idea in this principle of MP is that operations are driven by necessity, and, a shorter derivation is preferred to and more economical than a longer one (Lamidi, 2000: 63). This means that movement operation must occur for a formal reason, and every superfluous step in a derivation is banned. Minimalism has insisted on last resort nature of movement from its inception. Last resort principle is also a rescue operation in situations where a derivation is liable to crash for lack of full interpretation. Full interpretation, the convergence condition bars features that are without interpretation (uninterpretable features like case features on nouns and verbal agreement features) at the two interface levels: PF and LF. It ensures that every syntactic derivation is legible at the interfaces.

Feature checking

[18] This is now referred to as feature valuation.

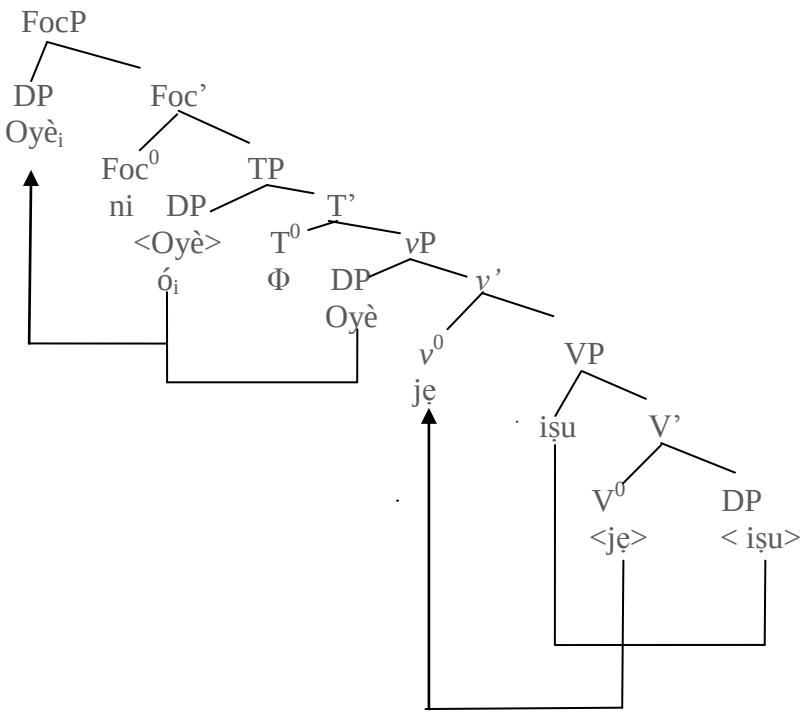
This is an operation in MP that takes care of the fulfillment of Full Interpretation principle (FI), with it, all uninterpretable features are eliminated once they are in a checking relationship. Some grammatical features are interpretable at LF because of their semantic content, with this, they contribute to determining meaning. Features that are uninterpretable at LF lack semantic content, and they make no contribution to meaning (Ajọ́ńgọ́lọ̀ 2005: 53). It is assumed, under minimalist that movement is driven by feature checking requirements, and a feature can either be weak or strong. A strong feature must be checked before the derivation reaches the spell-out and it necessarily triggers syntactic movement. Contrastively, weak feature can be discharged at the LF level. These are evident in Yorùbá focus and content word interrogatives. Foc-head is specified strong while Inter-head is specified weak in standard Yorùbá and CY dialects. Let us consider 6a, b and c respectively illustrated in the tree diagrams (in 7, 8 and 9) below for a clearer understanding.

6a. Oyè ni ó jẹ ịṣu.
Oyè FOC RES eat yam
'OYÈ ate yam.'

b. Ta ni ó jẹ ịṣu?
QN FOC RES eat yam
'Who ate yam?'

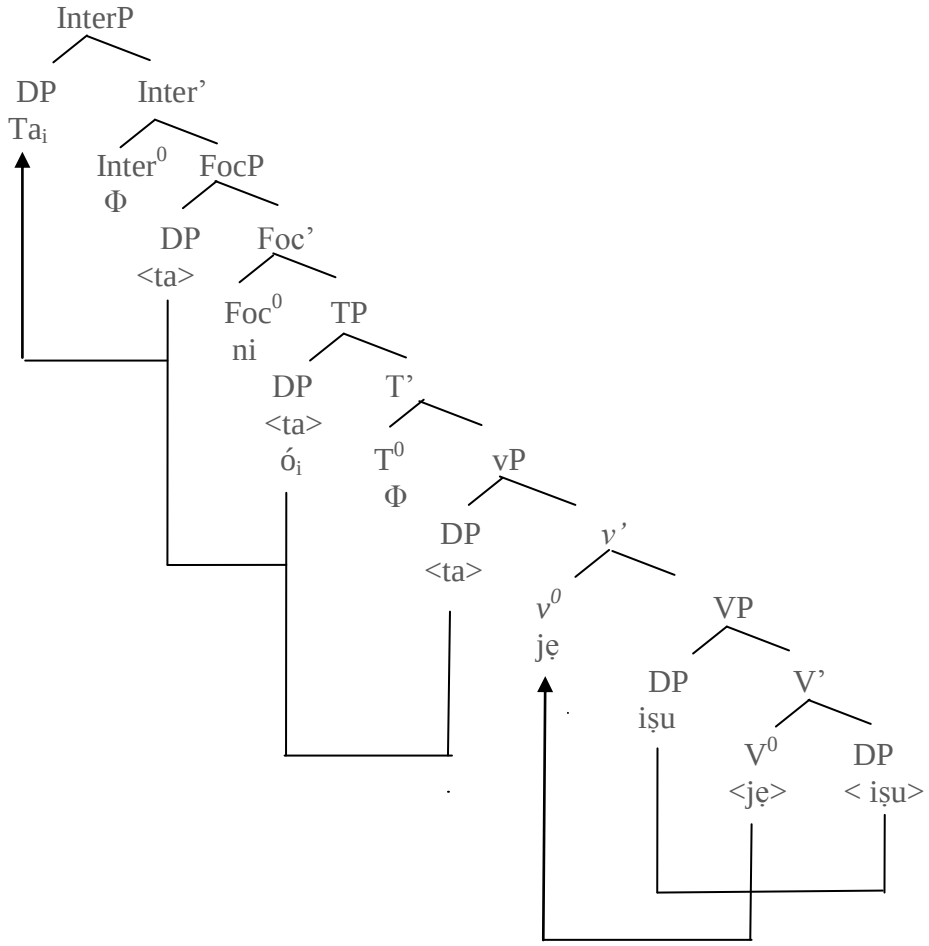
c. Báyọ̀ ṣe kí?
Báyọ̀ do QN
'Báyọ̀ did what?'

7.



The strong [+foc] feature in 7 above attracts the subject DP to the spec FocP as a feature cheking requirement. The spec FocP must be filled and visible to PF interface in standard Yorùbá and CY dialects. This is also evident in 8 below, the QN *ta* moves to the spec FocP before it is subsequently attracted to the spec InterP to satisfy the [EF].

8.

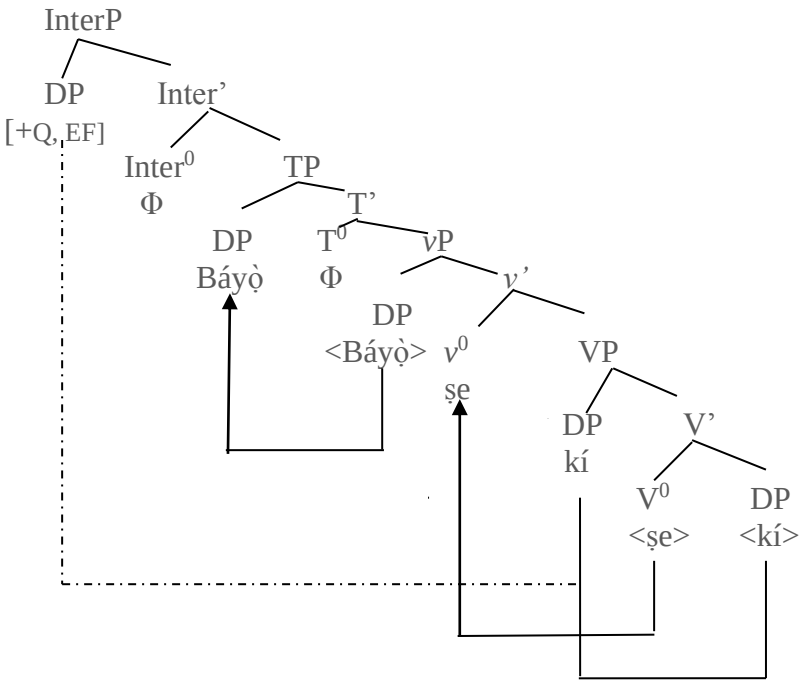


In 9 below, the QN fails to overtly move to the spec InterP, consequent upon the absence of the focus marker. The Inter-head in standard Yorùbá or CY dialects is specified weak (feature). Therefore, it cannot trigger syntactic movement. The QN takes an LF movement to the spec InterP to check its [EF]. It is however observed that, the LF movement contravenes Phase Impenetrability Condition (PIC) in the derivation below.[19]

The example (in 6c) represented (in 9) below is a non-echoic question.

[19]. Read Ìlọ̀rí (2010: 254-255) on the feature specifications of the Inter-head in polar questions in Yorùbá. We will discuss LF movement and rhetorical question forms in CY dialects in chapter four of this work. Read Chomskey (2009b) for more explanations on LF movement.

9.



Phase Theory

Another conceptual innovation in MP is Phase Theory. It stipulates that derivations proceed in phases. Extraction of a constituent out of a phase is allowed *iff* it is moved through the edge of the phase. This condition is dubbed Phase Impenetrability Condition (PIC). Chomsky defines PIC as follows:

> In a phase α with head H, the domain of H is not accessible to operations outside α, only H and its head are accessible to such operations.
>
> (Chomsky, 2000:108)

PIC is a powerful locality constraint in every derivation, It therefore, bars a constituent from arbitrary oversteps. As claimed by Citko (2014), the prowess of phase heads lies on the fact that they are the loci of uninterpretable features. Consequently, they have the power to trigger syntactc operations. Citco particularly refers to them as syntactic engines. In Chomsky's (2000:107) view, a phase head becomes inert whenever a phase is completed/formed.

Transfer

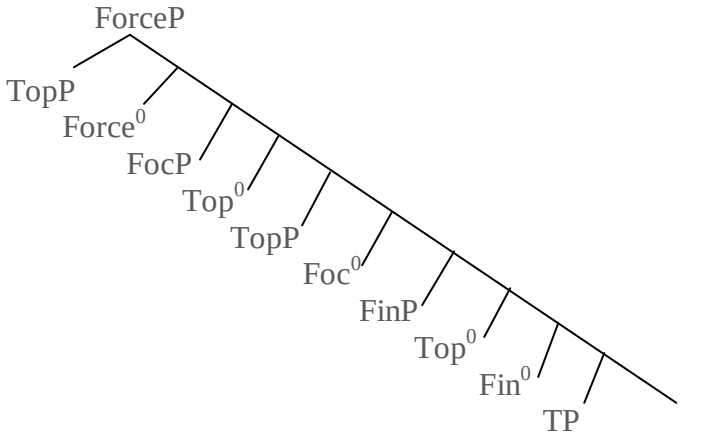
It is an operation in narrow syntax that sends derivation to LF and PF interfaces for onward valuations. A syntactic expression already formed is forwarded to phonological

component and semantic component, and later sent by these two interfaces to the Sensory-motor Interface (SM) and Conceptual-Intentional Interface (C-I) respectively.

Split CP Hypothesis[20]

This hypothesis is proposed and developed by Rizzi (1997, 2001, and 2003). Its main idea is that, the unsplit CP, as constituted in PPT and older versions of MP should be split into a number of different functional projections: ForceP (Force Projection), FocP (Focus Projection), TopP (Topical Projection) and so on. These are shown (in 10) below:

10.

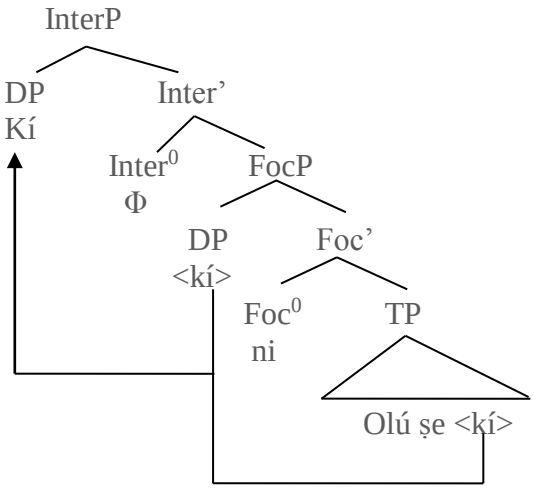


(Rizzi, 1997:281)

Unlike unitary CP analysis adopted by former versions of genertive grammar (PPT and so on), split CP analysis is highly relevant to this work because it adequately captures the analyses of focusing and interrogatives, particularly, the clause left periphery. In standard Yorùbá and CY dialects, the InterP dominates the FocP. The tree diagram (in 11) below illustrates split CP analysis of a constituent interrogative.

[20]. Apart from Rizzi's split CP analysis of the left periphery of cluses, TP and VP are also split under minimalist assumption. You can read Radford (2004, 2006 and 2009b) for detailed explanations.

11.



The QN *kí* moves to the spec FocP through the spec vP (although, not shown here) to check its [+focus] feature and there after attracted to the spec InterP to value the [+Q, EF] on the Inter-head[21].

2.2 On the classification of Yorùbá dialects

A considerable amount of research works have been carried out on the delimitation of Yorùbá dialects[22]; among these are: Adétúgbọ̀ (1967,1973,1982), Akínkúgbé (1976), Oyèláràn (1976), Awóbùlúyì (1998), Ajọ́ńgọ́lọ̀ (2005)[23] and, Adéníyì and Òjó (2005) .

Adétúgbọ́ (1973)

Adétúgbọ́ (1973) delimits Yorùbá dialects into three major groups:

i. Northwest Yorùbá (NWY): Ọ̀yọ́, Ṣakí, Ògbómọ̀ṣọ́ and Ẹ̀gbá

ii. Southwest Yorùbá (SEY): Rẹ́mọ, Onàdó, Ìkálẹ̀, Ọ̀wọ̀, Ìjẹ̀bú and Ẹ́pẹ́

iii. Central Yorùbá (CY): Ifẹ̀, Ìjẹ̀ṣà, Èkìtì and Akúrẹ́

Akínkúgbé (1976)

This work delimits Yorùbá dialects into four groups:

i. North East Yorùbá (NEY): Yàgbà, Gbẹ̀dẹ̀, Ijùmú, Ìkírí

ii. Central Yoruba (CY): Ilé-Ifẹ̀, Ìjẹ̀ṣà, Èkìtì

---

[21]. Focus and content word questions will be discussed in details in chapters four.

[22] According to some scholars, standard Yorùbá is also regarded as much as a dialect. See Capo (1989:282) in Adéwọlé (1999).

[23]. Ajọ́ńgọ́lọ̀ (2005) only adds Ào to South East Yorùbá (SEY).

iii. South-East Yorùbá (SEY): Ọ̀yọ́, Ẹ̀gbá, Ọ̀sun, Ibọlọ̀,Àwórì

iv. South West (SWY): Isábẹ̀ẹ́, Kétu, Ifẹ̀ (Togo)

Oyèláràn (1976)

Oyèláràn (1976) groups Yorùbá dialects into four groups as follows:

i. West Yorùbá (WY): Ọ̀yọ́, Ìbàdàn, Ẹ̀gbá, Ọ̀họ̀rí-Ìfọ̀hin, Upper Ògùn – Ṣakí, Ijio, Kétu, Sábẹ̀ẹ́, Benin and Togo- Ifẹ̀ (Togo), Ìdásà and Manigri

ii. Southeast Yorùbá (SEY): Onàdó, Ọ̀wọ̀, Ìjẹ̀bú, Ìkálẹ̀ and Ìlàjẹ

iii. Central Yorùbá (CY): Ìjẹ̀ṣà and Èkìtì

iv. Northeast Yorùbá (NY): Ìgbómìnà, Kákàńdá, Ìgbọ̀lọ̀, Ijùmú, Bunu, Ọ̀wọ́rọ̀, Owe and Ẹ̀gbá

Adétúgbọ́ (1982)

Adétúgbọ́ (1982) regroups Yorùbá speaking areas into three major dialects as follows:

i. Northwest Yorùbá (NWY): Ọ̀yọ́, Ìbàdàn and Ọ̀sun

ii. Southwest Yorùbá (SEY): Rẹ́mọ, Onàdó, Ìkálẹ̀, Ọ̀wọ̀ and Ìkàrẹ́, and

iii. Central Yorùbá (CY): Ifẹ̀, Ìjẹ̀ṣà and Èkìtì

Awóbùlúyì (1998)

Five Yorùbá dialects are identified by Awóbùlúyì (1998). They are:

i. Northwest Yorùbá (NWY): Èkó, Àwórì, Ẹ̀gbádò, Ọ̀yọ́, Ọ̀sun, Onàkò, Ìbọ̀lọ̀, Ìgbómìnà

ii. Northeast Yorùbá (NEY): Ìyàgbà, Ijùmú, Ọ̀wọ́rọ̀ and Ọwẹ́

iii. Central Yorùbá (CY) : Ifẹ̀, Ìjẹ̀ṣà, Èkìtì and Mọ̀bà

iv Southwest Yorùbá (SWY): Sábẹ̀ẹ́, Kétu (Ànágó) and Ifẹ̀ (Togo); and

v. Southeast Yorùbá (SEY): Ẹ̀gbá, Ìjẹ̀bú, Ìlàjẹ, Ìkálẹ̀, Onàdó, Ọ̀wọ̀ and Ọ̀bà Ìkàrẹ́.

Adeńíyì and Òjó (2005)

This scholarly work delimits Yorùbá into the following seven groups:

i. Northwest Yorùbá (NWY): Ọ̀yọ́, Ọ̀sun, Onàkò, Ìbọ̀lọ̀ and Ìgbómìnà

ii. Northeast Yorùbá (NEY): Ìyàgbà, Bùnú, Ijùmú, Ọ̀wọ́rọ̀, Gbẹ̀dẹ̀ and Àyèrè

iii. Western Yorùbá (WY): Ànàgó, Ifẹ̀ (Togo), Ketu, Ọ̀họ̀rì and Sábẹ̀ẹ́

iv. Central Yorùbá (CY): Ifẹ̀, Ìjẹ̀ṣà, Èkìtì, Àkúrẹ́ and Mọ̀bà

v. Eastern Yorùbá (EY): Ùkàrẹ́, Ọ̀bà and Ìdó-Àní

vi. Southwest Yorùbá (SWY): Èkó, Àwórì, Ẹ̀gbá and Ẹ̀gbádò

vii. Southeast Yorùbá (SEY): Ìjẹ̀bú, Onàdó, Ìkálẹ̀,Ìlàjẹ, Ìjọ and Apoi

Akinkúgbé (1976) and Adétúgbọ̀ (1982) do not include Mọ̀bà dialects under CY. Unlike some other works, Adétúgbọ̀ (1973), and Adéníyì and Òjó (2005) classify Àkúrẹ́ as a dialect of Central Yorùbá (CY). According to Olúmúyìwá (2006), some native speakers of the Èkìtì dialect still cut across some parts of Oǹdó state. Amongst these areas are parts of Àkúrẹ́ like Iju, Ìta-Ògbólú, Ọ̀bà-Ilé, Ìjàrẹ́ (Ùjàrẹ́) and so on. Therefore, all the native speakers in the towns listed above speak either Ìkẹ́rẹ́ or Ìsẹ̀ which are sub-dialects of Èkìtì. It is equally important to note that this study is concerned with linguistic features and not the geographical locations of the native speakers of the dailects. Except Awóbùlúyì (1998), and Adéníyì and Òjó (2005) all other research works on the classification of Yorùbá dialects exclude Mọ̀bá dialect from CY. We observed that they, in their own opinions, still categorise Mọ̀bà (Ọ̀tùn Mọ̀bà)[24] under Èkìtì. We observed that Mọ̀bà dialect has some sub-dialects with some more noticeable dialectal variations.

Generally, it is observed that all these afore-mentioned dialectologists have contributed to the delimitation Yorùbá dialect areas using the linguistic features that dialects in a particular group share in common, or some common features that set such dialects apart from the dialects of other areas.[25] Some common linguistic features exhibited by dialects from different groups are necessitated by the fact that they are all dialects of a language (Yorùbá), and it is pertinent that they should have things they share in common amongst themselves. However, as discussed by Ọlámrewájú (2017), it is not impossible for each dialect group members to have some features that set them apart from some other groups. Therefore, to test the veracity of this assertion, researchers need to explore Yorùbá dialects with a view to carrying out in-depth analyses of their linguistic features, preferably, at discuss level (syntactic processes

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[24]. Ọ̀tùn Mọ̀bà is still referred to as Mọ̀bà Ọ̀tùn by some people. See Ọlànrewájú (2017).

[25]. Take for instance, Adétúgbọ̀ (1982:213) identifies complete or full vowel harmony in both Central Yorùbá (CY), also in Òkìtìpupa and Ìkálẹ̀ dialects, which are classified under another group dialects (Northwest Yorùbá (NWY). Also, the same author identifies how both CY and SEY polarise positiveness and negativeness in the short pronouns: back vowels express the former while front vowels express the later as shown below:

a.	W***ọ́*** lọ. (you went.)	W***é è*** lọ.(you didn't go.) Adó-Èkìtì
b.	W***o*** yún. (You went.)	W***é è*** yún. (You didn't go.) Òkìtìpupa

Awóbùlúyì (1998: 30), in the same vein, also identifies occurence of vowel ***u*** at word-initial position of nouns, and also the absence of the nasal vowel ***ẹn*** in the phonology of CY dialects. The same Author also remarked that Southeast Yorùbá (SEY) dialects also exhibit these two features. Read Ọlámrewájú (2017) for more details on this.

like interrogatives, focusing, negation and so on). Invariably, these expose not only some common features that a group dialects similarly exhibit but also some other features that set them apart from other groups. This will also help us harness the divergent views of the scholars on the classifications of Yorùbá dialects.

2.3 On focus constructions

Crystal (1980: 148) describes focus as 'a new information at the centre of the speaker's communicative interest as opposed to a given information'.[26] Nkemnji (1995:135) views focus and emphasis as being synonymous. She identifies both contrastive and non-contrastive focus in Nweh, a language spoken in Cameroon. According to her, contrastive focus can be achieved either by the use of focus marker or by syntactic movement, while its non-contrastive counterpart is expressed prosodically.

According to Kiss (1998), in identificational focus, the focused constituent is preposed to the clause left periphery (the spec FocP) while it occurs at the VP peripheral position in informational focus. In line with this, Bámgbóṣé (2000) also identifies two types of focus in Yorùbá: marked and unmarked focus. Marked focus is signalled by fronting and the placement of particle *ni* while unmarked focus is placed at the end of an information unit.

12a. Olú ni ó ra iṣu.
PN FOC 3sg buy yams
'It was Olú that bought yams.'
(Bámgbóṣé, 2000:66)

b. Olú ra iṣu
PN buy yam
'Olú bought yam'
(Bámgbóṣé, 2000:65)

According to him, the given information (in 12) above is that 'Olú bought something,' while the new information constituting the unmarked focus is that what he bought was yam. What Bámgboṣé refers to as marked focus (in 12a) and unmarked focus (in 12b) above are similar to Kiss's identificational and informational focus respectively.

In Aboh (2004), three strategies involved in verb focus constructions are proposed as shown (in 13) below:

13a. $[\ _{FocP}\ [_{Foc}0\ V_i]\ [\grave{I}P\ ---F---V_i\ ]\ ]\ ]\ ]$

[26]. See Bámgbóṣé (2000) for more discussions on Crystal 1980.

b. $[_{FocP}\ [_{Nom}\ GER–V]_i\ [_{Foc}0\ ]\ [\ IP\ ---V_i---]\ ]$

c. $[_{FocP}\ [_{\sum P}VP\ ]_i\ [_{Foc}0\ ]\ [_{IP}\ (\ ---[_{\sum P}VP\ ])_i\ ---\ ]\ ]\ ]$

(Aboh, 2004:12)

In 13a, the preposed constituent is a verb, in 13b, it is a nominalised/reduplicated/gerundive verb, and a nominalised sequence in ∑P containing a full verb phrase with or without a trace in the type (13c). The types 13a and b are referred to as verb copying and nominalised verb strategies[27].

Jones (2006) refers to focus as a grammatical way of marking the organisation of information in a discourse. According to her, focus structure is not abstract, languages can mark focus syntactically, prosodically and morphologically, or use the combination of these grammatical means. To her, Yorùbá focus does not trigger existence presuppositions, and it does not have obligatory exhaustivity effects. Aboh (2007b:1) claims that 'focus refers to that part of the clause that provides the most relevant or most salient information in a given discourse situation'. Expression of focus according to Carlos (2007) reflects in the following three linguistic devices:

a. Syntax;
   - The position of the focus constituent in a syntactic structure
   - Focus particle

b. Morphology;
   - Affixation

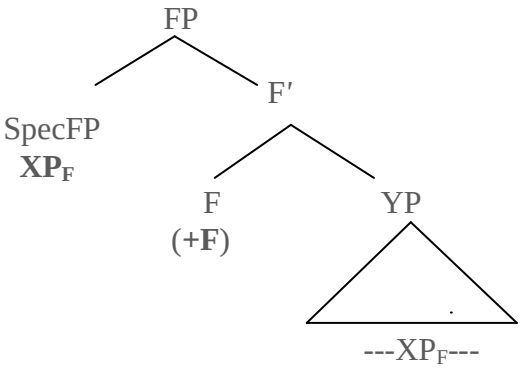
c. Phonology;
   - Presence of pitch accent
   - Type of pitch accent
   - Prosodic phrasing (Carlos, 2007:188)

Following Carlos' view above, Yorùbá and CY dialects operate syntactic strategy to form their focus constructions.

According to Skhwazs (2007:146), the general structure which a focus construction analysis is based on is shown (in 14) below:

[27]. Read Ansah (2014) for further expanations on this.

14.



(Schwazs, 2007:146)

In the structure above, the focus constituent originates from within the YP. Movement is feature-driven in MP, so, the strong feature on the head of focus phrase (FocP) triggers the movement of the XP bearing a focus feature to the spec FocP where it subsequently has its features checked through specifier and head agreement.

Latey, Siwah, Amponsah, Martines-Ferreiro and Bastiaanse (2020) claim that focus marking is very necessary in the formation of constituent interrogatives in Akan (the principal native language of the Akan people of Ghana) which also attests a resumptive pronoun at the clause final position of a focus construction.

2.3.1 On VP/predicate focusing [28]

Following Jackendoff (1977), Ilọ́rí (2010: 242) claims that in Yorùbá verb focus expressions, a nominalised copy of a focused verb is hosted at the spec FocP but their opinions on the actual clausal domain where the copied or focused verb is nominalised differs. To Jackendoff, the operation is post-syntactic, that is, it is nominalised at the clause left periphery. Jackendoff's position here violates Inclusiveness Condition under minimalist assumption.[29] Contrarily, Ilọ́rí opines that the focused verb is copied and nominalised within the TP domain. The nominalised copy is first left adjoined to the root V before it is moved to the spec FocP. The spec FocP only hosts a DP/noun in Yorùbá, meaning that, a constituent with [+nominal] feature moves to this checking domain to have its nominal feature checked or valued. We observe that this view aptly captures Chain Reduction and Chain Uniformity principles. However, this same claim fails to explicitly account for how the

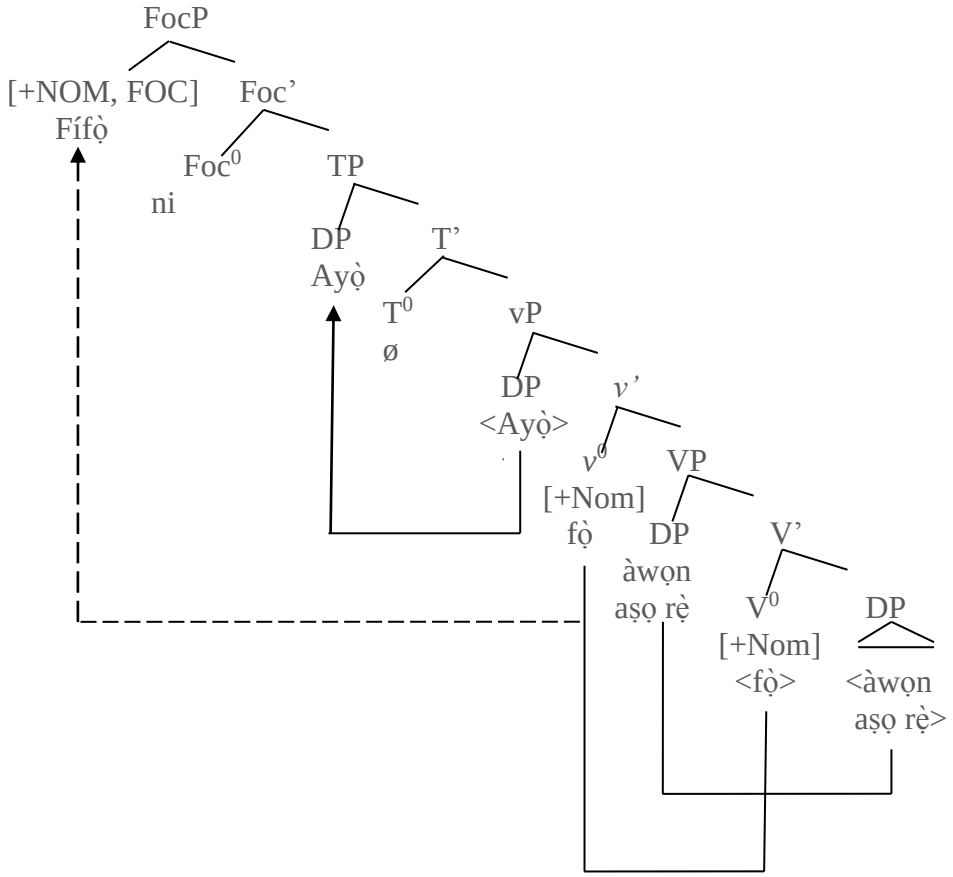
[28]. This study only focuses on some recent views on predicate focusing in Yorùbá, especially, within the requisite of MP.

[29]. You can also read Ọláògún's (2016) similar comment on this.

copied/nominalised form of the verb is left-adjoined to the root V within the TP domain. Therefore, the opinion looks superfluous and descriptively inadequate. Ilọ́rí's view here also contravenes minimalist assumption for its failure to adquately consider the two gramatical interfaces recognised by the theory. Firstly, this position needs to determine if the processes involved are pre-spell out or post-spell out operations. Therefore, if the syntactic processes identified by Ilọ́rí (2010) above occur in overt syntax, they would definitely have both phonological and semantic representations, and therefore cause such a derivation to crash. Therefore, there is a need to investigate the technical details on how the copied form of a verb is nominalised in VP focus expression to avoid a wrong or an arbitrary form of (constituent) derivation. It is equally important to identify the exact clausal domain where the copied verb is spelled out in its nominal form for the sake of intuitive plausibility and explanatory adequacy.

Following Chomsky (1995) on feature specification that lexical items are specified strong or weak features, Ọláògún (2016) claims that 'every verb in human languges is specified [+nominal] feature, but this feature is not lexicalised except at the spec FocP in languages where it is specified strong, such as Yorùbá'. With this position, it is observed that the [+nominal] feature is copied from a lexical verb in the TP domain and lexicalised at the spec FocP in line with Inclusiveness Condition (Chomsky, 1995, 2000) which disallows the introduction of a new item in the course of any derivation. Also, it is equally important to note that Chain Uniformity Constraint is not violated because only [+nominal] feature is copied from the verb within the TP domain and lexicalised at the spec FocP for the purpose of feature valuation through specifier and head agreement as shown below:

15.



Operation Copy only applies to the [+nominal] specified on the verb f*ọ̀* "wash" in 15 above. This feauture is lexicalised as the gerundive form *fífọ̀* "washing" because the spec FocP only hosts a DP costituent in Yorùbá.[30]

The rationale behind movement, whether syntactic or LF movement is to allow feature valuation. Therefore, movement is feature-driven, and these features determine both the PF and LF interpretations of syntactic objects. Feature movement referred to as "move F" under minimalist assumption, also as LF movement in the previous model of generative grammar is more economical than phrasal movement (Chomsky, 2000).[31] However, this position still fails to observe Phase Impenetrability Condition (PIC). I think it is better to abstract from this now and discussed fully on it in chapter four devoted to discussing the analysis of focus in CY dialects. Ọláògún's (2016) position above is subsumed under the second assumption that will be discussed in the next

[30]. Contrary to Chomsky's (1986) claim that feature specification of verbs in natural languages is [+V, -N], recent scholarly works have discovered that verbs are also specified [+ǹominal] feature. This is evident on Yorùbá complex verbs like ***rẹ́rìn-ín*** "smile" ***sáré***, "run" and so on. Read Yuka and Omoregbe (2010) on the internal structure of Edo verbs for further explanations on this.

[31]. Read Citko (2014) and some other related scholarly works on feature valuation.

section. Ọláògún (2019) claims that when a verb is focused in Njoo-koo a copy of the verb is nominalised by morpheme *a* at the clause left peripheral position, while the other copy is left in situ within the *v*P. Both copies are necessarily spelled-out in the derivation.

2.4 On interrogatives

Conventionally, interrogatives are used to request for pieces of information. According to Fodor (1978) wh-questions[32] are referred to as filler-gap sentences, where the preposed wh-words are referred to as fillers, and the empty argument positions where the fillers are to be interpreted are known as gaps. Saito (1992), in line with the view above, claims that wh-feature exist in all languages, and consequently responsible for the attraction of interrogative constituents to the clause left periphery for feature checking purpose. Contrarily, the [+Q] feature on Inter^0 of Yorùbá interrogatives is specified [-strong], therefore, it cannot trigger an overt movement of a QN. Movement of an interrogative constituent to the clause left periphery is motivated by the strong [+foc] feature on the Foc-head[33].

Ouhalla (1996) opines that wh-questions in natural languages differ with respect to their morphological and semantic properties. The veracity of this assertion is evident on the different ontological features of QNs in English and Yorùbá shown in examples below:

16.

English	Yorùbá
who	ta
what	kí
where	ibo

The English words above feature both as QNs and as demonstrative adjectives unlike their Yorùbá counterparts which are operated only as QNs. Let us also consider the English examples below:

17ai. **Who** did you see? i. The man **who** came here has left.

bi. **What** do you need? ii. I saw **what** I needed.

ci. **Where** did you keep it?. ii. I saw it **where** I kept it.

---

[32]. These types are referred to as question nouns in this work.

[33]. The implication of this is that an overt movement occurs when an interrogative noun is focused in Yorùba. Focused and non-focused interrogatives in CY dialects will be discussed extensivelly in chapter four of this study.

Yoruba does not operate the types (17aii, bii and cii) above because QNs strictly occur in content word interrogatives.

On the classification of interrogative types, Laurel (2000: 226) identifies the following forms of interrogative markers in English:

i). Pronouns: what, who and whom

ii). Determiners: whose, when, where and how

iii). Adverbs: why, when and how

Siemund (2001), according to the positions of occurrences of interrogative words[34] in content word questions classifies human languages into fronting, in-situ and optionally fronting languages. We observed that standard Yoruba and CY dialects can prepose their QNs to the clause left periphery, Also, QNs can be base generated in the canonical positions associated with their grammatical functions, where they are legible to the PF level, especially when rhetorical/echoed questions are operated.[35] Let us take a closer look at the derivations (in 18a-b) below for a clearer understanding:

SY
18a. Kí ni èyí jẹ́?
QN FOC this be
'What is this?'

b. Ẹ ṣe kí?
You did QN
'You did what?'

The QN is base generated in the canonical object positon in 18b, while it is moved to the clause left periphery in 18a.

In line with Ouhalla's (1996) position above, Sabel (2000) and Aboh (2004) suggest that, universally, movement of an interrogative constituent is triggered by both [+wh] and [+foc] features. Also, both features are [+interpretable] and specified [± strong]. Therefore, following Rizz's (1997) split CP Hypothesis, other Yorùbá focused constituents (items) and QNs do not target the same position; a DP moves to the spec FocP to check the [+focus] feature, which is specified [+strong} while a QN is first attracted to the spec FocP and aftermart to the spec InterP to check the [+Q, EF] through specifier and head agreement.[36]

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[34]. Note that we adopt question nouns (QN) for these types in this work.

[35]. We will discuss extensively on this in chapter four of this work.

[36]. A QN can be externally merged at the spec InterP in CY dialects. This will be discussed in chapter four of this work.

König and Siemund (2007: 291) and Issah (2013: 4) opine that interrogatives across word languages can be classified based on their syntactic and semantic properties into constituent and polar interrogatives. Sabel (2003), and Chernova (2012) see focus constructions and constituent interrogatives as being closely related because they both compete for the same syntactic position. However, Rizz's (1997,2001) split CP Hypothesis clarifies that there are seperate; projections for both focus constructions and constituent interrogatives. In Standard Yorùbá and CY dialects, an interrogative projection (InterP) dominates the focus projection (FocP). Aboh (2007a) claims that focused interrogative words and their non-focused counterparts have different formal licensing and information structure of answers. To him, focus constituents and wh-phrases are closely related for the fact that they interact in question and answer pair, and that they are mutually exclusive in many natural languages.[37]

Issah (2013) claims that interrogative constituents constitute a linguistic device for the identification of a piece of information considered to be prominently new. Also, Kroeger (2004:139) in Issah (2013:56) opines that a question word bears pragmatic focus because it specifies the crucial piece of new information required. He puts up a hypothesis that the information profile for an interrogative constituent is as shown below:

19. QW [+new, +prominent, +focus][38]

(Issah, 2013: 56)

Bocc, Blanchi. and Cruschina (2021) claim that a wh-phrase is inherently endowed with [+focus] feature which is inclusive in the bundle of features specified on every wh-phrase in a direct constituent question. They are of the view that focus feature is assigned to a wh-phrase in its first merge, that is its base-generated position.

2.4.1 Interrogatives and Clausal Typing Hypothesis (CTH)

Cheng (1991:29) proposes Clausal Typing Hypothesis[39] in (20) below:

20. Every clause needs to be typed. In the case of typing a wh-question, either a wh-particle in C^0 is used or else fronting of a wh-word to the spec of C is used, thereby typing a clause through C^0 by spec-head agreement.

---

37. The term *wh-phrases* is not adopted in this work because these types of questions are not signalled in wh-encripts in CY dialects unlike English.
38. What Kroeger (2004) and Issah (2013) refer to as QWs and interrogative constituents respectively are synonymous.
39. This proposal will be modified in this work to accommodate Yorùbá and CY dialects.

According to Cheng's proposal (in 20) above, wh-questions (constituent interrogatives) are clause-typed in two ways. These are: one, by what Cheng refers to as wh-question particle, and two, by syntactic wh-movement. He assumed that the wh-question particle on the Inter^0 has some features indicating that the clause is a wh-question. In languages with syntactic movement, the same [+wh] feature is acquired by the Inter^0 after the wh-movement. A wh-word moves to the specifier position of the Inter^0 and consequently allows spec-head agreement to take place, and hence, causes the Inter^0 to acquire the [+wh] feature from the wh-word in the spec InterP. The implication of this is that in languages like Yorùbá, there is no [+wh] question morpheme that is base generated in the Inter^0.

Nkemnji (1995), Aboh (2007a, 2007b), Aboh and Pfau (2011) claim that a wh-question is clause-typed by the question morpheme on the Inter^0 not by wh-movement. They also claim that wh-movement only satisfies other requirements (foc, EPP), not clause-typing. Therefore, they tease wh-movement and clause-typing apart.

Radford (2009b: 124) proposes (21) below as a way of clause-typing a non-echoic question:

> 21. A clause is interpreted as a non-echoic question if (and only if) it is a CP with an interrogative specifier i.e a specifier with an interrogative word.

Radford's (2009b:124) position on content word questions (in 21) above is closely related to Cheng's (1991) Clausal Typing Hypothesis. However, the positions of these two scholars (Cheng and Radford) still fail to adequately accommodate languages like Yorùba and CY dialects which operate other question items that are base generated within the *v*P domain i.e. the canonical positions associated with their grammatical functions.[40]

2.4.2 On subject in situ interrogatives

According to Chomsky (1995), a subject interrogative constituent originates from the VP internal position, and moves to the spec TP , before it later takes a covert movement to the spec CP to have its wh-feature checked and hence interpreted as a wh-question. This syntactic movement, according to Chomsky's minimalist assumption is licensed by the Q-feature on the complementizer.

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[40]. Yorùbá and CY dialects operate both QNs and QV that are base-generated within TP domain, even in non-echoic questions. This study will discuss in details in chapter four how these are applicable to CY dialects.

In line with Chomsky's view above, Radford (2009b) also assumes that movement of a subject wh-question is triggered to the clause left periphery by [+EF] on the Inter-head[41].

Agbayani (2000) discusses two ways of forming wh-subject phrases. The first type has its assumption based on Vacuous Movement Hypothesis (VMH), a condition whereby a wh-subject (in English) remains in the spec TP position without subject-auxiliary inversion as shown (in 22a and b) below:

22a. Who has fixed the car?

b. $[_{CP}[_{IP}$ Who has fixed the car]]?[42]

c. $[_{CP}$Who$_2$ has$_1$ $[_{IP}$ [t_2 t_1 fixed the car]]?[43]

(Agbayani, 2000: 703)

Agbayani claims that auxiliary insertion is disallowed in 22a and b above. The second type occurs where a subject wh-phrase is raised to the spec CP[44] position coupled with auxiliary inversion as shown (in 22c) above.

As shown (in 23) below, *Adé* (a proper noun) and *ta* "who" are mutually exclusive in line with Issah's (2013) assumption that a focus construction is an answer to a fronted interrogative constituent in a question and answer pair,

23a. Adé ni ọ̀rẹ́ rẹ̀.
Adé be friend his
'ADÉ is his friend.'

b. Ta ni ọ̀rẹ́ rẹ̀?
QN be friend his
'Who is his friend?

In each of the two examples (23a-b) above, *ni* does not mark focus, it is rather a copula. Following Issah's assumption, and in line with the Spilt CP Hypothesis, it is assumed that the subject DPs, *Adé* and *ta* (in 23a and b) are respectively attracted to the clause left periphery. Example (23b) is illustrated in the tree diagram below:

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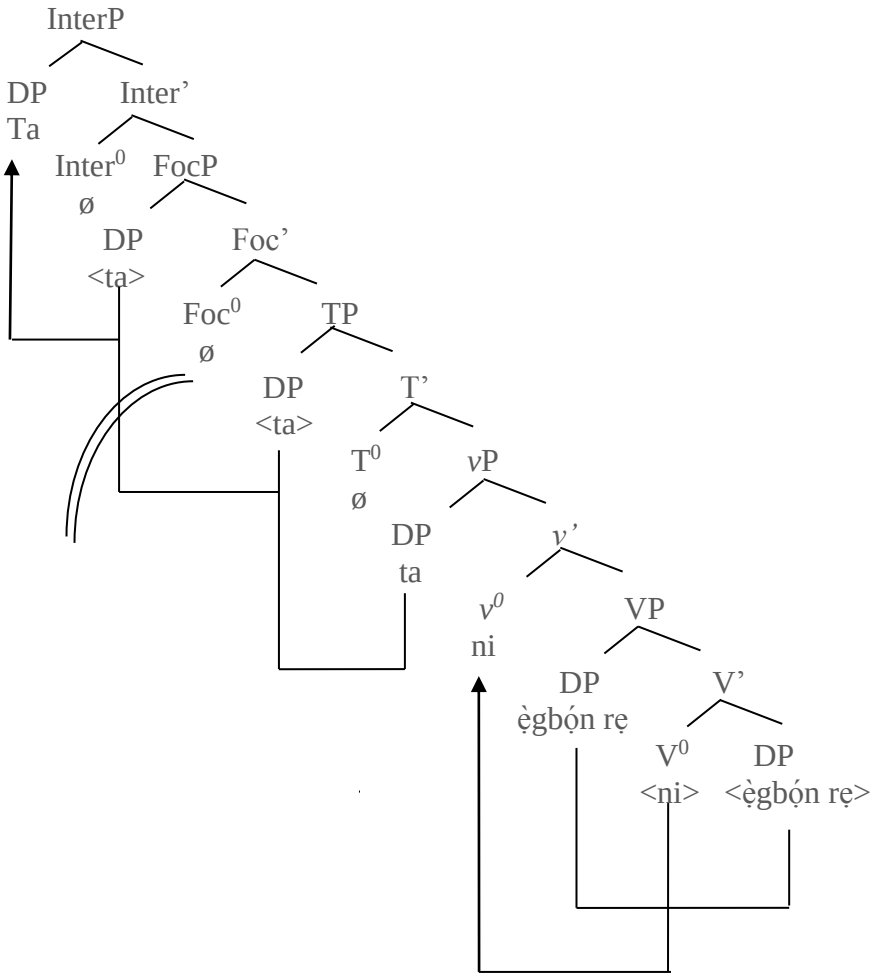
41. You can still read Pesetsky and Torrego (2004) for further explanations on this.
42. It is observed that the derivations (in 29b and c) are not in line with minimalist assumption, particularly, the Split CP Hypothesis. However, the examples still capture the explanations. IP is used in this example in the place of TP.
43. For more explanations on this, read Radford (2009b:138). According to him, wh-subject questions do not allow **T** to **C** movement and ***do support***. According to him, ***do support*** is introduced to a wh-question for the sake of emphasis.
44. Split CP Hypothesis is adopted in this work, therefore, spec InterP is used.

24.



The derivation (in 24) above goes thus: The copula *ni* merges with *ẹ̀gbọ́n rẹ̀,* the direct object DP of the verb (copula). The direct object DP *ẹ̀gbọ́n rẹ̀* is copied to the spec VP to have its case feature checked through specifier and head agreement. The VP merges with the null performative light verb v^0 to form the *v*-bar. The strong *v*F on the light v^0 attracts the lexical verb (copula) *ni* to adjoin to itself. The QN *ta* is selected from the numeration and merged at the specifier of the outer VP shell to satisfy the Predicate Internal Hypothesis (PISH) which requires the subject of a clause to be base-generated within the VP. The derivation proceeds by merging the abstract T^0 (the non-future tense marker) with the light verb phrase (*v*P) to project the T-bar, while the abstract T^0 probes *ta* the QN to its specifier position (the spec TP) where it is assigned a nominative case. *Ta* as an active goal is licensed from Phase Impenetrability Condition (PIC) (in 25) below because it occupies the spec *v*P.

25. In phase α with head H, the domain of H is not accessible to operations outside α, only H and its edge are accessible to such operations.

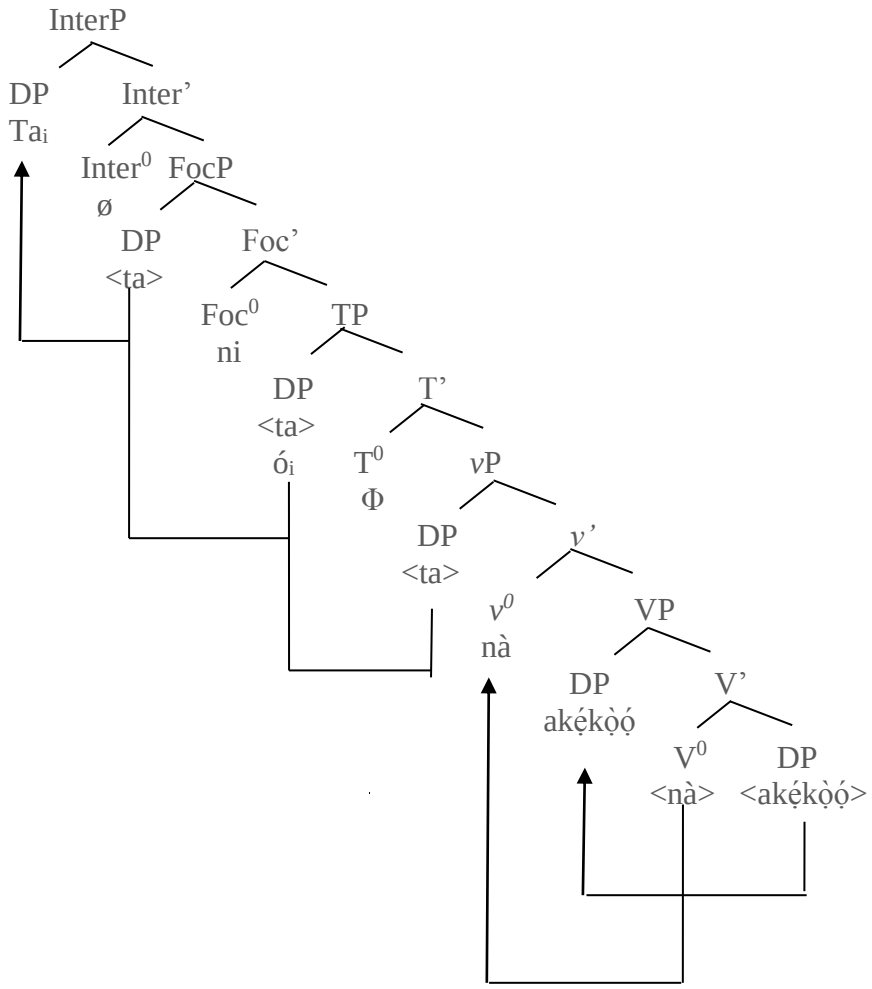
(Chomsky, 2000: 168)

Following question and answer pair, the derivation proceeds by merging an abstract Foc-head, another probe that searches its c-command domain and attracts *ta* to spec FocP to check its [+focus] feature. The derivation still continues by merging the Inter-head which finally attracts the QN *ta* to the spec InterP where its [+Q, +EF] is checked[45]. However, we observe that movement of the QN to the spec FocP contravenes the Subject Condition Constraint (SCC) modified as Condition on Extraction Domain (CED) under minimalist assumption. This constraint forbids extraction of a constituent from the spec TP. The derivation reaches the spell out immediately after the QN occupies the specifier position of the TP to value its unvalued [+EPP, case] feature. The derivaton (in 24) above is quite different from 26 represented in the tree diagram (27) below:

26. Ta_i ni $ó_i$ na akẹ́kọ̀ọ́?
QN FOC Res beat student
'Who beat the student?'

[45]. It is assumed that the focus head is abstract in 24 because ***ni***, a copula does not collocate with an overt focus marker.

27.



The interrogative construction (in 27) above is derived thus: The lexical verb *nà* "beat" (a transitive verb) merges with the DP *akẹ́kọ̀ọ́* "student". Then, the direct object *akẹ́kọ̀ọ́* internally merges at the spec VP to have its case feature checked. The null performative light verb v^0 is selected from the numeration and merged with the VP to form the *v*-bar. The strong *v*F on the light v^0 attracts the lexical verb *nà* "beat" to adjoin to itself. The the QN *ta* merges with the light *v'* to project the light verb phrase (*v*P) to conform to the PISH. The derivation proceeds by merging the absract T^0 with the light verb phrase (*v*P) to project the T-bar, the abstract or neutral tense marker now enters into feature checking relation with *ta* the QN. Consequently, *ta* is copied to the specifier position of the tense phrase (TP) where its [+EPP, case] feature is checked. It is therefore, assigned a nominative case. *Ta* as an active goal is licensed from Phase Impenetrability Condition (PIC) because it occupies the spec *v*P. The derivation proceeds by merging the Foc-head *ni*, another probe that searches its c-command domain and attracts *ta* to spec FocP to check its [+focus] feature. The derivation still proceeds by merging another probe, the abstract Inter-head which finally attracts the

QN *ta* to the spec interP where its [+Q, +EF] is checked. *Operation Copy and Delete* is applied on *ta* at the spec TP. With this, the spec TP is later occupied by a resumptive pronoun to save the derivation from a crash. The derivation (in 27) above unlike 24 has an overt focus marker.[46].

2.5 Previous studies on Yorùbá focus constructions

Scholarly works have paid adequate attentions to the syntax of focus constructions in Yorùbá. However, they have diverse opinions on the categorial status of the focus marker *ni* and focus constructions in the language. In this sub-section, the study discusses some of these issues and provides my submissions on them.

2.5.1 Yorùbà focus marker *ni*.

Oyèláràn (1988) disregards *ni* as a verb in Yorùbá for the two following reasons: one, its co-occurence with auxiliaries is highly restricted, and two, it cannot be nominalised. He therefore, identifies *ni* as an assertive marker. To him, *ni* introduces any constituent it preceeds as a new information in a discourse.

Yusuf (1990) discusses four different enviroments where *ni* occurs in Yorùbá. They are: focus, copula, emphatic and constituent interrogative constructions. The extracted data (in 28a-d) below depict the distribution of *ni* as itemised above.

28a. Òfin **ni** àṣẹ.
Law be decree
'The law is an imperative.'

b. Èèwọ̀ **ní** í gbèjà ara rẹ̀.
Taboo be 3sg wrest body self
'Taboo fights its own cause.'

c. Ta **ni** ó ń delé de alábà Lìńgúísítíìkì?[47]
Who be 3sg ASP hold.house wait head.hut
'Who is deputising for the head of Linguistic Dept.?'

d. Ṣé o fẹ́ ya mí ní ẹ̀wù **ni**?
QM you want tear me in cloth be
'Do you want to tear my cloth?'
(i.e. Is it your intention to tear my cloth?)

---

[46]. Awóbùlúyì (2001, 2008, 2013) identify ***ó*** as HTS in Yorùbá while Ajọ́ńgọ́lọ̀ (2005) identifies it as an agreement marker.

[47]. See Yusuf (1990) on this orthography.

According to Yusuf, *ni* occurs as a copula in each of 28a and b, it occurs in constituent question (28c) and emphatic construction (28d). This work subscribes to Yusuf's position on the distributon of *ni* above. However, his claim that the same item *ni* is used to mark both copula and focus constructions still needs to be given a re-think. *Ni*, a copula maker is quite different from its variant that occurs in focus constructions. They both have different categorial status, focus marker is a functor (a functional head) while copula belongs to the class of contentives. It is a lexical head that sub-categorises its complement just like other transitive verbs. Let us consider the examples below:

29a. Ọba ń kí ọ.
King PROG greet you
'The king was greeting you.'

b. Ọba ni ọ́.
King be you
'You are a king.'

In 29a-b above, the transitive verb *kí* and the copula *ni* subcategorise the second person singular object pronoun *ọ* as their complements.

Adéwọlé (1991a) identifies *ni* as a verb in Yorùbá. According to him, *ni* sub-categorises both DP and TP complements. Jones (2006:145) identifies *ni* and *jẹ́* as the two Yorùbá copula. According to her, *jẹ́* occurs in a canonical nominal predication while its *ni* counterpart occurs in an inverse nominal predication as shown (in 30a and b) below[48].

30a. $[_{SUBJ}$ DP $_{PRED}$ XP]

b. $[XP]_i$ ni $[_{SUBJ}$ DP $_{PRED}$ $t_i]$

In 30b above, the predicate of the restricting clause is raised to the subject position of the main clause. Now, a logical question that arises on this position is; 'if the frames (in 30a and b) above logically account for 31a and b, how would they adequately capture 32a and b below?'

31a. Kìnìún jẹ́ ọba ẹranko.
Lion be king animal
'Lion is the king of animals.'
(Lion is the king of the jungle).

b. Ọba ẹranko ni kìnìún.
King animal be lion
'Lion is the king of animals.'

[48]. You can also read Dechaine (2002) for this similar view.

(Lion is the king of the jungle). (Jones, 2006: 145)

32a. Ẹ jẹ́ ọlọ́gbọ́n.
2pl be owner.wisdom
'You are wise people.'

b. Ọlọ́gbón ni ***yín.***
Owner.wisdom be you
'You are wise people.'

c. *Yín jẹ́ ọlọgbọ́n.
'You be owner.wisdom.'

The frames in 30a and b fail to account for the accussative case of the second person plural object pronoun *yín* (in 32b). Following the frame in 30b, the position occupied by *yín* is meant for a subject pronoun not an object pronoun. Consequently, 32c is ill-formed. This implies that no inversion occurs in 32b unlike 33 below which features dislocation:

33, Olùkọ́ ni mo jẹ́.
Teacher FOC I be
'I am a TEACHER.'

If *ni* in 32b and 33 above are of similar (categorial) status, how do we then account for its irregularities with respect to case assignment? Yorùbá operates neither subject auxiliary inversion nor inverse norminal predicate unlike English and some other European languages. It only operates syntactic strategy to focus a constituent in a given construction.

Awóbùlúyì (2013) identifies *ni* as an introducer alongside the following items: *kọ́*, *dà*, *ńkọ́*, *wẹ̀*, and *kẹ̀*. According to him, the above listed items qualify the preceeding nouns as shown (in 34) below:

34a. Ìwọ ni (You are)
b. Ìwọ kọ́ (You are not ...)
c. Ìwọ dà (Where are you?)
d. Ìwọ ńkọ́ (What of you)
e. Ìwọ kẹ̀ (You!)
f. Ìwọ wẹ̀ (You!)

(Awóbùlúyì, 2013:72)

The examples (in 34a-f) above have different categorial status. The examples (in 34a-b) are elliptical forms of constructions like 35a and b below:

35a. Ìwọ ni o ra ìwé.
You FOC you buy ìwé
'YOU bought a book'

b. Ìwọ kọ́ ni o ra ìwé.
You NEG FOC you buy ìwé
'You were not the one that bought a book'

As shown in 35a and b above, 34b is more truncated than 35b. Therefore, *kọ́* in 34b/35b above as a constituent negator only negates the focused constituent *ìwọ*. Yorùbá still also uses the truncated form (in 36) below in the place of 34b.

36. Ìwọ kọ́ ni ... (It is not you ...)

Arguably, classifying the interrogative verbs: *dà* and *ńkọ́* alongside other items like *kẹ̀*, *wẹ̀* and so on still needs to be reconsidered. It is necessary to abstract from this now, it will be discussed fully, later in this same chapter, when reviewing extant works on interrogative verbs in Yorùbá.

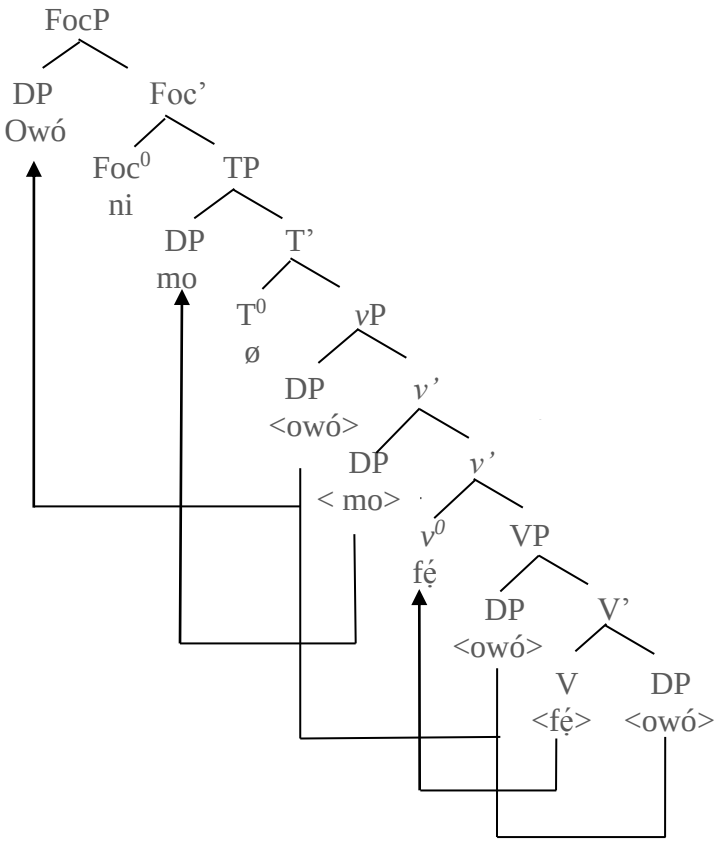
Following Yusuf's (1990) position on the distribution of *ni*, Yorùbá evidently operates two types of *ni*: one is a functor while the other is a copula. The first type as a functional head ocupies the Foc-head. Therefore, it does not assign a case unlike its copula counterpart as shown in 37a-b below:

37a. Owó ni mo fẹ́.
Money FOC I want
'I want MONEY.'

b. Ọlọ́gbọ́n ọmọ ni yín.
Owner.wise child CPL you
'You are wise children.'

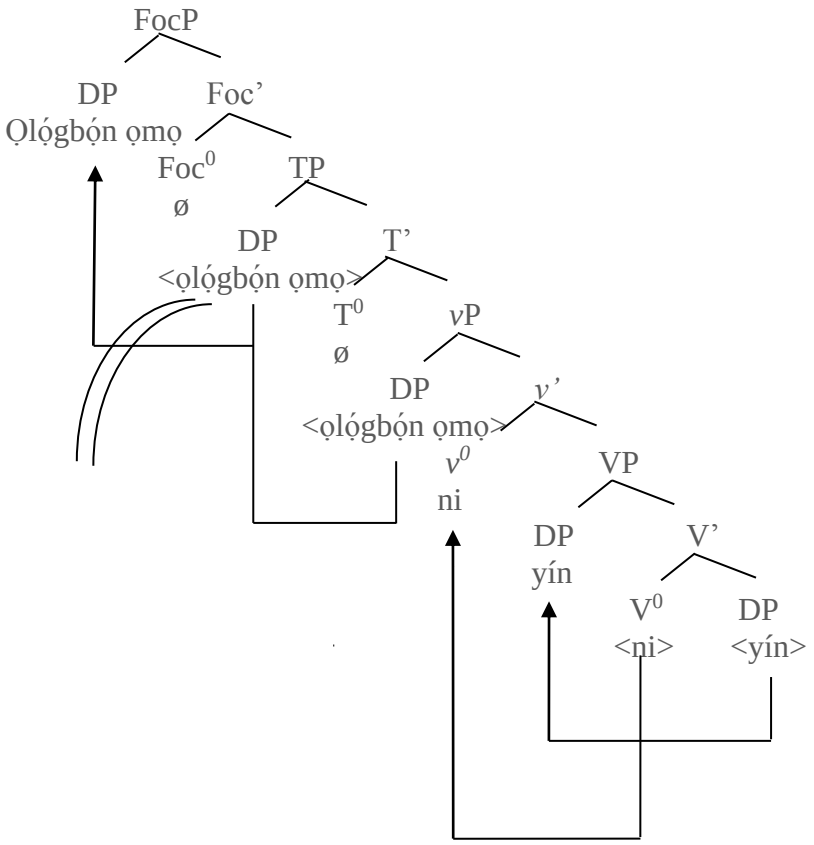
The syntax trees (38 and 39) below elucidate better:

38.



The derivation (38) above goes thus: The transitive verb *fẹ́* "want" merges with the DP *owo* "money" to project the V-bar. The same DP *owo* "money" is copied to the spec VP to have its case feature checked through specifier and head relation. The derivation continues by selecting the null performative light v^0 and merging it with the verb phrase (VP) to project the *v*-bar. Therefore, the strong *v*F on the light v^0 attracts the lexical verb *fẹ́* "want" to adjoin to itself. The DP *mo* is externally merged at the inner spec *v*P as the external argument. This is also in conformity to the PISH which requires the subject of a clause to be base-generated within the VP shells. The DP *owó* is attracted to the outer spec *v*P, an escape hatch that licenses it from Phase Impenetrability Conditon (PIC). Consequently, this allows the DP *owó* to be visible to subsequent operations. The derivation proceeds by externally merging the abstract T^0 with the light verb phrase (*v*P) to project the T-bar. The abstract tense head (T^0) as a probe enters into feature checking relation with the first person singular subject pronoun, *mo*, a matching goal attracted to the specifier position of the TP to check its [+EPP, case] feature. The derivation still proceeds by externally merging the Foc^0 *ni* with the tense phrase (the TP) to project the Foc*'*. The Foc^0 *ni* enters into a feature checking relation with the object DP *owó* and consequently has its [+focus, EF] through specifier and head agreement.

39.



The derivation (in 39) above goes thus: The copula *ni* "be" merges with the second person plural object pronoun *yín* "you" to project the V-bar in line with c-selection requirement of the copula *ni*. The same object pronoun *yín* "you" is copied to the spec VP by *Operation Copy and Delete* so as to have its case feature checked. The derivation proceeds by the external merge of the null performative light verb v^0 with the verb phrase (VP) to project the *v*-bar, while the strong *v*F feature on the light v^0 attracts the copula to adjoin to itself, while the DP *ọlogbọ́n ọmọ* "wise children" is externally merged as the specifier of the light verb phrase (*v*P) so as to conform to the PISH. The derivation still proceeds by selecting the abstract T^0 from the numeration and merging it with the light verb phrase to project the T*'* (T-bar), while the T^0 (the abstract non-future marker) probes the subject DP *ọlogbọ́n ọmọ* "wise children" to the specifier position of the TP to check its [+case, EPP] feature. Activation of focus projection is necessitated here by externally merging an abstract Foc-head. The Foc-head as a probe attracts the subject DP *ọlogbọ́n ọmọ* "wise children" to the spec FocP to have its unvalued [+focus, EF] checked through specifier and head agreement. Focus feature is specified [+strong] in Yorùbá, therefore, it necessitates the attraction

of the DP *ọlogbọ́n ọmọ* in the spec TP to the clause left periphery (the spec FocP), thereby causes the DP in the spec TP to be illegible to the PF interface.[49]

Another important aspect which the aforementioned scholarly works fail to pay attention to is the distribution of the allomorphs of *ni* in the syntax of Yorùbá focus. Yorùbá operates both (the allomorphs) *li* and *ri*[50] alongside *ni* as shown in the examples below:

40a. Olú ló lọ. (Olú **li** ó lọ ← Olú ni ó lọ).
Olú FOC-he go
'OLÚ went.'

b. Oyè la rí. (Oyè **li** a rí ← Oyè ní a rí).
Oyè FOC-we see
'We saw OYÈ.'

c. Owó ni wọ́n ń fẹ́.
Money FOC they PROG want
'The want MONEY.'

41a. Kí rèé? (Kí **ri** èí = Kí ni èyí)?
QN CPL-this
'What is this?

b. Owó rèé. (Owó **ri** èí = Owó ni èyí).
Money CPL-this
'This is money.'

c. Iṣẹ́ rèé. (Iṣẹ́ **ri** èí = Iṣẹ́ ni èyí).
Work CPL-this
'This is work.'

In standard Yorùbá, *ni*, *li* and *ri* are in complementary distribution. *Li* occurs with other vowels except vowel [i] as shown in 40a-b. *Ni* occurs with vowel [i] as shown in 40c, and as a copula in 41a-c above. *Ri* is operated as a copula in standard Yorùbá *iff* these two conditions are met:

i. When it occurs with the demonstrative noun *èyí* "this".

ii. Deletion of consonant *y* from *èyí* is necessitated. With this; *èyí* changes to *èí*[51].

---

49. This opinion is contrary to Ọlámrewájú's (2017) claim on the Subject Condition Constraint that 'the spec TP of Yorùbá clauses are not transparent to extraction.'

50. CY dialects operate ***rí*** both as Foc-head and copula just like standard Yorùbá does for ***ni***.

52. It is discovered that some dialects in Southeast and Northeast Yorùbá operate the allomorph ***li*** with ***èí*** as shown below:
Kí lèí? Ìlàjẹ
QN FOC-this
'What is this?'

2.5.2 Comments on the categorial status of focus constructions in Yorùbá

There are two different opinions on the categorial status of focus constructions in Yorùbá. Extant works like Bámgbóṣé (1966, 1990), Owólabí (1983, 1987,1989), Yusuf (1990), Adéwọlé (1991b), Ọláńrewájú (2008, 2017) and so on classify them as sentences, while Awobùlúyì (1978, 1987, 1992, 2013) classifies them as noun phrases[52]. Awobùlúyì's principal point in support of his argument is based on the occurrence of both focus and relative constructions as complements of the verb *ṣe*, as shown in the examples below:[53]

42a. Kìí ṣe ìwé ni mo rà.
NEG do book FOC I buy
'It was not a book I bought.'

b. Kìí ṣe ìwé tí mo rà.
NEG do book REL I buy
'It was not the book I bought.'

Suffice to note that 42a above is not structurally equivalent to its (b) counterpart, and also 43 below:

43. Èyí kìí ṣe iwé tí mo rà.
This NEG do book REL I buy
'This was not the book I bought.'

Consequently upon this, 42b unlike 42a is a phrasal category, it is not sentential. I think it is equally important to abstract from discussing the syntactic dissimilarities between 42a and b types above to investigate some other underlying technicalities that factor the occurence of both *ìwé ni mo rà* and *ìwé tí mo rà* (in 42a and b) above as complements of the verb *ṣe*.

The veracity of the assertion that relative and focus constructions are of different categorial status is syntactically evident in the empirical facts as follow:

1. A focus construction cannot accommodate an overt subject unlike its relative construction counterpart when occuring as a complement of *ṣe*. Let us consider the examples below:

Iṣẹ́ lèí. Ìyàgbà
Work FOC-this
'This is work.'

[52]. Following minimalist assumption, this is referred to as determiner phrase (DP) in this work.

[53]. Read Owólabí (1983, 1987,1989), Adewole (1991b), Yusuf (1990) and Oláńrewájú (2008) for details on their arguments againt Awóbùlúyì's position.

44a. *Èyí kìí ṣe iwé ni mo rà[54].
This NEG do book FOC I buy

b. Èyí kìí ṣe iwé tí mo rà.
This NEG do book REL I buy
'This was not the book I bought.

c. ? Èyí kìí ṣe pé iwé ni mo rà.
This NEG do that book FOC I buy

d. * Èyí kìí ṣe pé iwé ti mo rà.
This NEG do that book REL I buy

e *Èyí kìí ṣe pé iwé wọn.
This NEG do that book they

f. Èyí kìí ṣe iwé wọn.
This NEG do book they
'This is not their book.'

Example (44a) is ill-formed because the verb *ṣe* sub-categorises for a clausal complement. Examples (44b and f) are grammatical, *ṣe* in this environment takes a DP complement. Also, 44c is acceptable because the clausal complement has been nominalised by *pé*, while 44d-e are ill-formed. A complementiser is never used to nominalise a DP in Yorùbá[55]. The implication borne out of this is that whenever the spec TP is overtly realised, the predicate never sub-categorises a clausal complement, otherwise, the embedded clause is nominalised by a complementiser. A clause like 45 below is ill-formed in Yorùbá.

45. *Oyè gbà [$_{TP}$ Adé lọ].
Oyè accept Adé go

The restricting clause (in 45) above can only be licensed by nominalising it by a complementiser as shown (in 46) below:

46. Oyè gbà pé Adé lọ.
Oyè accept that Adé go
'Oyè accepted that Adé left.'

2. Stacking of a relative construction with other qualifiers is another empirical evidence that depicts a structural difference between relative and focus constructions. This is shown in the examples below:

[54]. This is repeated for ease of reference.
[55]. The study will still discuss this extensively later in this same section.

47a. Ìwé titun tí ó rà yìí kan náà ni o ń kà.
Book new that he buy this one the FOC he is read
'He was reading the same new book he bought.'

b. *Ìwé titun ni ó rà yìí kan náà ti o ń kà.
Book new FOC he buy this one the that he is read

A sentence like 47b above is never operated by Yorùbá speakers.

3. A clausal complement can be nominalised unlike a relative clause. This also provides a clear cut syntactic distinction between focus and relative constructions. Let us consider the examples below:

48a. Gbogbo wọ́n mọ̀ *pé ìwé ni mo rà.*
All they know that book FOC I buy
'They all knew I bought a book.'

b. Gbogbo wọ́n gbà *kí Olú lọ.*
All they accept that Olú go
'They all accepted that Olú should go.'

c. Gbogbo wọ́n gbà *pe Olú ti lọ.*
All they accept that Olú has go
'They all accepted that Olú has left.'

d. *Gbogbo wọ́n gbà *pe Olú **ti** ó lọ.*
All they accept that Olú that he go

e. *Gbogbo wọ́n mọ̀ *pé ìwé **ti** mo rà.*
All they know that book that I buy

f. Gbogbo wọ́n mọ̀ *ìwé **ti** mo rà.*
All they know book that I buy
'They all knew the book I bought.'

Only 48d-f have embedded relative clauses in the examples above. Examples (48d-e) are ill-formed because a complementiser does not collocate with a DP, it nominalises a higher category like a sentence[56]. The restricting clauses, that is, the clausal complements are all nominalised in each of 48a-c. A focus construction is nominalised in 48a, while simple declarative sentences are nominalised in 48b-c. The implication born out of these examples is that a relative clause with its head noun is a DP unlike its focus construction counterpart.

4. Awóbùlúyì also fails to account for the reasons why a focus construction cannot occur as a clausal complement of other verbs in Yorùbá. Take for an instance,

[56]. Read Taiwo (2011) and Awóbùlúyì (2008) on Morphology of Yorùbá.

the verbs *mọ̀* "know" and *gbà* "accept", never subcategorise focus constructions as clausal complements as shown in the examples below:

49a. *Wọ́n mọ̀ ìwé **ni** ó rà.
They know book FOC he buy

b. Wọ́n mọ̀ pé ìwé **ni** ó rà.
They know that book FOC he buy
'They knew he bought a book.'

c. Wọ́n mọ̀ ìwé **tí** mo rà.
They know book that I buy
'They knew the book I bought.'

d. *Wọn kò gba ọ̀rọ̀ **ni** Olú sọ.
They NEG accept word FOC Olú say

e. Wọn kò gba ọ̀rọ̀ **ti** Olú sọ.
They NEG accept word that Olú say
'They did not accept what Olu said.'

Apart from *ṣe*, "be" identified by Awóbùlúyì, *jẹ́* is another lexical verb that exhibits this similar syntactic behavour in Yorùbá. Let us consider the examples below:

50a. Bí ó bá ṣe ìwé ni o rà ...
If it ADV[57] be book FOC you buy
'If it was a BOOK you bought...'

b. Bí ó bá jẹ́ ìwé ni o rà ...
If it ADV be book FOC you buy
If it was a BOOK you bought .....

Ontologically, *ṣe, ,jẹ́* and the copula *ni* all meaning "be" are closely related, perhaps, this permits *ṣe* and *jẹ́* to subcategorise focus constructions as clausal complements. This study therefore, disregards Awóbùlúyì's assertion that relative and focus constructions have similar categorial status. The empirical evidences discussed above reveal that his works on this particular position is a survey of limited data, as Yusuf (1990) rightly remarks. Consequent upon this, he was unable to adequately discuss the underlying technicalities on the issue.[58]

[57]. This is a premodifier.

[58]. You can read Yusuf (1990) and Owólabí (1983, 1987, 1989) on some other points raised against Awóbùlúyì's assertion on the categorial status of focus and relative constructions in Yorùbá.

2.5.3 Assumptions on VP/predicate focusing in Yorùbá

There are three possible methods of accounting for VP focusing under minimalist assumption. These are:

i. The unvalued [+focus] feature of the Foc-head is valued by externally merging a nominalised form of a main verb at the spec FocP. This implies that every syntactic object is contained in the numeration in line with Inclusiveness Condition.

ii. A copy of the lexial verb is spelled-out as a nominalised/gerundive form at the spec FocP for feature checking purpose, as shown (in 51) below:[59]

51. $[\ _{FocP}\ [\ _{Nom}\ (GER)\ –V\ ]_i\ [\ _{Foc^0}\ ]\ [\ TP\ ---(V)_i\ ---]\ ]$

(Aboh, 2004:12)

iii. A silent complement of verb is internally merged at the clause left periphery in predicate focusing in Yorùbá. Following Awóbùlúyì (2013) and other much related works, intransitive verbs in Yorùbá take cognate objects as shown below:

52a. Olú lọ (lílọ) kan lésìí.
Olú go going one in-last-year
'Olu just went once last year.'

b. Mo gbọ́ kíkọ tí Olú ń kọrin.
I hear singing REL Olú PROG sing
'I heard Olú singing.'

c. Mo gbọ́ tí Olú ń kọrin.
I hear RELOlú PROG sing
'I heard Olú singing.'

(Awóbùlúyì, 2013: 311-312)

According to Awóbùlúyì, *lílọ*"going", the cognate object is silent in 52a. The fact that *kíkọ* "singing" is optionally dropped in 52c is an evidence that the cognate complement *lílọ* "going" is also dropped in 52a above.

Following the assumption (in iii) above, a cognate object is preposed to the clause left periphery whenever a main verb is focused, although a cognate object is not always left overt in the base generated positon in Yorùbá. Let us consider 53 below for a better understanding of this view.

[59]. Read Aboh (2004) and Ọláògún (2016) on this position.

53. [$_{FocP}$ Sísùn ni [$_{TP}$Oyè [$_{vP}$<sísùn> [$_{v'}$<Oyè>$_{v'}$ sùn
[$_{VP}$<Oyè><sùn>[$_{DP}$<sísùn>]]]]].
Sleeping FOC Oyè sleep
'Oyè SLEPT.'

The cognate object, *sísùn* "sleeping" is internally merged at the spec FocP in 53 above.

This research work adopts the second assumption with the frame (51) above. The third assumption, which posits that the silent cognate object is preposed to the clause left periphery in predicate focusing is unsubscribed to, based on the two observations below:

i. The internal merge of silent cognate object at the spec FocP invariably indicates that a DP is focused, not a VP/predicate, so far a verb is not moved. Remember, in situ focus is not operated in Yorùbá, therefore, any constituent focused is moved to the clause left periphery. The implication of this third assumption is that a cognate object that moves receives prominence not a verb. A verb never occupies an argument position in a Yorùbá sentence. Let us consider the examples below:

54a. [$_{FocP}$Líḷọ ni [$_{TP}$Adé ḷọ <líḷọ>]][60].
NOM FOC Adé ḷọ
'Adé WENT'

b. [$_{FocP}$ Iṣu ni [$_{TP}$Adé jẹ <iṣu>]].
Yam FOC Adé eat
'Adé ate YAM.'

In 54a and b above, *líḷọ* and *iṣu* are complements respectively. They are both DPs, not verbs[61]. Therefore, what happens in 54a is a DP focusing not a VP focusing.

ii. The proposed silent gerundive form is only workable when an intransitive verb is used. Let us consider 55 below:

55a. Àwọn akẹ́kọ̀ọ́ ń ka ìwé.
They student PROG count book
'The students were reading.'

b. *Àwọn akẹ́kọ̀ọ́ ń ka (kíkà) ìwé.
They student PROG count book.

c. Kíkà ni àwọn akẹ́kọ̀ọ́ ka ìwé.
NOM FOC they student count book

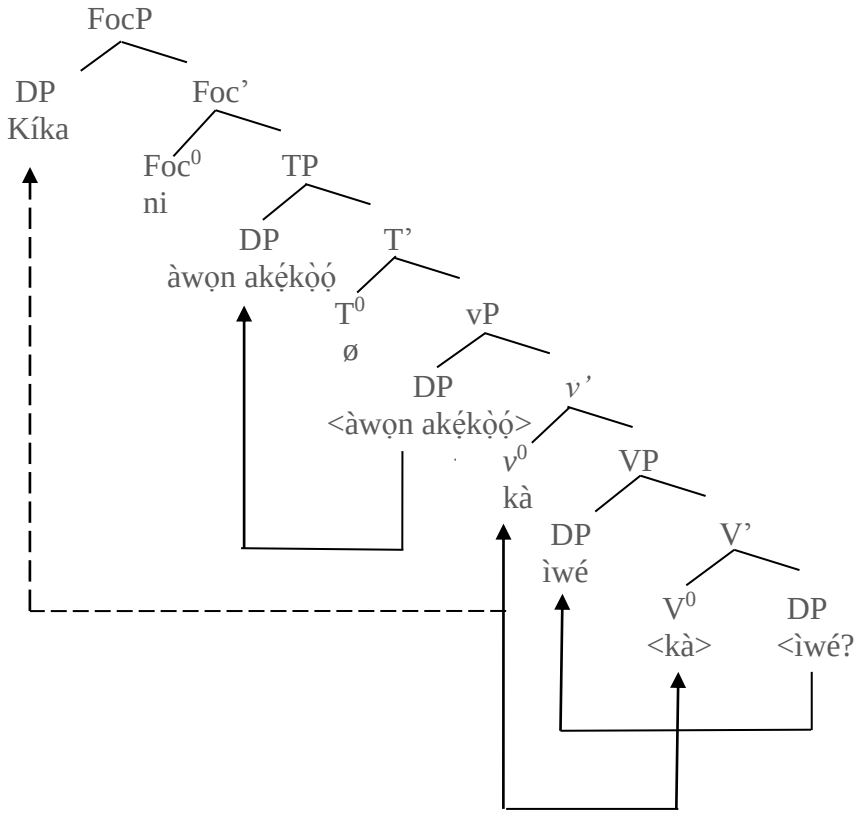
60. This study does not subscibe to the assumption that a silent complement is moved or copied to the clause left periphery.

61. ***Líḷọ*** shares many nominal features with other nouns like ***Adé***. For instance, both of them can be qualified or used as qualifiers and so on.

" The students READ."

The verb *kà* "read" does not take *kíkà* "reading" as its complement (in 55b) because *ìwé* "book" is subcategorised as the direct object. This implies that *kíkà* "reading" never originates from the object position of the verb *kà* (in 55c). The derivation in 55c is represented in the syntax tree (in 56) below:

56.



The derivation in 56 above goes thus: The verb *kà* "read" merges with the DP *ìwé* "book" to project the V-bar. The same object DP *ìwé* "book" is internally merged at the spec VP to have its case feature value through specifier and head relation. The derivation proceeds by the external merge of the null performative light verb v^0 with the VP to form the *v'*. The strong *v*F on the light v^0 attracts the lexical verb *kà* "read" to adjoin to itself. The the DP *àwọn akẹ́kọ̀ọ́* "students" is externally merged as the specifier of the *v*P to conform to the PISH. The derivation proceeds by merging the T^0 with the light verb phrase (*v*P) to project the T', while the T^0 attracts *àwọn akẹ́kọ̀ọ́* "students" to the spec TP where its [+case, EPP] feature is checked. The derivation proceeds by merging the focus marker *ni* to form the Foc-bar. The Foc-head as a probe attracts the [+nominal] feature on the lexical verb (kà) in the *v*P domain to the spec FocP, where it is lexicalised as the gerundive/nominal form. Therefore, feature

valuation takes place between the nominalised verb, *kíkà* "reading" and the Foc-head through specifier and head agreement. Further discussion on this will be returned to in chapter four of this work so as to discuss some other salient issues.

2.6 Previous studies on interrogatives in Yorùbá

Awobùlúyì (1978) and Bámgbóṣé (1990) assert that interrogatives are used to elicit information from an interlocutor. Also, Bámgbóṣé (1990:183-186) identifies six methods of forming questions in Yorùbá: the use of interrogative verbs, question particles, interrogative conjuctions, interrogative modifiers, interrogative qualifiers and preverbal question markers.[62]

Awóbùlúyì (1978) classifies question forms in Yorùbá into two: content word and non-content word questions. He identifies five ways of marking interrogatives in Yorùbá unlike Bamgbóṣé (1990) which identifies six. These five ways are: interrogative nouns, interrogative verbs, interrogative qualifiers, interrogative modifiers and intonational accent with great loudness or pitch rising. These are respectively shown in the examples below:

57a. **Interrogative nouns (ta, kí, èwo and so on.)[63]**
Ta ni èyí?
QN be this
'Who is this?'

b. **Interrogative verbs (dà, ńkṍ)**
Owó dà?
Money QV
'Where is the money'

c. **Interrogative qualifier (ta, kí, èwo, èló, mélòó)[64]**
Aṣọ wo ni Bọ́lá rán?
Cloth QM FOC Bọ́lá sew
'Which cloth did Olú sew?'

d. **Interrogative modifier (bí)**
Wọ́n lọ bí?[65]
They go QM
'Did they go?'

---

62. Bámgbóṣé (1990) identifies ***tí ì***, which he refers to it as a preverbal interrogative particle, and ***tàbí***, referred to as an interrogative conjunction. However, ***tàbí*** is not identified as such by Ọlańrewájú (2017:124-125), according to him, ***tabí*** only conjoins the alternative possibilities.
63. QNs are adopted in the place of these in this work.
64. According to Awóbùlúyì 1978:123), these QNs are also used as qualifiers.
65. This is referred to as a yes/no question marker. Awóbùlúyì (1978: 123) also classifies ***ṣé***, ***ṣebí*** and ***ǹjẹ́*** as interrogative modifiers.

e. **Use of intonational accent**
Ẹ rí Adéwálé?
You see Adéwálé
'Did you see Adéwálé?'

According to Awóbùlúyì, the ultimate syllable of the final word *Adéwá**lé*** is produced with higher picth to mark interrogative force[66].

The other two methods identified by Bámgbósé are:[67]

i. Use of preverbal interrogative marker **ti i** e.g

58. O **tíì** lọ ná?
You QM go QP
'Have you really gone?'(Bámgbóṣé, 1990: 185)

ii. Use of conjunction **tàbí/àbí** e.g

59. O ti lọ ***tàbí*** o kò tíì[68] lọ?
You PERF go QM you NEG PERF go
'Have you gone?' (Bámgbóṣé, 1990:186)

2.6.1 Comments on Yorùbá question verbs (QVs)

Awóbùlúyì (2013) disregards *dà* and *ńkọ́* as question verbs in Yorùbá and refers to them as (interrogative) qualifiers. His arguments are based on distributional restriction placed on these items. According to him, *dà*, and *ńkọ́* are classified alongside *kọ́*, *ni*, *kẹ̀* and *wẹ̀* as shown (in 60) below:

60a. Ìwọ ***ni*** (You are)
b. Ìwọ ***kọ́*** (You are not ...)
c. Ìwo ***dà*** (Where are you?)
d. Ìwọ ***ńkọ́*** (What of you)
e. Ìwọ ***kẹ̀*** (You!)
f. Ìwọ ***wẹ̀*** (You!) (Awóbùlúyì, 2013:72)

Now, a cursory look at 60 below evidently reveals that Awóbùlúyi (2013) fails to adequately account for the categorial status of each of the items (in 60) above.

61. Òjò tún ń rọ̀ *kẹ́/ni/wẹ̀*.
Òjò still PROG fall PSM

---

66. We will discuss fully on this, using minimalist assumption, when we get to chapter four of this work.
67. These two examples adapted from Bámgbóṣé (1990) are glossed in line with his position.
68. According toBámgbóṣé ***tíì*** is the interrogative/negative variant of ***ti***.

'The rain is still falling.'

The question begging for an explanatory adequacy on 61 above is 'what are the italicised item qualifying?' Therefore, for a more plausible grammar, all environments where all these items occur must be surveyed and discussed before we can determine their gramatical functions or categorial status. It should be equally noted that only examples (60c-d) are predicate clauses. Awóbùlúyì (2013: 72-73) also identifies these same items above as preverbal modifiers when he says:

> Kí ni ìdí rẹ̀ tí àwọn àpọ́nlé aṣaájú-ìṣe wọ̀nyí fi lè ṣaájú *dà, kọ́* àti *ni*? A rò pé, níwọ̀n ìgbà tí ó jẹ́ pé 'ẹgbẹ́ ẹyẹ ni ẹyẹ ń wọ́ tọ̀,'ó ní láti jẹ́ pé, torí pé **ẹ̀yà aṣaájú-ìṣe ni *dà, kẹ̀, kọ́, ńkọ́, ni* àti *wẹ̀* ni àwọn aṣaájú mìíràn fi lè dìgbà máa ṣaájú àwọn kan nínú wọn ...**[69]
>
> What are the reasons why preverbal modifiers preceed *dà, kọ́* and *ni*? We believe that, so far 'birds of a feather flock together,' **the reason behind this is that *dà, kẹ̀, kọ́, ńkọ́, ni* and *wẹ̀* are allowed to collocate with other preverbal adverbs because they belong to the same category ...**

Let us consider the examples below:

62a. Iwọ tiẹ̀ kúkú dà?[70]
You PRM PRM QV
'Where are you again?'

b. Iwọ tiẹ̀ kúkú ni.
You PRM PRM FOC
'You are ...' (Awóbùlúyì, 2013: 73)

It is discovered that the examples above are not plausible enough to determine the categorial status of QVs in Yorùbá, or whether QVs have the same categorial status with *kẹ̀, kọ́, ni* and *wẹ̀* as claimed by Awóbùlúyì. To adequately capture the syntactic behaviours of Yorùbá QVs and their collocation with auxiliaries, we need to explore some other technical details on the syntactic or semantic similarities/dissimilarities among QVs (dà and ńkọ́) , other lexical verbs and *kẹ̀, kọ́, ńkọ́, ni* and *wẹ̀* classified alongside the QVs by Awóbùlúyì (2013). In line with this, let us consider the examples below:

63a. Olú tún wá.
Olú PRM come
'Olú still came.'

---

[69]. This is not Yorùbá equivalent of a qualifier.

[70] See Awóbùlúyì (2013:72-73) for other types of pre-modifiers that collocate with ***dà***, ***kọ́***, and ***ni***.

b. Olú tún dà/ńkọ́?
Olú PRM QV
'Where is Olú again?'

ci. Olú tún ni ....
Olú PRM FOC
'Olú again'

ii. Olú tún ni ó wá.
Olú still FOC he come
'OLÚ still came.'

iii. Olú ni ó tún wá.
Olú FOC RES still come
'OLÚ still came.'

d. Olú tún wẹ̀/kẹ̀
Olú PRM PSM
'Olú again!'

Only 63a, b, cii and cii above are complete expressions, they have predicates unlike 63ci, and d. Example (63ci) above is an elliptical form of 63cii or 63ciii. Also, *kẹ̀* and *wẹ̀* cannot feature in the examples below because they are not verbs.

64a. Ayọ̀ wá *dà/ńkọ́?*
Ayọ̀ PRM QV
'Where is Ayọ̀ now?'

b. Ayọ̀ wá *fẹ́* ìyàwó.
Ayọ̀ PRM marry wife
'Ayọ̀ later got married?'

c. Ayọ̀ wá *gbọ́* ọ̀rọ̀ mi.
Ayọ̀ PRM hear word me
'Ayọ̀ later listened to me.'

d. *Ayọ̀ wá[71] *kẹ̀/wẹ̀*
Ayọ̀ PRM PSM[72]

The italicised items (in 64a-c) below are verbs. *Ni* is a focus marker (in 65a) below, which is an elliptical version of 65b, where *ri* "see" functions as the sentence predicate.

65a. Olú wá ni ....

71. This is a pre-modifier in Yoruba. It is different from the lexical verb *wá* "come" .
72. ***Kẹ̀*** and ***wẹ̀*** are identified as intensifiers here.

Olú PRM FOC
'Later it was olú.'

b. Olú wá ni mo ***ri***.
Olú PRM FOC I see
'I later saw OLU.'

Also, QVs do not collocate with other regular verbs unlike *kẹ̀* and *wẹ̀,* as shown below:[73].

66. Olú wá kẹ̀/wẹ̀/*dà/*ńkọ́.
Olú come PSM
Olú still came'

Àkànbí (2011:8) also identifies *dà* and *ńkọ́* as verbs performing dual roles: predicates and question markers in Yorùbá sentences. This view is in line with Munro's (2012) assumption that 'an interrogative verb is embedded with wh-feature, and used in a wh-question. Àkànbí (2011) also claims that *dà* and *ńkọ́* exhibit some dissimilarities with respect to their semantics and also, they are not mutually exclusive as shown in the examples below:

67ai. Ìgbà wo ló dà?[74]
Time QM FOC-it become
'When will it be/When next?'

ii. *Ìgbà wo ló ńkọ́?
Time QM FOC-it QV

bi. Ibi wo ló dà (Ibo ló dà)?
Place QM FOC-it become
'Where are you going?'

ii. *Ìgbà wo ló ńkọ́?
Time QM FOC-it QV (Àkànbí, 2011: 8)

Àkànbi's opinion on 67a and b above is not very correct, for the following two reasons:

1. The ontological specification of *dà* in the examples (67ai and 67bi).above is defective. The item (dà) is wrongly identified as a QV. *Dà* "become" in each of the sentences

[73]. Read Ọlánrewájú (2016) and, Taíwò and Abímbọ́lá (2014) on syntactic similarities and dissimilarities of QVs and other regular verbs in Yorùbá.

[74]. Our gloss here does not follow Akànbi's view. He identifies ***dà*** here as a QV. ***Dà*** (in 67ai or bi) above does not mark interrogatives unlike ***ńkọ́***.

does not have [+Q] feature. For a clearer understanding, let us consider the examples below:

68a Ó di ọ̀la.
It become tomorrow
'Till tomorrow/We shall see/met tomorrow'

b. O di ìgbà wo?
It become time QM
'Till when?/Whe shall we see/met?'

c. Ìgbà wo ni ó dì/dà?
Time QM FOC it become
'Till when?/When shall we see/met?'

Dà/Dì in above examples are ontologically different from *dà/ńkọ́* specified [+Q] feature a QV in Yorùbá.

2. Akànbí's position regarding 69 above also fails to consider that Yorùbá disallows

collocation of two seperate question markers in an interrogative clause.

2.6.2 On in situ QNs in Yorùbá

Ajíbóyè (2006: 32) identifies the following examples as insitu content word questions in Yorùbá[75].

69. Ta ni?
Who FOC
'Who is s/he?'

b. Kí ni?
What FOC
'What is it?'

c. Níbo ni?
Where FOC
'Where is it?'

d. Èló ni?
How-much FOC
'How much is it?'

e. Ìgbà wo ni?
Time which FOC
'When is it?'

f. Báwo[76] ni?
Manner-which FOC
'How is it?'

A cursory look at the examples above reveals that they are truncated forms of 70 below:

70a. Ta ni o kí <ta>?
QN FOC you greet
'Who did you greet?'

b. Kí ni o rà <kí>?
QN FOC you buy
'What did you buy?'

[75]. Examples below are extracted as glossed by Ajibóyè (2006).
[76]. This study adopts Oláńrewájú's (2016) orthography.

c. Níbo/ibo ni o ti wá <ni ibo>?[77]
QN FOC you have come
'Where are you from?'

d. Èló ni o rà ni <èló>?
QN FOC you buy at
"How much did you by it?'

e. Ìgbà wo ni o rà á <ní ìgbà wo>?
Time QM FOC you buy it
'When did you buy it?'

f. Báwo ni o ti ṣe é <báwo>?
QN FOC you have do it
'How did you do it?'

The preposition is not pie-piped with the QN, but gets deleted (in 70d) above. We assume that the only reason behind this irregularity is that *èló* "how much" is used to eliciting information about price. This is not peculiar to *èlo* as a QN alone, it is also applicable to other DPs in this category. Let us consider the examples below:

71a .[$_{TP}$Olùkọ̀ rà ìwé [$_{PP}$ ní [$_{DP}$ ṣílè mẹ́ta]]]
Teacher buy book at pence three
'The teacher bought the book three pence.'

b. [$_{FocP}$ Ṣílè mẹ́ta ni [$_{TP}$ Olùkọ́ ra ìwé [$_{PP}$ ø [$_{DP}$<sílè mẹ́ta>]]]].
Pence three FOC teacher buy book
'The teacher bought the book THREE PENCE.'

c. *[$_{FocP}$Ni ṣílè mẹ́ta ni [$_{TP}$ Olùkọ́ ra ìwé [$_{PP}$ < ní ṣílè mẹ́ta>]]].
At pence three FOC teacher buy book

d. [$_{TP}$Olùkọ́ ra ìwé [$_{PP}$ ní àná]]
Teacher buy book at yesterday
'The teacther bought a book YESTERDAY.'

e. [$_{FocP}$Ní àná ni [$_{TP}$ olùkọ́ ra ìwé [$_{PP}$<ní àná>]]].
At yesterday FOC teacher buy book
'The teacher bought a book YESTERDAY.'

f. [$_{FocP}$Àná ni [$_{TP}$ olùkọ́ ra ìwé [$_{PP}$Φ<àná>]]].
Yesterday FOC teacher buy book
'The teacher bought a book YESTERDAY.'

As evident (in 71e and f) above, the preposition *ni* is optionally pie-piped with the DP *àná* "yesterday" to the clause left periphery unlike 71b and c above. The derivation (in 71c) above crashes because the preposition *ní* is pie-piped with the preposed DP. The conclusion borne out of this is that, what Ajíbóyè (2006) refers to as in situ content

[77]. The preposition is either pie-piped or deleted for the derivation to converge.

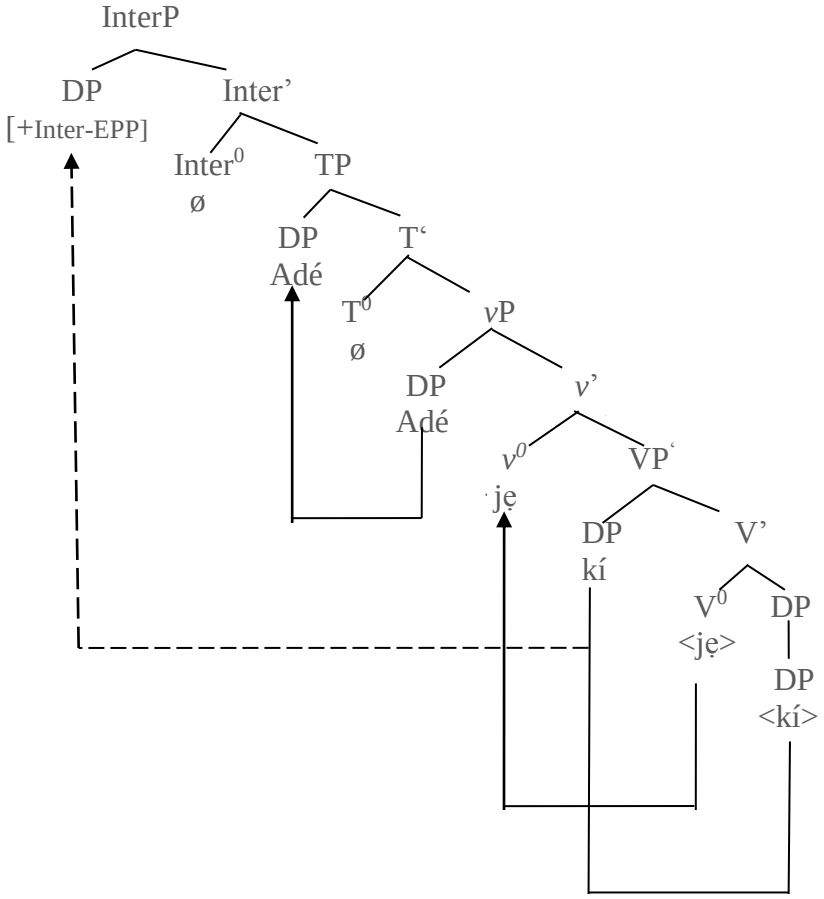
word questions as exemplified (in 69b) repeated (as 72a) below, for ease of reference, is incorrect, unlike 72b below, adapted from Àkànbí (2016):

72a. Kí ni? [78] (Adé ṣe **kí ni**?)
QN FOC
'What is it?' (Ajíbóyè, 2006: 32)

b. Adé ję kí?
Adé eat what
Adé ate what? (Àkànbí, 2016: 418)

Within minimalist assumption, the QN *kí*, although base generated at the canonical position associated with its grammatical function (object complement), is still attracted to the spec InterP through LF movement as shown below:

73.



The interrogative construction above is derived thus: The verb *ję* "eat" first merges with the QN *kí* "what" to satisfy the requirement of the transitive verb *ję*, while the direct object, the QN *kí*, is also copied to the specifier position of the verb phrase (VP) for the purpose feature valuation. The derivation proceeds by merging the null performative light v^0 with the VP to form the v' (*v*-bar). The strong *v*F on the light

[78]. Note that this is a truncated focus construction.

v^0attracts the lexical verb *jẹ* "eat" to be adjoined to itself while the subject DP, *Adé* is externally merged as the spec *v*P in line with Predicate Internal Subject Hypothesis which requires subject of a clause to be base-generated within the predicate. The derivation proceeds by merging of the abstract/neutral non-future tense, the T^0 with the light verb phrase (*v*P) to project the T*'* (T-bar), while the T^0 attracts the subject DP (Adé) to the spec TP for feature checking purpose, where it values its unvalued [+EPP, case] feature. The derivation still proceeds by merging the null $Inter^0$ with the TP to project the Inter*'*, while the QN *kí* takes an LF movement to the spec InterP to check its [+Q, EF] on the $Inter^0$.

The derivation (in 73) above is an echoed question. Therefore, it does not trigger any response from an interlocutor. FocP is not activated because the QN *kí* "what" is not focused. It is observed in Standard Yorùba and CY dialects that only Foc^0 is specified [+strong], not the $Inter^0$. As a result of this, the Inter-head ($Inter^0$) cannot trigger the syntactic movement of the QN to the clause left periphery.

2.6.3 Comments on interrogative qualifer *wo*.

Awóbùlúyì (1978, 2013) refers to *ta*, *kí èwo*, ***èló*** and *mélòó* as interrogative nouns/qualifiers in Yorùbá[79]. He fails to identify *wo* as a qualifier. Consequent upon this, he does not distinguish between *wo* (the interrogative qualifier) and *èwo* (an interrogative noun functioning as a qualifier in Yorùbá). Awóbùlúyì's explanatory inadequacy on the grammar of *èwo* and *wo* in Yorùba will be invariably exposed and corrected, in the course of dicusssing Àkànbí's (2016) position on *wo* in Yorùbá.

Bámgbóṣé (1990) and Ọlánrewájú (2016, 2017) identify *èwo* "which one" as an interrogative noun alongside *ta* "who", *ki* "what" , *èló* "how much", *mélòó* "how many", *èkelòó* "what position/time" and so on as QNs, and *wo* "which" as an interrogative qualifier, as respectively shown (in 74a and b) below:[80]

74a. Èwo ni wọ́n gbà?
QN FOC they take
'Which one did they collect? (Bámgbóṣé, 1990: 184)

b. Ilé wo ni èyí ?
House QM FOC this
'Which house is this?'

[79]. All interrogative nouns function as qualifiers. This will still be discussed in this same section.
[80]. Awóbùlúyì (1978, 2013) does not include ***èkelòó*** among Yorùbá QNs.

Two claims are made by Àkànbí (2016) on how Yorùbá operates *wo* as an interrogative marker: one, the entire italicised phrases (in 75) below function as question markers[81], and two, *wo* is derived from *èwo* by deleting the initial vowel *è'*. Let us consider his first assertion in the examples below:

75. *Ilé wo* ni Olú kọ́?
House QP FOC Olú kọ́?
'Which house did Olú build?'
(Àkànbí, 2016: 419)

In Àkànbí's opinion, the entire DP (QP) in 75 is regarded as the question marker. Corroborating this position, he assumes that the entire italicised phrase (in 75) above is undetachable. Everything is pie-piped together to the clause left periphery, as evident in the ungammaticality of 76b below:

76a. Ayọ̀ sùn ní igbà wo?
Ayọ̀ sùn at time QP
'When did Ayọ̀ sleep?'

b. *Wo ni Ayọ̀ sùn ni igbà ___?
QP FOC Ayọ̀ sleep at time

Now, if Àkànbí's assumption above holds water, how do we account for *ilé* "house" and *ìwé* "book" as question markers (in 77a-b) below?

77a. Ilé kí ni Olú kọ́?
House QM FOC Olú kọ́
'What type of house did Olú build?

b. Ìwé mélòó ni wọ́n rà?
Book QM FOC they buy
'How many books did they buy?'

The QNs in examples above cannot be detached from their head nouns. The head nouns and their complements form the DP just like we have (in 76a-c) above. *Wo* in each of the examples (in 76a-c) is an interrogative qualifier. The QNs (in 77a-b) above also function as qualifiers, just like a noun (nominal qualifier) qualifies its head noun, as shown (in 78) below:

78. Bàbá *Adé* lọ sí ilé *ìwé*.
Father Adé go to house book
'Adé's father went to school.'

Adé qualifies *bàbá* while *ìwé* qualifies *ilé* (in 78) above. Therefore, what happens in 75a-c or 77a-b unlike 78 above is that the QMs have their interrogative feature percolated through the entire phrases. Q-feature percolation is a feature copying

[81]. It should be noted that QMs are closed marker class in standard Yorùbá and CY dialects.

process whereby a constituent that does not possess Q-feature (a non Q-word) inherits Q-feature from its immediately adjacent complement. Under minimalist assumption, atraction of the entire phrase to the clause left periphery is accounted for by Attract Possible Smallest Maximal Projection (in 79) below:

79. An interrogative **C** attracts the smallest possible maximal projection containing an interrogativeword to become its specifier.

(Radford, 2006: 128)

It is equally discovered that hypothesis (79) above captures more than content word questions in Yorùbá. Let us consider the daclarative sentence (in 80) below:

80a. Olùkọ́ ra ìwé tuntun.
Teacher buy book new.
'The teacher bought a new book.'

b. Ìwé tuntun ní olùkọ́ rà.
Book new FOC teacher buy
'The teacher bought A NEW BOOK.'

c.. *Ìwé ní olùkọ́ rà __ tuntun.
Book FOC teacher buy new.

The derivation (in 80c) above crashes because the attributive adjective *tuntun* "new" is left stranded at the base-generated position. This is captured under island condition referred to as Left Branching Constraint (LBC) in the previous models of generative grammar.[82]

Now, let us return to Àkànbí's second assertion, where he claims that *wo* is derived from *èwo* after deleting the initial vewel *è*. On the contrary, *èwo* is derived by prefixation of *è-* and *wo* (è+wo)[83]. Both of them are of different categorial status: *ewo* is a QN while *wo* is an interrogative qualifier. They do not occur in free variation as evident in the examples below:

81a. [$_{FocP}$ Èwo [$_{Foc'}$ni [$_{TP}$ ẹ [$_{T'}$ [$_{vP}$<èwó> [$_{v'}$<ẹ> [$_{v'}$ rí [$_{VP}$<èwo> [$_{V'}$<ri> [$_{DP}$<èwo>]]]]]]]]]]?
QN FOC you see.

[82]. Read Ndimele (1992:76) and Ọlámrewájú (2017) on this.

[83]. Read Ọlámrewájú (2016) for further details on the derivation of QNs in Yorùbá.

'Which one did you see?'

b. *[$_{FocP}$ Wo ni ẹ rí <wo>]?
QM Foc you see

Two things caused 81b to crash unlike 81a: Firstly, in Yorùbá, the spec FocP only hosts a DP, therefore, any lexical item specified [-nominal] never occupies the spec FocP.[84] This invariably disqualifies *wo* occupying the left periphery of the clause (in 81b). Secondly, *wo* unlike *èwo* cannot be selected as the direct object of *ri* "see" as evident in ungrammaticality of 82a below:

82a. *Olú ra wo?
Olú buy QM

b. Olú ra èwo?[85]
Olú buy QN
'Olú bought WHICH ONE?'

Therefore, as syntactically evident above, Àkànbí's position on the syntax of *wo* and *èwo* as content word question markers in Yorùbá needs a rethink.

2.6.4 Comments on Yorùbá interrogative nouns[86]

Ọláògún (2016) and, Ọláògún and Aṣiwáju (2016) take a radical departure from the traditional position on Yorùbá QNs. Ọláògún (2016) claims that items like *ta*, *kí* and so on in Yorùbá content word questions never mark interrogative. Therefore, they only satisfy focus requirements. This assertion is based on 83a-e as follow:

83a. Yorùbá operates overt/abstract question morpheme to mark content word

questions[87]

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[84]. Some Yorùbá scholars also assume that a PP can be hosted at the spec FocP in Yorùbá. Ii is discovered that unlike DP-head, PP-head (a preposition) is never visible to the LF interface whenever a PP is lured to the clause left periphery as shown in the examples below:

a. Ilé ni Oyè wà.
House FOC Oyè exist
'Oyè was at HOME.'

b. Ní ilé ni Oyé wà.
At house FOC Oyè exist
'Oyè was at HOME.'

The preposition ***ní*** (in b) above is invisible to the LF interface. This is an evident that the PP-head has been deactivated and the entire PP has been nominalised during the course of its internal merge at the clause left periphery (the spec FocP). In order to avoid distraction, we will abstract away from this argument to discuss other salient issues.

[85]. We can also have the example below, where ***èwo*** "which" qualifies ***aṣọ*** "cloth"

Olu ra aṣọ ***èwo****?*
Olú buy cloth QN
'Which cloth did Olú buy?'

You can also read Taiwò (2016) on abstract DP head in Yorùbá.

[86]. Note that this is referred to as QNs in this work.

b. Co-occurence of wh-phrase with an overt or non overt yes/no morpheme

c. Other language attest non-overt wh-phrases

d. A wh-prase does not mark only questions in English.

e. Yorùbá still operates wh-questions without wh-phrases.

These five point itemised (in 83) above are subsumed under the following three evidences:

i) clause typing evidence,

ii) information structure evidence and

iii) clause structure evidence.

On the occurence of question morpheme (in 85a) above, Ọláògún (2016) claims that, just like some other languages under Kwa, Yorùbá operates an abstract question morpheme, and not a wh-phrase to mark a content word question. According to him, this question morpheme either occurs after subject DP or at the clause final position as evident in the examples below:

84a. Ìwọ ***a*** mọ̀? Yorùbá
You INTER know
'Did you know?'

b. Olú ***yé*** rán? Ǹjọ̀kóo
Olu INT know+emph
'Did Olu know?' (Ọláògún, 2016: 14)

The questions morphemes *a* and *ye* come after the subject DPs and function as yes/no question markers in 84a and b respectively. To Ọláògún (2016), overt realisation of a question morpheme after the subject DP in 84a above is an evidence that Yorùbá also operates its abstract equivalent either after a subject DP or at the clause final position.
It is however discovered that *a* is wrongly identified as the yes/question marker in 84a for the following reasons:

1. The item still occurs with some other commonly used yes/no question markers like *ṣé* and *ǹjẹ́* as evident in the examples below:

85a. Ǹjẹ́/Ṣé ìwọ a mọ̀?
YNQM you PRM know
'Did you really know?'

b. Ǹjẹ́/Ṣé ìwọ tilẹ̀[88] mọ̀?

---

[87]. Òláògún (2016) adopts wh-phrases in the place of this.

[88]. Some scholars of Yorùbá refer to this item as a preverbal modifier.

YNQM you PRM know
'Did you really know?'

All non-controversial yes/no question markers (ǹjẹ́, ṣé, ṣebí and ṣèbí) collocate with *a* or its abstract form. In a nutshell, *ǹjẹ́/ṣé* is the yes/no marker in 85a above. This invariably indicates that yes/no question marker is non-overt in 84a above.

It is equally important to note that, *a* shares this syntactic behaviour with *tí ì* identified by Bámgbóṣé (1990: 185) as shown below:

86a. O *tí ì* lọ ná?[89]
You YNQM go ADV
'Haven't you really gone?'

b. Ǹjẹ́/Ṣé o *tí ì* lọ ná?
YNQM you PERF go ADV
'Haven't you really gone?'

Yes/No question marker (YNQM) is not phonetically marked in 84a unlike 86b above. Therefore, *tí ì* does not mark yes/no question in 86b above. This is also evident in 87a-b below:

87a. Mo gbọ́ ṣùgbọ́n mi ò *tí ì* gbà.'
I hear but I NEG PERF take
'I heard but I have not accepted.'

b. Mo gbọ́ mo sì ***ti*** gbà.'
I hear, I and PERF take
'I heard but I have not accepted.'

Tí ì marks negation in 87a above. Example 87b is its declarative counterpart.

3. The question morpheme can co-occur with *dà/ńkọ́* as shown (in 88) below:

88. Ọlọ́gbọ́n náà *a* dà?
Wise-person the PRM QV
'Where is the wise?' (1 Cor. 1 :20, *Bíbélì Mímọ́*)

The example (in 88) above raises these two plausible questions: Firstly, considering *a* as a question morpheme (in 88) above, how many question markers does the construction (in 88) have? The plausible answer is "two", of course, so far *dà* is undebatably a content word question marker in Yorùbá as evident (in 81) below:

89. Ẹlẹ́rìí rẹ dà?
Owner-witness your QV
'Where is your witness?

[89]. This sentence is glossed in line with Bámgbóṣé's (1990: 185) position on ***tí ì***.

It should however be noted that, QVs never co-occur with other question markers in Yorùbá (Táíwò and Abímbọ́lá 2014).[90] Let us consider the examples below:

90a. Ìyàwó rẹ dà?
Wife you QV
'Where is your wife?'

b. *Ǹjẹ́/Ṣé ìyàwó rẹ dà?
YNQM Wife you QV

c. Àwọn ọ̀rẹ́è rẹ dà?
They friend your QV
'Where are your friends?'

d.. *Ta ni àwọn ọ̀rẹ́è rẹ dà?
QN FOC they friend your QVs

Examples (90b and d) are ill-formed in Yorùbá.

Another logical assumption demanded by 84a and 88 repeated as 91a and 91b respectively for ease of reference is that if *a*, a question morpheme, according to Ọláògún (2016) and, Ọláògún and Aṣiwájú (2016) triggers yes/no response (in 91a) below, what type of response does it trigger in 91b, if truely it is a question marker in Yorùbá? The answer is not far-fetched: Our comments on Ọlaògún's (2016) claim on co-occurrence of wh-phrase with overt or non-overt yes/no question morpheme will provide a plausible answer to this question.

91a. Ìwọ ***a*** mọ̀?
You PRM know
'Did you know?'

b. Ọlọ́gbọ́n náà *a* *dà*?[91]
Wise-person the PRM QV
'Where is the wise?' (1 Cor. 1:20, *Bíbélì Mímọ́*)

On co-occurrence of wh-phrase with an overt or non overt question morpheme, Ọláògún (2016) and, Ọláògún and Aṣiwájú (2016) opine that evidence from other languages reveals that the eqivalents of items like *kí* "what", and *ta* "who" in some other languages co-occur with overt question morpheme as shown (in 92) below. Therefore, Yorùbá attests abstract question morpheme that collocates with these items.

92a. Wey ba é gà? [92] Lélé
Who FOC go INTER

[90]. Táíwò and Abímbọ́lá (2014:12) observes that ***dà*** an ***ńkọ́*** are never used with QNs, particularly, among the Kwa languages.
[91]. Extracted from KJV (Yorùbá Bible).
[92]. This example is extracted fom Aboh and Pfau (2011). See Ọlaògún and Aṣiwájú (2016: 2)

‘Who went away?’

b. Kósan Ade yè dẹ ìsi? ṄJọ̀-Kóo
Where Adé INTER buy yam
‘Where did Adé buy yam?’ (Ọláògún and Aṣiwájú, 2016: 2-3)

They assert as follows:

> ... wúnrẹ̀ aṣèbéèrè *yè* tí ó wà nínú ìbéèrè bẹ́ẹ̀ ni tàbí bẹ́ẹ̀ kọ́ náà tún jẹyọ nínú àwọn ìbéèrè tí kìí ṣe bẹ́ẹ̀ ni tàbí bẹ́ẹ̀ kọ́ ti a ti máa ń rí àwọn wúnrẹ̀n onítibí ... Ẹ̀kọ́ tí irúfẹ́ àwọn àpẹẹrẹ yìí ń kọ́ wa ni pé kì í ṣe àwọn wunrẹ̀n bí i *kí* àti *ta* ni a fi ń ṣe ìbéèrè ninú èdè Yorùbá.
>
> ... the question marker *yè* in a yes/no question also occurs in those that are not yes/no questions, where these concerned items (QNs) also occur... The implication borne out of this is that items like *kí* and *ta* are not used to mark questions in Yorùbá.
> (Ọláògún and Aṣiwájú, 2016:2)

Now, the two germane questions that beg to be answered here are: “what type of response does the abstract equivalent of *yè* trigger in Yoruba? Two, how do we account, for the sake of intuition, why this question morpheme triggers two different types of responses: a polar answer and also, a content word answer? The item ***a***, which Ọláògún refers to as the equivalent of *yè* neither triggers a yes/no answer in Yorùbà as shown in 84a repeated (as 93) below for ease of reference.

93. Ìwọ ***a*** mọ̀?
You INTER know
‘Did you know?’

To Nkemnji (1995), Aboh and Pfau (2011), Ọláògún (2016), and Ọláògún and Aṣiwájú (2016), the two questions above are irrelevant. To them, focus and clause typing are teased apart; the question morpheme clause-types while a QN satisfies focus requirements as shown (in 94) below:

94. [$_{\text{InterP}}$ Ki [$_{\text{Inter}'}$ Φ [$_{\text{FocP}}$<kí>ni [$_{\text{TP}}$ Olú [$_{v\text{P}}$<kí> [$_{v'}$ <Olú> jẹ [$_{\text{VP}}$<Olú><jẹ><kí>]]]]]]]?
QN FOC Olú eat
‘What did Olú eat?’

Another plausible fact revealing that QNs/QMs are inherently interrogative in Yorùbá is shown (in 95) below:

95a. **Aṣọ wo** ni Oyè rà ____?
Cloth QM FOC Oyè buy
‘Which cloth did Oyè buy?’

b. **Aṣọ yẹn** ni Oyè rà ____.
Cloth that FOC Oyè buy
'Oyè bought THAT CLOTH.'

In 95a above, the QM *wo* performs interrogative function not scope marking. *Wo* (interrogative qualifier) and *yẹn* "that" are not nouns, therefore, they cannot be hosted at the spec FocP. Suffice to note that *aṣọ wo* forms the QP in 96a above, *wo* has it [+Q] feature percolated through the entire phrase. Also, extraction of the entire QP to the clause left periphery is in line with Wh-Attraction Condition (WAC) (in 96) below:

96. The edge feature on C attracts the smallest possible maximal projection containing the closest wh-word to move to spec CP.
(Radford, 2009:216)

The implication borne out 95a and b above is that if *wo* is the question marker in 95a, *kí* also marks question in 97a below.

97a. Iṣẹ́ *kí* ni Ọlá n ṣe?
Work QN FOC Ọlá PROG do
'What is Olá's profession?

b. Iṣẹ́ Olùkọ́ ni Ọlá ń ṣe.
Work teacher FOC Ọlá PROG do
'Olá TEACHES?

Furthermore, it should be noted that all QNs in Yorùbá have unvalued [+focus] feature which needs to be valued at the spec FocP through specifier and head agreement. *Wo* can only be licensed to be hosted at the clause left periphery *iff* it is nominalised or qualifies a head noun[93].

Therefore, we need to survey the technicalities underlying the formation of interrogatives in Yorùbá to be able to determine the correct distribution of the said item *a* and its abstract equivalent. Consequent upon this, it is the [+Q] feature on QNs that is transferred to Inter^0 to trigger content word answers in the examples below:

98a. Kí ni Bọ́lá jẹ?
QN FOC Bọ́lá eat
'What did Bọ́lá eat?'

b. Ibo ni ẹ ti ri wọn?
QN FOC you PERF see them
'Where did you see them?'

Another empirical evidence showing that Yorùbá does not operate an abstract question morpheme with QNs in Yorùbá is examplified below.

[93]. See Ọláńréwájú (2016) on derivations of question items in Yorùbá.

99a. *Ṣé/Ńjẹ́ Olú ti lọ báwo?
YNQM Olú PERF go QN

b. *Ṣebí ẹ rí wọn níbo?
YNQM you see they at-QN

The ill-formedness of 99a-b above is factored by the co-occurrence of two different question markers. Therefore, the conclusion borne out of the examples above is that the assumption that (the traditional) QNs collocate with an abstract question morpheme in standard Yorùbá as claimed by Ọlaògùn (2016) and, Ọlaògùn and Aṣiwájú (2016) still needs to be given a re-think.

Ọlaògùn (2016) also observed that wh-prases do not mark only questions in English, as exempified below.

100a. We met the man whom you interviewed last week.

b. The committee decided over who will represent the University at the meeting.

c. The boy who bought a car last week is dead.

(Oláògún, 2016:128)

d. Who broke the plate?

e. I have seen the boy who broke the plate.

f. I met the boy where he broke the plate.

A cursory look at 100a-c above reveals that *who* marks a wh-question in 100a, relativisation in 100b and *where* marks an adverbial in 100c. This consequently factors English adopting "wh-term".[94] On the contrary, in standard Yorùbá and CY dialects, content word questions, relative clauses, adverbials and so on are not signalled by wh-encripts. They operate different lexical items (heads) to clause-type them. Let us consider the examples below in standard Yorùbá for a better explanation.

101a. [$_{InterP}$Kí[$_{Inter'\Phi}$ [$_{FocP}$<kí> [$_{Foc'}$ni [$_{TP}$ Oyè [$_{vP}$<kí>[$_{v'}$ < Oyè >[$_{v'}$rí [$_{VP}$ <kí><rí><kí>]]]]]]]]?

QN FOC Oyè see

'What did Oyè see?

b. [$_{RelP}$ Ọmọ ti [$_{TP}$ wọ́n [$_{vP}$<ọmọ> [$_{v'}$<wọ́n> pè [$_{VP}$<ọmọ><pe><ọmọ>]]]]]

Child REL they call

The child who was called

c. Mo ri Olú$_i$ ní [$_{RelP}$ ibi [$_{Rel'}$ ti [$_{TP}$ ó$_i$ [$_{vP}$ <ibi> [$_{v'}$ <ó>[$_{v'}$ jókòó [$_{VP}$<ó><jókòó> [$_{PP}$ sí [$_{DP}$ <ibi>]]]]]]]].

I see Olú at place REL he sit at

[94]. See Agbàyani (2000) and Radford (2004) on this.

'I saw Olú where sat.'

A cursory look at the gloss in each of 101a-b above reveals that English operates *who* (a wh-expression) in a wh-question in 101a, a relative construction in 101b. This is not applicable in Yorùbá, where different items are operated in content word questions and relative constructions. Therefore, QNs in Yorùbá are ontologically different from wh-phrases operated in English wh-questions. They do not exhibit a unified behaviour.[95]. Ọláògún's failure to identify the language parameter discussed above invariably factors the putting up of the fourth point below to support his claim.

Ọláògún (2016) also opines that Yorùbá still operates wh-questions without wh-phrases (QNs) as considered in the examples below:

102a. Esther dà?[96]
Esther INTER
'Where is Esther?'

b. Ìwé ńkọ́?
Book INTER
'Where is the book?' (Ọláògún, 2016: 129)

The data in 102a-b above raise these two germane facts: One, Yorùbá operates some cotentives specified [+Q] feature to form its interrogatives, and examples are QNs and QVs. Two, *dà* and *ńkọ́* in (102a-b) above are QVs. Both expressions are of sentential status while *dà* and *ńkọ́* form their predicates[97]. It is also equally important to note here that *dà*, *ńkọ́*, *ta*, *kí*, *wo* and so on are used to form content word questions but they do not have the same categorial status entirely. Therefore, adopting wh-phrases for them in the syntax of Yorùbá interrogatives is descriptively inadequate[98].

Another plausible evidence revealing that QNs do more than focus marking is shown in CY content question below:

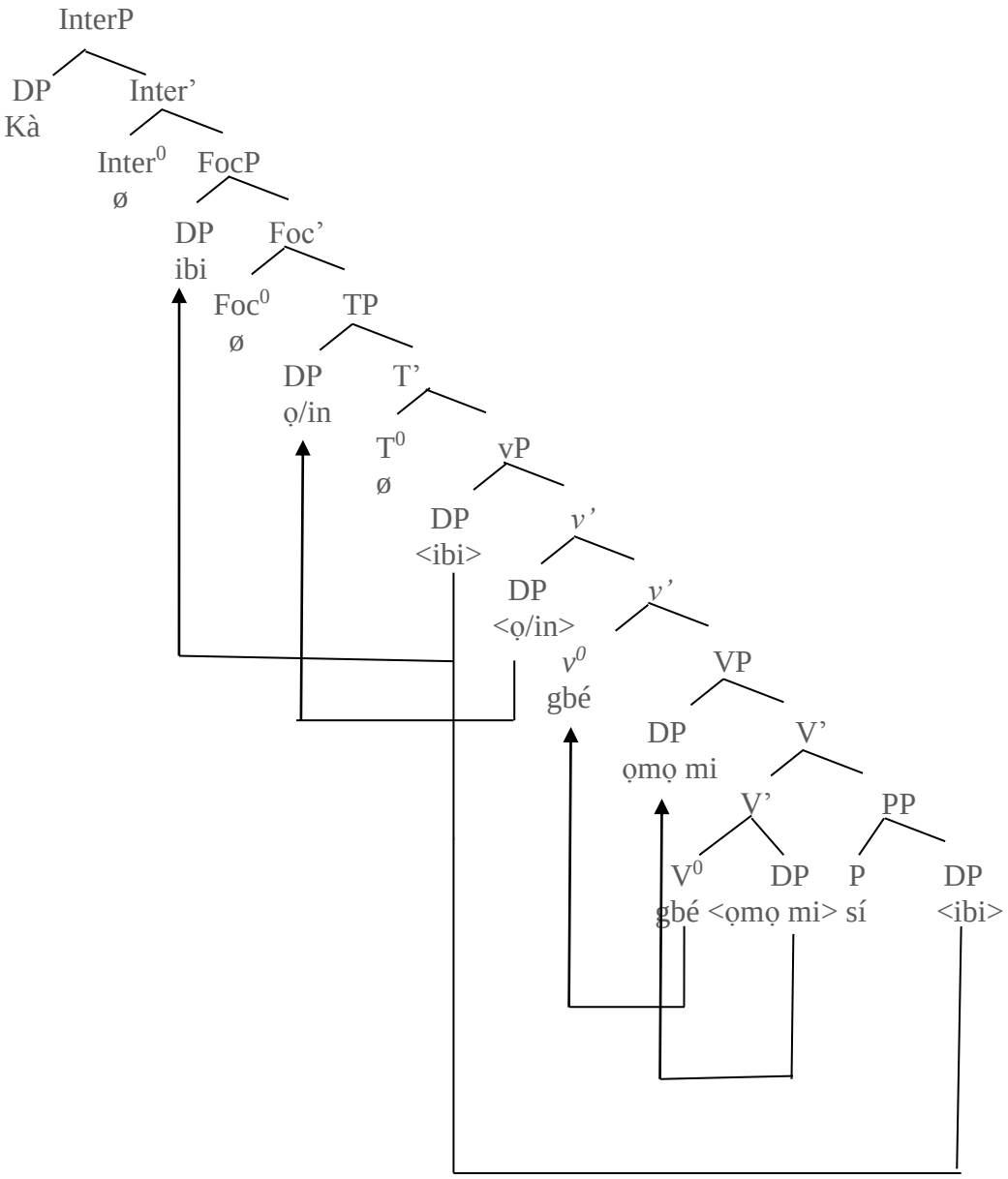
Ifẹ̀
103. Ka ibi o gbé ọmọ mi sí?
QN place you carry child me to
'Where did you put my child?'

The example (in 103) above is phrase-marked as 104 below for more explanatory adequacy.

---

95. This informs the adoption of QNs in the place of wh-phrases for the purpose of language justification.
96. The examples in 102a-b are adapted from Ọláògún without any orthographical modification.
97. We have discussed extensively on this in the previous sections of the same chapter. You can also read Taiwo and Abimbọlá (2014) and Ọláńrewájú (2016) for further explanations on the syntactic similarities between QVs and other sub-categories of verbs in Yorùbá.
98. Read Issah (2013) for further and similar explanations on this.

104.



The derivation (in 104) above goes thus: The verb *gbé* "carry" merges with the DP *ọmọ mi* "my child" , and consequently projects the lower V-bar. The lower V-bar merges with the PP *sí ibi* to project the higher the V-bar. The object DP *ọmọ mi* "my child" is copied to the spec VP by *Operation Copy and Delete* so as to have its case feature checked through specifier and head agreement. After this, the null performative light verb v^0 is externally merged with the verb phrase to project the *v*', while the strong *v*F on the light v^0 attracts the lexical verb *gbé* "carry" to adjoin to itself while the subject DP *o* "you" is selected from the numeration and merged as the inner

specifier of the light verb phrase (*v*P) to conform to the PISH. The outer spec *v*P then becomes the

escape hatch for the DP *ibi* "place" so as to be licensed from Phase Impenetrability Condition (PIC), and not to be frozen in situ. The non-future marker is merged with the light verb phrase (vP) to project the T*'*, while the the subject DP *ọ/in* "you" is probed to the specifier position of the TP where its [+EPP, case] feature is checked. The derivation proceeds by merging the abstract Foc-head to project the Foc-bar. The Foc-head as a probe also attracts the DP *ibi* "place" to the spec FocP to value its [+Focus] feature. The derivation still continues by merging the abstract Inter-head with the FocP to project the Inter-bar. The QN *ka* is externally merged at the spec InterP to value the unvalued [+Q, EF] on the Inter-head through specifier and head agreement. At this point, the derivation reaches the spell-out. This implies that only the DP *ibi* "place" and not *kà* (QN) undergoes focusing in (106) above. *Kà* is externally merged at the spec InterP in line with Radford's (2009: 124) proposal (105) below:

105. A clause is interpreted as a non echoic question if (and only if) it is a CP with an interrogative specifier i.e a specifier with an interrogative word).

To conclude this section, Ọláògún's assertion that items like *ta*, *kí* and so on only occur to satisfy focus requirements in Yorùbá interrogatives needs to be giving a re-think. These items have [+Q] which necesitates the activation of [+Q] specified on the abstract head of an interrogative phrase (InterP) [99] that is the Inter^0. Let see how this is evident in the examples below:

106a. [$_{FocP}$Ìwé Adé ni [$_{TP}$ mo [$_{vP}$<ìwé Adé><mo> kà [$_{VP}$ <ìwé Adé><kà><ìwé Adé>]]]]]?

Book Adé Foc I read
'I read ADE'S BOOK.'

b. [$_{InterP}$Ìwé ta [$_{FocP}$<ìwé ta> ni [$_{TP}$ o [$_{vP}$<ìwé ta><o> kà [$_{VP}$ <ìwé ta><kà><ìwé ta>]]]]]?

Book QN Foc you read
'Whose book did you red?'

c. [$_{InterP}$Ìwé wo [$_{FocP}$<ìwé wo> ni [$_{TP}$ o [$_{vP}$<ìwé wo><o> kà [$_{VP}$ <ìwé wo><kà><ìwé wo>]]]]]?

[99]. Read Ouhalla (1996) for further explanations on this.

Book QM Foc you read
'Which book did you read?'

In 106a above, the DP comprising the noun *ìwé* and its complement *Adé* (the nominal qulifier) are attracted to the spec FocP to check its [+focus] feature, also the question phrases (QPs) in 106b-c. A logical reasoning tells us that, the QN *ta* "who" (in 106b) and the QM *wo* "which" (in 106c) are not there for focus scope because focus requirement is satisfied by the head nouns *ìwé* as evident in 106c. *Wo* is specified [-Focus] feature in Yorùbá, therefore, it cannot be hosted in the spec FocP[100]. The entire DP is focused in 106a, and it does not trigger interrogative. A school of thought like Ọláògún (2016) would claim that 106a above does not have abstract question morpheme, but the same school fails to account for why the said abstract question morpheme collocates with 106b and c and not 106a above. Therefore, the QN *ta* and the interrogative qualifier *wo* (in 106b and c) perform interrogative function, They do not satisfy any focus requirement.[101] They have their [+Q] feature percolated through the entire phrases which are pie-piped to the clause left periphery in line with Wh-Attraction Condition(WAC) (in (107) below:

107. The edge feature on C attracts the smallest possible maximal projection containing theclosest wh-word to move to spec C.
(Radford, 2009b: 216)

Ọláògún (2016) and, Ọláògún and Aṣíwájú (2016) are therefore considered as works with a survey of limited data. This consequently factors their failure to explore other technical details underlying content word question formation in Yorùbá.

2.6.5 Comments on the derivation of polar questions in Yorùbá

Awóbùlúyì (1978:79-80) identifies *ṣe*, *ǹjẹ́* and *bí* as modifiers that occur in questions only. To him, *ṣe* and *ǹjẹ́* are sentence-initial sententials while *bí* is referred to as sentence-final sentential as shown below:[102]

108a. Ṣé Òjó lọ? (Did Ọjó go?)
b. Ǹjẹ́ Òjó lọ? (Did Ọjó go?)
c. Òjó lọ bí? (Did Ọjó go?)

[100]. We have discussed the categorial status of ***wo*** in the previous section of this same chapter.
[101]. QNs, just like other nominals in Yorùbá and CY dialects are license to be hosted at the spec FocP.
[102]. Read Awóbùlúyì (1978:79) for his detailed discussions on sententials in Yorùbá.

Bámgbóṣé (1990) also identifies *bí* as an interrogative sentence modifier.[103] He also classifies *kẹ̀* and *dan* in this same category as shown below:

109a. O ti lọ dan? (= Ṣé o ti lọ?)
You PERF go YNQM
'Have you gone?'

b. O ti lọ kẹ̀? (= Njẹ́ o ti lọ?)
You PERF go YNQM
'Have you gone?' (Bámgbóṣé, 1990: 186)

Bámgbóṣé (1990) unlike Awóbùlúyì (1978) identifies *ṣe* and *ǹjẹ́* separately from interrogative modifiers by referring to them as question markers[104]. According to Bámgbóṣé (1990), 109a above is a rhetorical question. He claims that *kẹ̀* occurs only in a rhetorical question. He also identifies *ṣebí* and *ṣèbí* as question markers alongside *ṣe* and *ǹjẹ́*. I will first discuss my position on this before I continue discussing others items used in the derivation of polar quetions in Yorùbá as identified in some extant works. Bámgboṣé's (1990) position on 109b generates these two questions: One, if *O ti lọ kẹ̀* "Have you gone?" is equivalent to *Ǹjẹ́ o ti lọ?* "Have you gone?" , how do we account for occurrence of *kẹ̀* in only rhetorical polar questions as opined by Bamgbóṣé (1990) so far *ǹjẹ́/ṣe* does not function as such? The implication of 109b above is that *ǹjẹ́/ṣe* also occurs in rhetorical polar questions in Yorùbá, and this is untrue. Two, if *kẹ̀* (in 109b) above marks interrogatives, what does it mark in 110b below?

110a. Olú náà kẹ̀!
Olú the PSM
;Olú again!'

b. Olú ni mo ri kẹ̀.
Olú FOC I see PSM[105]
'It was Olú I really saw.'

---

[103]. Ìlọ̀rí (2010) identifies ***ndan*** and ***ná*** as dialectal variants of ***bí***. According to him, ***dan*** and ***bí*** are operated among Ọ̀yọ́ and Ẹ̀gbá native speakers respectively.

[104]. The implication of Bámgbóṣe's (1990) view here is that ***ṣe*** and ***ǹjẹ́*** have different categorial status from ***bí***, ***kẹ̀*** and ***dan***. Some Yorùbá native speakers operate ***ndan*** in the place of ***dan*****.** According to Bámgbóṣé, ***ṣebí*** and ***ṣèbí*** are used in rhetorical question forms as shown below;

a, ***Ṣèbí*** ilẹ̀ ti mọ́?
QM ground PERF clear
'Is it not dawn?'

b. ***Ṣebí*** ọ̀la ni ọdún?
QM tomorrow is year
'Is tomorrow not new year?' (Bámgbóṣé, 1990: 184)

[105] This item is used as a post-modifier here.

Neither 110a nor 110b above triggers yes/no answer. It is observed that *kẹ̀* behaves similarly with *wẹ̀* as shown (in 111a-b) below:

111a. Iwọ náà kẹ̀! (You!)

b. Iwọ náà wẹ̀! (You!)

If *wẹ̀* is not identified as a rhetorical question marker in 111b above, *kẹ̀* (in 111a) also should not[106]. *Kẹ̀* does not belong to the class of interrogative markers, therefore, identifying it as an interrogative marker indicates that Yorùbá operates open class markers for questions.

Another plausible evident that excludes *kẹ̀* from interrogative class is based on its co-occurrence with other regular question markers as evident in the examples below:

112a Èwo tun ni èyí kẹ̀?
QN again FOC this QUAL
'Which one is this again?'

b. Kí tun ni èyí kẹ̀?
QN again FOC this QUAL
'What is this again?'

A logical question that demands an answer here is that 'if *kẹ̀* is used only as a rhetorical question as shown in 109b repeated as 113a below for ease of reference, how do we account for its occurence in content word questions in 112a-b above?

113a. O ti lọ kẹ̀? (Njẹ́ o ti lọ?)
You PERF go YNQM
'Have you gone?'

b. O *tí ì* lọ ná?[107]
You YNQM go ADV
'Have you gone now?'

(Bámgbóṣé, 1990: 184)

Awóbùlúyì identifies *kẹ̀* as a modifier in Yorùbá.[108] Bámgbóṣé (1990) also identifies *tí ì* as a preverbal interrogative marker. He equates it with *njẹ́* and *ṣe* with respect to how they elicit the same yes/no answer. In this work, *tí ì* is not identified as the question

[106]. Read Awobùlúyì (2013) and Ọlánrewájú (2017) on the differences between these items (kẹ̀, wẹ̀ and so on) in Yorùbá.

[107]. This example is glossed, following Bámgbóṣe's (1990) position. ***Tîì*** is disregarded as a question Marker in this work.

[108]. You can read Awóbùlúyì (2013) on ***kẹ̀***, ***wẹ̀***, ***dà***, ***ńkọ́*** and ***ni***.

marker in 113a above, interrogative is marked by an abstract yes/no question marker which its overt form is depicted in the examples below:[109]

114a. *Ǹjẹ̀* wọ́n *tí ì* lọ?
YNQM they PERF go
'Have they gone?'

b. *Ṣé* Olú *tí ì* gbọ́?
YNQM Olú PERF hear
'Has Olú heard?'

Ǹjẹ́ and *ṣe* respectively marks interrogative in 114a and b above, not *tí ì* which only functions as a pre-modifier in each of the constructions. It is equally irrelevant to ask 'which of the italicised items above is actually marking question in the above examples, so far the formal feature of Yorùbá polar question head (ǹjẹ́, ṣe ṣebí and ṣèbí) are interpretable.[110] Empirically, *tí ì* has no interpretable [+Q] feature. It is therefore an aspectual marker.

Another plausible evidence to disregard *tí ì* as a question marker in Yorùbá lies in its collocation with QNs in Yorùbá, as shown in the examples below:

115a. Ta ni ó tí ì lọ ninu yín?
QN FOC RES PERF go in-inside you
'Who among you has left?'

b. Kí ni o tí ì jẹ?
QN FOC you PERF eat
'What have you eaten?'

Tí ì as glossed in 115a and b is an aspectual marker. Therefore, it is a pre-modifier not a yes/no question marker. *Tí ì* also co-occurs with other question markers in Yorùbá, except QVs (dà, ńkọ́) which have high restriction placed on them[111]. Let us also consider the examples below:

116a. Ìwé *wo* ni o *tí ì* kà?
Book QM FOC you PERF read
'Which book have you read?'
(What is your level of education?)

b. Owó *wo* ni o *tí ì* ní?
Money QM FOC you PERF have
'Which mone do you have now?'
(What is the level of your riches now?)

---

109. Contrary to Aboh and Pfau (2011), yes/no question markers can be in abstract form in standard Yorùbá and CY dialects.

110. Read Ilọ̀rí (2010) onyes/no question markers in Yorùbá.

111. QVs do not co-occur with modifiers in Yorùbá. Read Ọláńrewájú (2017) on features of Yorubá QVs.

Wo marks interrogatives in the examples above. Its [+Q] feature percolates through the entire phrases: *ìwé wo* "which book" and *owó wo* "which money".

A cursory look at the examples below shows that *tí ì* behaves similarly with *a* identified by Ọláògun (2016) as a polar question marker in Yorùbá. Therefore, they are both pre-modifiers, only that *a* occurs in no other constructions than interrogatives while *tí ì* still features in affirmative sentences as shown below:

117a. Ǹjẹ́/Ṣé ẹ *tí i*/*a* gbọ́?
YNQM you PERF/PRM[112] hear
'Have you heard?'

b. Ǹjẹ́/Ṣé ẹ̀yin *tí i*/*a* mọ̀?
YNQM you PERF/PRM hear
'Have you heard?

Both pre-modifiers *tí ì* and *a* can be stacked in an interrogative derivation as shown below:

118a. Ǹjẹ́/Ṣé ẹ̀yín *a* *tí i* gbọ́?
YNQM you PRM PERF hear
'Have you heard?'

b. Ǹjẹ́/Ṣé ẹ̀yin *a* *tí i* mọ̀?
YNQM you PRM PERF hear
'Have you heard?

c. Ẹ̀yín *a* *tí i* gbọ́?
You PRM PERF hear
'Have you heard?'

The Inter^0 of the polar question is not visible to PF level in (118c) above unlike 118a and b, where they are legible to the PF interface. Also, *a* preceeds *tí ì* whenever they are stacked together in a derivation.

Ilọ̀rí (2010), following Awóbùlúyì (1978) and Bámgbóṣé (1990) identifies *bí* as a question element that occours at the clause-final position of a Yorùbá yes/no quesion. Let us consider the examples below:

119a. Olú lọ *bí*?
Olú go Qst
'Did Olú go?'

b. Ṣé/Ǹjẹ́ Olú lọ *bí*?
Qst Olú go Qst

[112]. This abbreviation (PRM) stands for pre-modifier. Pre-modifiers are also referred as pre-verbal adverbs by Awóbùlúyì (1978).

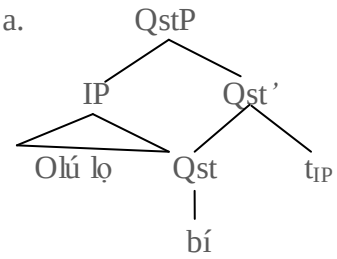
‘Did Olú go?’

(Ìlọ̀rí, 2010: 254-255)

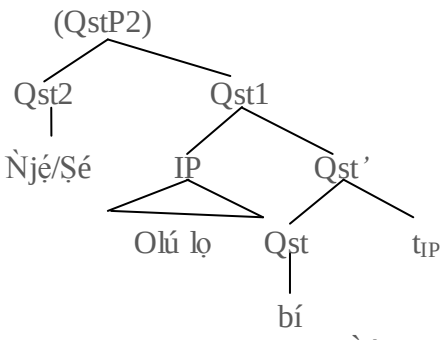
Ìlọ̀rí (2010) therefore, proposes 119a-b below as the projections of *bí* (identified as a polar question marker).

120.

a.



b.



(Ìlọ̀rí, 2010:255)

Ìlọ̀rí’s claim in 120a above is that, *bí* unlike other polar question markers in Yorùbá has strong feature which needs to be checked, and hence attracts the entire TP to the spec QstP. The first question generated by this opinion is, ‘for the sake of unified analysis for all yes/no markers in the language, how do we account for the strong [+Q] feature specified on *bí* only, and not other polar question markers (ṣé, ǹjẹ́, ṣebí and ṣèbí)?’ Actually, this is a reflection of views at variance to Ìlọ̀rí’s (2010:254) assertion below:

> From all syntactic indications, the formal features of the Yorùbá polar Qst head are interpretable just like Φ-features on N items, Therefore, they need not to be checked because the Qst head is not strong and that explains why spec-QstP is not required ...

In a nut shell, how do we explain the variation of *bi* to the assertion above? Suffice to note that Ilọ̀rí (2010) also identifies *bí* as a polar Qst head in Yorùbá. He equally claims that the formal features of the Yorùbá polar Qst head are interpretable just like Φ-features on N items. Therefore, it does not also need to be checked. Contrarily, *bí* is

wrongly identified as as a polar question marker by Ìlọ̀rí (2010) and some other extant works in Yorùbá.

2.6.6 *Bí* as a post-modifier in Yorùbá

Awóbùlúyì (1978), Bámgbóṣé (1990), Táíwò (2009), Ìlọ̀rí (2010) and some other related works identified *bí* as a polar question in Yorùbá. Also, Bámgbóṣé (1990) and Ọlaògun (2016) identify *tîì* and *a* as preverbal polar question markers respectively. It is empirically evident that these items perform modifying function, not interrogative function in Yorùbá.

As earlier discussed on *tí ì* and *a* , *bí* also co-occurs with *ṣe* and *ǹjẹ́* (other polar question markers in Yorùbá). Yoruba does not attest double head projection for its interrogative constructions. Therefore, (122b) above presented by Ìlọ̀rí (2010) is arbitrarily formed.[113] The interrogative force is triggered by the Inter-head in the clause left periphery.

Unlike *tí ì* which also features in negative sentences as shown below, *a* and *bí* only occur in interrogatives.

121a. Àwón akékọ̀ọ́ naa kò *tí ì* gbọ́.[114]
They student the NEG PERF hear
'The student are yet to hear.'

b. Ṣé ọmọ náà *ti ì* gbọ́?
YNQM child the PERF hear
'Has the child heard?'

c. Ọmọ náà *ti ì* gbọ́?
Child the PERF hear
'Has the child heard?'

Tí ì co-occurs with a negative marker *kò* (in 121a), a polar question marker *ṣe* in (121b), and abstract polar question marker in (121c). *Tí ì* does not mark negation in 121a neither it marks interrogatives in (121b).

Let us consider the examples below on *a* and *bí* with respect to their distribution in Yorùbá interrogative constructions.

122a. Ṣé olùkọ́ náà wá *bí*?
YNQM teacher the come PSM

---

113. Some extant works also identify *bí* collocating with some other question markers (ṣe, ǹjẹ́), however, they fail to recognise that Yoruba does not attest double head projection

114. ***Tí ì*** is a negative variant of ***ti*** "has/have/had".

'Did the teacher come?'

b. Ǹjẹ́ olùkọ́ náà *a* wá?
YNQM teacher the PRM come
'Did the teacher come?'

c. Ǹjẹ́ olùkọ́ náà *a* wá *bí*?
YNQM teacher the PRM come PSM
'Did the teacher come?'

d. Olùkọ́ náà *a* wá *bí*?
Teacher the PRM come PSM
'Did the teacher come?'

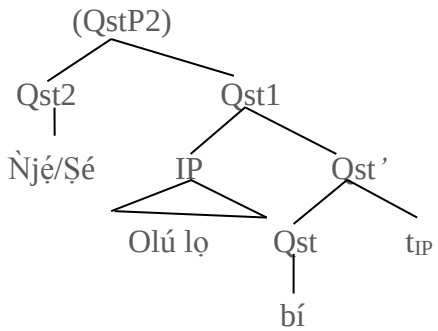
A and *bí* function as modifiers (in 122a-d) above. The Inter-head is not visible to PF interface in 122d. Occurence of *a/bí* only in interrogatives does not necessitate its being a question marker in Yorùbá, other items also exhibit this similar attribute. For instance, *mọ́* occurs only in negative constructions and it does not function as a negative marker. Let us consider the examples below:

123a. A kò rí awọn ìwé náà *mọ́*.
We NEG see they book the PSM
'We do not see the books again.'

b. *A rí awọn ìwé náà *mọ́*.
We see they book the PSM

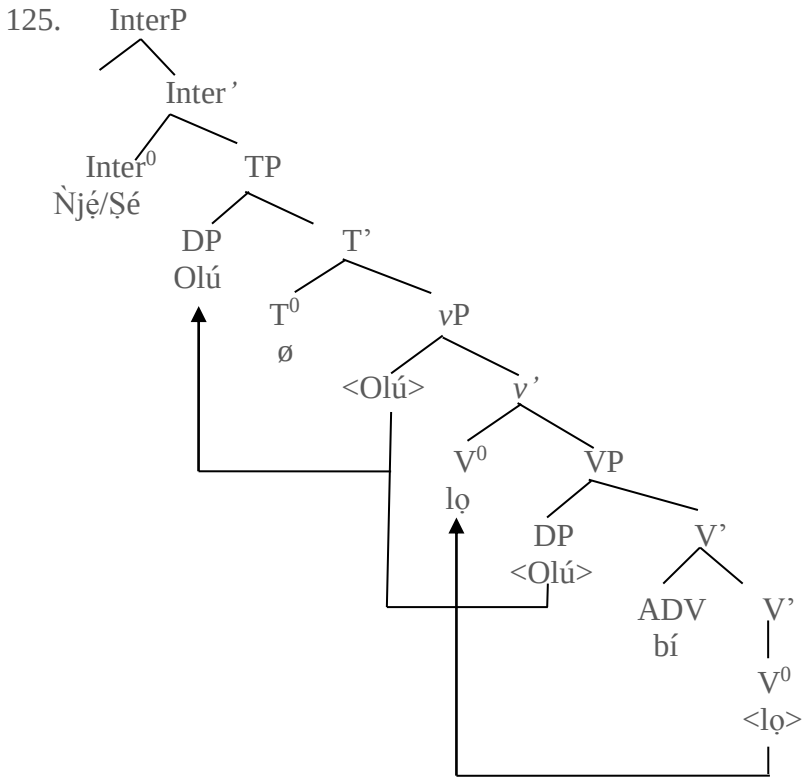
Example (123b) above is ill-formed because *mọ́* does not occur in a declarative sentence. Therefore, the projection of bí-clause presented in 120b above, represented in (124) below for ease of reference is wrong unlike 125 below:

124.



(Ìlọ́rí, 2010:255)

125.



In 125 above, *bí* as a post-modifier merges with the verb *lọ* "go" to project the higher v-bar. The subject DP *Olú* is selected from the lexical array and merged at the spec VP. The derivation proceeds by externally merging the light performative verb v^0 with the VP to project the *v*-bar. The strong *v*F on the light performative v^0 attracts the lexical verb to adjoin to itself while the DP *Olú* is attracted to the spec *v*P. The derivation proceeds by the external merge of T^0 with the light verb phrase to project the T*'*, while the T^0 probes *Olú*, the subject DP from the spec *v*P to the spec TP to value its unvalued [+ EPP, case] feature. The derivation still proceeds by the external merge of the Inter^0, *ǹjẹ̀/ṣé* with the TP to project the Inter-bar. *Ǹjẹ́* and *ṣe* as polar question markers have interpretable [+Q] feature. Also, they are specified [-strong] formal feature. Consequent upon these, the DP *Olú* cannot be attracted syntactically to the specifier position of the interrogative phrase (InterP).[115] The implication borne out of this is that *bí* is base-generated within the vP domain.

Bí and *a* also exhibit parallelism based on the co-occurence of the later with *dà*, a QV in Yorùbá, unlike the former, as shown below:

[115]. Read Ìlọ́rí (2010:254) on this view.

126a. Àwọn ọmọ náà *a* dà?
They child the PRM QV
'Where are the children?'

b. *Àwọn ọmọ náà dà *bí*?
They child the QV PSM

Example (126b) above is ill-formed because *bí* is used alongside *dà*. It is equally important to reiterate at this point that *bí* is not a question marker. Question verbs (QVs) in Yorùbá (dà and ńkọ́) have highly selectional restriction. Therefore, the ill-formedness of 126 is not caused by operating two question markers. Yorùbá QVs do not collocate with post-modifiers. Let us consider the examples below.

127a. Àwọn ọmọ náà ń lọ *díẹ̀díẹ̀*[116].
They child the PROG go gradually
'The children were going gradually.?'

b. *Àwọn ọmọ náà dà *diẹ̀díẹ̀*?
They child the QV gradually

Example (127b) above is ill-formed in Yorùbá.[117]

It is not impossible to interrogate why *bí* also fails to co-occur with QNs in Yorùbá. The reason is not far-fetched, *bí* obligatorily co-occurs with YNQMs in Yorùbá. Therefore, the YNQM or its abstract form disallows collocation of a QN. Let us consider the examples below for a clarification.

128a. Ṣé Olú lọ sí ilé bí?
YNQM Olú go to house PSM
'Did Olú go home?'

b. *Ṣé Olú lọ sí ibo bí?
YNQM Olú go to QN PSM

c. *Olú lọ sí ibo bí?
Olú go to QN PSM

The ill-formedness of 128c is not factored by occurence of *bí* with *ibo* (QN). The example in 128c has an abstract YNQM which disallows the collocation of *ibo* as similarly exhibited by its overt form in 128b above.

116. Awóbùlúyì (2013) identifies ***díẹ̀díẹ̀***, ***kíákíá*** as nouns in Yorùbá.
117. Read Ọláńrewájú (2017) on the features of Yorùbá QVs.

2.7 Comments on focus markers in CY Dialects

Olúmúyìwá (2006) identifies the following focus markers in CY dialects: *ni*, *li*, *nì*, *kọ́*, *ri/rin*. Ajíbóye (2006b) identifies *ni*, *li*, *ìn*, *à*[118], *nì*, *ri*, *rin* and *ìn* in Mọ̀bà. According to Ajíbóyè, *rìn* is the nasal variant of *rì*. He also claims that *rì*, *rìn*, *à*, *nì* and *ìn* occur with WH-words[119]. Olúmúyìwá (2006: 55) disregards *rà* as a focus marker in CY dialects, and also asserts that 'only *ni* and *li* are used across-board in CY, *ìn* and *kọ́* are operated only among Èkìtì speakers, while only Mọ̀bà dialect uses *ri/rin'*.[120] We discovered that Olúmúyìwá's assertions here do not adequately capture the syntactic behaviour of focus markers in CY dialects because of the following reasons:

Let us start on Olúmùyìwá's (2006, 2009) position that all focus markers in CY dialects take their base form as *li,* as shown below:

Èkìtì
129a. Ayọ̀ *li* ó lọ > Ayọ̀ lí lọ.
Ayọ̀ FOC HTS go
'AYỌ̀ left.'

b. Ayọ̀ *li* ó lọ.> Ayọ̀ lọ́ lọ.
Ayọ̀ FOC HTS go
'AYỌ̀ left.' (Olúmùyìwá, 2009:132)

Now, if focus constructions are signalled by *li* in CY dialects, how then do we account for *ni* as being (more) acceptable than *li* in the examples below?

Ifẹ̀
130a. Ṣé títà ni/*li?[121]
YNQM NOM FOC
'Is it for sale?'

b. Èló ni/*li?
QN FOC
How much?

Focus markers are not signalled by *li* in the above examples. Also, The Ifẹ̀ dialect operates *ni* and *li* similarly with standard Yorùbá, where both are in complementary distribution. It is also observed that *nì* identified as a focus marker by Olumúyìwá (2006) and Ajíbóyè (2006) is an entirely different item, it never functions as such.

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118. This is very similar to ***rà***, which Olúmúyìwá (2006:55) disregards as a focus marker among Èkìtì speakers. The ***r*** consonant is deleted from ***rà*** to form ***à***.
119. Note that these types are referred to as QNs in this work.
120. Ajíbóyè (2006:34) identifies ***rì***, ***rìn*** and ***à*** among the native speakers of Òbó, Odò Ọwá and Ùlọfà in Mọ̀bàland.
121. Note that the two examples in (130) are in their elliptical forms.

According to these two scholars, *nì* occurs in content word question forms, as shown in the example below:

131a. Kéè ***nì***?
QN FOC
'What is it?.

b. Kí rà[122]***nì***?[123]
QN FOC
'What is it?. (Olumúyìwá, 2006: 55)

It is observed that the orthography and analysis (of 131a-b) above are wrong, and hence, consequential to why they identified *nì* as a focus marker. For clarity on the item *nì*, let us consider the examples below:

132a. Ké èe-nì (Kí èi-nì)? Èkìtì/ Mọ̀bà
QN that
What is that?

b. Ké èí (Kí èi)?
QN this
What is this?

The Ifẹ̀ and Ìjẹ̀ṣà dialects forms of 132a-b above are respectively shown in 133a-b below for a more clarity.

Ifẹ̀/Ìjẹ̀ṣà
133a. Kí i yèé-nì (Kí ni yèe-nì)?
QN FOC that
'What is that?'

b. Kí i/ni yèé (Kí i/ni yèé)?
QN FOC this
'What is this?'

Unlike 132a-b, the focus is overtly marked in each of 133a-b above. The dialectal equivalent of *èí-nì* "that" in Ifẹ̀ and Ìjẹ̀ṣà dialects is *yèé-nì*. Therefore, *nì*, the ultimate syllable in *èí-ni* is not a focus marker..

Another item that also begged our attention is *kọ́* identifed as a focus marker in some parts of Èkìtì (Adó and Ìkọ́lé) by Olúmúyìwá. According to him, *kọ́* occurs in a negative construction, and it can be decomposed into *kọ*, a focus marker and ó (HTS as shown in the example below:

134a. É[124] è ṣè mi kọ́ (kọ + ó).[125]

---

[122]. Ajíbóyè (2006) identifies ***rà*** in some parts of Mọ̀bàland.

[123]. This construction is not glossed by Olumúyìwá (2006). Also, the item ***rà*** is disregarded as a focus marker in the work.

HTS NEG do.me FOC (FOC + HTS)
. ‘I was not the one.’

b. É è ṣèmi kọ́ (kọ + ó) lọ
HTS NEG do-me FOC (FOC+ HTS) go
‘I was not the one that left.’ (Olúmúyìwá, 2006: 55)

Now, these two questions are generated by the examples above:

1. How do we account for the incorrectness of the elliptical forms (in 135a and b) below?

SY
135a. Èmi ni ...
. I FOC
‘I am ...’

Èkìtì
b. Ùwọ ni ...
. You FOC
‘You am ...’

SY
136a. *Èmi ni ó ...
. I FOC HTS
‘I am ...’

Èkìtì
b. *Ùwọ ni/li ó ...
. You FOC HTS

Standard Yorùbá and its CY dialect counterparts do not operate 136a-b as elliptical forms. Invariably, 134a-b above are arbitrary and misleading.

2. The second question is how do we account for the absence of *kọ́* in the types of constructions below?

137a. Èmi síkọ́ ni/li Olú rí.
I NEG FOC Olú see
‘I was not the person Olu saw.’’

b. Ùwọ síkọ́ ni/li (ó/é) gbé e. (Ùwọ síkọ́ lí gbé e.)

---

[124]. Note that Awobulúyì school of thought identifies this as HTS of which Olúmúyìwa (2006, 2009) are not exempted. Therefore, the assumption that ***kọ́*** can be decomposed into ***kọ*** and ***ó*** is uncalled for.

[125]. The standard Yorùbá equivalent for this is shown below:
Kì í ṣe èmi ni.
NEG do me FOC
‘ I was not ...’

You NEG FOC he carry it
'You were not the one that carried it.'

As evident in the limited data provided by Olúmúyìwá (2006), *kọ́* does not occur in negative focus constructions unlike *síkọ́* (in 137a-b) above. Therefore, all environments of occurrences of the item (kọ́) should be surveyed to determine whether it is truly a focus marker in CY dialects. Therefore, *kọ́* is not adopted as a focus marker in this work based on the fact that it was not evident in from the data acquired, and also, the available literature Olúmúyìwá (2006) that identifies it lacks descriptive adequacy regarding the item.

2.8 Comments on Question Nouns (QNs) in CY dialects

Awóbùlúyì (1998) and Ajọ́ńgọ́lọ̀ (2005) identify *yèsí* "who" as the QN operated by CY dialects to elicit information on a human referent. Unlike Ajọ́ńgọ́lọ̀, Awóbùlúyì's orthography splits *yèsí* into two words: *yè sí*. Ọláńrewájú (2017) also adopts *yèsí* and claims that it is not only the correct form, but also the underlying form of *ìsí/isín, yèsín,* and *yè*.[126] Ajíbóyè (2006) identifies the following QNs below in Mọ̀bà, while Akànbí (2011) also identifies same in Èkìtì: *yèsí* (ìsí) "who", *kí* "what", *kabi* "where", *èló* "how much", *ùgbà sí* "when", and *uṣe sí* "how", Ọláńrewájú (2017) also identifies *ẹ̀ẹ̀kelòó (ẹ̀rìnkelòó)/ẹlẹ́ẹ̀kelòó* "what number/position", and *ẹ̀ẹ̀melòó* "how frequent" alongside them in CY dialects. However, it is observed that strange items are enlisted into the class of question markers which are close class markers in standard Yorùbá and CY dialects. Items like *ùgbà* "time" in *ùgbà sí* "when" and *ùṣe* "act" in *ùṣe sí* (how) are not among the question items in CY dialects. They are the head nouns for the DPs/QPs (ùgbà sí and ùṣe sí). *Si* is the question marker in both phrases and it has its [+Q] feature percolated through the entire phrases. Therefore, considering an item like *ùgbà* "time" in *ùgbà si* as a question marker is misleading and equivalent to identifying *ìwé/ùwé* "book" in the example below as a question marker in CY dialects.

Ifẹ̀
138a. Ìwé sí i yèé?
Book QM FOC this
'Which book is this?'

[126]. Read Ọláńrewájú (2017) for further information on this.

Ìjẹ̀ṣà
b. Ùwé sí i yèé?
Book QM FOC this
'Which book is this?'

Ìwé/Ùwé cannot be the question marker in 138a/b above, neither the entire QP *ìwé/ùwé sí*.[127]

Àkànbí (2011) also identifies *kà* in Ìjẹ̀ṣà and Èkìtì dialects as shown in the example below:

139a. ***Kà**rí* ọ̀yà rẹ?
Where wife your
'Where is your wife?'

b. ***Kà**rí* ìọ̀n ọmọ rẹ?
Where they child your
'Where are your children?' (Àkànbí, 2011: 17)

c. ***Kà**rí* Òjó?
Where Òjó
'Where is Òjó?' (Àkànbí, 2011: 18)

Ọlámrewájú (2017) identifies *kà* and *kabi* as QNs in the syntax of interrogatives in CY dialects but provides a different orthography *kà ri* (written seperately) as shown (in 140) below:

Ifẹ̀
140a. Kà rí ilé ọ̀hún? → 'Kà rílé ọ̀hún?
QN see house the
'Where is the house?'

Ìjẹ̀ṣà
b. Kà rí ulé ọ̀hún/nì? →Kà rúlé ọ̀hún/nì?
QN see house the
'Where is the house?'

Ado Èkìtì/ Ọ̀tùn Mọ̀bà
c. Kà rí ulée nì? → Kàrúlée nì?
QN see house the
'Where is the house?' (Ọlámrewájú, 2017: 90)

This work adopts the later orthography and disregards Àkànbí's orthography, based on the following reasons:

[127]. We have discussed extensively on this similar issue in Yorùbá under comments on Àkànbí's (2016) position on ***wo***.

1. Àkànbí's orthography fails to accommodate auxiliary verbs, as shown in the structures like 141 below:

141a. Kà tún rí ìwé/ùwé rẹ?
QN PRM see book your
'Where is your book?'

b. *Kàrí tún (rí) ìwé/ùwé rẹ?
QN PRM see book your

c. ***Kà**rí* tún ọyà rẹ?
QN PRM wife your

d. Mọ tún rí ìwé/ùwe rẹ?
I PRM ri book your
'I saw your book again?'

Example (141b and c) above are ill-formed because the transitive verb is not separated from *kà*, the QN in each of the constructions. Example 141d above is the declarative equivalent of 141a.

2. QNs in Yorùbá and CY dialects do not take complements (qulifiers) unlike 141 above. This is also evident (in 142) below:

142a. Ìyàwó ta ni ọ́?
Wife QN be you
'Whose wife are you?'

b. *Ta ìyàwó ni ọ́
QN wife be you

Example 142b unlike 142a is ungrammatical because *ta* "who" takes a qualifier (ìyàwó).

3. The later orthography does not recognise the sentential status of 141a-c, consequent upon its failure to identify predicates in the constructions.

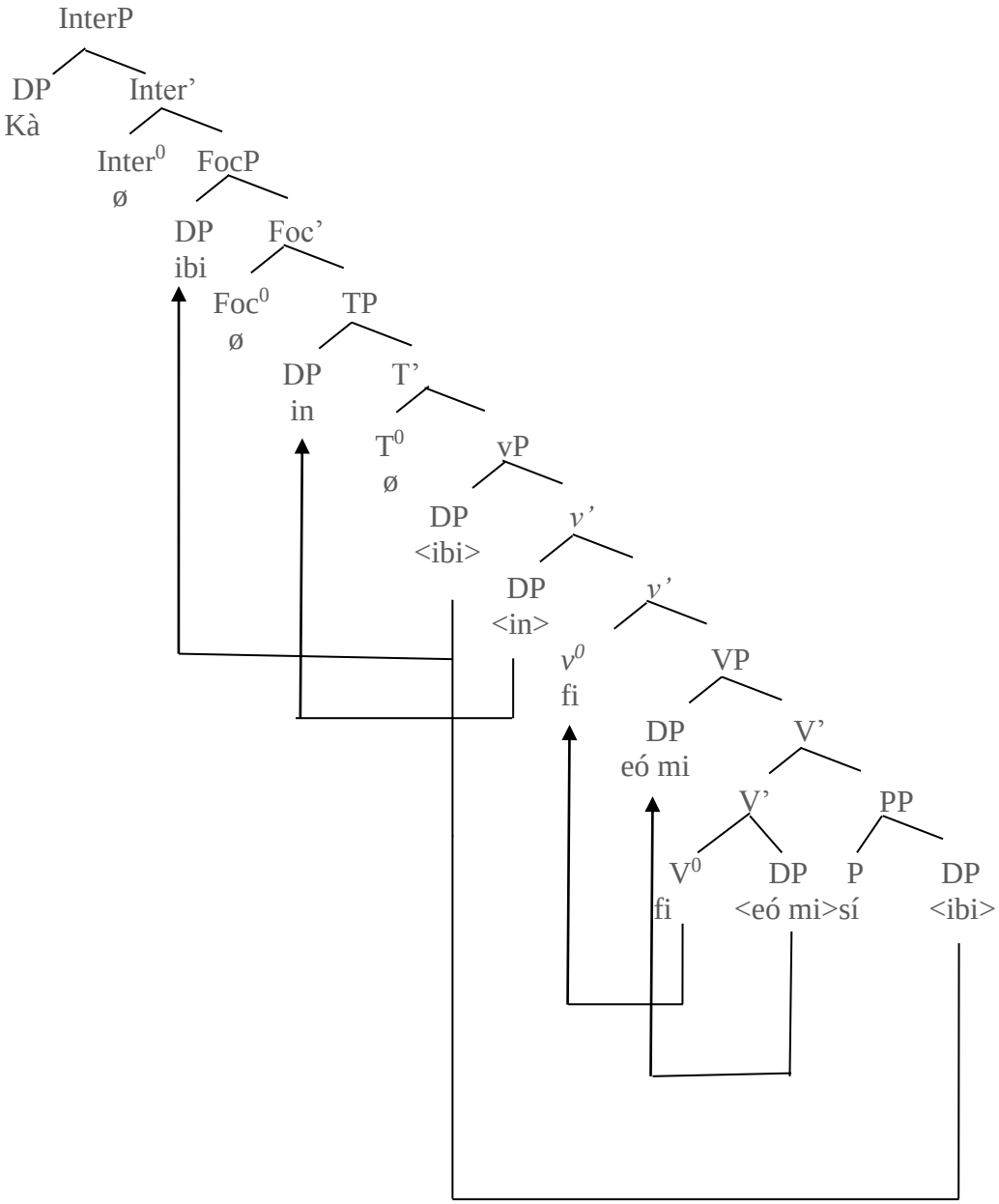
It is also discovered that Ọlámrewájú's (2017) explanation on the application of *kabi* "where" within PPT assumption needs a rethink. Let us consider the example below for the purpose of explanatory adequacy.

143. $[_{CP}$ Kabi$_i$ $[_{IP}$ ìn a fi eó mi $[_{PP}$ sí t$_i$]]]?
QN you will put money my to
'Where will you put my money?' (Ọlámrewájú, 2017: 85)

According to Ọláńrewájú's (2017) claim, 'the NP[128], *ibi* is extracted from its base-generated position (the complement of the preposition *sí*) to the spec CP before *kà*, a question morpheme is later adjoined to it at the landing site. In PPT unlike MP, structures are built from the top to the bottom. Therefore, adjunction of *kà* to the spec CP later in the configuration is anti-PPT. However, this descriptive inadequacy is easily obviated under minimalist assumption, as shown in the derivation below:

[128] DP is adopted in the place of this in this work.

104.



The derivation (in 144) above goes thus: The verb *fi* "put" merges with the DP *eó mi* "my money" to project the lower V-bar. The lower V-bar merges with the PP *sí ibi* to project the higher V-bar. The direct object DP *eó mi* "my money" is internally merged at the spec VP to value its case feature through specifier and head agreement. The derivation proceeds by the external merge of the null performative light verb v^0 with the VP to project the *v*-bar. The strong *v*F on the light v^0 attracts the lexical verb *fi* "put" to adjoin to itself while the subject DP, the second person singular subject pronoun *in* "you" is selected from the numeration and merged as the inner specifier of the light verb phrase (*v*P) so as to conform to the PISH. The outer spec *v*P then

becomes the escape hatch for the DP *ibi* "place" so as to be licensed from Phase Impenetrability Condition (PIC), and also to be actively available for subsequent operations. The derivation proceeds by merging the T^0 to project the T*',* while the T^0 as a probe searches its c-command domain for the active/visible goal *in* "you". With this, the pronoun *in* "you" becomes the specifier of the tense phrase. It therefore, checks its [+case, EPP] feature through specifier and head relation. The derivation proceeds by merging the abstract Foc-head to project the Foc-bar. The Foc-head as a probe also attracts the DP *ibi* "place" to spec FocP to value its [+Focus] feature. The derivation still proceeds by merging an abstract Inter-head to project the Inter*',* while the QN *ka* is externally merged at the spec InterP to value the unvalued [+Q, EF] on the Inter-head through specifier and head agreement. At this point, the derivation reaches the spell-out. The analysis above has the following two implications: One, CY dialects do not operate *kabi* as an interrogative noun, therefore, the QN in 144 is *kà* which is externally merged at the spec InterP. Two, QNs and other focused constituents do not always target the same position; *kà*, the QN does not move through the spec FocP in 144 above.

2.9 Summary

In this chapter, the theoretical framework adopted in this research work was discussed. The chapter was able to explored the global overview of the Minimalist Program and its relevance to the study. Although there is no model of generative syntax that is absolutely flawless, it is evident from the explanations in this chapter that Minimalist Program adequately captures the syntactic analyses of focus and interrogatives in CY dialects. Relevant extant works on focus and interrogatives in both standard Yorùbá and CY dialects were also discussed. In the next chapter, the methodology adopted for this research work will be discussed.

CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY

3.0 Preliminaries

In chapter two of this study, we discussed the global overview of Minimalist Program and some relevant scholarly works, This chapter presents the detailed account on the methodology employed for this research work. This comprises the study design, data collection techniques, research location and population, instrumentation and method of data analysis,

3.1 Study design

The study adopted structured oral interview method to source for data from the informants. Forty-eight native speakers aged 60 and above were purposively selected for structured oral interview based on their proficiency, 12 each from Ilé-Ifẹ̀, Ilẹ́ṣà, Adó-Ékìtì and Ọ̀tùn Mọ̀bà, which are the major areas where Central Yorùbá is spoken. Noam Chomsky's Minimalist Program served as the framework, while the interpretive design was used.

3.2 Study location and population

The study areas covered Ilé-Ifẹ̀, Ilẹ́ṣà, Adó-Ékìtì and Ọ̀tùn Mọ̀bà which are the major cities where Central Yorùbá is spoken. The researcher engaged a total number of forty-eight native speakers aged above sixty from the whole of the four dialect areas of the study for structured oral interview based on their proficiency. Twelve informants were selected from each of the four dialects (Ifẹ̀, Ijẹ̀ṣà, Èkìtì and Mọ̀bà). The researcher ensured that, apart from being aged, the informants spoke unadulterated versions of their dialects, which positively affected the quality of the data.

3.3 Method of data analysis

Data were transcribed using Yorùbá orthography. Morpheme-by-morpheme interlinear glosses were also provided in English. The structures of both focus and interrogatives constructions were analysed using the Phase Theory of Noam Chomsky's Minimalist Program and interpretive design.

3.4 Instrumentation

The main research instrument employed for data collection was Ibàdàn Syntax Paradigm, this was also complemented by the Ibàdàn 400 wordlist. Secondary data were gathered from existing texts, journals and articles on both CY dialects and standard Yorùbá.

3.5 Method of data collection

Focus and interrogative sentences were provided for the native speakers of CY dialects (the informants) to be rendered in their (native) dialects while taking the audio recording of the structured oral interviews. It was ensured that the participants did not use standard Yorùbá in their expressions.

3.6 Codification of dialectal forms in the analysis

Data used in this study were presented in CY dialects but written in standard Yorùbá orthography including tones and diacritics. Few CY sounds that are not found in standard Yorùbà were identified and transcribed using IPA symbols.

3.7 Summary

This chapter discussed the methodology used for this research work. In line with this, the researcher discussed the study design, method of data collection, method of data analysis, instrumentation and so on. In the next chapter, the syntax of focus and interrogatives in CY dialects will be explored.

CHAPTER FOUR
FOCUS CONSTRUCTIONS AND INTERROGATIVES IN CY DIALECTS

4.0 Preliminaries

This chapter focuses on the in-depth analysis of focus and interrogatives in CY dialects. This chapter discusses focus markers and different DP argument positions accessible to focus. Strategies for focusing VPs/predicates, short pronouns and post modifiers are also discussed. Also, types of question forms and diferrent question markers in CY dialects are identified and discussed. Following our position in chapter two on how questions are clause-typed in Yorùbá, this chapter establishes how CY dialects mark their interrogatives within the minimalist assumption.

4.1 Focus markers in CY dialects

CY dialects, just like Yorùbá, operate syntactic focus, i.e., focus is signalled by fronting the focused constituents to the clause left periphery where it is followed by any of the following focus markers: ni, li ri/rin[129] or their abstract form. Let us consider the examples below:

Ifẹ̀
1a. Ọlá *ni* mo rí.
Ọlá FOC I see
'I saw ỌLÁ.'

[129]. Olúmúyìwá (2006) identifies ***kọ́*** in some parts of Èkìtì like Ìdó and Adó. We have discussed extensively on this position in chapter two of this study. This item is not considered as a focus marker in CY dialects, based on the evidence from our data coupled with explanatory inadequacy in Olúmúyìwa's work on the syntactic distribution of this item. Ajíbóye (2006) identifies ***rà***, ***nì***, ***ìn***, ***ri*** and ***rin*** in some parts Mọ̀bàland. According to him, ***rà*** occurs in interrogatives. However, Olúmúyìwá (2006:39) also disregards ***rà*** as a focus marker in CY dialects. *Ri/Rin* is operated among the native speakers of Ìlọfà in Mọ̀bà Local Government Area.

Ìjẹ̀ṣà

b. Ọlá *li* mo rí.
Ọlá FOC I see
'I saw ỌLÁ.'

Adó Èkìtì

c. Ùwé *ni* Bọ́lá rà.
Book FOC Bọ́lá buy
'Bọ́lá bought a BOOK.'

d. Ọlá *li* ẹ́ rà ẹran.
Ọlá FOC RES buy meat
'ỌLÁ bought meat.'

e. Olú *li* ẹ́ ghá.
Olú FOC he come
' OLU came.'

Mọ̀bà

f. Ìwé/Ùwé *ni* Ibọ́lá rà.
Book FOC Bọ́lá buy
'Bọ́lá bought a BOOK.'

g. Ọlá *ri* í bọ̀ í[130].
Ọlá FOC PROG come now
'ỌLÁ is coming now.'

h. Aṣọ *rin* mìí rà.
Cloth FOC I buy
'I bought a CLOTH'

Focus markers are italicised in the examples above. *Ni* is more frequently operated among these focus markers by Ìjẹ̀ṣà and ifẹ̀ dialects unlike Èkìtì and Mọ̀bà dialects[131]. Èkìtì native speakers frequently operate *li* than *ni*. Also, these focus markers are not in complementary distribution, except in the Ifẹ̀ dialect. *Rin* (in 1h) is the nasal variant of *ri*. Both are commonly operated in Ìlọfà of Mọ̀bàland and some parts of Èkìtì. Ifẹ̀ and Ìjẹ̀ṣà do not operate *ri/rin* (Ajibóyè 2006).

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156. ***Í*** is the CY dialect's equivalent of ***yìí*** in standard Yorùbá. In 1e above, it is glossed ***now***, a post modifier. This is contrary to Awobùlúyì's (2013: 61) position, which still identifies ***yìí*** as used below as a qualifier.

Òjò ni ó ń/i rọ̀ *yií*
Òjò FOC RES PROG fall this
'Rain is falling now.'

Note that Awóbùluyi (2001) also identifies ***ó*** in the example above as HTS. Ọ̀tùn Mọ̀bà operates ***ni*** in the place of ***ri/rin***.

131. We observe that this is contrary to Olúmúyìwá's (2006) position that focusing is signalled by ***li*** in CY dialects .

It is also observed that Ifẹ̀ dialect can delete the the vowel *i* in *ni* and retain the consonants *n* as shown below:

Ifẹ̀

2a. Oyè ***ni/n*** mo ri[132]
Oyè FOC I see
'I saw OYÈ.'

a. Oyè ***ni/n*** mo pè
Oyè FOC I call
'I called OYÈ.'

4.2 Positions accessible to focus in CY dialects

The following syntactic positions can be focused in CY dialects' clauses:

i. Subject DP

ii. Object DP

iii. Preposition DP

iv. Genitive DP

v. Predicate/Verb

vi. Adjuncts or post modifiers

Subject DP focusing

In CY dialects, a subject DP is a noun, pronoun or determiner phrase (DP) that performs the action or acts upon the verb in a clause. Let us consider the following examples:

Ifẹ̀

3ai. Ọlá ka ìwé.
Ọlá read book
'Ọlá read a book'

ii. Ọlá ni ọ́ kà ìwé
Ọlá FOC RES read book
'ỌLÁ read a book.'

Ìjẹ̀ṣà

3bi. Ọlá ka ùwé.
Ọlá read book
'Ọlá read a book'

[132]. CY dialects also drop consonants ***n*** in ***ni*** or ***l*** in ***li*** and retain the ***i*** sound as a focus marker in their interrogatives.

ii. Ọlá li ẹ́ kà ìwé.
Ọlá FOC RES read.book
'ỌLÁ read a book.'

Adó-Èkìtì

ci. Ayọ̀ pọn omi
Ayọ̀ fetch water
'Áyọ̀ fetched water.'

ii. Ayọ̀ li ẹ́ pọn omi.
Ayọ̀ FOC RES fetch so onh water
'AYỌ̀ fetched water.'

Mọ̀bà

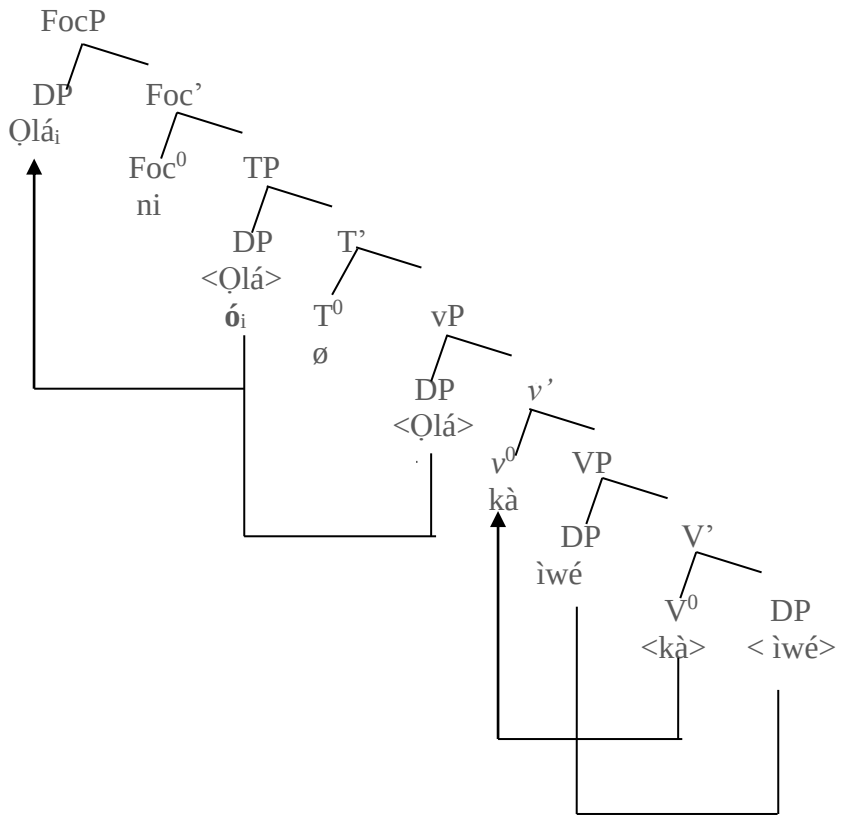
di Gbogbo rín ghá.
All you come
'You all came'

ii. Gbogbo rín li ẹ́ ghá.
All you FOC RES come
'YOU ALL came'

The subject DP in each of the examples in 3aii, bii, cii and dii are moved from the subject canonical position to the clause left periphery. The resumptive pronoun (expletive) is inserted in the subject position to save the derivation from crash after *Operation Copy and Delete* had been applied on the spec TP, .[133] The focus construction (in 3aii) above is phrase-marked as follows:

[133]. Awóbùlúyì (1992, 2001, 2013) disregards ***ó*** as 3rd person singular pronoun, and identifies it as HTS. However, this item is not identified as HTS because of its collocation with future markers in CY dialects. This study does not discuss HTS in CY dialects. Ajọ́ńgọ́lọ̀ (2005) identifies ***ó*** as an agreement marker.

4.



The verb *kà* "read" merges with the DP *ìwé* "book" which is the object of the transitive verb. Then, the direct object DP *ìwé* "book" is copied to the specifier position of the verb phrase (spec VP) to have its case feature checked through specifier and head agreement. The derivation proceeds by merging the null performative light verb $v^0$with the VP to project the *v*-bar. The strong *v*F on the light v^0 attracts the lexical verb *kà* "read" to adjoin to itself. The subject DP *Ọlá* is externally merged with the V-bar *ka ìwé* "read book" to project *Ọlá ka ìwé* "Ọlá read book" in line with Predicate Internal Subject Hypothesis (PISH) which requires the subject of sentences to be base-generated within the VP. The derivation proceeds by merging the T-head (T^0) to project the T-bar. The T-head as a probe at this point selects the subject DP *Ọlá* (being an active goal within its c-command domain) and attracts it to the spec TP to value its unvalued [+EPP, case] feature. The derivation proceeds by externally merging the Foc-head *ni/li* with the tense phrase (TP) to project the Foc*'*, while the Foc^0 as a probe searches its c-command domain for a matching goal *Ọlá*, which is attracted to the spec FocP to have its [+Foc] feature valued. Thefore, *Operation Copy and Delete* is applied on the subject DP *Ọlá*, consequently, it is deleted both at the PF and LF interfaces. The

spec TP is always visible to the PF interface in CY dialects[134]. Therefore, a resumptive pronoun *ó* is inserted at the spec TP to save the derivation from crash[135].

Object DP focusing

A direct DP object of a transitive verb in CY dialects is a noun, pronoun or determiner phrase (DP) that receives the action performed by the subject of a clause. Let us consider the examples below:

Ifẹ̀
5ai. Mo rí owó.
I see money
'I got money.'

ii. Owó ni mo **rí**.
Money FOC I see
'I got MONEY.'

Ìjẹ́ṣà
5bi. Mo rí oó/eó .
I see money
'I got money.'

ii. Eó li mo **ri**.
Money FOC I see
'I got MONEY.'

Èkìtì
ci. Mi rí eó .
I see money
'I got money.'

ii. Eó li mo **ri**.
Money FOC I see
'I got MONEY.'

Mọ̀bà
di. Mìí rí eó .
I see money
'I got money.'

134. Read Ọláńrewájú (2017) on Subject Condition Constraint (SCC) in CY dialects. With the development in the trend of generative grammar, the Subject Condition has subsequently been interpreted as Condition on Extraction Domain (CED). Read Haegeman, L. Jeménez-Fernández, L. and Radsford, A. (2014) for further explanations on this.

135. The resumptive pronoun ***ó*** above is referred to as an expletive in some scholarly works.

ii. Eó li mìí **ri**.
Money FOC I see
'I got MONEY.'

Ifẹ̀
6ai. Olú kà ilé.
Olú count house
'Olú counted houses.'

ii. Ilé ni Olú **kà**.
House FOC Olú kà
'Olú counted houses.'

Ìjẹ̀ṣà
6bi. Olú kà ulé.
Olú count house
'Olú counted houses.'

ii. Ulé li Olú **kà**.
House FOC Olú kà
'Olú counted houses.'

Èkìtì
6ci. Olú kà ulé.
Olú count house
'Olú counted houses.'

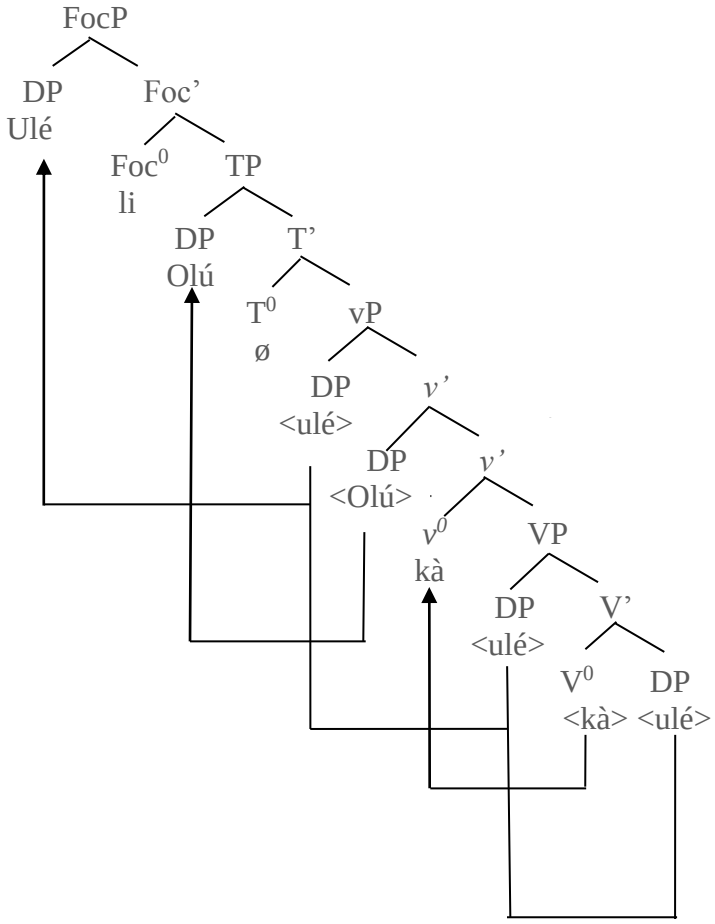
ii. Ulé li Olú **kà**.
House FOC Olú kà
'Olú counted houses.'

Mọ̀bà
di. Olú kà ulé.
Olú count house
'Olú counted houses.'

ii. Ulé ni Olú **kà**.
House FOC Olú kà
'Olú counted houses.'

Object DPs are attracted to the spec FocP in each of 5aii, bii, cii, dii, 6aii, bii, cii and dii above, and hence, cause the main verbs (boldly printed) to be stranded. Example (6bii) is phrase-marked as 7 below for illustration and more clarity.

7.



The derivation above goes thus: The verb *kà* "count" first merges with the DP *ulé* "house" to satisfy the c-selection requirement of the verb *kà*, and to form the V-bar. After this, the DP *ulé* "house" is internally merged at the spec VP by *Operation Copy and Delete* so as to check its case feature. The derivation proceeds by merging the null performative light v^0 with the VP to project the *v*-bar. The strong *v*F on the light v^0 attracts the lexical verb *kà* "count" to adjoin to itself. The DP *Olú* is externally merged as the inner spec *v*P for theta role assignment and to satisfy the Predicate Internal Subject Hypothesis (PISH) which requires the subject of a sentence to be base-generated within the predicate. The DP *ulé* "house" is attracted to the outer spec *v*P, an escape hatch which licenses it from Phase Impenetrability Conditon (PIC). Consequently, this allows the DP *ulé* "house" to be visible for subsequent operations. After this, the abstract T^0 is selected from the numeration and merged with the light verb phrase (*v*P) to project the T*'*, while the T^0 probes *Olú* to the specifier position of the tense phrase (TP) to value its unvalued [+case, EPP] feature. After this, the Foc^0 *li* is selected from the numeration and merged with the TP to project the Foc', while the

Foc^0 as a probe searches and attracts the DP *ulé* "house" to the spec FocP to value its unvalued [+focus, EF] feature through specifier and head relation .

Focusing of an object DP in double complement constructions

A direct object DP can still be focused in a clause where a transitive verb subcategorises two complements: a direct DP and a PP complements. Let us consier the data below:

Ifẹ̀

8ai. Ọlá fi owó mi sí àpò rẹ̀.
Ọlá put money me to pocket his
'Ọlá put my money in his pocket.'

ii. Owó mi ni Ọlá fi sí àpò rẹ̀.
Money me FOC Ọlá put to pocket his
'Ọlá put my MONEY in his poket.'

Ìjẹ̀ṣà

8bi. Ọlá fi eó mi sí àpò rẹ̀.
Ọlá put money me to pocket his
'Ọlá put my money in his pocket.'

ii. Eó mi li Ọlá fi sí àpò rẹ̀.
Money me FOC Ọlá put to pocket his
'Ọlá put my MONEY in his poket.'

Èkìtì

ci. Ọlá mú eó mi sí àpò rẹ̀.
Ọlá put money me to pocket his
'Ọlá put my money in his pocket.'

ii. Eó mi li Ọlá mú sí àpò rẹ̀.
Money me FOC Ọlá put to pocket his
'Ọlá put my MONEY in his poket.'

Mọ̀bà

di. Ọlá mú eó mi sí àpò rìn.
Ọlá put money me to pocket his
'Ọlá put my money in his pocket.'

ii. Eó mi ni Ọlá mú sí àpò rìn.
Money me FOC Ọlá put to pocket his
'Ọlá put my MONEY in his poket.'

Ifẹ̀

9ai. Táyọ̀ ra aṣọ ní Ọjá Ifẹ̀.
Táyọ̀ buy cloth at market Ifẹ̀
'Táyọ̀ bought a shirt at Ọjà Ifẹ̀ market.'

ii. Aṣọ ni Táyọ̀ ra ní Ọjá Ifẹ̀.
cloth FOC Táyọ̀ buy at market Ifẹ̀
'Táyọ̀ bought a cloth at Ọjà Ifẹ̀ market.'

Ìjẹ̀ṣà
bi. Táyọ̀ ra aṣọ lí Ọjá Ufẹ̀.
Táyọ̀ buy cloth at market Ifẹ̀
'Táyọ̀ bought a cloth at Ọjà Ifẹ̀ market.'

ii. Aṣọ li Táyọ̀ ra lí Ọjá Ufẹ̀.
cloth FOC Táyọ̀ buy at market Ifẹ̀
'Táyọ̀ bought a CLOTH at Ọjà Ifẹ̀ market.'

Adó-Èkìtì
ci. Táyọ̀ ra aṣọ ní Ọjá Ufẹ̀.
Táyọ̀ buy cloth at market Ifẹ̀
'Táyọ̀ bought a cloth at Ọjà Ifẹ̀ market.'

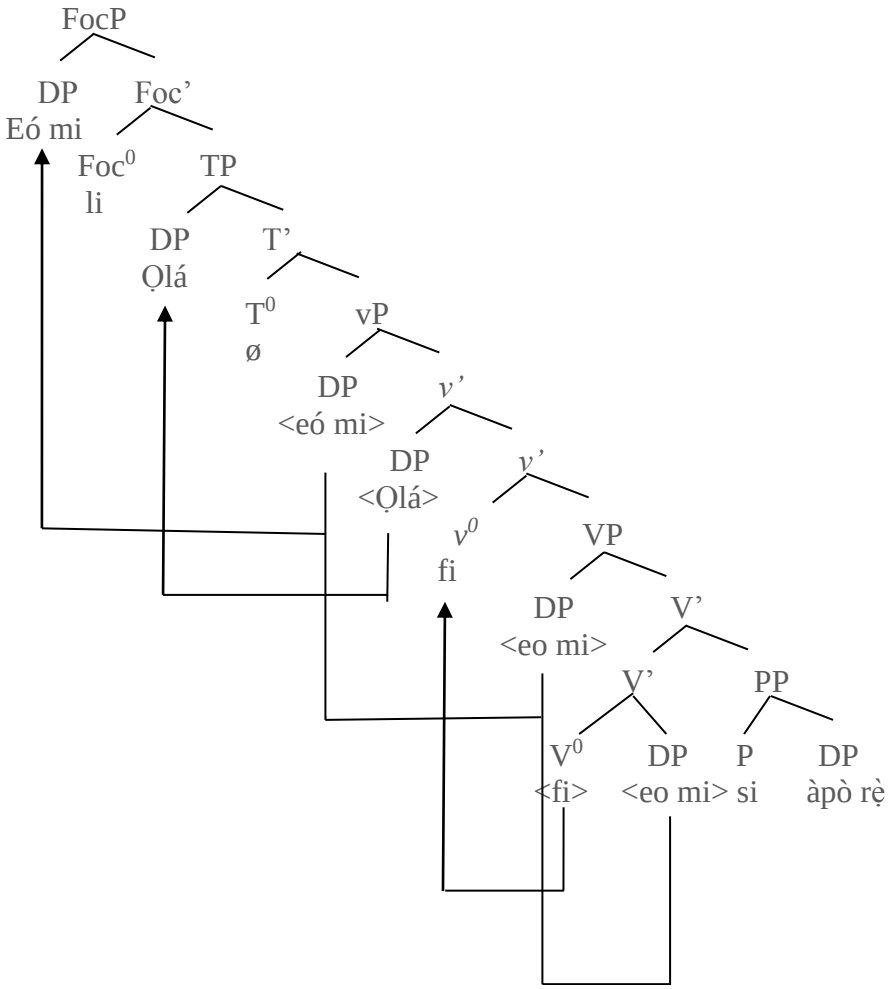
ii. Aṣọ ni Táyọ̀ ra lí Ọjá Ufẹ̀.
cloth FOC Táyọ̀ buy at market Ifẹ̀
'Táyọ̀ bought a CLOTH at Ọjà Ifẹ̀ market.'

Mọ̀bà
di. Táyọ̀ ra aṣọ ní Ọjá Ufẹ̀.
Táyọ̀ buy cloth at market Ifẹ̀
'Táyọ̀ bought a cloth at Ọjà Ifẹ̀ market.'

ii. Aṣọ ni Táyọ̀ ra ní Ọjá Ufẹ̀.
cloth FOC Táyọ̀ buy at market Ifẹ̀
'Táyọ̀ bought a CLOTH at Ọjà Ifẹ̀ market.'

The direct DP object complements *eó/oó* "money" and *aṣọ* "cloth" (in 8bii, cii, dii 9aii, bii, cii and dii) are respectively attracted to the clause left periphery for focusing. Example (8bii) is represented in the syntax tree below:

10.



The derivation (in 10) above goes thus: The main verb *fi* "put" merges with the direct object DP *eó mi* "my money" to project the lower V- bar and also to satisfy the c-selection of verb *fi,* while the lower V-bar merges with the PP *si àpò rẹ* "to his pocket" to project the higher V-bar, The direct object DP *eó mi* "my money" is internally merged at the spec VP to have its case feature checked. The derivation proceeds by merging the null performative light verb v^0 with the VP to project the *v*-bar. The strong *v*F on the light v^0 attracts the lexical verb *fi* to adjoin to itself. The subject DP *Ọlá* is externally merged at the inner spec *v*P to satisfy external theta role and the Predicate Internal Subject Hypothesis (PISH) . The direct object DP *eó mi* "my money" is copied to the outer spec *v*P to avoid being frozen within the *v*P phase, also, to be licensed for subsequent syntactic operations. The derivation proceeds by merging the abstract T-head to project the T-bar. The abstract T-head as a probe searches through its c-command domain and attracts *Ọlá* to the spec TP to value its

[+EPP, case] feature. The derivation still proceeds by externally merging the focus-head *li* with the TP to project the Foc-bar.

The Foc-head as a probe also searches through its c-command domain to attract the direct object DP *eó/oó* from the outer spec *v*P (the escape hatch from PIC) to the spec FocP where it values its unvalued [+focus, EF].

Prepositional object DP focusing

A DP complement of a preposition can be focused in CY dialects. Let us consider the examples below:

Ifẹ̀
11a, Òjó sun sí (orí) ení.
Ojó sleep to head mat
'Òjó slept on a mat.'

b. Orí ení ni Òjó sùn sí.
Head mat FOC Òjó sleep to
'Òjó slept on a MAT.'

Ìjẹ̀ṣà
12a, Òjó ghà lí ulé.
Òjó exist at house
.'Òjó was at home.'

bi. Ulé li Òjó ghà.
House FOC Òjó exist
.'Òjó was at HOME.'

bii. Lí ulé li Òjó ghá.
At House FOC Òjó exist
.'Òjó was at HOME.'

The DP complement of the preposition *ní/lí* "at" is focused in each of 11b, 12bi and bii above. The PP head (sí) is left orphaned in 11b unlike the PP head ***ní*** deleted in 12bi. It is discovered that preposition stranding is predicated on two factors: one, the types of PP head used, and two, nominalistion strategies. Let us discuss how preposition stranding is affected by the types of prepositions before we return to explain how it is motivated by nominalisation strategies in CY dialects.

Unlike prepositions *ni/li* "in/at", preposition *sí* "to" is never pied-piped along with a DP complement in CY dialects. The same thing is applicable to *ti* "from" . The examples below elucidate better on this.

Èkìti (Adó)
13a. Olú ju ọ́ọ́ sí olùkù rẹ̀.

Olú throw hand to friend his
'Olú waved his friend.'

b. Olùkù rẹ̀ ni Olú ju ọ́ọ́ sí
Friend his FOC Olú throw hand to
'Olú waved HIS FRIEND.'

c. *Sí Olùkù rẹ̀ ni Olú ju ọ́ọ́.
To friend his FOC Olú throw hand

Mọ̀bà
d. Olú ju ọ́ọ́ sí ọ̀rẹ̀ rìn.
Olú throw hand to friend his
'Olú waved his friend.'

e. Ọ̀rẹ́ rìn ni Olú ju ọ́ọ́ sí
Friend his FOC Olú throw hand to
'Olú waved HIS FRIEND.'

f. *Sí Ọ̀rẹ́ rìn ni Olú ju ọ́ọ́.
To friend his FOC Olú throw hand

Ifẹ̀
14a. Oyè ti ti Ilẹ́ṣà dé.
Oyè has from Ilẹ́ṣà arrive
Oyè has arrived from Ilẹ́ṣà.'

b. Ilẹ́ṣà ni Oyè ti dé.
Ilẹ́ṣà FOC Oyè has arrive
'Oyè has arrived from ILÉṢÀ.'

c. *Ti Ilẹ́ṣà ni/li Oyè ti dé.
From Ilẹ́ṣà FOC Oyè has arrive

Ìjẹ̀ṣà
d. Oyè ti ti Ulẹ́ṣà dé.
Oyè has from Ilẹ́ṣà arrive
Oyè has arrived from Ilẹ́ṣà.'

e. Ulẹ́ṣà li Oyè ti dé.
Ilẹ́ṣà FOC Oyè has arrive
'Oyè has arrived from ILÉṢÀ.'

f. *Ti Ulẹ́ṣà li Oyè ti dé.
From Ilẹ́ṣà FOC Oyè has arrive

Adó-Èkìtì
g. Oyè ti ti Ulẹ́ṣà dé.

Oyè has from Ilẹ́ṣà arrive
Oyè has arrived from Ilẹ́ṣà.'

h. Ulẹ́ṣà li Oyè ti dé.
Ilẹ́ṣà FOC Oyè has arrive
'Oyè has arrived from ILÉṢÀ.'

i. *Ti Ulẹ́ṣà li Oyè ti dé.
From Ilẹ́ṣà FOC Oyè has arrive

Mọ̀bà
j. Oyè ti tu Ulẹ́ṣà dé.
Oyè has from Ilẹ́ṣà arrive
Oyè has arrived from Ilẹ́ṣà.'

k. Ulẹ́ṣà li Oyè tu dé.
Ilẹ́ṣà FOC Oyè has arrive
'Oyè has arrived from ILÉṢÀ.'

l. *Ti Ulẹ́ṣà li Oyè tu dé.
From Ilẹ́ṣà FOC Oyè has arrive

Ifẹ̀
15a. Ọ́ ghà ní ilé.
He exist FOC house
'He is at home.'

b. Ilé ni ọ́ ghà.
House FOC he exist
'He was at HOME.'

c. Ní ilé ni ọ́ ghà.
At house FOC he exist
'He was at HOME.'

Ìjẹ̀ṣà
d. Ẹ́ gha li ulé.
He exist FOC house
'He is at home.'

e. Ulé li ẹ́ ghà.
House FOC he exist
'He was at HOME.'

f. Lí ilé/ulé li ẹ́ ghà.
At house FOC he exist
'He was at HOME.'

As depicted (in 13b and c) above, the PP head *sí* "to" is left orphaned after its DP complement had been attracted to the clause left periphery. The ill-formedness of 13c and f is consequent upon the pied-piping of the preposition *si* "to". In 14b the preposition *ti* "from" is deleted. It never remains stranded. Examples (14c, f, i and l)) crash because the preposition *ti* "from" is pied-piped along with its complement *ilé* "house". In 15b, the preposition *ni* "at/in" undergoes deletion, while it is pied-piped in 15c and f. The conclusion borne out of this is that, preposition stranding in CY dialects is factored by the particular prepositions used in focus constructions.

On how nominalisation strategies affect preposition deletion, let us consider the examples below:

Ifẹ̀

. 16a. Ìbàdàn ni Olú ghà.
Ìbàdàn FOC Olú exist
'Olù stays in ÌBÀDÀN.'

b. Ní ìbàdàn ni Olú ghà
At Ìbàdàn FOC Olú exist
' Olú stays in ÌBÀDÀN.'

Ìjẹ̀ṣà

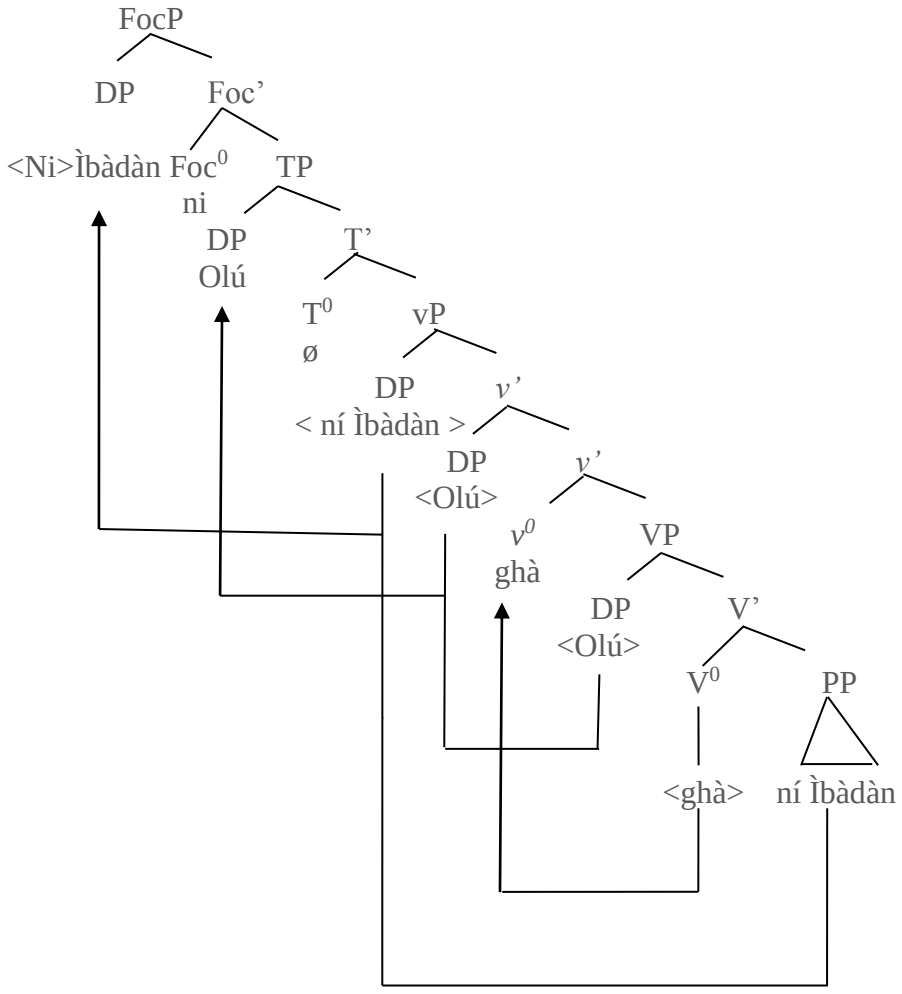
c. Ìbàdàn li Olú ghà.
Ìbàdàn FOC Olú exist
'Olù stays in ÌBÀDÀN.'

d. Lí ìbàdàn li Olú ghà
At Ìbàdàn FOC Olú exist
' Olú stays in ÌBÀDÀN.'

In 16a and c above, the PP head *ní/'lí* is dropped after the derivation had reached its spell-out. Consequent upon this, the process does not affect the LF interface. The PP head is dropped in line with nominalisation (strategy). Only nominal items are hosted at the spec FocP[136]. However, it is not impossible to assume that a PP is also hosted at the spec FocP in Yorùbá, but one still needs to investigate why this is possible *iff* ***ni*** is used as a PP head. The phrase-marker below better illustrates how 16a is derived.

[136]. Some scholars in Yorùbá opines that PP can be hosted at the spec FocP. I reserve my comment on this, at least for now, to avoid distraction.

17



The derivation (in 17) above goes thus: The lexical verb *ghà* "exist" is merged with the PP complement *ní Ìbàdàn* "in Ìbàdàn" to project the V-bar, while the subject DP *Olú* merges with the V*'* so as to conform to the PISH. After this, the derivation proceeds by merging the null performative light verb v^0 with the VP to project the *v*-bar. The strong *v*F on the light performative verb v^0attracts the lexical verb *ghà* to adjoin to itself. Also, the subject DP *Olú* is attracted to the inner spec *v*P, while the PP *ní Ìbàdàn* occupies the outer spec *v*P as an escape hatch from Phase Impenetrability Condition (PIC). The derivation proceeds by merging the abstract T-head to project the T-bar. The T-head as a probe searches its c-command domain and attracts the subject DP *Olú* to the spec TP to value its unvalued [+EPP, case] feature. The derivation proceeds by externally merging the focus marker *ni/li* with the TP to project the Foc-bar. The Foc-head as a potential probe searches its c-command domain and probes the PP *ní Ìbàdàn* to the specifier position of the focus phrase (FocP) to check its [+focus, EF]. At this point, the derivation is spelled out as a focus construction. After the spell-out stage, the

preposition *ní* "in" undergoes a phonological process (deletion) which is only legible to PF, not LF interface, because the two interfaces are already split.

Genitive DP focusing[137]

Genitive DPs can also be focused in CY dialects, as shown in the examples below:

Ìjẹ̀ṣà
18a. Bàbá/Ààbá Ìyábọ̀ jẹ ụ̀ṣụ.
Father Ìyábọ̀ eat yam
'Ìyábọ̀'s father ate yam.'

b. Ìyábọ̀ li bàbá/ààbá rẹ̀ jẹ ụ̀ṣụ.
Ìyábọ̀ FOC father her eat yam
'ÌYÁBỌ̀'s father ate yam.'

Adó-Èkìtì
c. Ààbá Ìyábọ̀ jẹ ụ̀ṣụ.
Father Ìyábọ̀ eat yam
'Ìyábọ̀'s father ate yam.'

d. Ìyábọ̀ li bàbá rẹ̀ jẹ ụ̀ṣụ.
Ìyábọ̀ FOC father her eat yam
'ÌYÁBỌ̀'s father ate yam.'

Ọ̀tùn Mọ̀bà
e. Ààbá Ìyábọ̀ jẹ ụ̀ṣụ.
Father Ìyábọ̀ eat yam
'Ìyábọ̀'s father ate yam.'

f. Ìyábọ̀ ni ààbá rìn jẹ ụ̀ṣụ.
Ìyábọ̀ FOC father her eat yam
'ÌYÁBỌ̀'s father ate yam.'

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137. In Yorùbá and CY dialects, (attributive) adjectives are necessarily pied-piped with the head nouns.This is referred to as Left Branching Condition (LBC) under the PPT assumption. Whenever a genitive noun or a possessive DP is focused in CY dialects, the main verb necessarily selects a DP comprising at least a head noun and ***rẹ̀*** as its complement as shown below.

Ifẹ̀
a. *Òjò ni Adé fẹ́ràn omi ___
Rain FOC Adé like water

b. ***Òjò***$_i$ ni Adé fẹ́ràn omi ***rẹ̀***$_i$.
Òjò FOC Adé like water its
'Adé likes RAIN water.'

Example (a) above is ill-formed because the qualifier **rẹ̀** is missing in the DP. ***Rẹ̀*** coindexed with its antecedent ***Òjò***. Read Ọlanrewajú (2017) for more explanations on this.

Ifẹ̀

19a. Òjó wọ bàtà Ọlá.
Òjó wear shoe Ọlá
‘Òjó put on Ọlá’s shoe.’

b. Ọlá ni Òjó wọ bàtà rẹ̀.
Ọlá FOC Òjó wear shoe his
‘Òjó put on ỌLÁ’s shoe.’

Ìjẹ̀ṣà

c. Òjó wọ bàtà Ọlá.
Òjó wear shoe Ọlá
‘Òjó put on Ọlá’s shoe.’

d. Ọlá li Òjó wọ bàtà rẹ̀.
Ọlá FOC Òjó wear shoe his
‘Òjó put on ỌLÁ’s shoe.’

Èkìtì (Adó)

e. Òjó wọ bàtà Ọlá.
Òjó wear shoe Ọlá
‘Òjó put on Ọlá’s shoe.’

f. Ọlá ni Òjó wọ bàtà rẹ̀.
Ọlá FOC Òjó wear shoe his
‘Òjó put on ỌLÁ’s shoe.’

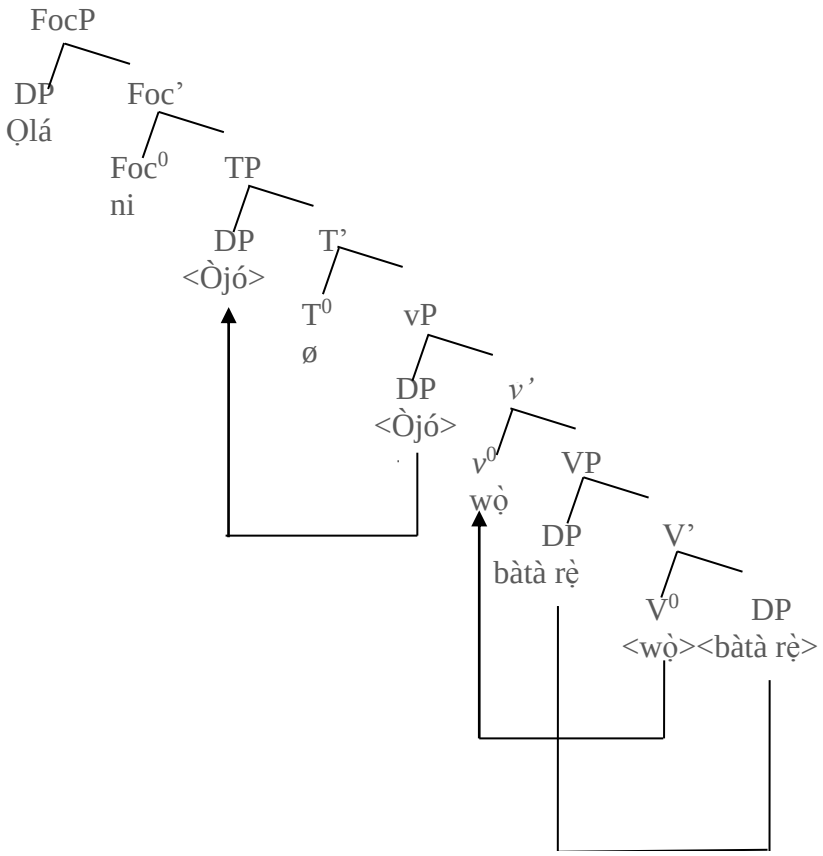
Mọ̀bà

g. Òjó wọ bàtà Ọlá.
Òjó wear shoe Ọlá
‘Òjó put on Ọlá’s shoe.’

h. Ọlá ni Òjó wọ bàtà rìn.
Ọlá FOC Òjó wear shoe his
‘Òjó put on ỌLÁ’s shoe.’

The genitive DP *Ìyábọ̀* is focused in 18b, d and f while the possessive DP *Ọla* is focused in 19b, d, f and h. Under minimalist assumption, 19b can be accounted for as shown in the phrase-marker below:

20.



The focus construction (in 20) above is derived thus: The lexical verb *wọ̀* "wear" merges with the DP *bàtà rẹ̀* "his shoe" to project the V-bar. Later, the object DP *bàtà rẹ̀* "his shoe" is externally merged at the spec VP to have its case feature checked. The derivation proceeds by merging the null performative light verb v^0 with the verb phrase (VP) to project the *v',* while the strong *v*F on the light verb v^0 attracts the main verb *wọ̀* "wear" to adjoin to itself. After this, the subject DP *Òjó* merges at the specifier position of the light verb phrase (*v*P) to conform to the PISH. The derivation proceeds by merging the abstract T^0 with the light verb phrase (*v*P) to project the T*',* while the T^0 probes the DP *Òjó*, an active and visible goal to the spec TP to value its [+EPP, case] feature. The derivation still proceeds by externally merging the focus marker *ni* (the Foc^0) to project the Foc-bar. Since the numeration is not yet exhausted, *Ọlá* is externally merged at the spec FocP to check the [+Focus, EF] through specifier and head agreement.

VP/Predicate focusing[138]

CY dialects operate VP/predicate focusing similarly to standard Yorùbá. Let us consider the examples below:

Ifẹ̀

21a. Fífọ̀ ni Ayọ̀ fọ ighan aṣọ rẹ̀.
NOM FOC Ayọ̀ wash they cloth his
'Ayọ̀ WASHED his cloth.'

b. Ṣíṣe ni Ọlá ṣe iṣẹ́ rẹ̀.
NOM FOC Ọlá do work his
'Ọlá DID his work'

Ìjẹ̀ṣà

c. Fífọ̀ li Ayọ̀ fọ ìọn aṣọ rẹ̀
NOM FOC Ayọ̀ wash they cloth his
'Ayọ̀ WASHED his cloth.'

d. Ṣíṣe li Ọlá ṣe uṣẹ́ rẹ̀.
NOM FOC Ọlá do work his
'Ọlá DID his work'

Ì Adó-Èkìtì

e. Fífọ̀ li Ayọ̀ fọ ìọn aṣọ rẹ̀
NOM FOC Ayọ̀ wash they cloth his
'Ayọ̀ WASHED his cloth.'

f. Ṣíṣe li Ọlá ṣe uṣẹ́ rẹ̀.
NOM FOC Ọlá do work his
'Ọlá DID his work'

Mọ̀bà

g. Fífọ̀ ni Ayọ̀ fọ ìọn aṣọ rìn
NOM FOC Ayọ̀ wash they cloth his
'Ayọ̀ WASHED his cloth.'

h. Ṣíṣe ni Ọlá ṣe uṣẹ́ rìn.
NOM FOC Ọlá do work his
'Ọlá DID his work'

---

[138]. According Ọláògún (2016:242-243) the same strategy is used for both VP and sentence focus in Ǹjọ̀-kóo. He therefore, asserts that it is redundant to keep them apart in the language. In CY dialects a clause can be focused when it functions as an argument in a main clause. Example ***a*** below is an eliptical form of its ***b*** counterpart:

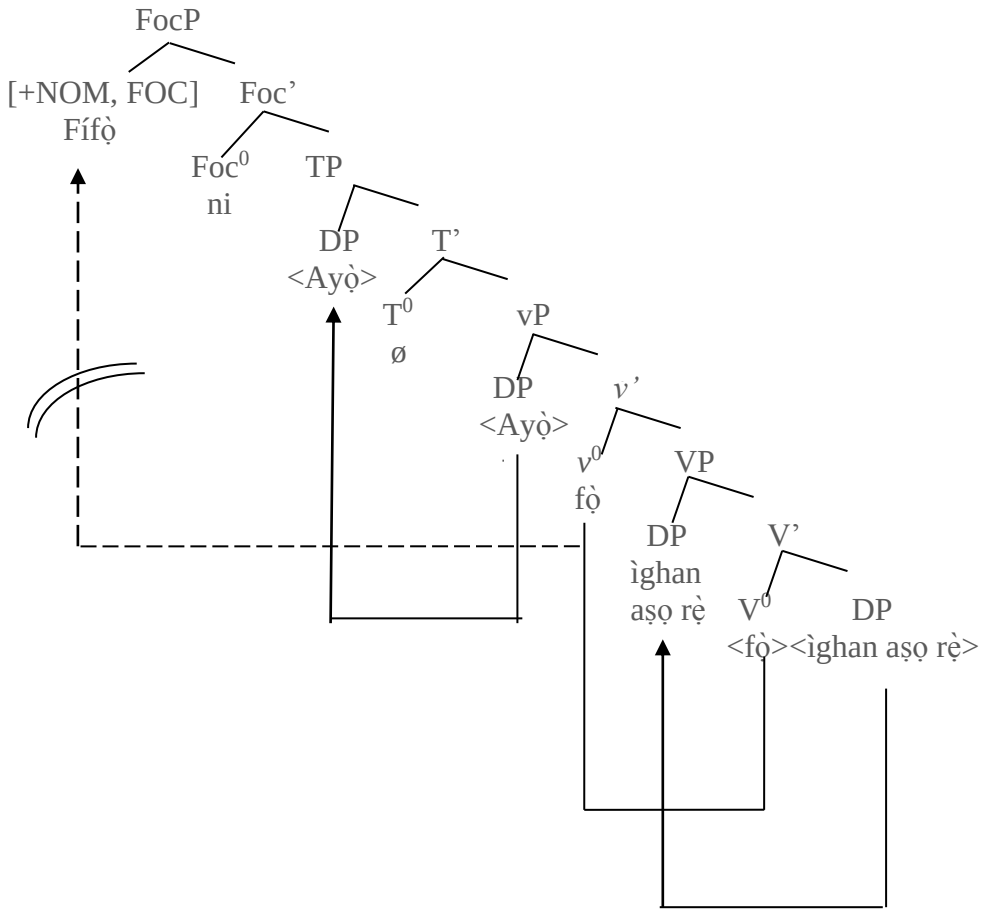
Ifẹ̀

a. Adé mí sùn ni ...
Adé PROG sleep FOC
ADÉ WAS SLEEPING..

b. Adé mí sùn ni ián mí wí.
Adé PROG sleep FOC they PROG say
They said ADÉ WAS SLEEPING..

There are two ways of deriving each of the the examples (in 21a-h) above. The first method is to assume that the [+nominal] feature on the verb is copied and lexicalised as a nominal/gerundive form at the spec FocP as shown below:

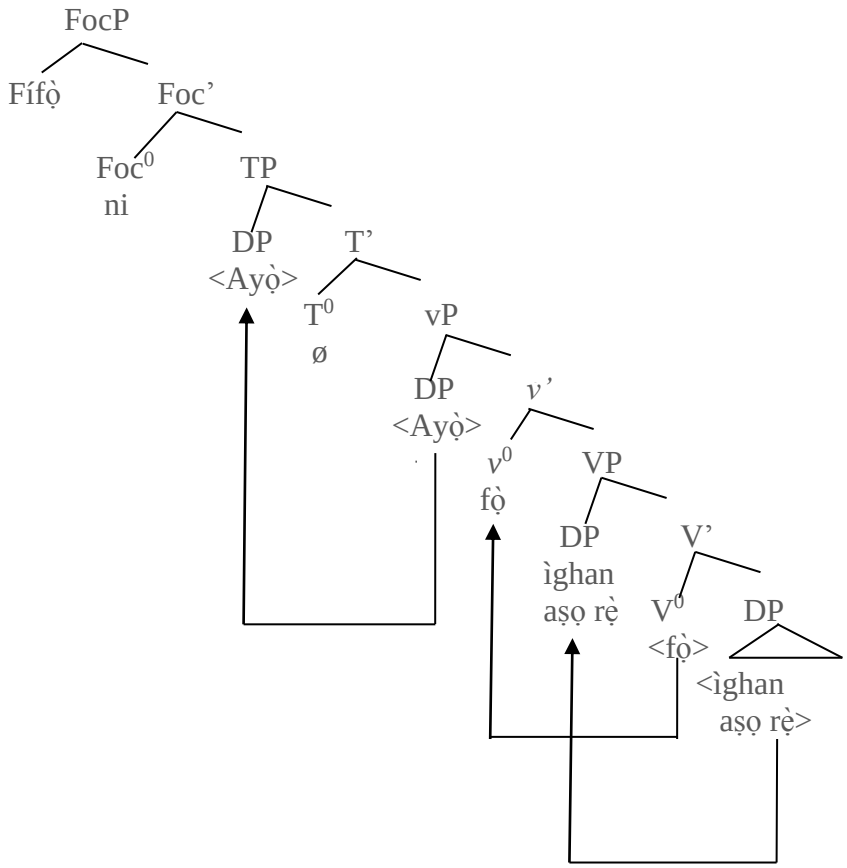
22.



The derivation (in 22) above goes as follows: The lexical verb *fọ̀* "wash" merges with the DP *ìghan aṣọ rẹ̀* "his clothes" to satisfy the c-selection requirement of the verb, and hence projects the v-bar *fọ ìghan aṣọ rẹ̀* "wash his clothes". After this, the same object DP *ìghan aṣọ rẹ̀* "his clothes" is copied to the spec VP for feature valuation where its [+case] feature is checked. The derivation proceeds by selecting the null performative light verb v^0 and merging it with the verb phrase (VP) to project the *v'*, while the strong *v*F on light verb v^0 attracts the main verb *fọ̀* to adjoin to itself. Also, the DP Ayọ̀ externally merges as the specifier of the light verb phrase (*v*P) in line with the PISH. The derivation proceeds by merging the abstract T-head with the *v*P to project the T-bar. The T-head as a probe searches its c-command domain and attracts the subject DP *Ayọ̀* to the spec TP to check its unvalued [+ EPP, case] feature. Consequently, it is valued a nominative case. The derivation still proceeds by externally merging the focus

marker *ni* (the Foc-head) to project the Foc-bar. *Operation Copy and Delete* only applies on the strong [+nominal] feature on the verb *fọ̀* "wash", the lexical verb in the TP domain. Ọláògún (2016: 171), following Chomsky (1995) on feature specification, speculates that 'every verb in languges is specified for [+nominal] feature which is not lexicalised, except at the FocP in languages that operate strong [+nominal] such as Yorùbá.' Therefore, the Foc- head *ni* as a probe in 22 attracts only the [+nominal] feature on *fọ̀* "wash" to the spec FocP where it is lexicalised as *fífọ́* "washing" (a gerundive/nominal form), so as to value the unvalued [+focus, EF) on the Foc-head. It is equally important to note that the operation above is not in perfect compliance with Phase Impenetrability Condition. This may be factored by the legibility of the original copy of the verb in the *v*P domain to PF interface. Also, the process of copying the [+nominal] feature from the v^0 to the spec FocP, a non-head position violates Head Movement Constraints (Radford, 2009: 208). Therefore, these inadequacies are obviated by the second method depicted in the phrase marker (23) below:

23.



The assumption in 23 is that *fífọ̀*, the nominalised/gerundive form of the verb is formed in the numeration. Therefore, it is externally merged at the spec FocP for feature valuation. Unlike the first method, this second method also preserves economy of efforts.

Focusing of (post) adverbs/adverbials (post-modifiers)

Awóbùlúyì (2013:14) takes a radical departure from the traditonal position by identifying words like *kía-kíá* "quickly", *wéré-wéré* "quickly", *jẹ́ẹ́jẹ́* "easily", *díẹ̀-díẹ̀* "gradually/easily" and so on as nouns and not adverbs in Yorùbá. In this work, examples of adverbs are picked from nominalised idophones in CY dialects. Let us consider the examples below:

Ifẹ̀

24a. [$_{FocP}$Túú [$_{Foc'}$ ni [$_{TP}$ Bámidélé dìde]]].
NOM FOC Bámidélé stand
'Bámidélé stood QUIETLY.'

b. [$_{FocP}$ Ṣìì [$_{Foc'}$ ni [$_{TP}$ ọkọ̀ ọ̀hún dúró]]].
NOM FOC lorry the stop
'The lorry stopped SUDDENLY.'

Ìjẹ̀ṣà

c. [$_{FocP}$Túú [$_{Foc'}$ li [$_{TP}$ Bámidélé dìde]]].
NOM FOC Bámidélé stand
'Bámidélé stood QUIETLY.'

d. [$_{FocP}$ Ṣìì [$_{Foc'}$ li [$_{TP}$ ọkọ̀ọ nì dúró]]].
NOM FOC lorry the stop
'The lorry stopped SUDDENLY.'

The focused constituents *túú* and *ṣìì* are merged at the spec FocP to check the unvalued [+Foc, EF] feature on the Foc^0 through specifier and head agreement (in 24a-d) above. They are nominalised constituents. They have different feature properties from their adverbial counterparts (in 25a-d) below:

Ifẹ̀

25a. [$_{TP}$ Bámidélé dìde **túú**]
Bámidélé stand PSM
'Bámidélé stood quietly.'

b. [$_{TP}$ Ọkọ̀ ọ̀hún dúró **ṣìì**].
Vehicle the stop PSM
'The lorry stopped suddenly.'

Ìjẹ̀ṣà

c. [$_{TP}$ Bámidélé dìde **túú**]
Bámidélé stand PSM
'Bámidélé stood quietly.'

d. [$_{TP}$ Ọkọ̀ọ nì dúró **ṣìì**].
Vehicle the stop PSM
'The lorry stopped suddenly.'

Focusing of Pronominals

Let us consider the examples below on how CY dialects focus pronominals.

Ifẹ̀

26a. Èmi ni mo pe yèyé mi.
I Foc I call mother me
'I was the one that called my mother.'

b. Èmi ni bàbá mi pè.
I FOC father me call
'My father called ME.'

Ijèṣà
c. Èmi li mo pe èèye mi.
I Foc I call mother me
'I was the one that called my mother.'

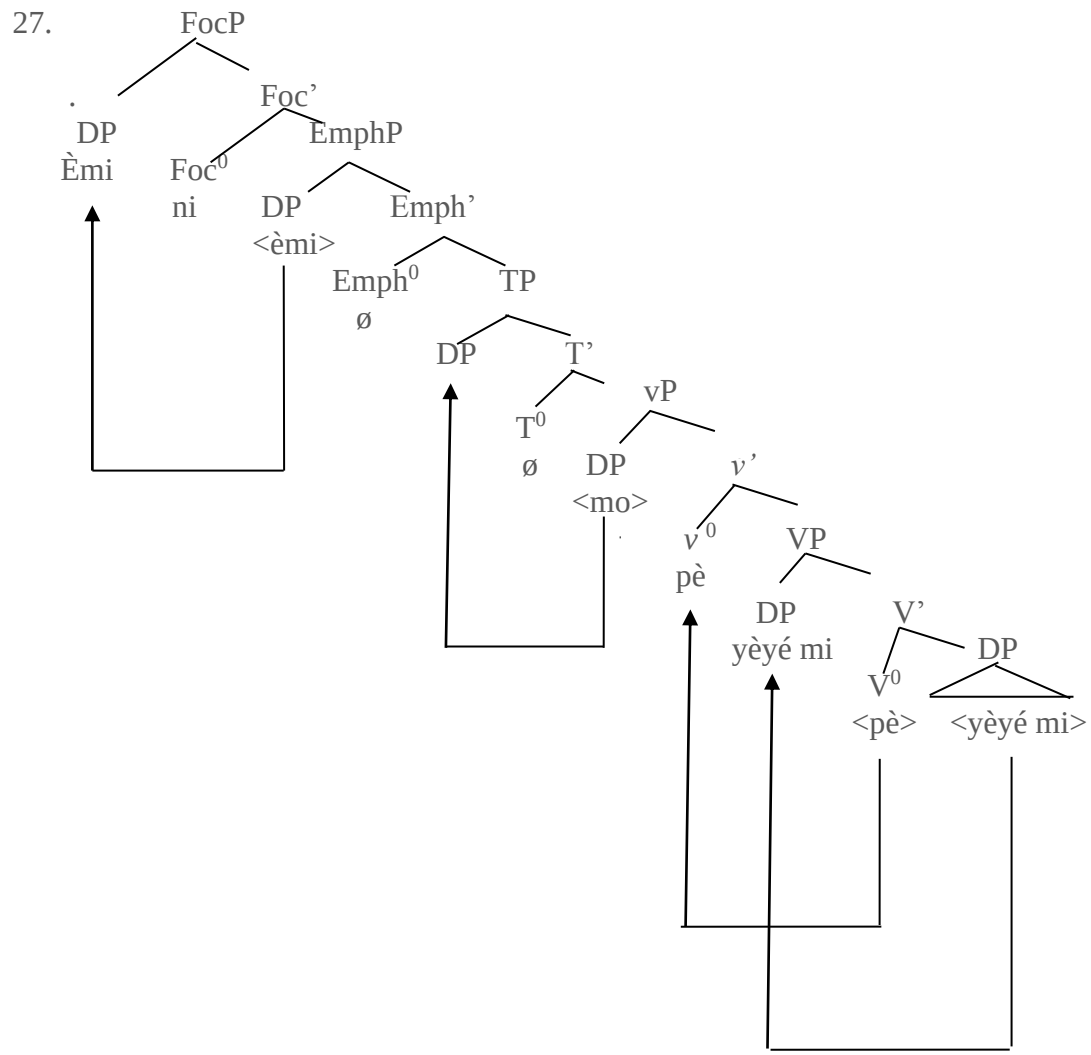
d. Èmi li ààbá mi pè.
I FOC father me call
'My father called ME.'

Ọ̀tùn Mọ̀bà
e.. Èmi li mìí pe èèye mi.
I Foc I call mother me
'I was the one that called my mother.'

f.. Èmi ni ààbá mi pè.
I FOC father me call
'My father called ME.'

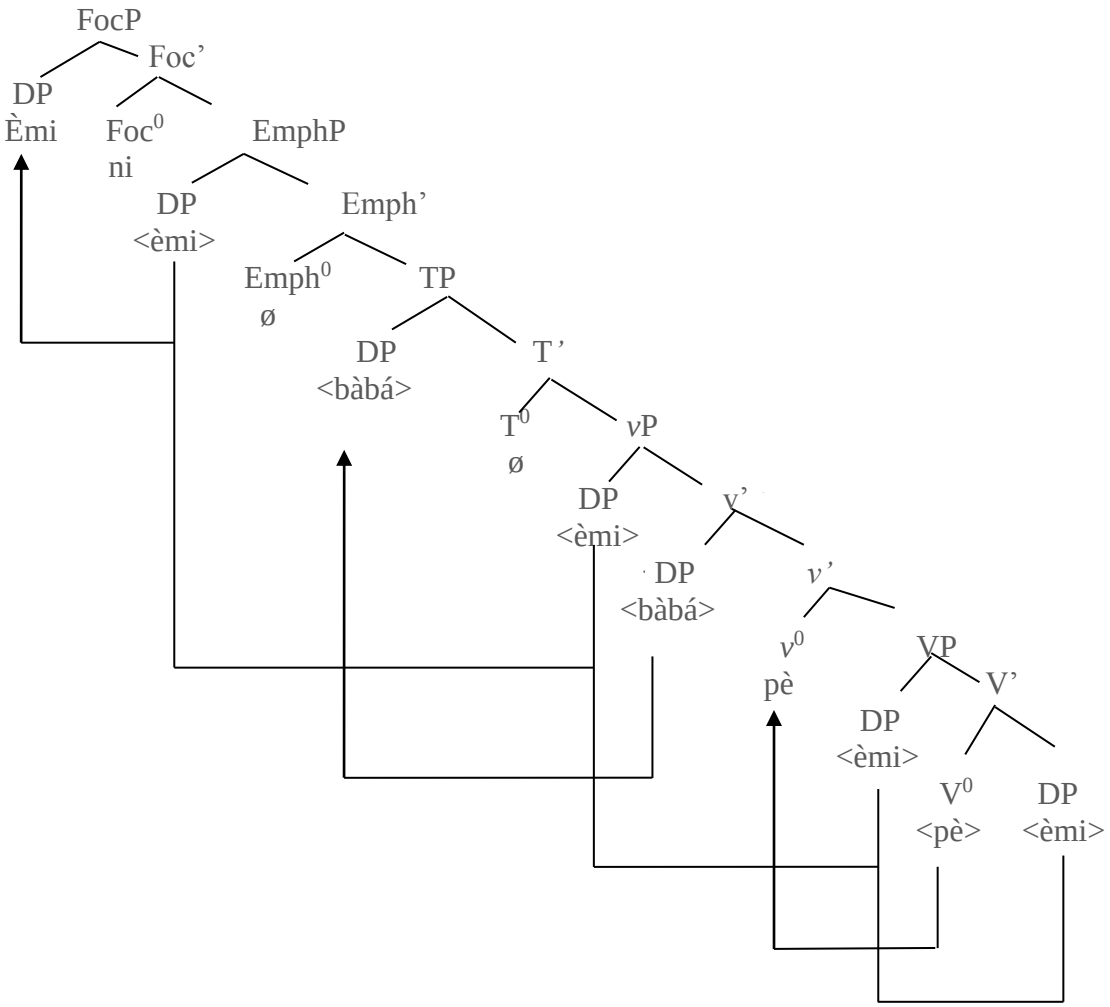
In 26a, c and e above the pronominal (long pronoun) *èmi* "I"enters the derivation at the pragmatic domain (the spec EmphP before it later moves to the spec FocP). Example 26a is phrase-marked as 27 below:

27.



Unlike 26a phrase-marked as 27 above, 26b has a different derivation. In 26b, the long pronoun *èmi* “me” enters the derivation at the *v*P domain before it was attracted to the spec FocP for onward feature valuation. The derivation in 26b is represented in the tree diagram below:

28.



In 28 above, the pronominal (long pronoun) *èmi* moves through the outer spec *v*P to the spec EmphP where the unvalued [+emphasis] feature on the Emph-head is checked before it is later attracted to the spec FocP to check the [+EF, Foc] feature on the Foc-head through specifier and head agreement.

In 29a phrase-marked as 30 below, the entire TP is probed to the spec EmphP to value the unvalued [+EF, Emphasis] feature on the Emph-head through specifier and head agreement.

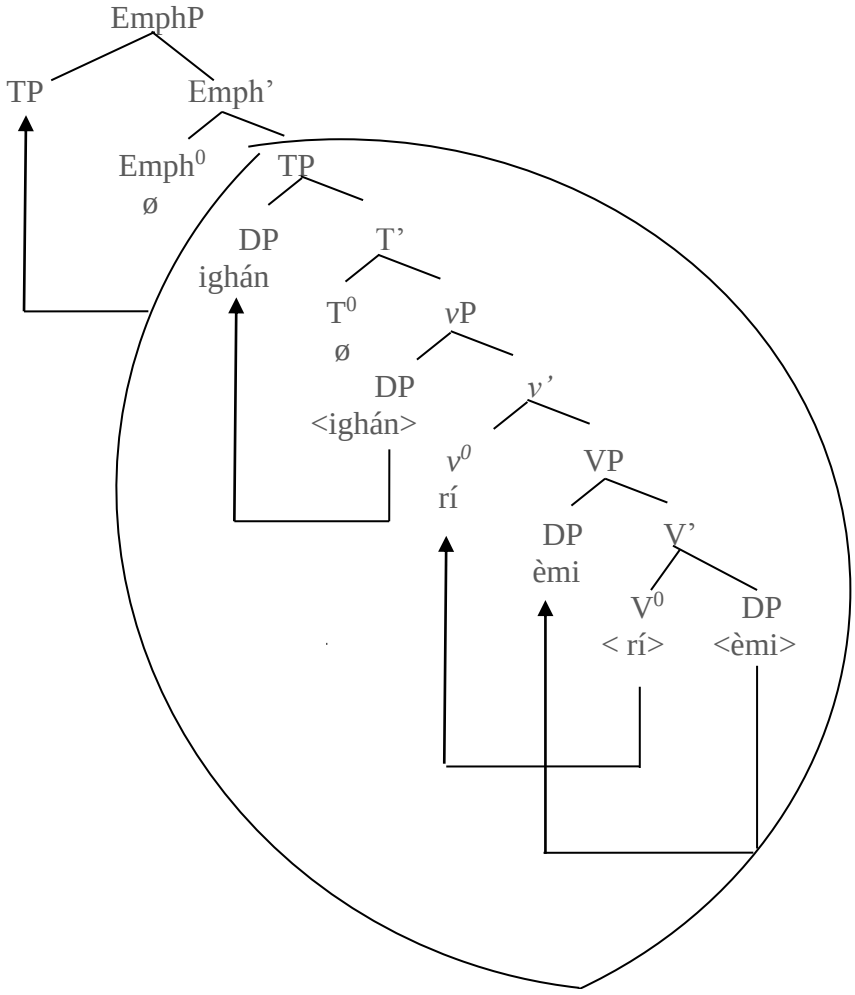
Ifẹ̀

29a. Ighán rí èmi
They see me
'They saw me.'

Ìjẹ̀ṣà/Èkìtì

b. Iọ́n rí èmi
They see me
'They saw me.'

30.



The derivation (in 30) above goes thus: The lexical verb *rí* "see" merges with the DP *èmi* "me" to project the V*'*. Then, the same direct object *èmi* is internally merged as the specifier of the verb phrase (VP) to have its case feature valued. The derivation proceeds by merging the null performative light verb v^0 with the VP to project the *v*-bar. The strong *v*F on the light verb v^0 attracts the main verb *rí* "see" to adjoin to itself. The subject DP i*ghán/iọ́n* "they" is externally merged as the specifier of the light verb phrase (*v*P) to conform with the PISH. The derivation proceeds by merging the abstract T-head with the *v*P to project the T-bar. The T-head as a probe searches its c-command domain and attracts *ìghán* "they", the active and visible goal to the spec TP to value its

[+EPP, case] feature. After this, the derivation still proceeds by the external merge of the abstract $Emph^0$ to project the $Emph^{'}$. The entire TP is probed to the spec EmpnP to check the [+emph, EF] on the $Emph^0$ through specifier and head agreement.

4.3 Focus and constituent negation in CY dialects

Before a DP constituent can be negated, it must first undergo focusing as shown in the examples below:

Ifẹ́

31a. Adé ni mo pè.
Adé FOC I call
'I called ADÉ.'

b. Adé síkọ́ ni mo pè.
Adé NEG FOC I call
'I did not call ADÉ.'
(It was not Adé I called).

Ìjèṣà

c. Adé li mo pè.
Adé FOC I call
'I called ADÉ.'

d. Adé síkọ́ li mo pè.
Adé NEG FOC I call
'I did not call ADÉ.'
(It was not Adé I called).

Adó-Èkìtì

e. Adé ni mo pè.
Adé FOC I call
'I called ADÉ.'

f. Adé síkọ́ ni mo pè.
Adé NEG FOC I call
'I did not call ADÉ.'
(It was not Adé I called).

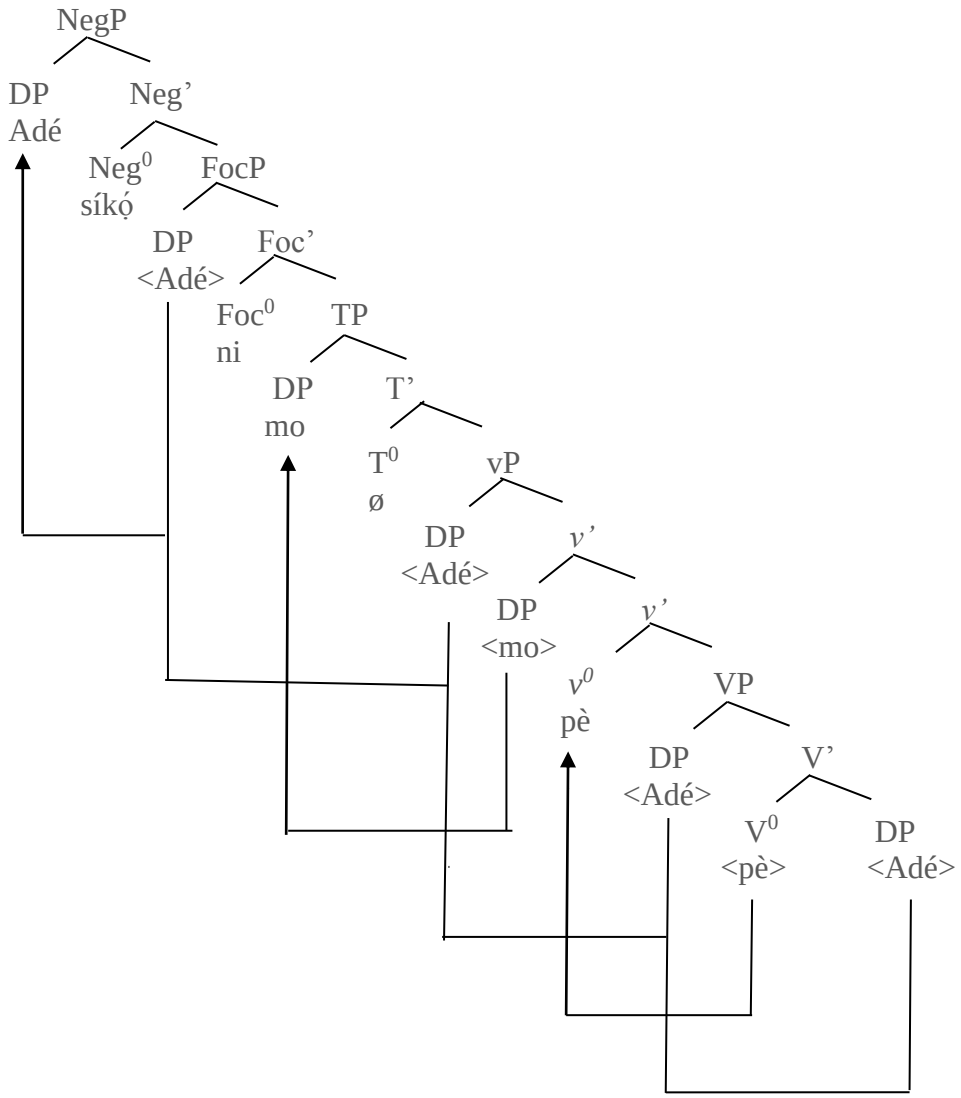
Ọ̀tùn Mọ̀bà

g. Adé ni mìí pè.
Adé FOC I call
'I called ADÉ.'

h. Adé síkọ́ ni mìí pè.
Adé NEG FOC I call
'I did not call ADÉ.'
(It was not Adé I called).

The syntactic implication of 31b, d, f amd h is that the force is exerted on the NegP which dominates the FocP. Example (in 31b) above is phrase-marked (as 32) below for a clearer understanding.

32.



In 32 above, the negated constituent, *Ade* is probed by the Neg-head to the spec NegP to value its unvalued [+EF] through specifier and head agreement.

4.4 Interrogtives in CY dialects

Question forms in CY dialects can be classified into three, based on the types of responses elicited from an interlocutor:

i. Content word questions
ii. Polar (Yes/No) questions
iii. Alternative possibility questions

4.4.1 Content word questions in CY dialects

These are also referred to as constituent interrogatives (Issah 2013). These question forms are realised using question nouns (QNs), question verb (QV) and interrogative qualifiers (*sí* and *kelòó*).

4.4.1.1 Question nouns (QNs) and derivation of constituent interrogatives in CY dialects

The question nouns identified here are traditionally referred to as wh-phrases in some other works. This work follows the Issah's (2013) position, where same are identified as 'interrogative words', considering the fact that they are not signalled by wh-encripts/centric terms in Dagbani. Also, Boardi (1990) refers to them as question words or question phrases. Ọlánrewájú (2017) refers to them as interrogative nouns. This work adopts the nomenclature QNs, because it helps us norrow down the conceptual range of the items that fall into this category. It also helps us separate the class from other types of question markers used in content word questions (QV and interrogative qualifiers) in the dialects. QNs in CY dialects are shown in the table below:

Table 4.1: Question nouns in CY dialects

Concept	Question noun	Gloss
human/Person	yèsí/ìsí	who
non human/manner	kí	what/how
enumerative	melòó	how many
price	èló	how much
location	kà (kà... ibi)/ibi sí	where
time	ìgba/ùgbà sí	when

In the table above, *ibi sí* "where" and *igbà sí* "when" are question phrases (QPs). *Sí* is the question marker (interrogative qualifier) in each of the phrases. The interrogative feature on *sí* percolates through the entire phrases (ìgbà/ùgbà sí and ibi sí).[139] Now, let us consider how these QNs are operated in CY dialects.

Yèsí/Ìsí (Who)

Ifẹ̀

33a. Yèsí[140] ni ó pè mi?
QN FOC RES call me
'Who called me?'

b. Yèsí ó jẹ iṣu?[141]
QN RES eat yam
'Who ate yam?'

Ìjẹ̀ṣà

c. Yèsí li ó pè mi?
QN FOC RES call me
'Who called me?'

d. Yèsí ọ́ jẹ uṣu?
QN RES eat yam
'Who ate yam?'

Adó-Èkìtì

e. Ìsí ó mú eó kò ọ́?
QN RES give money meet you
'Who gave you money?'

Ọ̀tùn Mọ̀bà

f. Ìsí mìí wi kí ọ mú un kò?[142]
QN I say COMP you give it meet
'Who did I tell you to give?'

---

[139]. Feature percolation will be discussed later in this same chapter.

[140]. There are two different positions on the orthography of ***yèsí***: Awóbùlúyì (1998) splits it into two (yè sí) while Ajọ́ńgọ́lọ̀ (2005), Ajíbóyè (2006) and Ọlańrewájú (*2017*) identify it as ***yesí***.

[141]. Ifẹ̀ and Ìjẹ̀ṣà dialects also use ***yèé*** in the place of ***yèsí***. This is factored by phonological processes as shown below:

Yèsí> yèi> yèé

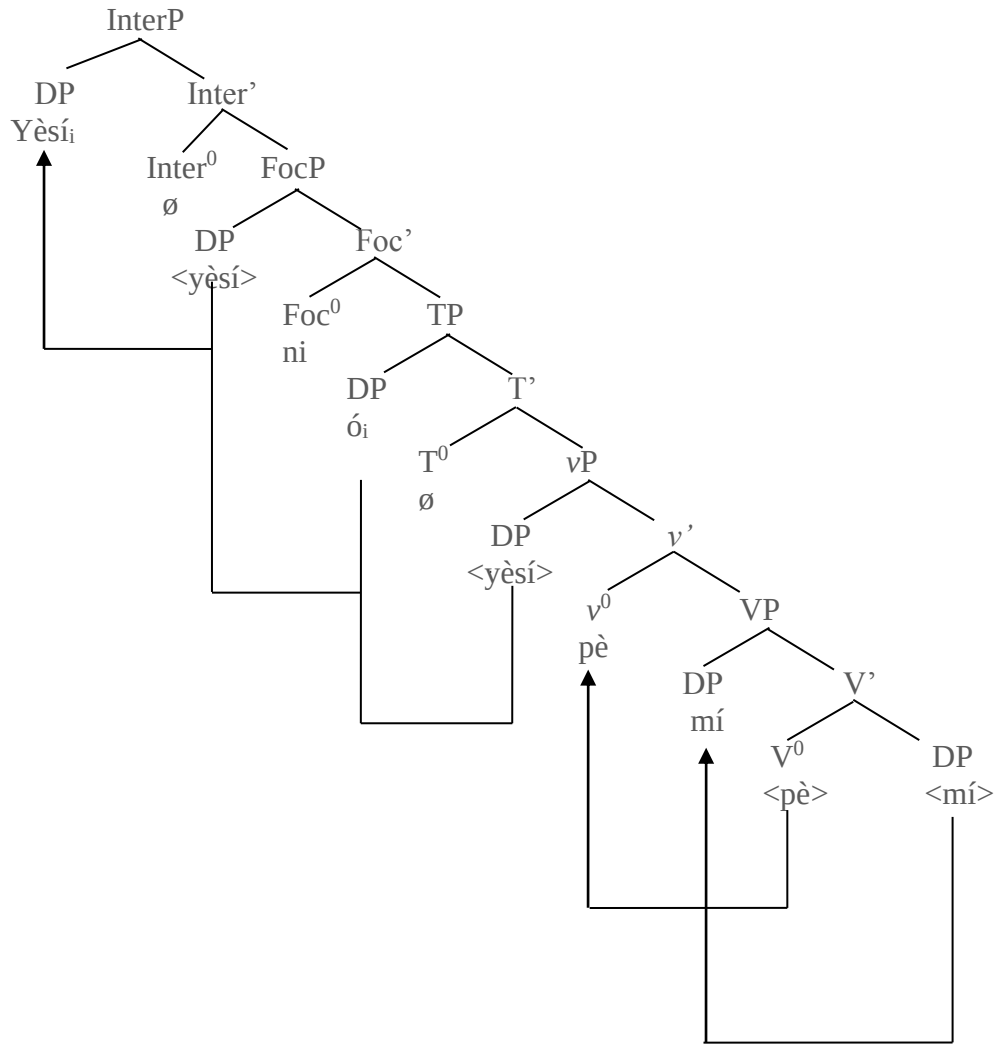
Consoant ***s*** is first deleted before progressive assimilation applies on the vowel **i.**

. It is observed that parts of Èkìtì and Mọ̀bà operate ***ìsín*** in the place of ***ìsí***. This variation is factored by regressive nasal assimilation from the contiguous focus marker. You can read Ajiboye (2006) and Ọlańrewájú (2017) for further explanations on this.

Yèsí is commonly used by the native speakers of Ifẹ̀ and Ìjẹ̀ṣà dialects while Èkìtì and Mọ̀bà speakers use *ìsí*. The focus marker is dropped in 33f above.

CY dialects also optionally drop focus marker as shown (in 1b, d and e) above. QN is extracted from the subject position to the clause left periphery in each of 33a-e. In 33f, the QN is extracted from PP complement position. All the examples discussed (in 33) above are focused interrogatives, therefore, the QNs are all attracted to the clause left periphery to value their unvalued [+focus] feature, and the [+Q, EF] on the Foc-head and the Inter-head respectively. The syntax tree below illustrates 33a for a better understanding.

34.



The derivation (in 34) above goes thus: The verb *pè* "call" merges with the first person singular object pronoun *mi* "me" to project the V*'*. After this, the first person singular object pronoun *mi* is copied to the spec VP by the *Operation Copy and Delete* so as to check its case feature through specifier and head agreement. The derivation proceeds by merging the null performative verb v^0 with the verb phrase to project the *v'*, while

the strong *v*F on the light v^0attracts the lexical verb *pè* "call" to adjoin to itself. *Yèsí*, the QN is externally merged as the specifier of the light phrase verb (*v*P) to conform to the PISH. After this, the abstract T^0 merges with the *v*P to project the T-bar (T*'*). Also, the abstract T^0 as a probe searches its c-command domain for the active goal (yèsí) so as to value its unvalued [+EPP, case] feature. It then attracts *yèsí* to the spec TP, where it is valued nominative case. The derivation proceeds by merging the focus marker *ni* with the TP to project the Foc-bar. The Foc-head as a potential probe searches its c-command domain and attracts *yèsí* an active goal to the spec FocP to value its unvalued [+focus] feature. The derivation still proceeds by selecting the abstract $Inter^0$ and merging it with the focus phrase to realise the interrogative projection. The $Inter^0$ probes the QN *yèsí* to the spec InterP to value its [+Q, EF]. The derivation is spelled-out as a constituent interrogative at this stage. Therefore, any further transformation at PF interface does not simultaneously trigger a corresponding transformation at LF interface. In CY dialects, subject position is never empty (Ọlámrewájú, 2017). To observe Subject Constraint Condition (SCC) also known as Condition on Extraction Domain (CED) under minimalist assumption, a resumptive pronoun *ó* is inserted at the spec TP. Suffice to note that *Operation Copy and Delete* was applied on the specifier of the TP *yèsí*. Therefore, it was deleted both at the PF and LF interfaces. This allows the resumptive pronoun *ó* to occupy the subject position so as to save the derivation from crashing.

Kí (What/How)

As shown in table 3 above, CY dialects use *kí* to question two things: non-human referents and manner (how). Let us consider how *kí* is used to question non-human referents before we return to how it is operated to question manner.

Ifẹ̀

35a. Kí ni ighán mú ghá?
QN FOC they take come
'What did they bring'

b. Kí ni ọ rà?
QN FOC you buy
'What did you buy?'

Ìjẹ̀ṣà

c. Kí i án mú ghá?
QN FOC they take come
'What did they bring'

d. Kí in rà?
QN you buy
'What did you buy?'

Èkìtì/Mọ̀bà
e. Kí in rà?
QN you buy
'What did you buy?'

f. Kí l'Olú gbọ́?
QN FOC-Olú hear
'What did Olú hear?'

The focus marker is dropped in 35d and e above. The QN *kí* functioning as object DP is extracted to the clause left periphery in each of 35a-f above.

Now, let us consider the the usage of *kí* in questioning manner (how) in CY dialects.

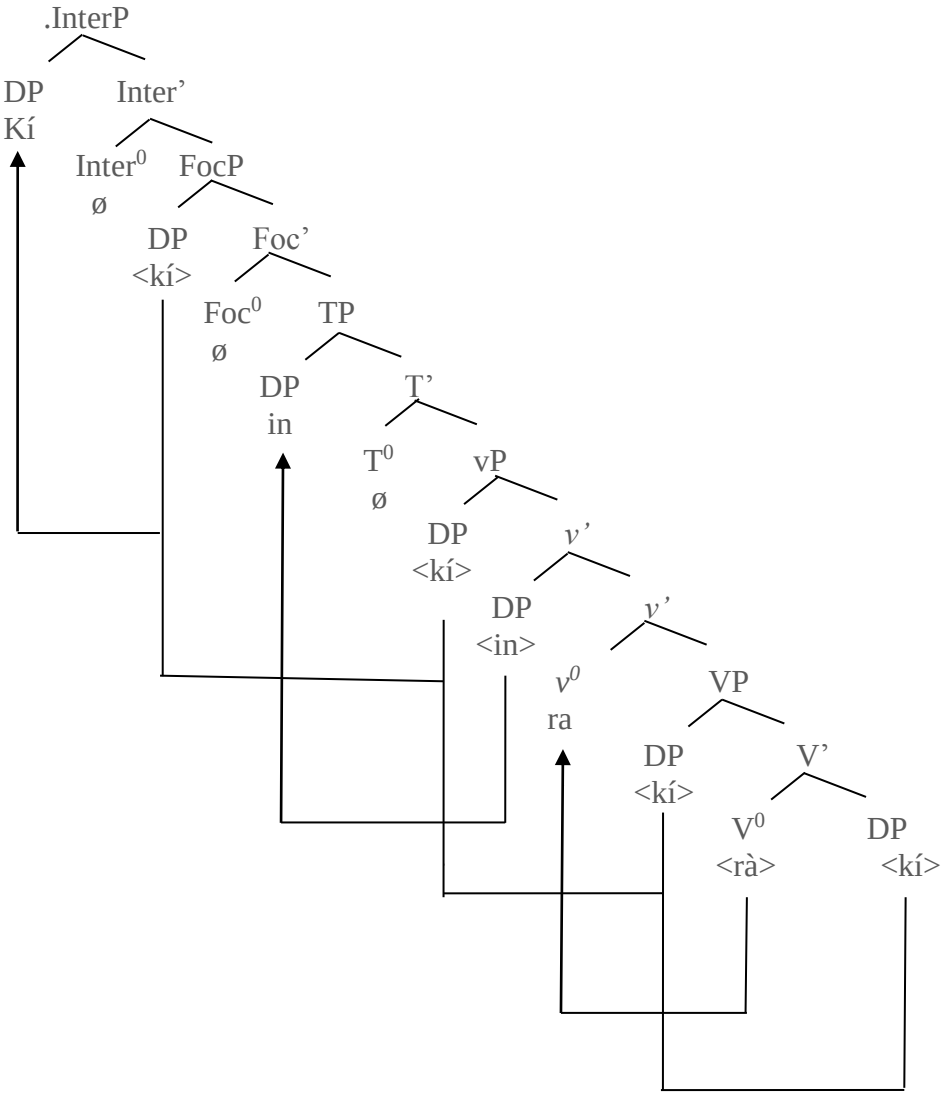
Èkìtì/ Ìjẹ̀ṣà/Ọ̀tùn Mọ̀bà
36a. Kí ọn ti í pè é?
QN they ASP call it
'How is it pronunced?'

Ifẹ̀
b. Kí ìghan Ijẹ̀ṣà ṣe é jó?
QN they Ijẹ̀ṣà do HAB dance
'How do Ìjẹ̀ṣà people dance?'

c. Kí ni o ṣe ṣe é?
QN FOC you PRM do it
'How did you do it?'

Unlike it is applicable in 36a-c above, the QN kí "how" is externally merged at the clause pragmatic domain in each of 36a-c above. Let us consider 35d phrase-marked as 37, and 36c also phrase-marked as 38 below for better illustrations:

37.

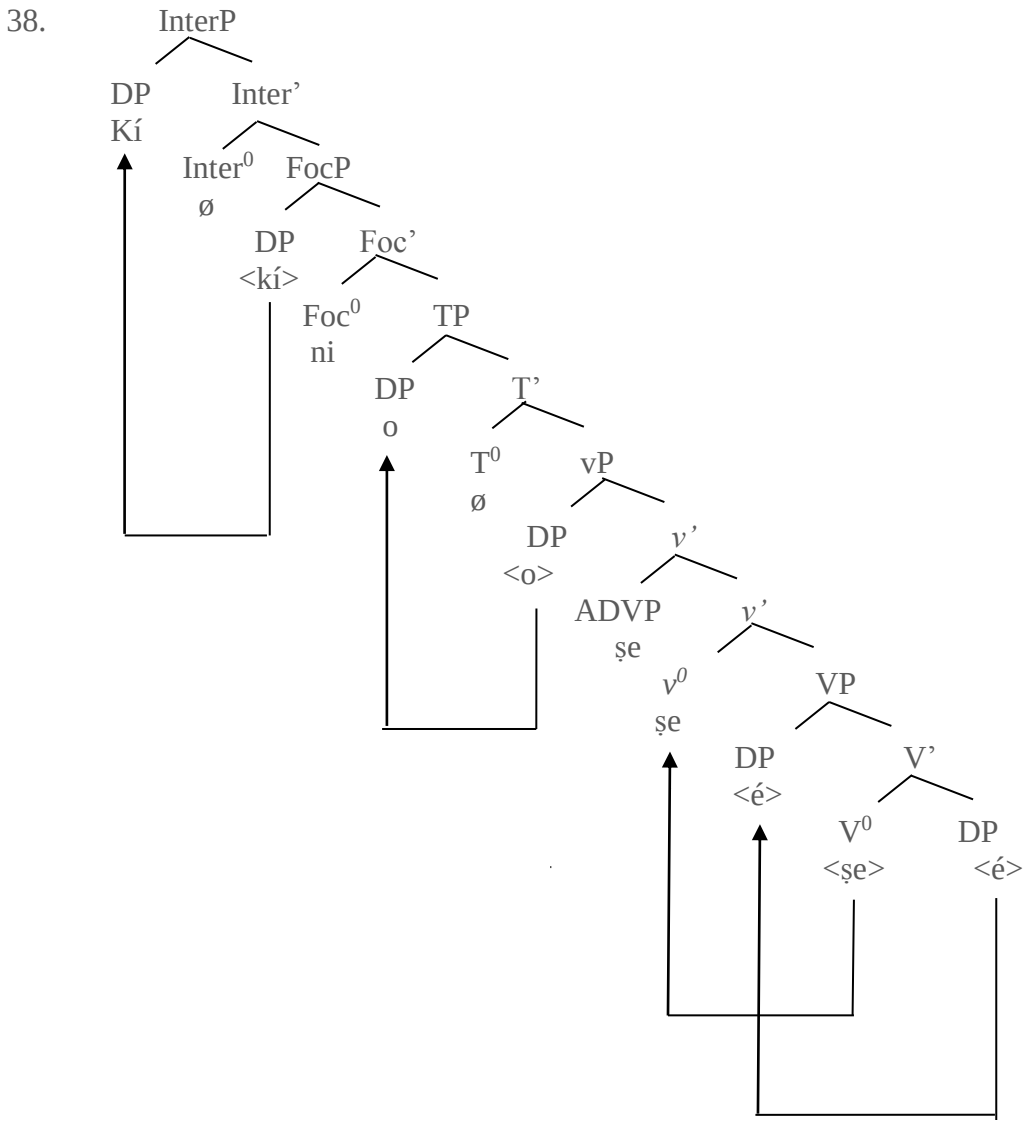


In 37 above, the QN originates from the *v*P domain. The derivation goes thus: The lexical verb *rà* "buy" merges with *kí* "what" to project the V-bar *ra kí* "buy what" in line with c-selection requirement of the verb. After this, the QN *kí* "what" is copied to the spec VP by the *Operation Copy and Delete* so as to check its case feature through specifier and head agreement. The derivation proceeds by merging the null performative verb v^0 with the verb phrase (VP) to project the *v'*, while the strong *v*F on the light v^0attracts the lexical verb *rà* "buy" to adjoin to itself. The second person singular subject pronoun *in* is externally merged as the inner specifier of the light verb phrase (*v*P) in line with the PISH. The QN *kí* is attracted to the outer spec *v*P, an escape hatch from PIC. This invariably allows it visible to further operations in the course of the derivation. The derivation proceeds by externally merging the abstract T-head with the *v*P to project the T-bar. The T-head as a probe attracts *in* to the spec TP to value its unvalued [+case, EPP] feature. The abstract Foc^0 merges with the TP to

project the Foc-bar. The Foc-head as a potential probe searches its c-command domain and attracts the QN (an active goal) to the spec FocP to have its unvalued [+Foc] feature valued. Also, the derivation proceeds by externally merging the absract Inter-head with the FocP to project the Inter-bar. The Inter-head as a potential goal attracts the QN *kí* to the spec InterP to value its [+Q, EF].

In 38 below, the QN, *kí* does not originate from within the TP domain unlike what we have (in 37) above.

38.



The derivation (in 38) above goes thus: The lexical verb *ṣe* "do" merges with the third person singular object pronoun *é* "it" to form the V-bar *ṣe é* "do it" in line with c-selection requirement of the verb. The third person singular object pronoun *é* "it" then moves to the spec VP to have its case feature checked. The derivation proceeds by merging the null performative light verb v^0 with the VP to project the *v*-bar. The strong

*v*F on the light v^0attracts the lexical verb *ṣé* "buy" to adjoin to itself. The pre-modifier *ṣe* is externally merged with the v-bar to project the inner spec *v*P, while the subject DP, *o,* the second person singular subject pronoun is also externally merged at the outer spec *v*P to satisfy the Predicate Internal Subject Hypothesis (PISH) which stipulates that a subject originates internally within the predicate. The drivation proceeds by merging the abstract T-head with the *v*P to project the T-bar. The T-head as a probe attracts *o*, the second person singular subject pronoun to the spec TP to value its [+EPP, case] feature. The Foc^0 merges with the tense phrase to project the Foc*'*, while the QN, *kí* externally merges at the spec FocP. Therefore, feature valuation is satisfied through specifier and head agreement. After this, the abstract $Inter^0$ (a probe) enters into feature checking relation with the QN *ki* through specifier and head agreement. Consequently, the unvalued [+Q, EF] on the $Inter^0$ is checked.

As shown (in 38) above, when CY dialects operate *kí* to question manner, they introduce *ṣe*, a premodifier, also, the QN *kí* does not enter the derivation within the *v*P domain. It is rather externally merged at the pragmatic domain.

Mélòó (How many)

This QN is used for numerative. It is derived from *mú èló*[143]. CY dialects use this QN similarly with standard Yorùbá. Let us consider the examples below:

Ìjẹ̀ṣà/Èkìtì/Mọ̀bà

39a. Mélòó[144] in fẹ́?
QN you want
'How many do you want?'

b. Mélòó in gbà?
QN you take
'How many did you take?'

c. Mélòó in mú ghá?
QN you pick come
'How many did you bring?'

Ifẹ̀

d. Mélòó ni ẹ mí wá?
QN FOC you PROG search

[143]. ***Èló*** itself is a derived QN. Read Ọlámẃewájú (2016) on derivation of QNs in Yorùbá.

[144]. Ọ̀tùn Mọ̀bà uses ***èló sí***, while some native speakers of Èkìtì dialect operate ***iye sí*** in the place of mé***lòó*** as shown below.

Iye/èló sí in rà á?
Number QM you buy it
''How much did you buy it?'

‘How many are you looking for?’

e. Mélòó ẹ rà
QN you buy
‘How many did you buy?’

CY dialects also optionally drop the focus marker when operating this QN as exemplified in 39a, b, c and e above.

Èló (How much)

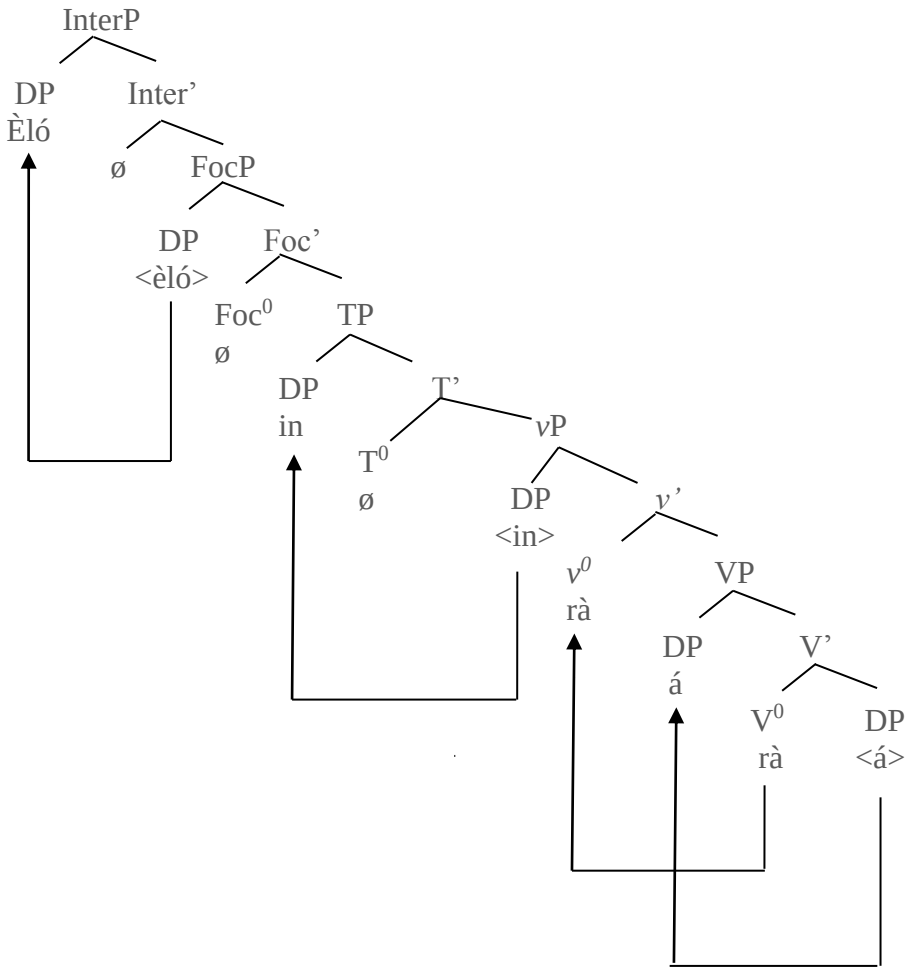
CY dialects also use this QN similarly with standard Yorùbá. Some parts of Èkìtì use *iye sí* in the place of *èló.*

40a. Èló in rà á?
QN you buy it
‘How much did you buy it?’

b. Èló ọ ra èwù rẹ?
QN you buy shirt your
‘How much did you buy your shirt?’

The QN *èló* in each of 40a and b above enter the derivation at the clause left peripheral position to check the [+ foc, Q, EF] on the Foc-head and the Inter-head respectively. For a clearer understanding, Let us see how 40a is phrase-marked (as 41) below:

41.



In 41 above, the lexical verb *rà* subcategorises the third person singular object pronoun *á* to satisfy its c-selection requirement and consequently projects the V-bar. The third person singular object pronoun *'a* "it" then moves to the spec VP to have its case feature checked. The derivation proceeds by merging the null performative light verb v^0 with the verb phrase to project the *v'*, while the strong *v*F on the light v^0attracts the lexical verb *rà* "buy" to adjoin to itself. The subject DP ***in*** is externally merged as the specifier of the light verb phrase (spec *v*P) in line with the PISH which stipulates that subject should originate internally within the predicate. The derivation proceeds by merging the abstract T^0 with the light verb phrase (*v*P) to project the T*'*. The T-head (T^0) as a potential probe locates the second person singular subject pronoun *in* which is probed to the specifier position of the TP to check its [+EPP, case] feature. After this, the abstract Foc^0 merges with the TP to project the Foc-bar. The QN *èló* is externally merged at the spec FocP to check the unvalued [+focus] feature on the Foc-head. The derivation proceeds by merging the abstract Inter-head with the FocP to project the

InterP. The Inter-head as a potential probe attracts the QN *èló* (an active goal) to the spec InterP to check its [+Q, EF].

Kà (Where)

CY dialects use this QN in two ways to form constituent interrogatives: one, it can be used to ask after a referent or to request for something. When used in this context it enters the derivation within the *v*P domain. Two, it is also used to ellicit information about the particular location of a referent. When used in this second context, it co-occurs with the DP *ibi* "place" and it enters th derivation at the clause left peripheral position (the spec InterP). Now, this study will first discuss how CY operate *kà* (QN) alongside the DP *ibi* "place" at the pragmatic domain before it returns to discuss extensively on the first way of operating the QN as mentioned above. Let us consider the examples below on *kà...ibi* (kà+ibi) "where":

Ifẹ̀

43a. [$_{InterP}$Kà [$_{Inter'}$ ø [$_{FP}$ ibi [$_{Foc'}$ ø [$_{TP}$ o [$_{T'}$ ø [$_{vP}$<ibi>[*v'*<o>[*v'*rè[$_{VP}$<o>[$_{V'}$,<rè> <ibi>]]]]]]]]]]?

QN place you go

'Where did you go?'

b. [$_{InterP}$ Kà [$_{Inter'}$[$_{FP}$ ibi [$_{Foc}$ ø [$_{TP}$ o[$_{T}$ ø [$_{vP}$ <ibi>[*v'*<o> *v'* fi [$_{VP}$ owó mi[$_{V}$ *'*<fi>owó mi [$_{PP}$ sí <ibi>]]]]]]]]]]]?

QN place you put money me to

'Where did you put my money?'

Ìjẹ̀ṣà

c. [$_{InterP}$Kà [$_{Inter'}$Φ[$_{FP}$ ibi [$_{Foc'}$ ø [$_{TP}$ ọ [$_{T}$ ø [$_{vP}$<ibi>[*v'*<ọ>[*v'*rè[$_{VP}$<ọ>[$_{V'}$,<rè> <ibi>]]]]]]]]]]?

QN place you go

'Where did you go?'

d. [$_{InterP}$ Kà [$_{Inter'}$[$_{FP}$ ibi [$_{Foc'}$ ø [$_{TP}$ ọ [$_{T'}$ ø [$_{vP}$ <ibi>[*v'*<ọ>*v'*fi [$_{VP}$ oó mi [$_{V}$ *'*<fi><oó mi> [$_{PP}$ sí <ibi>]]]]]]]]]]]?

QN place you put money me to

'Where did you put my money?'

Adó-Èkìtì

e. [$_{InterP}$Kà [$_{Inter'}$ ø [$_{FP}$ ibi [$_{Foc'}$ ø [$_{TP}$ o [$_{T'}$ ø [$_{vP}$<ibi>[*v'*<o>[*v'*rè[$_{VP}$<o>[$_{V'}$,<rè> <ibi>]]]]]]]]]]?

QN place you go

'Where did you go?'

f. [$_{InterP}$ Kà [$_{Inter'}$[$_{FP}$ ibi [$_{Foc'}$ ø [$_{TP}$ o [$_{T'}$ ø [$_{vP}$ <ibi>[*v'*<o>*v'* mú [$_{VP}$ eó mi [$_{V'}$<mú><eó mi> [$_{PP}$ sí <ibi>]]]]]]]]]]]]?
QN place you take money me to
'Where did you put my money?'

Mọ̀bà
g. [$_{InterP}$Kà [$_{Inter'}$ ø [$_{FP}$ ibi [$_{Foc'}$ ø [$_{TP}$ ọ́ọ́ [$_{T'}$ø [$_{vP}$<ibi>[*v'*<ọ́ọ́>[*v'* lọ[$_{VP}$<ọ́ọ́>[$_{V'}$<lọ> <ibi>]]]]]]]]]]]?
QN place you go
'Where did you go?'

h. [$_{InterP}$ Kà [$_{Inter'}$[$_{FP}$ ibi [$_{Foc'}$ ø [$_{TP}$ ọ́ọ́[$_{T'}$ ø [$_{vP}$ <ibi>[*v'*<ọ́ọ́>*v'* mú [$_{VP}$<eó>[$_{V'}$<mú>eó mi [$_{PP}$ sí <ibi>]]]]]]]]]]]]?
QN place you take money me to
'Where did you put my money?'

In each of the derivations above, only the DP *ibi* "place" entered the derivation within the *v*P domain before it was moved to the clause left periphery. The Foc-head as a probe attracts the DP *ibi* "place" to the spec FocP to check its [+focus] feature. The QN *kà* enters the derivation at the pragmatic domain, it is externally merged at the spec InterP to value the unvalued [+Q, EF] on the Inter-head through specifier and head agreement. Two implications are born out of this analysis: one, CY dialects do not operate *kabi* as a QM in their constituent interrogatives. Therefore, the QN in each of 43a-g above is *kà* which is externally merged at the spec InterP. Two, *kà*, the QN does not move through the spec FocP.

Focus marker must be dropped when the dialect operate *kà*. Legibility of the focus marker *ni/li* to the PF interface informs the ill-formedness of 44a-b below:

Ifẹ̀
44a. *[$_{InterP}$Kà [$_{Inter'}$ ø [$_{FP}$ ibi [$_{Foc'}$ ni [$_{TP}$ o [$_{T'}$ ø [$_{vP}$<ibi>[*v'*<o>[*v'*rè [$_{VP}$<o> [$_{V'}$<rè> <ibi>]]]]]]]]]]?
QN place FOC you go

Ìjẹ̀ṣà
b. *[$_{InterP}$Kà [$_{Inter'}$ ø [$_{FP}$ ibi [$_{Foc'}$ li [$_{TP}$ o [$_{T'}$ ø [$_{vP}$<ibi>[*v'*<o>[*v'*rè [$_{VP}$<o> [$_{V'}$<rè> <ibi>]]]]]]]]]]?
QN place FOC you go

The native speakers of Èkìtì and Mọ̀bà[145] dialects use *ibi sí* interchangeably with *kà ...bi* unlike the native speakers of Ifẹ̀ and Ìjẹ̀ṣà. In *ibi sí*, *sí* as the interrogative

[145]. Here, we are particular about Ọ̀tùn Mọ̀bà. Ọlámrewájú (2017) also identifies *kabi* as a QN in

qualifier qualifies the head noun *ibi*[146]. Therefore the interrogative feature on *sí* percolates through the entire question phrase (QP). Let us consider the examples below:

Èkìtì

45a. Kà ibi (Kabi) ọ mú eó mi sí?
QN you take money me to
'Where did you put my money?'

b. Ibi sí ọ ti pàdé rẹ̀?
Place QM you PERF meet his
'Where did you meet him?'

Mọ̀bà

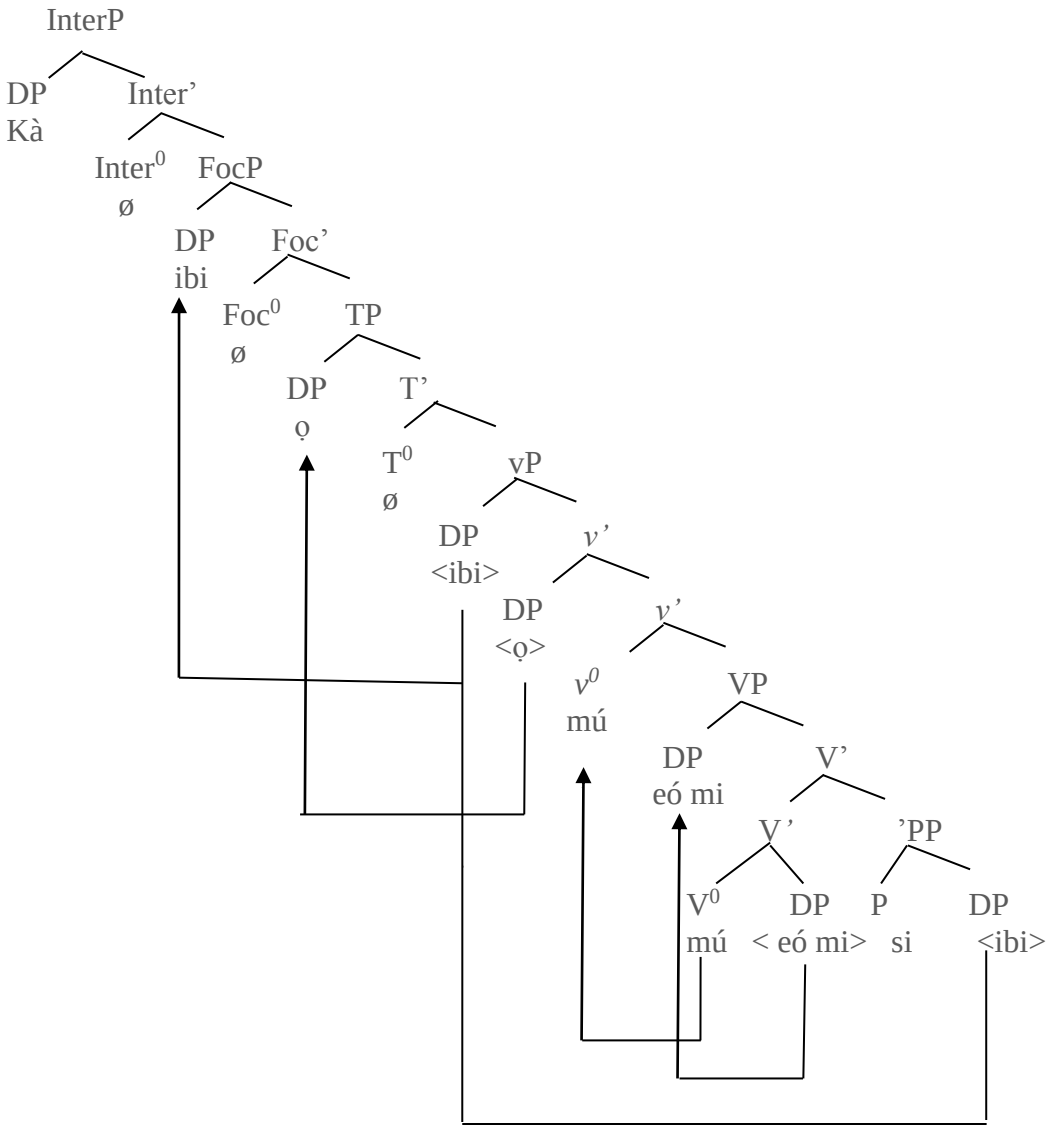
c. Kà ibi (Kabi) ọ̀ọ́ mú eó mi sí?
QN you take money me to
'Where did you put my money?'

The examples (in 45a and b) are respectively illustrated in the syntax trees (46 and 49) below for a clearer understanding.

CY dialects but fails to provide a plausible account on its derivation using PPT.

[146]. This study will discuss interrogative qualifier in details later in this same chapter.

46.



The derivation (in 46) above goes thus: The verb mú "take" merges with the DP *eó mi* "my money" to satisfy its c-selection requirement and consequently projects the lower V-bar. The lower V-bar merges with the PP *sí ibi* to project the higher the V-bar. After this, the direct object DP *eó mi* "my money" is internally merged at the spec VP for (case) feature valuation. The null performative light verb v^0 externally merges with the verb phrase (VP) to project the *v'*, while the strong *v*F on the light v^0attracts the lexical verb *mú* "take" to adjoin to itself. The second person subject pronoun *ọ* "you" is selected from the numeration and merged at the inner spec *v*P in line with Predicate-Internal Subject Hypothesis (PISH) which conditions a subject DP to be base-generated within the predicate. The outer spec *v*P then becomes the escape hatch for the DP *ibi* "place" so as to be licensed from Phase Impenetrability Condition (PIC), also, to be actively available for subsequent operations. The derivation proceeds by

merging the T-head to project the T-bar. The T-head as a probe searches its c-command domain and attracts *ọ* "you" to the specifier position of the TP (spec TP) where its [+case, EPP] feature is checked. The derivation proceeds by merging the abstract Foc-head with the TP to project the Foc-bar. The Foc- head as a probe also attracts the DP *ibi* "place" to spec FocP to value its [+Focus] feature. The derivation proceeds by merging the abstract Inter-head with the FocP to project the Inter-bar. The QN *ka* is externally merged at the spec InterP to value the unvalued [+Q, EF] on the Inter-head through specifier and head agreement. The derivation (in 46) above deviates from Chengs's (1991) Clause Typing Hypothesis earlier discussed in chapter two of this study, repeated (as 47) below for ease of reference:

> 47. Every clause needs to be typed. In the case of typing a wh-question[147], either a wh-particle in C^0 is used or else fronting of a wh-word to the spec of C is used, thereby typing a clause through C^0 by spec-head agreement.
>
> Cheng (1991:29)

As evident in 47 above, the content word question is not typed only by a wh-question particle in $Inter^0$ or fronting of a wh-word to the spec InterP as Cheng (1991) claims. The QN *kà* does not undergo any syntactic movement, it is rather externally merged at the spec InterP. This assumption necessitates the adoption of *Interrogative Condition* proposed by Radford (2009b) in 48 below in the place of 47.

> 48. A clause is interpreted as a non-echoic question (if and only if) it is a CP with an interrogative specifier (i.e, a specifier containing an interrogative word)[148].
>
> (Radford, 2009b:194)

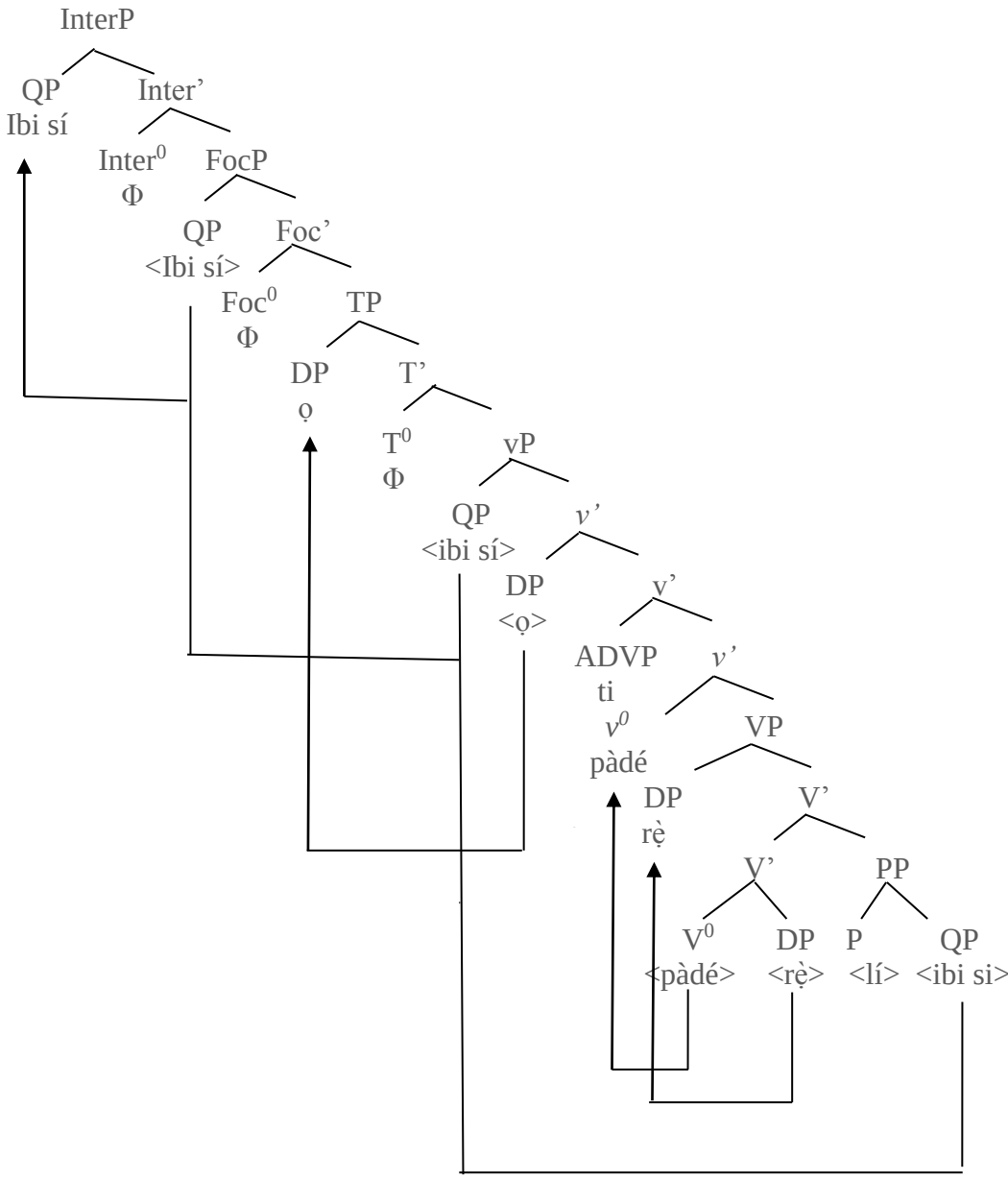
On *ibi sí* in 45b, the entire question phrase (QP) originates from the PP complement of the verb *pàdé* "meet"as shown in the derivation below:

---

147. ***Content word question*** is adopted in the place of ***wh-question*** in this work. Also, ***QNs*** and ***QVs*** are used in the place of ***wh-phrases/words***.

148. However, this proposal will still be modified in this same chapter to adequately capture syntactic analysis of constituent interrogatives in CY dialects and some other languages exhibiting similar behaviour.

49.



In 49 above, the QP *ibi sí* is internally merged at the outer spec vP, the escape hatch from Phase Impenetrability Condition (PIC). This invariably allows it visible to subsequent syntactic operations in the derivation. The PP-head *lí* is not pied-piped along with the QP *ibi sí*. It has to be deleted for the derivation to converge.[149] The Foc-head as a potential probe attracts the entire QP to the spec FocP to check its [+focus] feature. After this, the abstract Inter^0 merges with the FocP to project the Inter*'*, while

[149]. This research work has discussed extensively on the rationale behind pied-piping and prepositions stranding in Yorùbá in chapter two of this study.

the Inter^{0} probes the QP to the specifier position of the Interrogative phrase (spec InterP) to check its [+Q, EF]. Focus markers are dropped in 46 and 49 above.

Igbà/Ùgbà sí[150] (When)

Just like *ibi sí*, used to elicit information about the location of a referent, this QP is used to question time. The QM in the phrase is *sí* which has it interrogative feature percolated through the entire phrase (ìgbà/ùgbà sí). Let us consider the examples below:

Ifẹ̀

50a. Ìgbà sí o dé?
Time QM you arrive
'When did you arrive?'

b. Ìgbà sí ọ mí re ilé?
Time QM you PROG go house
'When are you going home?'

Ìjẹ̀ṣà/Èkìtì

c. Ùgbà/Ìgbà sí ọ dé?
Time QM you arrive
'When did you arrive?'

d. Ìgbà sí ọ mí re ulé?
Time QM you PROG go house
'When are you going home?'

Mọ̀bà

e. Ùgbì sí ọ̀ọ́ dé?[151]
Time QM you arrive
'When did you arrive?'

f. Ùgbì sí ọ̀ọ́ mí re ulé?
Time QM you PROG go house
'When are you going home?'

Focus marker is dropped in each of the examples (50a-f) above. The entire QPs are copied from *v*P domain in line with Wh-Attraction Condition (in 51) below:

> 51. The edge feature on C attract the smallest possible maximal projection containing the closest wh-word to move to spec C.
>
> (Radford, 2009b:216)

---

[150]. Note that ***ìgbà/ùgbà sí*** is not identified as a QN/QM in this work. It is rather a QP, with ***ìgbà/ùgbà*** as the head noun, and ***sí*** as the QM.

[151]. Mọ̀bà also uses ***ùgbè*** in the place of ***ùgbà***.

Ẹ̀ẹ̀kelòó/Ẹlẹ́ẹ̀kelòó (What frequency)

This is used to question frequency of occurence in CY dialects. It is used in the place of *igba kelòó* "what round" operated by standard Yorùbá. *Ẹ̀ẹ̀kelòó/Ẹlẹ́ẹ̀kelòó* can be decomposed to *ẹ́rìn kelòó/ oní ẹ̀rìn kelòó*. Ọ̀tùn Mọ̀bà operates *ẹ̀rìn/ẹ̀rẹ̀ kelòó.* Examples (52a-b) below show how this QN is operated in ex situ question forms in CY dialects:

Ifẹ̀

52a. Ẹ̀ẹ̀kelòó/Ẹlẹ́ẹ̀kelòó ni yèé jẹ́?
QN FOC this be
'What round is this?'

b. Ẹ̀ẹ̀kelòó/Ẹlẹ́ẹ̀kelòó ni ọ fẹ́ dáhùn ìbéèrè mi?
QN FOC you like answer question me
'What number of time are you trying to answer my question?'

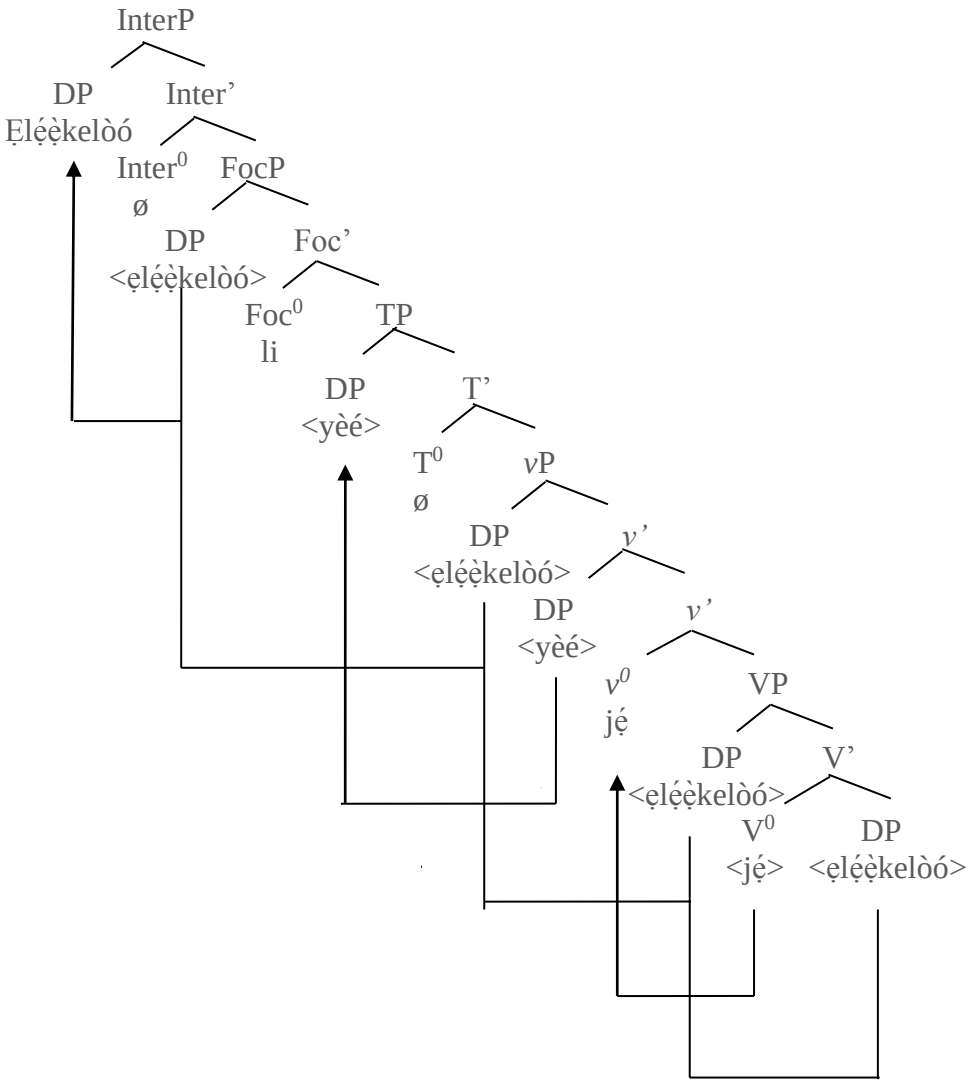
Ìjẹ̀ṣà

52a. Ẹ̀ẹ̀kelòó/Ẹlẹ́ẹ̀kelòó li yèé jẹ́?
QN FOC this be
'What round is this?'

b. Ẹ̀ẹ̀kelòó/Ẹlẹ́ẹ̀kelòó li ọ fẹ́ dáhùn ùbéèrè mi?
QN FOC you like answer question me
'What number of time are you trying to answer my question?'

Example (52a) above is reprensented in the syntax tree below:

53.



In the derivation above, the QN *ẹ̀ẹ̀kelòó* is copied to the clause left peripheral position through the outer spe *v*P, an escape hatch to Phase inpenetrability Condition (PIC).

4.4.1.2 Subject QNs in CY dialects

Apart from rhetorical question forms, a QN can be lexicalised at the canonical subject position (spec TP) in CY dialects when either copula *ni* or the QN *ka* is used to form a non-echoic question. Let us consider the examples below:

Ifẹ̀

54a. **Yèsí** ni ọ́?
QN CPL you
'Who are you?'

b. **Ọmọ ibi sí** ni ín?[152]

[152]. Èkìtì and Ìjẹ̀ṣà dialects also use the example below in the place of 54b.

Child place QM CPL you
'You are a native of where?'

Ìjẹ̀ṣà
c. **Yèsí** i ààba rẹ?
QN CPL father your
'Who is your father?'

55a. **Kà** rí in?
QN see you
'Where are you?'

Ifẹ̀
b. **Kà** rí ọ bá-in-ín?
QN see you now
'Where are you now?'

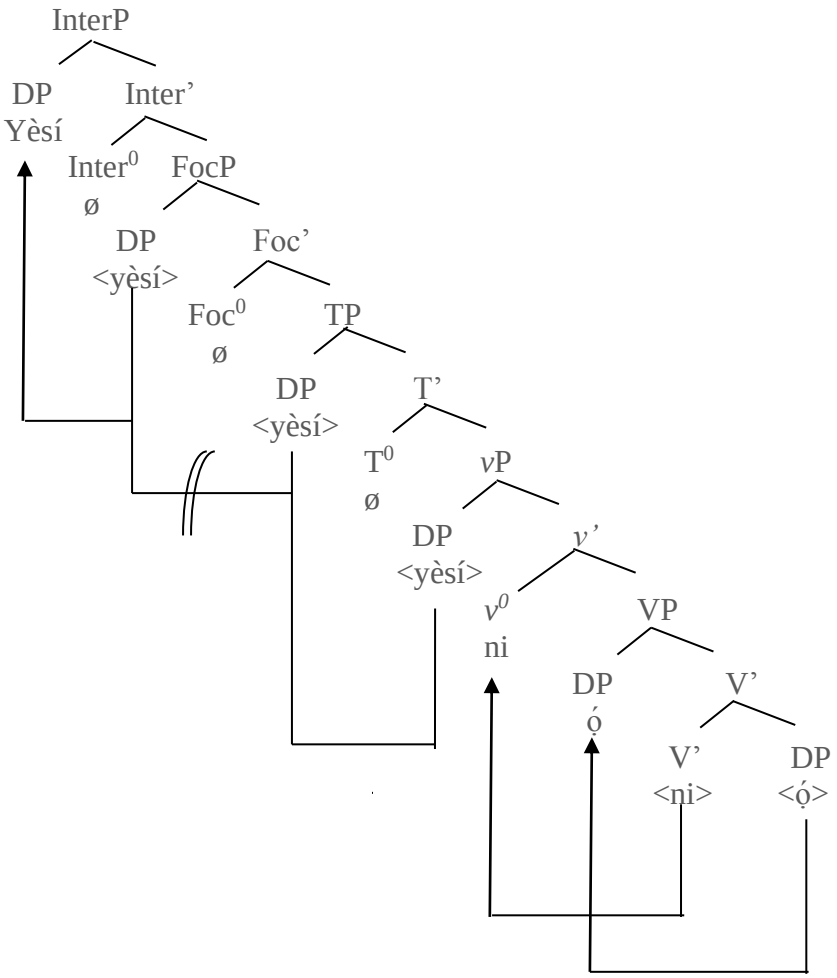
Ìjẹ̀ṣà/Èkìtì
c. **Kà** rí fìlà mi?
QN see cap me
'Where is my cap?'

In each of the examples (in 54 and 55) above, the QN is base generated in subject canonical position. Following Yusuf (1990), *ni* as used in each of 54a-c is a copula, it assigns an accusative case to the DPs *ọ, in* and *àábá rẹ̀* in 54a, b and c respectively.[153] There are two possible ways of analysing each of 54 and 55 above under minimalist assumption: the first method is by activating an abstract Foc-head in the pragmatic domain in each of the examples, whereby the subject is attracted to the spec FocP to value its unvalued [+focus] feature, and finally lured to the spec InterP to check the [+Q, EF] on the Inter-head. Let us consider 54a phrase-marked as 56 below:

Ọmọ yèsí/ìsí o rè?
Child QN you be
'Whose child are you?'

153. Read Yusuf (1990) and Adéwọlé (1991) on syntactic behavours of copula in Yorùbá.

56..



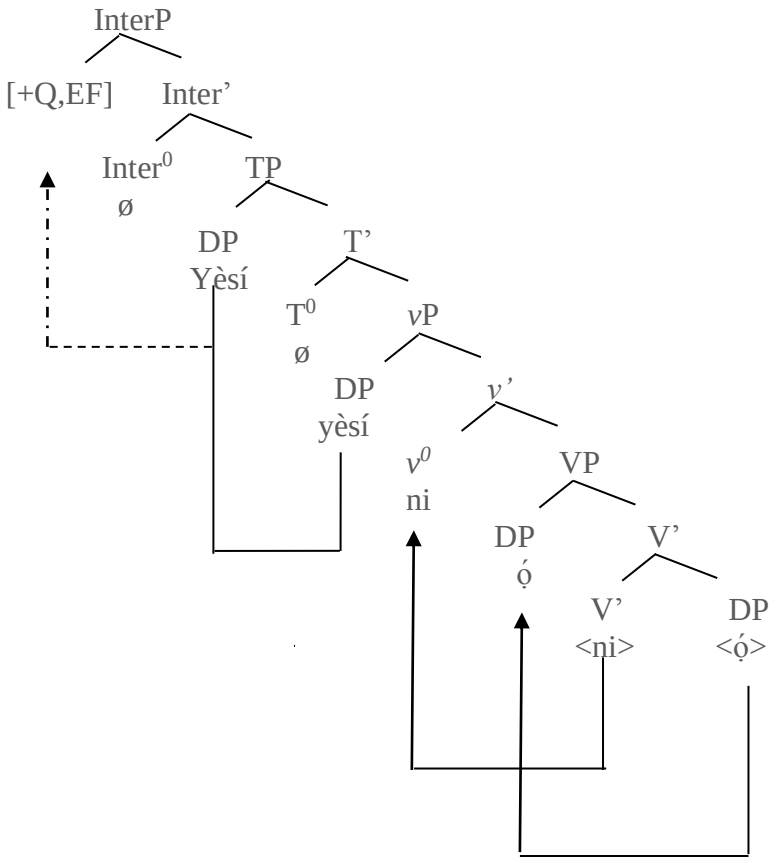
The derivation (in 56) goes thus: The copula verb *ni* "be" merges with the second person singular object pronoun *ọ́* "you" to project the V-bar in line with c-selection requirement of the verb. After this, the second person singular object pronoun *ọ́* "you" moves to the spec VP to check its case feature. The null performative light verb v^0 merges with the verb phrase (VP) to project the *v',* while the strong *v*F on the light v^0attracts the copula to adjoin to itself. The derivation proceeds by externally merging the QN *yèsí* as the specifier of the light phrase verb (*v*P) to conform to the PISH which necessitates a subject to originate internally within the predicate. After this, the abstract T^0 externally merges with the light verb phrase (*v*P) to project the T', while the T^0 probes the QN *yèsí* to the spec TP to check [+EPP, case] feature.[154] The derivation still proceeds by merging the abstract Foc-head with the TP to project the FocP. Therefore, the strong [+focus] feature on the Foc-head attracts the QN *yèsí* to the spec FocP to have its unvalued

[154]. The derivation is spelled-out stage at this point. The derivation conveys interrogative meaning. With this, it is empirically evident that QNs in CY dialects are inherently interrogative.

features checked. The derivation still proceeds by merging the abstract Inter-head with the FocP to project the Inter-bar. The abstract Inter^0 probes the QN *yèsí* for feature valuation whereby its unvalued [+Q, EF] is checked through specifier and head agreement.

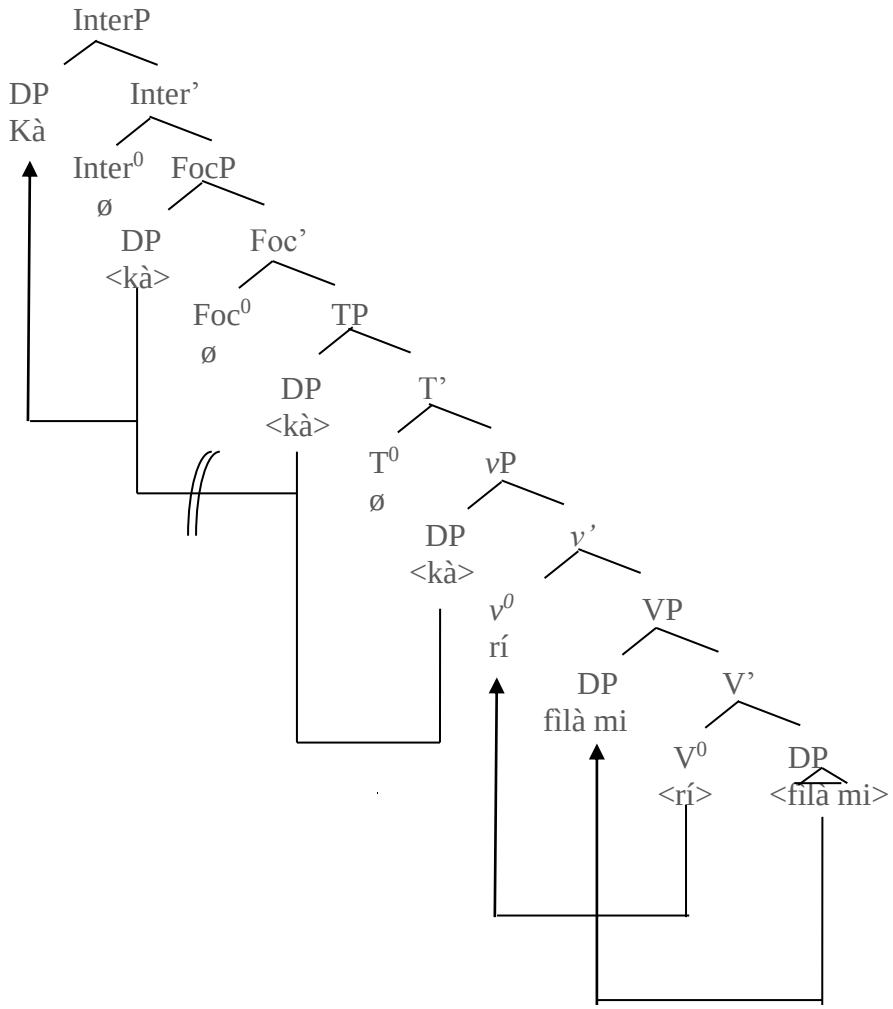
Although, the first method used above is in line with minimalist assumption, however, it fails to observe Conditon on Extraction Domain (CED) which forbids extractions from the spec TP in standard Yorùbá and CY dialects. Therefore, this invariably necessitates the second method whereby the QN *yèsí* only takes an LF movement to the Spec InterP. Focus projection is never activated because it is specified [+strong] in Yorùbá and CY dialects, it necessarily triggers overt movement. Therefore, only interrogative projection is activated as shown (in 57) below:

57.



The tree diagrams (in 58 and 59) below illustrate how the QN *kà* is spelled out at the spec InterP and spec TP respectively. The QN *kà* is used to ask after a referent in CY dialects just like the QVs *dà* and *ńkọ́* of standard Yorùbá.

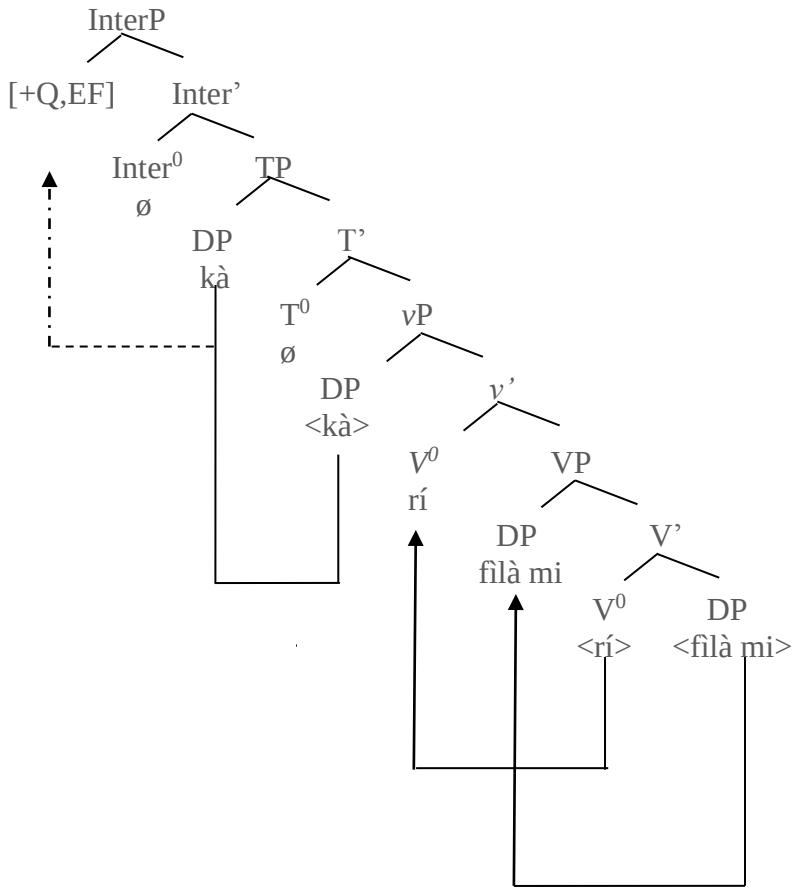
58.



Activation of focus projection (in 58) above necessitates the extraction of the QN *kà* from the subject position (the spec TP). Just like it is applicable in the copula construction in 56 above, Conditon on Extraction Domain (CED) bars movement of the subject DP *kà* to the clause left periphery. To avoid this, the subject QN *kà* only takes an LF movement to the spec InterP to check the [+Q, EF], as shown below:[155]

[155]. Inter-head is too weak to trigger syntactic movement of QNs in Yorùbá. Read Ìlọ̀rí (2010).

59.



Kà is visible to the PF interface at the spec TP in 59 above. After the internal merge of the QN *kà* at the spec TP, the derivation enters the covert syntax stage where the PF and LF interfaces are split. *Kà* takes LF movement to the spec InterP to value the unvalued [+Q, EF] on the Inter-head.[156]

4.4.1.3 Minimalist derivation of rhetorical questions in CY dialects

This study has discussed extensively on ex situ strategy whereby QNs occupy the clause left periphery of interrogatives. In this section, the study discusses how CY dialects operate their QNs to form echoic/rhetorical questions within minimalist assumption. A rhetorical question is used primarily to echo a question previously asked by someone else. Therefore, in an echoic question, the QN is not lexicalised at the spec InterP. Rather, it is base generated in the canonical position associated with its grammatical function. QNs are spelled out within the *v*P domain in rhetorical/echoic

[156]. Chomsky (1995) and Agbayani (2000) among others propose Vacuous Movement Hypothesis (VMH), where a subject is extacted to the clause left edge but with no item mediating betwen it in its landing site and the site of extraction. It is discovered that, this type of movement is not applicable in CY dialects.

questions because they require no focus markers (either in its abstrtact or overt form) in the pragmatic domain. Inter-head is too weak to trigger overt movement in CY dialects, consequently, QNs are not attracted to the clause left periphery in these types of questions unlike non-echoic questions. A QN takes an LF movement to the spec InterP to check its [+Q, EF]. A rhetorical question does not trigger any information/response from an interlocutor. Let us consider the examples below:

Mọ̀bà
60a. Ọ̀ọ́ lù ìsí?
You beat QN
'You beat whom?'

Èkìtì
b. Iọ́n mí re ibi sí?
They PROG go place QM
'They are going where?'

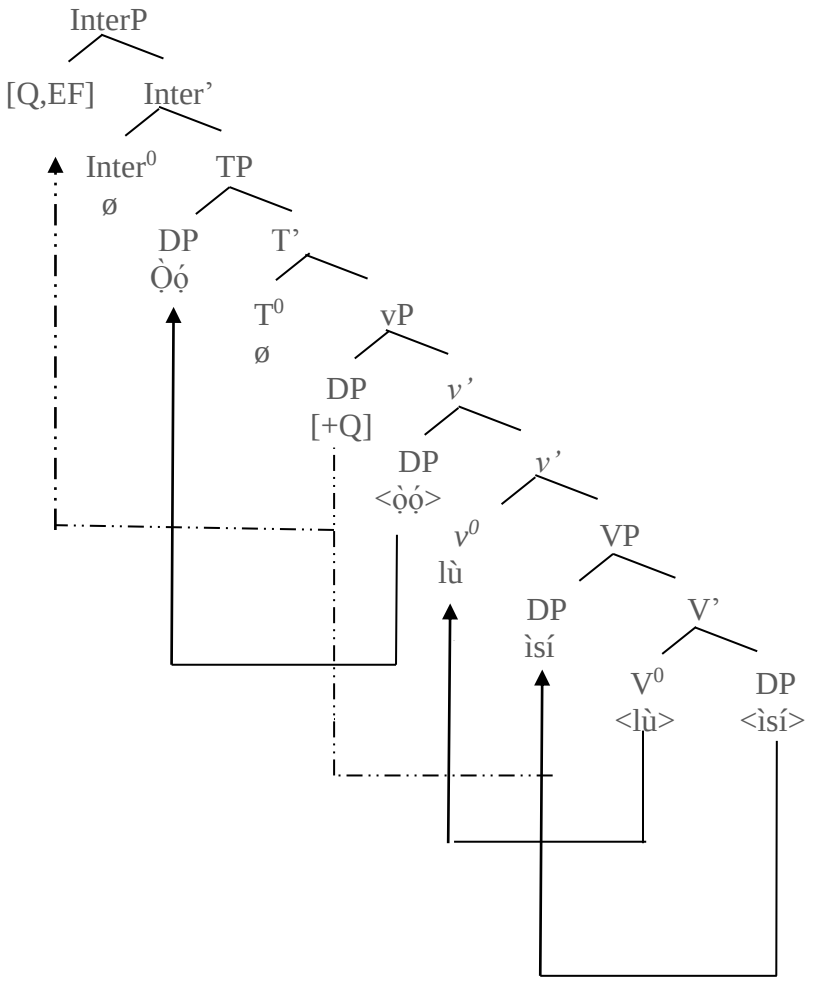
Ìjẹ̀ṣà
c. Kẹ́mi bí ọmọ mélòó?'
Kẹ́mi bear child QN
'Kẹ́mi gave birth to how many children?'

Ifẹ̀
d. Olú (w)íi ghán ṣe kí?
Olú say they do what
Olú said "they did what?''

QNs/QPs in the above interrogatives are base generated in the canonical positions associated with their grammatical functions.[157]. Example (60a) is represented in the tree diagram below for a better illustration.

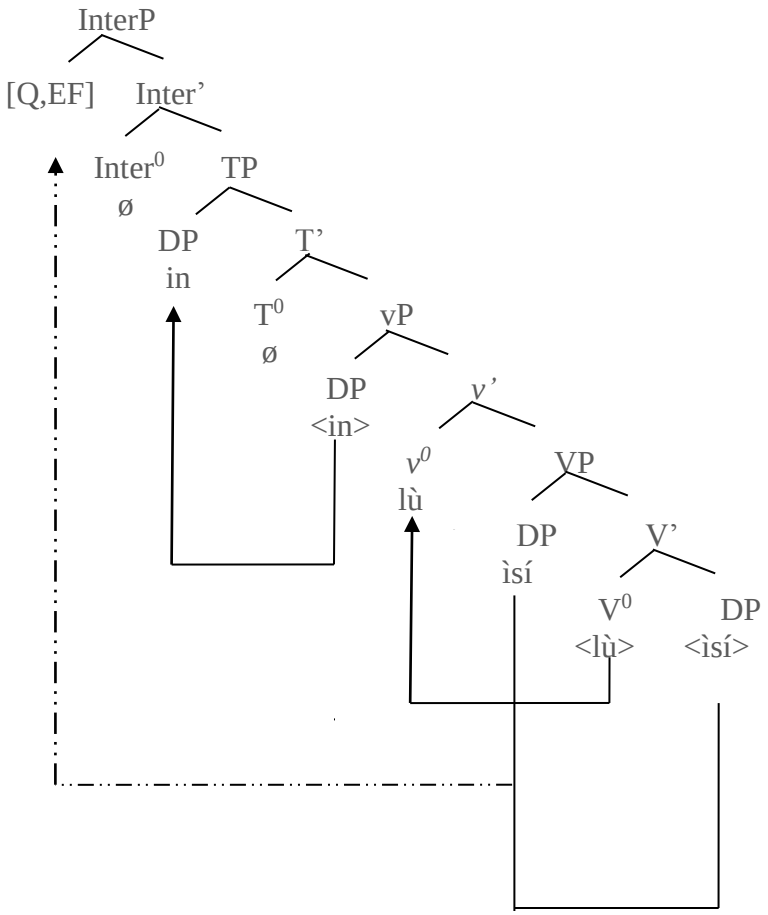
[157]. Read Ọlámrewájú (2017) for further explanation on this.

61.



The derivation (in 61) above goes thus: The lexical verb *nà* "beat" merges with the QN *ìsí* "whom" to project the V'. After this, the QN *ìsí* "whom" moves to the spec VP to check its case feature. The derivation proceeds by merging the null performative light verb v^0 with the VP to form the *v*-bar. The strong *v*F on the light v^0attracts the lexical verb *lù* "beat" to adjoin to itself. The second person singular subject pronoun *ọ́ọ́* is externally merged as the inner specifier of the light verb phrase (*v*P) to conform with the PISH, while the QN *ìsí* takes an LF movement to the spec *v*P which serves as an escape hatch from Phase Impenetrability Condition (PIC). The derivation proceeds by externally merging the abstract T-head with the the outer vP to project the T-bar. The T-head as a potential probe searches its c-command domain and attracts the second person singular subject pronoun *ọ́ọ́* "you" to the spec TP to value its unvalued [+case, EPP] feature. Ater this, the abstract $Inter^0$ merges with the tense phrase to project the Inter*'*. The abstract $Inter^0$ attracts only the [+Q] feature to the spec InterP for onward feature valuation. Inter-head never triggers overt movement in Yorùbá and CY dialects. A more economical way to derive 61 above is shown (in 62) below:

62.



The edge feature on the Inter-head triggers LF movement of the QN ì*sí* in 62 above. The structure derived in 61 is not less economical than 62 above. However, the example (in 62) fails to observe PIC which blocks *ìsí* from being visible to the Inter^{0}, a probe in another clausal domain.[158]

4.4.1.4 Multiple QNs and Attract the Closest Principle

Natural languages exhibit syntactic asymmetry with respect to how many QNs they can merge at their clause left periphery. CY dialects conflate only two QNs in an interrogative construction, one is attracted to the clause left periphery while the other remains within the *v*P domain. Let us consider the examples below:

Ifẹ̀
63a. Yèsí (ó) ṣe kí?
QN RES do QN
'Who did what?'

[158]. Read Radsford (2009b) on LF movement of wh-phrases.

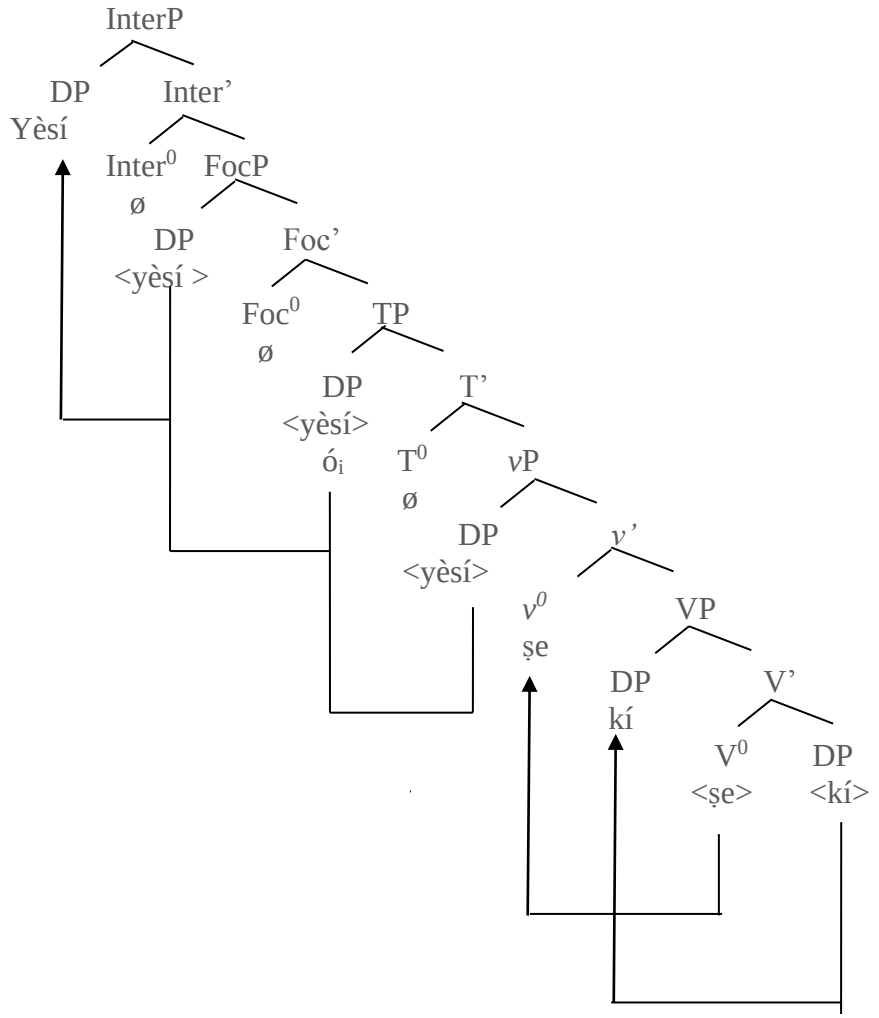
b. Kabi ighán gbé kí sí?
QN they carry QN to
'Where did they put what?'

Ìjẹ̀ṣà
c. Yèsí ó ṣe kí?
QN RES do QN
'Who did what?'

Adó-Èkìtì
d. Ìsí ó ṣe kí?
QN RES do QN
'Who did what?'

The preposed QN in 63a is internally merged at the spec InterP from the spec TP, while the other one remains within the *v*P domain. The derivation in 63a is represented in the tree diagram below:

64.



The subject QN *yèsí* is focused and subsequently copied to the spec InterP to check its

[+Q, EF] in 64 above. The Foc-head attracts the closest QN *yèsí* in line with the Attract the Closest Principle (ACP) in 65 below:

65. A head attracting a given kind of constituent attracts the closest of the relevant kind[159].
(Radford, 2009b: 216)

Attract the Closest Principle (ACP) above is captured under Superiority Condition in the previous models of generative gammar. However, it is observed that Attract the Closest Principle (ACP) is not observed in CY dialects when QNs are stacked. In 64 above, the QN in the *v*P domain (kí) can be attracted to the clause left periphery, as shown (in 66) below:

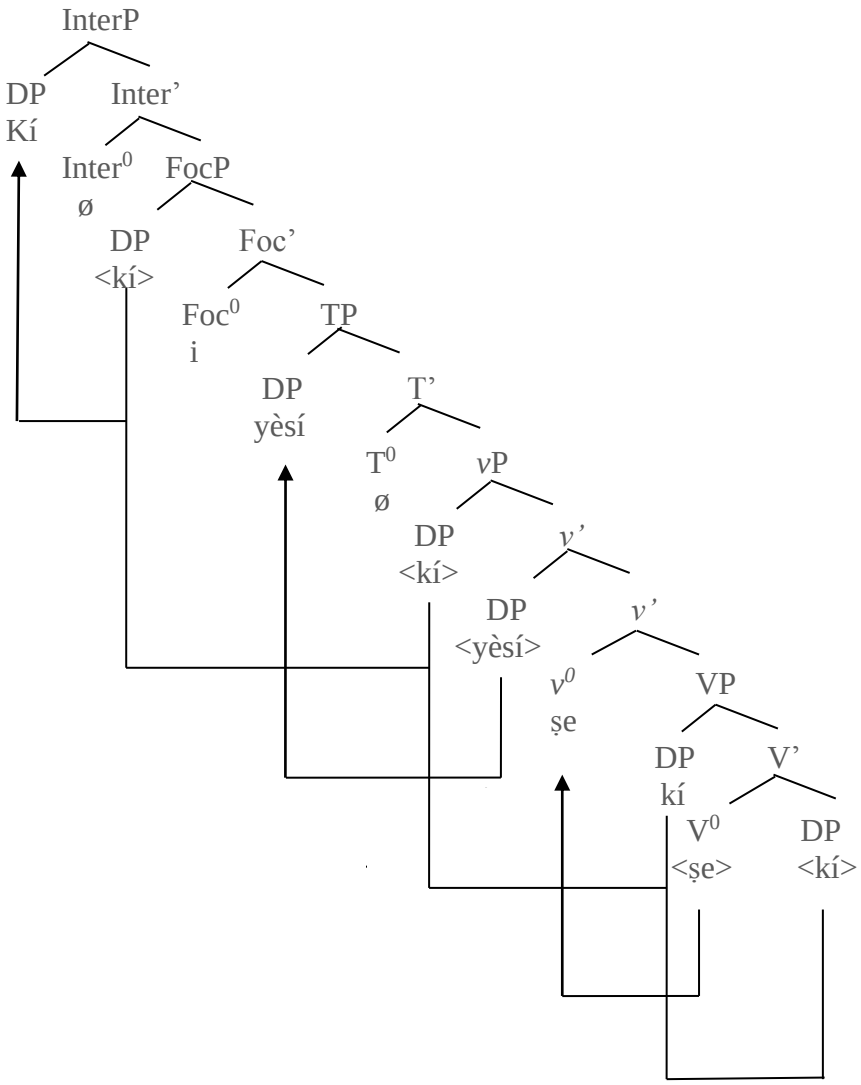
Ifẹ̀/Ìjẹ̀ṣà
66. Kí i yèsí ṣe?
QN FOC QN do
'Who did what?'[160]

The implication borne out of 66 above is that CY dialects conflate QNs only in echoic interrogatives. Also, copying a QN to the clause left periphery is mainly determined by the actual QN a speaker intends focus. The example in 66 is represented in the syntax three below:

[159]. This is similar to the Minimalist Link Condition which says '*k* attracts α only if there is no *β*, *β* close to *k* than *α* such that *k* attracts *β*.

[160]. There is no English equivalent of this example because English strictly observed Attract Closest Principle (ACP).

67.



The derivation above goes thus: The lexical verb *ṣe* "do" merges with the QN *kí* to from the V-bar in line with c-selection requirement of the verb. The QN *kí* is copied to the spec VP by *Operation Copy and Delete* for (case) feature valuation. The derivation proceeds by merging the abstract performative light v^0 with the verb phrase (VP) to project the *v'*, while the strong *v*F on the light v^0 attracts the lexical verb to adjoin to itself. Then, the QN *yèsí* internally merges as the inner specifier of the light verb phrase (*v*P) in line with the PISH, while the object QN *kí* is copied to the outer spec *v*P so as to be licensed from the Phase Impenetrability Condition (PIC). This enables it visible to subsequent syntactic operations. The derivation proceeds by merging the abstract T-head with the *v*P to project the T-bar. The T-head as a probe attracts the subject QN *yèsí* to the spec TP to value its unvalued [+EPP, case] feature. After this, the abstract Foc^0 merges with the TP to project the Foc-bar. The Foc^0 as a potential probe searches its c-command domain and attracts *kí* to the the spec FocP to value its

unvalued [+focus] feature. Finally, the abstract Inter^0 merges with the FocP to project the Inter*'*. The Inter^0 probes the QN *kí* to the spec InterP to value its unvalued [+Q, EF].

4.4.2 Interrogative qualifiers

CY dialects employ two methods to operate interrogative qualifiers: one, they use any of the interrogative qualifiers *sí* and *kelòó* with a head noun, and two, they use any of the QNs discussed above to qualify a preceeding DP. Let us consider the examples below on the first method.

Ifẹ̀

68a. Owó *sí* Dayọ̀ hún mi?
Money QM Dayọ̀ give me
'Which money did Dayọ̀ give me?'

b. Ulé *sí* ghan kọ́ kò mi?
House QM they build meet me
'Which house did they build for me?'

Ìjẹ̀ṣà/Èkìti

c. Oó/Eó *sí* Dayọ̀ hún mi?
Money QM you give me
'Which money did Dayọ̀ give me?'

d. Ulé *sí* ọ́n kọ́ kò mi?
House QM they build meet me
'Which house did they build for me?'

e. Upò *kelòó* li Oyè ṣe?
Position QM FOC Oyè do
'What is Oye's position?'

The interrogative qualifiers *sí* and *kelòó* are the question markers (QMs) in 68a-d and 68e respectively. The interrogative feature on *sí/kelòó* percolates through the head nouns. The entire DPs (i.e, the head nouns with their complements) form the question phrases (QPs)[161].

Now, let us consider the following examples on the second method.

Ìjẹ̀ṣà

69a. Ọmọ ìsí o rè?
Child QN you be
'Whose child are you?'

[161]. ***Ìgbà sí*** and ***ibi sí*** early discussed fall into the first method identified above.

Ifẹ̀

b. Ilé kabi o mí gbé?
House QN you PROG live
'Which house do you stay?'

c, Iṣẹ́ kí o mí ṣe?
Work QN you PROG do
'What is your profession?'

Adó-Èkìtì

d Ìyàó mélòó ọ fẹ́?
Wife QN you marry
'How many wives did you marry?'

The QNs are all qualifying their head nouns in the the above examples. The interrogative feature on them percolates through the entire phrases (QPs). They functions as qualifiers similarly to the italicised nouns (nominal qualifiers) (in 70) below:

Ìjẹ̀ṣà/Èkìtì

70a. Bàbá *Oyè* re ulú *Uléèṣà'*
Father Oyè go town Iléṣà
'Oyè's father went to Iléṣà.'

b. Ọmọ *olùkọ́* ṣe upò kìn-ín-ní.
Child teacher do position first'
'The techer's child came first.'

Oyè and *Uléèṣà* are the nominal qualifiers in 70a while *olùkọ́* is the nominal qualifier in 70b.[162] In line with Wh-Attraction Condition (WAC), the entire QPs are copied to the clause left periphery in 68a-e and 69a-d.

4.4.3 Question Verb (QV)[163] in CY dialects

A QV is a verb with [+Q] feature[164] and it is used to elicit information from an interlocutor. CY dialects operate one QV *síkọ́* in two types of question forms: content word questions (seeking the location of referents), as shown in 71a-c, and as rhetorical questions, as shown (in 71d-f) below:

---

[162]. This also serves as a plausible evidence that [+Q] feature is inherent in QNs in CY dialects.

[163]. The standard Yorùbá equivalent of ***síkọ́*** is ***ńkọ́*** which is referred to as wh-question marker in Ọláògún (2016), and Ọláògún and Aṣiwájú (2016). Question Verb (QV) is more appropriate because it narrows down the conceptual range of the item (síkọ́) from other costituent question markers.

[164]. This is referred to as [+wh] feature in some works. Read Munro (2012).

Ifẹ̀

71a. Ìwé mi síkọ́?
Book me QV
‘Where is my book?’

b. Yèyé rẹ̀ síkọ́?
Mother his QV
‘Where is his mother?’

Ìjẹ̀ṣà/Èkìtì

c. Ùwé mi síkọ́?
Book me QV
‘Where is my book?’

d. Èèyé rẹ̀ síkọ́?
Mother his QV
‘Where is his mother?’

Ọ̀tùn Mọ̀bà

e. Ìwé mi síkọ́?
Book me QV
‘Where is my book?’

f. Èèyé rìn síkọ́?
Mother his QV
‘Where is his mother?’

Ifẹ̀

g, Ìwọ síkọ́, ó ò lè gbé e?
You QV you NEG can carry it
‘What of you, can’t you carry it?’

h. Ìwọ síkọ́, ó ò lè mú un kò ó?
You QV you NEG can give it meet him
‘What of you, can’t you give him?’

i. Ìwọ síkọ́, ọ́ ọ̀ ní ghá.
You QV you NEG will come
‘What of you, won’t you come?’

Ìjẹ̀ṣà

j, Ùwọ síkọ́, ó ò yè gbé e?
You QV you NEG can carry it
‘What of you, can’t you carry it?’

k. Ùwọ síkọ́, ó ò yè mú un kò ó?
You QV you NEG can take it meet him

‘What of you, can’t you give him?’

l. Ùwọ síkọ́, ọ́ ọ̀ ní ghá.
You QV you NEG will come
‘What of you, won’t you come?’

The QV *sikọ́* forms the predicate in each of 71a-f. Examples (71g-l) are compound sentences, implying that *síkọ́* is never operated to form rhetorical questions in simple clauses. We can still use 72 below in the place of 71g above.

Ifẹ̀
72. Ìwọ síkọ́, ṣé ó ò lè gbé e?
You VQ YNQM you NEG can carry it
‘What of you, can’t you carry it?’

The yes/no question marker *ṣé* is licensed (in 72) above because it does not occur in the same clausal domain with *síkọ́*. When s*íkọ́* is used to elicit information, it does not collocate with any of other question markers in CY dialects as evident in the ill-formdness of the examples below:

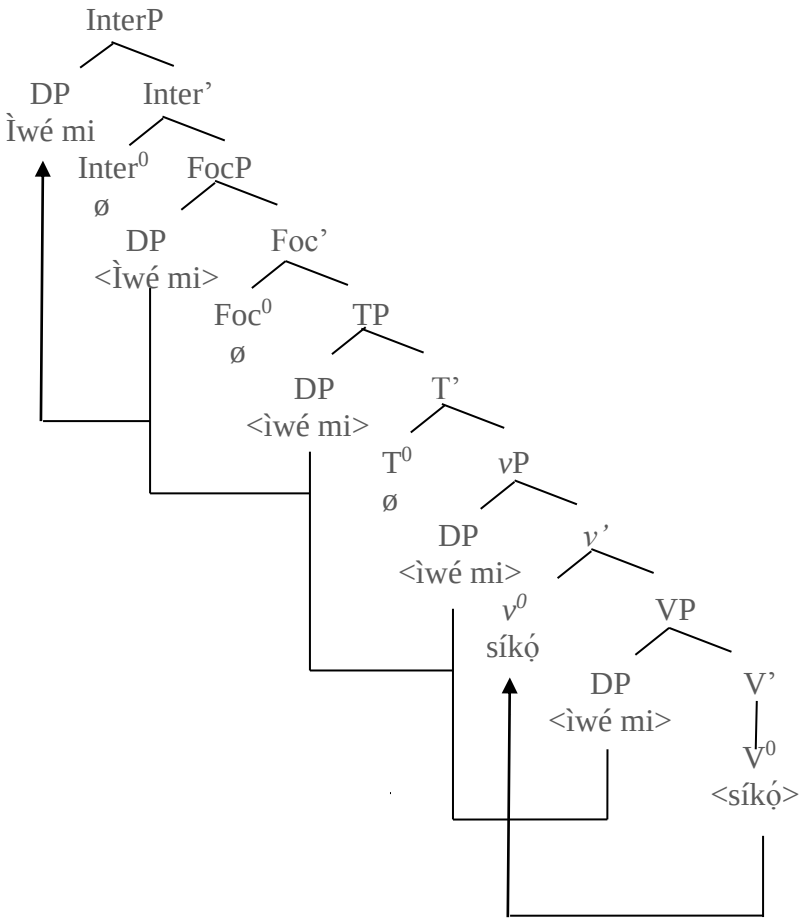
Ìjẹ̀ṣà/Èkìtì
73a. *Ṣé Adé síkọ́?
YNQM Adé QV

b. *Kabi Oyè síkọ́?
QN Oyè QV

c. *Ẹ̀-in/Ì-in wo síkọ́?
You QM QV

Example (71a) is illustrated (in 74) below, for a clearer understanding.

74.



The derivation in 74 goes thus: The DP *ìwé mi* "my book" externally merges with the QV *síkọ́* to project the VP in line with the PISH. The null performative light verb v^0 externally merges with the verb phrase (VP) to project the *v'*, while the strong *v*F on the light performative verb v^0 attracts the QV *síkọ́* to adjoin to itself. The DP *ìwé mi* is attracted to the spec vP for external argument role. After this, the abstract T^0 merges with the light verb phrase (*v*P) to project the T*'*. The T^0 as a probe attracts the DP *iwé mi* to the spec TP to value its unvalued [+EPP, case] feature. *Ìwé rẹ* is therefore valued nominative case. The abstract Foc^0 externally merges with the TP to project the Foc*'*, while the Foc^0 probes the DP *iwé mi* to the spec FocP to value its [+focus] feature. The derivation still proceeds by activating the interrrogative projection, the abstract $Inter^0$ merges with the FocP to project the Inter*'* (Inter-bar). The $Inter^0$ as a potential probe attracts the DP *iwé mi* to the spec InterP to check its [+Q,EF] through specifier and head agreement. Following question and answer pair of this interrogative type, focus projection is activated, consequently, the DP *ìwé rẹ̀* is attracted to the clause left

periphery.[165] In order to accommodate Yorùbá and CY dialects, the derivation (in 74) above necessitates 76 as a modification of 75.

75. A clause is interpreted as a non echoic question if (and only if) it is a CP with an interrogative specifier i.e a specifier with an interrogative word).

(Radford, 2009b:124

76. A clause is interpreted as a non echoic question if (and only if) it is an InterP with either an interrogative specifier or a QV.

Some features of QVs in CY dialects

i. Just like other Yorùbá verbs, a QV selects a prepositional complement.

Ifẹ̀
77a. Olú sùn sí inú ilé righan.
Olú sleep to inside house their.
'Olú slept in their house.'

Ìjẹ̀ṣà/ Èkìtì
b. Olú síkọ́ ní inú kete riọn?
Olú QV in inside all them
'Where is Olú among them?'

ii. It does not collocate with modifiers.

Ifẹ̀
78a. *Ìyàwó rẹ máa síkọ́?
Wife your will QV

b. *Olú síkọ́ kía?[166]
Olú QV PSM

Ìjẹ̀ṣà/Èkìtì
c. *Ìyàó rẹ á síkọ́?
Wife your will QV

d. *Olú síkọ́ kía?
Olú QV PSM

Mọ̀bà
e. *Ìyàó rìn á síkọ́?
Wife your will QV

[165]. The implication borne out of this is that formation of constituent interrogatives in human languages goes beyond a question word occupying the spec InterP as opined by Cheng (1991). It cannot be universally captured by a clause final question morpheme as proposed by Aboh and Pfau (2011). This is a plausible evidence that, in constituent interrogatives, an Inter-head is only activated in a given construction *iff* a question word is used.

[166] Awóbùlúyì (2013) identifies ***kíakía*** as a noun.

f. *Olú síkọ́ kía?
Olú QV PSM

iii. It does not allow partial reduplication as shown below:

79a. Lọ → Lílọ

b. Wá → Wíwá

c. *Síkọ́ → Sísíkọ́

iv. It cannot be focused.

Èkìtì
80a. Olú síkọ́?
Olú QV
'Where is Olú?'

b. *Sísíkọ́ ni Olú.
NOM FOC Olú

v. It does not collocate with negative markers.

Ìjẹ̀ṣà
81a. Èèyé rẹ síkọ́?
Mother your QV
'Where is your mother?'

b. *Èèyé rẹ ẹ̀ síkọ́?
Mother your NEG QV

Example (in 81b) above is ill-formed unlike 81a.

Sikọ́ as a negative marker in CY dialects

A variant of *sikọ́* is also operated as constituent negator in CY dialects. Let us consider the examples below:

Èkìtì (Adó)
82a. Ìn-in síkọ́ ni mi kí.
You NEG FOC I greet
'You were not the one I greeted.'

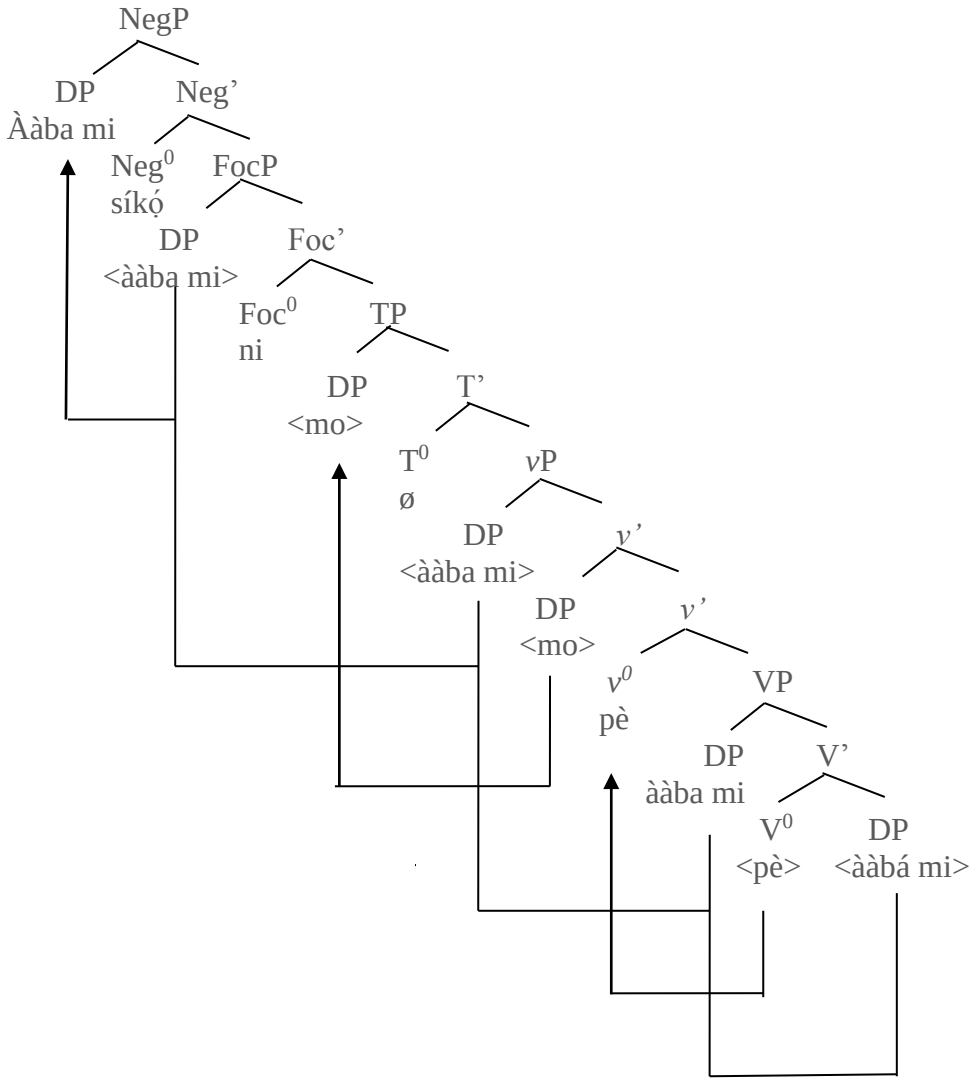
b. Àabá mí síkọ́ ni mo pe.
Father me NEG FOC I call.
'It was not my father I called.'

Ifẹ̀
c. Ẹ̀-in síkọ́ ni mo kí.
You NEG FOC I greet
'You were not the one I greeted.'

d. Bàbá mí síkọ́ ni mo pe.
Father me NEG FOC I call.
'It was not my father I called.'

Ìn-in "you" and *ààbá mi* "my father" are negated (in 82a and b) respectively. Example (82b) is phrase-marked (as 83) below:

83.



The derivation above goes thus: The lexical verb *pè* "call" merges with the DP *ààba mi* "my father" to project the V-bar in line with c-selection requirement of the verb. The object DP *ààba mi* is later internally merged at the spec VP to have its case feature checked. The derivation proceeds by merging the abstract/null performative light v^0 with the VP to project the v-bar. The strong *v*F on the light v^0 attracts the lexical verb *pe* "call" to adjoin to itself. The subject DP *mo* externally merges at the inner spec *v*P in line with the PISH which necessitates a subject to originate internally within the predicate, while the object DP *bàbá/àabá mí* is copied to the outer spec *v*P so as to be licensed from Phase Impenetrability Condition (PIC). This enables it visible to subsequent syntactic operations. The derivation proceeds by merging the abstract T^0

with the *v*P to project the T$^{'}$. The T^{0} as a probe attracts the first person singular subject pronoun *mo* to the spec TP to value its unvalued [+EPP, case] feature. The derivation proceeds by merging the abstract Foc^{0} with the TP to project the Foc$^{'}$. The Foc^{0} as a potential probe searches its c-command domain and attracts the object DP *ààba mi* to the the spec FocP to value its unvalued [+focus] feature. The derivation still proceeds by externally merging *síkọ́*, the Neg-head (Neg^{0}) with the FocP to project the Neg-bar (Neg*'*), while the Neg^{0} probes the DP *ààba mi* and attracts it to the spec NegP to check its unvalued [+EF] through specifier and head agreement.

4.5 Yes/No (Polar) questions in CY dialects

A yes/no question is used to trigger an affirmative or negative response from an interlocutor. These types require only yes/no answers unlike content word questions earlier discussed. CY dialects operate yes/no question markers (YNQMs) and intonational accent (with great loudness or pitch rising at the final sylable) to form their polar questions[167]. This work will discuss how CY dialects operate their YNQMs first and later return to how they operate intonational accent.

4.5.1 Yes/No question markers in CY dialects

Let us consider the following question markers in the examples below: *ṣé, ṣebí, ṣèbí, mbí, àjẹ́* and *ǹjẹ́*.

Ifẹ̀
84a. Ṣé o rí Adé?
YNQM you see Adé
'Did you see Adé?'

Ìjẹ̀ṣà
b. Ṣé o rí Adé?
YNQM you see Adé
'Did you see Adé?'

Ifẹ̀/ Ìjẹ̀ṣà
c. Ṣèbí/Ṣebí/Mbí ighán há?
YNQM they come
'Did they come?'

Èkìtì/Ìjẹ̀ṣà/Ọ̀tùn Mọ̀bà
d. Ṣé ààba mi ti dé?
YNQM father me PERF arrive

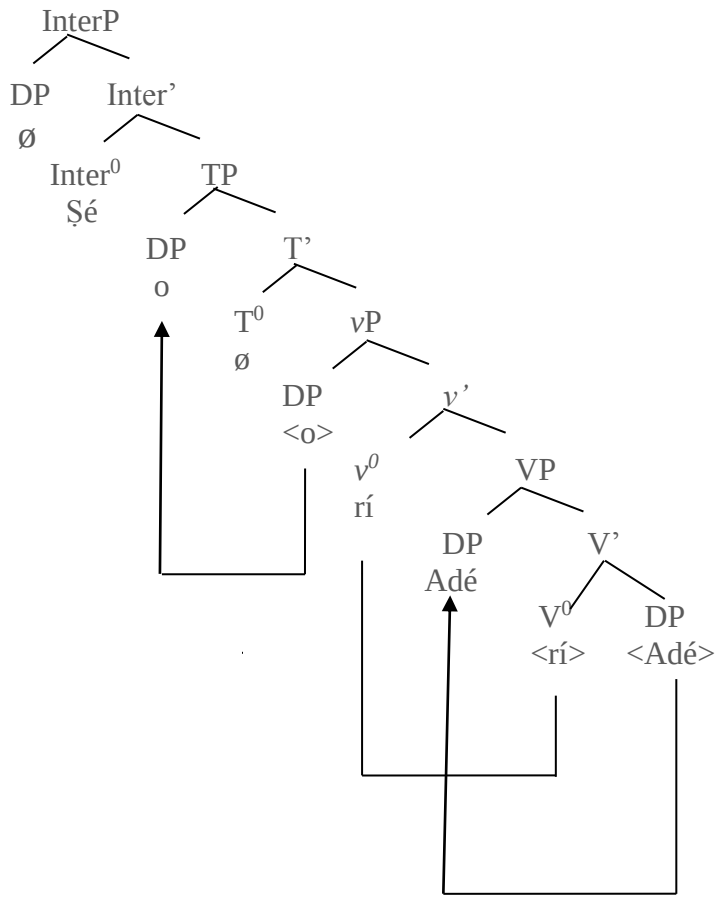
. Questions marked by intonational accent are also referred to as null questions. Read Geluykens (1986), Crystal (2003) and Ọlánrewájú (2017, 2020).

‘Has my father arrived?’

Adó-Èkìtì
e. Àjé wọ kàn gbọ́?
YNQM you PRM hear
‘Did you just hear?’

Ṣe is the only YNQM that has its usage cuts across the entire CY dialects, *Àjé* is used among Èkìtì speakers while Ifẹ̀ and Ìjẹ̀ṣà operate *njé*. It is observed that this is factored by the proximity of the two dialects (Ifẹ̀ and Ìjẹ̀ṣà) to the Ọ̀yọ́ dialect (of Yorùbá) which is considered as the closest to standard Yorùbá among all Yorùbá dialects. *Ṣebí/Ṣèbí/Mbí*[168] does not trigger a yes/no answer when used in a rhetorical question. For a better clarity, 84a is illustrated in 85 below.

85.

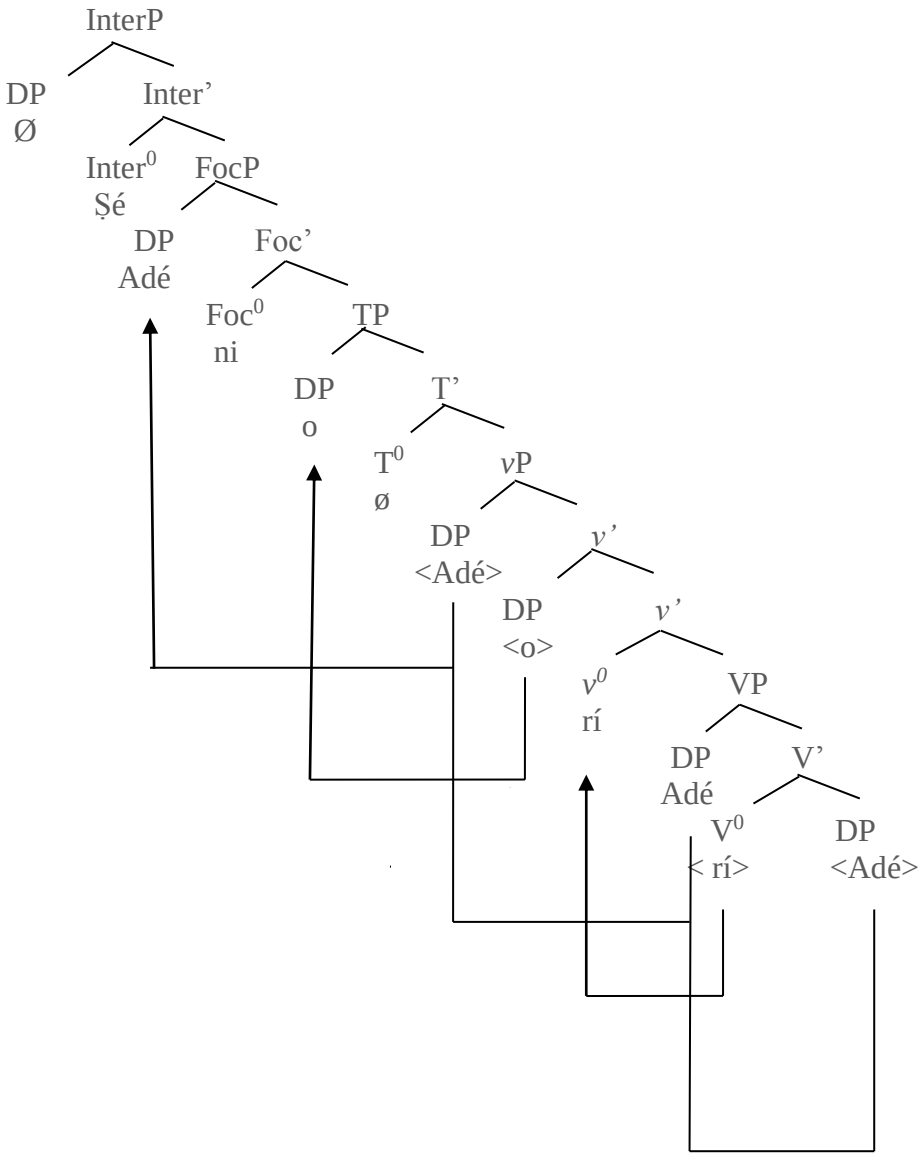


The derivation (in 85) above goes thus: The main veb *ri* “see” merges with the DP *Adé* to form the V-bar in line with c-selection requirement of the verb. The object DP *Adé*

[168]. ***Mbí*** is formed from ***ṣebí***, Read Ọlámẹ́rewájú (2016) on derivation of question words in Yorùbá. For further explanation on this.

is copied to the spec VP by *Operation Copy and Delete* so as to have its case feature checked. The null performative light verb v^0 merges with the verb phrase (VP) to project the *v*', while the strong *v*F on the light verb v^0 attracts the lexical verb *rí* "see" to adjoin to itself. The second person singular subject pronoun *o* "you" is externally merged at the spec *v*P in line with the PISH which requires a subject DP to be base-generated within the predicate. The derivation proceeds by merging the abstract T^0 with the light verb phrase (*v*P) to project the T*'*. The T^0 enter into feature checking relation with its specifier (the second person singular subject pronoun *o*). The derivation continues by externally merging the $Inter^0$ *ṣé* with the TP to project Inter*'*. The [+Q] feture on the $Inter^0$ is too weak to trigger the syntactic movement of a matching goal from the spec TP to the clause left peripheral position. Also, the Inter-head is already interpretble. Therfore, the spec InterP is left empty (Ìlọ́rí 2010). The pragmatic domain in 85 above does not have a focus projection. Although it triggers the same answer (yes/no) as 86 below, they both have different forms of derivation.

86.



In 86 above, The focused constituent *Adé* is copied to the outer spec *v*P, an escape hatch from Phase Impenetrability Condition (PIC). It is later probed by the Foc-head, so as to have its unvalued [+focus] feature checked. The derivation proceeds by externally merging the YNQM *ṣé* with the FocP to activate the interrogative projection. In line with Ìlọ́rí (2010: 254), the Inter^0 *ṣé* is too weak to trigger (the overt) movement of the DP *Adé* to the spec InterP. The clause left periphery of the derivation (in 86) above houses a focus projection unlike 85. The implication borne out of this is that, in CY dilects, clause structure determines the activation of focus projection in polar questions.[169]

[169]. This assertion is also true about standard Yorùbá.

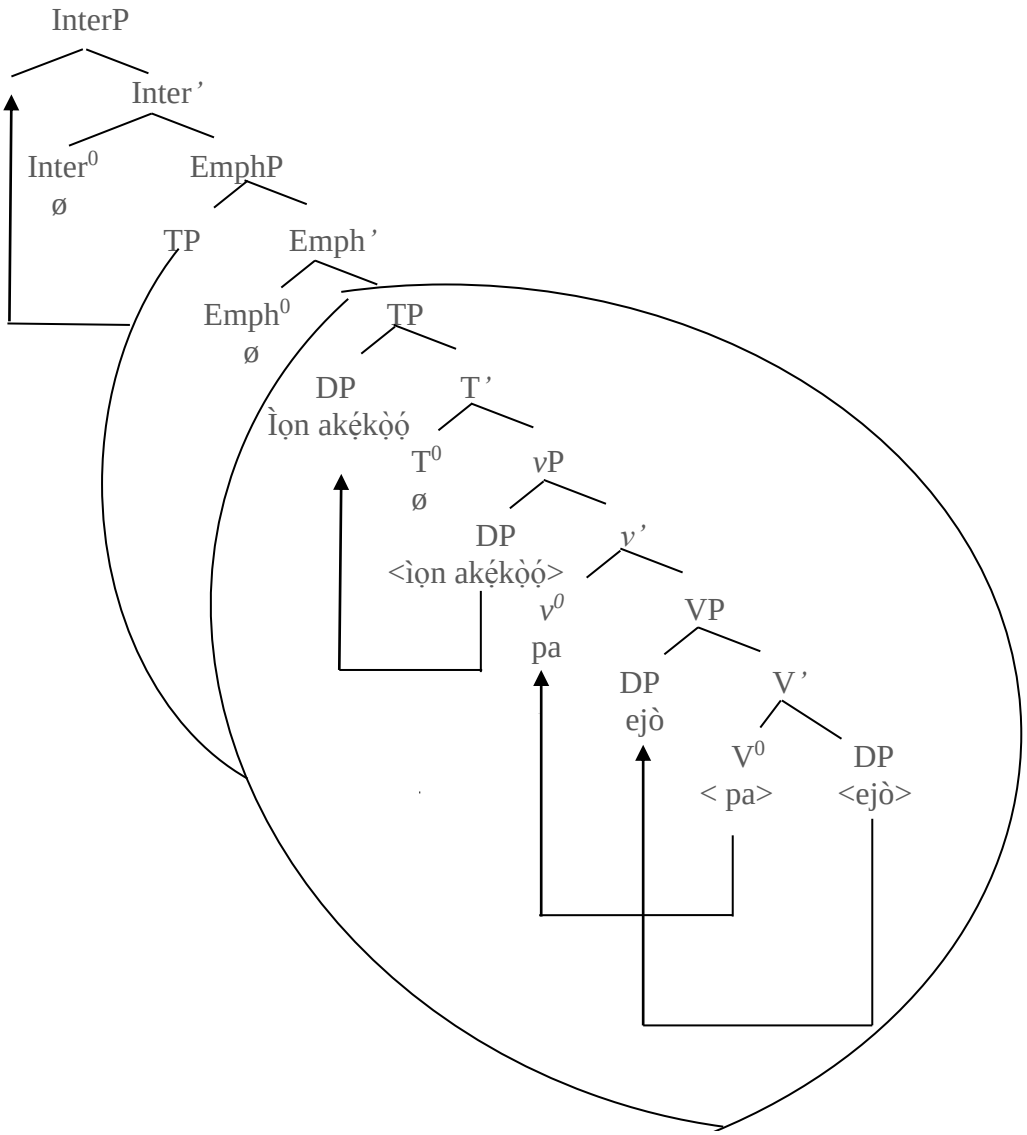
4.5.2 Null questions in CY dialects

These types of polar questions are not marked by overt question markers, Ọlámrewájú (2017), following Awóbùlúyì (1978) opines that 'null questions are usually pronounced with lighter and higher voice than their declarative counterparts. He also claims that the method is accompanied by some paralinguistic features like raising of eyebrow and so on. Paralinguistic features as identified above are not plausible enough to determine null question types in a human language. Such features can also be identified with other sentence types. Following minimalist assumption, CY dialects operate an absract null question marker on the Inter-head, this is used alongside the emphasis marker (the higher intonational accent) that hangs on the ultimate syllable. A null question is clause-typed by an abstract Inter-head that is hosted at the pragmatic domain. The Emph-head as a probe attracts an entire TP to the spec EmphP for feature valuation before the abstract Inter-head is externally merged to project the Inter-bar. In Yorùbá and CY dialects, Inter^{0} is too weak to trigger an overt movement.[170] Therefore, the Emph^{0} attracts an entire TP to the pragramatic domain. Let us consider 87 represented in the phrase-marker (88) below:

Ìjẹ̀ṣà/Èkìtì
87. Ìọn akẹ́kọ̀ọ́ pa ejò?
They student kill snake
'Did the students kill a snake?'

[170]. Read Ilọ̀rí (2010) for further explanation on this.

88.



Focus projection is not activated in 88 above. The derivation goes thus: The verb *pa* "kill" merges with the DP *ejò* "snake" to project the V*'*. After this, the object DP *ejò* "snake" internally merges at the spec VP by the *Operation Copy and Delete* so as to have its case feature checked. The derivation proceeds by merging the null performative light verb v^0 with the VP to project the *v*-bar. The strong *v*F on the light verb v^0 attracts the lexical verb to adjoin to itself. The subject DP *ìọn akẹ́kọ̀ọ́* "the students" is externally merged at the spec *v*P in line with the Predicate-Internal Subject Hypothesis (PISH) which requires a subject to be base-generated within the predicate. The derivation continues by merging the abstact T-head with the *vP* to project the T-bar. The T-head as a probe now attracts the DP *ìọn akẹ́kọ̀ọ́* to the spec TP to value its unvalued [+EPP, case] feature. The derivation proceed by merging the Emph^0 (marked

prosodically by the intonational accent) to project the Emph-bar. The Emph^0 probes the entire TP *Ìọn akẹ́kọ̀ọ́ pa ejò* "The students killed a snake" to the spec EmphP to value its unvalued [+Emph] feature. The derivation proceeds by merging the abstract Inter-head with the EmphP to project the Inter-bar. The [+Emph] feature on the Emph^0 is necessarily activated here because it specified [+strong], consequently, it triggers the overt movement of the entire TP to the spec EmphP. In Yorùbá and CY dialects, the [+Q] feature on the Inter-head is to weak to trigger syntactic movement of the TP to the clause left periphery. Therefore, the entire TP is attracted to the spec InterP to satisfy the [+EF] on the Inter-head through specifier and head agreement.

4.5.3 Alternative questions

In this type of question the interlocutors only pick from the alternative possibilities offered by the speakers. This is similar to what Bamgbose (1990) refers to as 'the use of interrogative conjunction *tàbí*[171] in Yorùbá', as shown in the example below:

89. Ó ti tán **tàbí** ó kù?
It PERF finish or it remain
'Has it finished or remained?'
(Bámgbóṣé, 1990:186)

Identifying *tàbí* as a question marker in 89 above is wrong. The item only conjoins the alternative possibilities, it does not mark interrogatives. Let us consider the examples below for the purpose of explicity.

Ìjẹ̀ṣà
90a. Ulé li ó rè ọ́ àbí eo?
House FOC it please you or money
'Is it a house that pleases you or money?'

b. Ṣé ulé li ó rè ọ́ àbí eo?
YNQM house FOC it please you or money
'Is it a house that pleases you or money?'
(Do you prefer a house to money?)

Ifẹ̀
91a, Ẹ máa dúró àbí ẹ mí bọ̀?
You will wait or you PROG come
'Are you waiting or you are coming?'

171. ***Tàbí*** is disregarded as a question marker in this work.

Mọ̀bà/Èkìtì
b. Ṣé ọ̀ọ́ í dúró àbí ọ̀ọ́ í bọ̀?
YNQM you will wait or you PROG come
'Are you waiting or you are coming?'

As evident in 90b and 91b, the yes/no question marker is dropped in each of 90a and 91a. *Àbí* only conjoins the alternative possibilities in the examples. This work bases its classification of interrogatives in CY dialects on the types of answers elicited from interlocutors, therefore, these types of questions are still referred to as polar questions.[172]*Ṣe* as yes/no question marker triggers a polar response (two alternative possibilities) in each of 90 and 91 above. Just like standard Yorùbá, CY dialects can drop their yes/no question markers at the PF level, especially when they collocate with the following items: *tîì, (h)a, àbí* and *bí.*[173] These italicised items are not identified as question markers in CY dialects. *Tîì* and *(h)a* are pre-modifiers, *bí* is a post-modifier while *àbí* is a conjunction[174]. Let us consider these items in the examples below:

Ìjẹ̀ṣà
92ai. Ṣé o **tîì** rí an?
YNQM you FERF see them
'Have you seen them?'

ii. O **tîì** rí an?
You FERF see them
'Have you seen them?'

Ifẹ̀
bi Ṣé ọ **(h)a** gbọ́?
YNQM you PRM hear
'Did you here?'

ii. Ọ **(h)a** gbọ́?
You PRM hear
'Did you here?'

ci. Ṣé o kí mi **bí**?
YNQM you greet me PSM
'Did you greet me?'

ii. O kí mi **bí**?
You greet me PSM

[172]. Read Haegeman (1991). Laurel (2000), Radford (2004), Táíwò (2009) and Ọlańrewájú (2017).
[173]. This view is contrary to the position of Aboh and Pfau (2011), where it is claimed that a YNQM cannot be in abstract form.
[174]. This is referred to as a disjunctive marker in some works.

‘Did you greet me?’

Mọ̀bà

di. Ṣe eó ni ọ̀ọ́ í fẹ́ àbí ọmọ?
YNQM money FOC you PROG want or ọmọ
‘Is it money you need or a child?’

iii. Eó li ọ̀ọ́ í fẹ́ àbí ọmọ?
Money FOC you PROG want or ọmọ
‘Is it money you need or a child?’

Tîi, *(h)a*, and *bí* collocate with YNQMs as shown below:

Ifẹ̀

93a. Ṣé/Ǹjẹ́ ẹ **(h)a tîi** gbọ́ **bí**?
YNQM you PRM PERF hear PSM
‘Did you here?’

b. Ǹjẹ́ ọ **(h)a tîi** gbọ́ **bí**?
YNQM you PRM PERF hear PSM
‘Did you here?’

c. Ọ **(h)a tîi** gbọ́ **bí**?
You PRM PERF hear PSM
‘Did you here?’

The YNQM is not visible to the PF level in (93c) above.

4.6 Summary

In this chapter, the study was able to explore the syntax of focus and interrogatives in CY dialects where we discussed the focus markers, focusing of different DP argument positions, VPs/predicates, pronominals and post-modifiers. We also identified and discussed different question forms, question markers attested in CY dialects and their distribution. The different methods employed to derive interrogatives in the dialects, using MP were also discussed. The last chapter will discuss the conclusion, research findings, contribution to knowledge and recommendation for futher studies.

CHAPTER FIVE
CONCLUSION

5.0 Preliminaries

In chapter four of this research work, we gave a detailed and systematic presentation of how CY dialects form their focus and interrogatives under minimalist assumption. This chapter provides the brief summary of chapters one to four, research findings and recommendations for further studies.

5.1 Summary

Chapter one discusses the general introduction where the background information are provided on the locations of the speakers of CY dialects. Statement of the problem, aim and objectives, research questions, significance and scope are also discussed in the same chapter. Global overview of Minimalist Program (MP) and relevant scholarly extant works on focus and interrogatives were reviewed in chapter two. Chapter three focused on the methodology. The indepth analyses of the derivations of focus and interrogatives in CY dialects were undertaken in chapter four of the work while summary, research fingings, contribution to knowledge and recommendations for further studies are presented in chapter five of the study.

5.2 Research findings

The main findings and their implications in this work deal with issues of dialectal variations jointly exhibited by CY dialects with respect to how they form their focus and interrogative constructions. These dialectal variations range from lexical items through sentence structures. Among these are:

Focus markers

Focus markers in Ifẹ̀ Ìjẹ̀ṣà and Ekìtì dialects are *ni* and *li* while Mobà operates *ni, li ri/rin*[175] as shown below:

Ifẹ̀

1a. Ìwé ni Akin rà. ì
Book Foc Akin buy
'Akin bought A BOOK.'

Ìjẹ̀ṣà

b. Ùwé li mọ rà.
Book FOC I buy
'I bought A BOOK.'

Adó-Èkìtì

c. Ìwé ni mo rà.
Book Foc I buy
'I bought A BOOK.'

Ọ̀tùn-Mọ̀bà[176]

d. Ùwé ni mìí rà.
Book Foc I buy
'I bought A BOOK.'

e. Ulé rin mìí kọ́.
House FOC I build
'I built a HOUSE.'

In Èkìtì and Mọ̀bà dialects *ni* and *li* do not occur in complementary distribution unlike ifẹ̀ and Ìjẹ̀ṣà dialects. This varition is probably factored by the proximity of the Ifẹ̀ and Ìjẹ̀ṣà dialects to the Ọ̀yọ̀ dialect of Yorùbá. *Rin* as the nasal variant of *ri* is selected whenever the spec TP is specified [+nasal]. Ọ̀tùn Mọ̀bà and some parts of Èkìtì delete the resumptive pronoun while its high tone hangs on the focus marker (li) as shown below:

2. Oyè lí lọ. (Oyè li ẹ́ lọ.)
Oyè FOC.RES go
'OYÈ left'

---

175. ***Ri/Rin*** is operted in some parts of Mọ̀bá; Ilọ́fà inclusive.

176. ***Rí/Rin*** is commonly operated by Ìlọ́fà people of Mọ̀bàland. Under minimalist assumption either ***ni*** or ***li*** is formed in the numeration. ***Ni*** co-occurs with subjects DPs with intial ***i*** vowel or consonant while ***li*** co-occur when a DP at the spec TP starts with other vowels and not ***i*** vowel or a consonant.

In situ subject DP

Just like standard Yorùbá, a focused subject DP can be spelled out at the spec TP in CY dialects. When this occurs, the focus head is not overtly realised at the clause left periphery. Therefore, the subject DP is not syntactically attracted to the spec FocP. It is rather attracted to the cluase left periphery via the LF movement. In this type of enviroment, copula verb *ni* is operated as the main verb as shown below:

Ifẹ̀
3a. Akẹ́kọ̀ọ́ ni mí.
Student CPL me
'I am a student'

Ọ̀tùn Mọ̀bà
b. Ọmọ Uléṣà ni Ibọ́lá.
Child Iléṣà CPL Ibọ́lá
'Bọ́lá is a native of Iléṣà.'

In each of (3a-b) above, copula verb functions as a diadic predicate[177]. The subject DP occupies the spec TP in each of the the examples.

Common interrogtives features exhibited by CY dialects

CY dialects share some similar features with respect to the way they form their interrogatives. These features set them apart from some other dialects classified in some other groups.[178] Among these are:

Question Nouns

CY dialects operate common question nouns different from their standard Yorùbá counterpart. These are *yèsí* (who), *kí* (what/how), *mélòó* (how many), *èló* (how much) *kabi/ibi sí* (where) and *ìgbà/ùgbà sí* (when). *Ibi sí* and *igbà/ùgbà sí* are referred to as question phrases (QPs) where *si* the question item has its interrogative feature percolated through the entire pharses. Also, CY dialects unlike standard Yorùbá use *kí* to question both non-human referents (what) and manner (how).

177. See Lamid (2000:50) for more explanations on diadic predicates.
178. Read Awóbùlúyì (1998) on classification of Yorùbá dialects.

Dropping of a focus marker.

Another common feature exhibited by CY dialects is that they optionally drop their focus markers in constituent interrogatives as shown below:

Ifẹ̀
4a. Kí ni ọ rà?
QN FOC you buy
'What did you buy?'

b. Kí ọ rà?
QN you buy
'What did you buy?'

Question verb

CY dialects operate a single QV (síkọ́). This QV can be used either to seek information on the location of a referrent (as in 5a), or used in a rhetorical question (as shown in 5b) below:

Adó-Èkìtì
5a. Kete uráalé rẹ̀ síkọ́?
All relative his QV
'Where are all his relatives?

b. Ìn-in síkọ́, in ìn lè mú un kò ó?
You QV you NEG can give it meet him
'What of you, can't you give him?'

Ọ̀tùn Mọ̀bà
c. Gbogbo uráalé rìn síkọ́?
They relative his QV
'Where are all his relatives?

d. Ìwọ síkọ́, ọ̀ọ́ ọ̀ lè mú un kò ó?
You QV you NEG can give it meet him
'What of you, can't you give him?'

Some variations among CY dialects

CY dialects exhibit the following variations with respect to how they form their focus constructions and interrogatives.

Yèsí versus ìsí

Only Ifẹ̀ and Ìjẹ̀ṣà dialects operate *yèsí* to questions human referent. Èkìtì and Ọ̀tùn Mọ̀bà operate *ìsí* as shown below.[179]

Ifẹ̀/Ìjẹ̀ṣà
6a. Yèsí ọ fẹ́ rí?
QN you love see
'Who do you want to see?'

Adó-Èkìtì
b. Ìsí[180] ọ fẹ́ rí?
QN you love see
'Who do you want to see?'

Ọ̀tùn Mọ̀bà
c. Ìsí ọ̀ọ́ fẹ́ rí?
QN you love see
'Who do you want to see?'

Interrogative qualifier (sí)

Ifẹ̀ and Ìjẹ̀ṣà use the demonstrative noun *yèé* "this" alongside *si* to form a question phrase *yèé sí* while Adó-Èkìtì uses *ọ̀kàn sí* as shown below:

Ifẹ̀
7a. Yèé sí ọ máa rà ní ibẹ̀?
This QM you will buy at there
'Which one will you pick among them?'

Adó-Èkìtì
b. Ọ̀kàn sí ọ a rà li ubẹ̀?
One QM they will pick at there
'Which one will they pick among them?

Kabi versus ibi sí

Some parts of Ekiti use *ibi sí* in the place of *kabi* (in ex situ form) to seek information on the location of a referrent while some other parts still use *kabi* with other dialects classified under CY (Ifẹ̀, Ìjẹ̀ṣà and Ọ̀tùn Mọ̀bà).

5.3 Contribution to knowledge

[179]. Read Awóbùlúyì (1998) on the classification of Yorùbá dialects
[180]. Ìlógbò Èkìti uses ***ìsín*** in the place of ***ìsí***.

This research work investigated the syntax of focus and interrogatives in CY dialects. It identifies and discusses different features exhibited by CY dialects with respect to how they form their focus an interrogatives. These features cover areas of lexicon to clause structures. With this, some similarities and dissimilarities between CY dialects and standard Yorùbá were identified and discussed. The study also identifies many items operated in standard Yorubá that their sources are from CY dialects. All these invariably have immediate and long-term benefits for Yorùbá studies, especially on things that these dialects can teach us about the structures of standard Yorùbá. The study also helps researchers (particularly the different schools of thought on the classifications of Yorùbá dialects) in the correct alignment of a group or regrouping of Yorùbá dialects.

5.4 Recommendation for further studies

This study explored the syntax of focus and interrogatives in CY dialects within the confiner of Minimalist Program (MP). Other syntactic processes like negation, sluicing, relativisation and so on in CY still need to be explored. Also, MP needs to be modified by African syntax scholars so as to highten the level of compliance of African languages to the theory.

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Appendix I

Short pronouns in CY dialects

	Ifẹ̀		**Ìjẹ̀ṣà**		**Èkìtì**		**ỌtùnMọ̀bà**		**SY**		
	SG	PL	SG	PL	SG	PL	SG	PL	SG	PL	
1st	mo	a	mo	a	mi	a	mìí	àá	mo	a	SUBJECT
2nd	o	ẹ	(w)ọ	In	(w)ọ	Ìn	òó/ọ́	ín-ín	o	ẹ	
3rd	ó	ghán	ẹ́	ọ́n	é/ẹ́	ọ́n	é/ẹ́	ọ̀n-ọ́n	ó	wọ́n	
1st	mi	gha	mi	a	mi	a	mi	a	mi	wa	OBJECT
2nd	ọ	ghín	ọ	In	ọ	in	ọ/ẹ	in	ọ	yín	
3rd	F	(i)ghán	F	ọn	F	ọn	F	ọn	F	wọn	

Source: The researcher (Fieldwork, 2019)

Appendix II

Table 1.2: pronominals and possessive pronouns in CY dialects

	Ifẹ̀		**Ìjẹ̀ṣà**		**Èkìtì**		**Ọ̀tùnMọ̀bà**		**SY**		
	SG	PL	SG	PL	SG	PL	SG	PL	SG	PL	
1st	mi	ria	mi	ria	mi	ria	mi	ria	mi	ria	
2nd	rẹ	rin-ghin	rẹ	rin-ín	rẹ	rin	rẹ	rin	rẹ	yin	Possessive Pronouns
3rd	rẹ̀	righan	rẹ̀	riọ́n	rẹ̀	riọ́n	rìn	riọ́n	rẹ̀	wọn	
1st	mi	ìgha	èmi	ìa	èmi	Ìa	èmi	ìa	èmi	àwa	
2nd	ìwọ	ẹ̀ghín	ùwọ	ìn-ín	ùwọ	ìn-in	ùwọ	ìn-in	ìwọ	ẹ̀yín	
3rd	òun	ìghan	òun	ìọn	òun	ìọn	òun	ìọn	òun	àwọn	Pronominals

Source: The researcher (Fieldwork, 2019)

Appendix III

S/N	Name	Age (Years)	Sex	Occupation	Level of education	Location
1	Mr. Òjó Iyìọlá	65	male	farming	Pry. sch.	Òrótó, Ilé-Ifẹ̀
2	Mrs Àjàyí Tóóyìn	67	female	trading	Pry. sch.	Ìlọ́rọ̀, Ilé-Ifẹ̀
3	Mr Túndé Àlùkò	72	male	faming	Nil	Odò Òrò, Iléṣà
4	Chief Adégbóyèga Alímì	71	male	farming	Pry. sch.	Ìlọ́rọ̀, Ilé-Ifẹ̀
5	Mrs Àjọkẹ́ Adéoyè	75	female	trading	Pry. sch.	Òkèṣà, Adó Èkìtì
6	Mrs Alice Awóyẹmí	64	female	tradimg	Secondary sch.	Ìbòdì, Iléṣà
7	Mrs Ọmọ́bọ́ládé Olúdáre	72	female	trading	nil	Ìbòdì, Iléṣà
8	Mr olúníyì Ọdẹwọlé	64	male	brick layer	Pry. sch.	Mọ̀ọ̀rẹ̀, Ilé-Ifẹ̀
9	Mr Ọlọ̀gbẹ́ńlá Lawrence	66	male	hunting	Pry sch.	Ọjà Ifẹ̀, Mọ̀ọ̀rẹ̀, Ilé-Ifẹ̀
10	Mr Adébíyìí Ọládljọ	65	male	security	Pry sch.	Odò Òrò, Iléṣà
11	Mr Àlàbí Kàrímù	68	male	trading	Secondary sch.	Araràmí, Iléṣà
12	Mr Afọlábí Ògúndáre	72	male	teaching	NCE	Bọ́lọ́rundúró, Iléṣà
13	Mrs Alàbá Adéwọlé	63	female	trading	Pry sch.	Òkèyìn, Adó-Èkìtì
14	Mrs Adéọlá Adésanyà	68	female	trading	nil.	Òkè Èfè, Ọ̀tùn Mọ̀bà
15	Mrs Olúníkẹ̀ẹ́ Ògúndáre	67	female	trading	Pry sch.	Ìdọ̀fin Street, Ọ̀tùn Mọ̀bà
16	Mrs Ọmọ́yẹmí Adébísi	60	female	teaching	Degree	Òkèyìn, Adó-Èkìtì

17	Mr Tundé Afọláyan	67	male	teaching	Degree	Ìládò Street, Ọ̀tùn Mọ̀bà
18	Alàgbà Ọdẹ́lẹ́yẹ	64	male	teaching	Degree	Adébáyọ̀ Area, Adó-Èkìtì

Socio-demographic information of the key informants

Source: The researcher (Fieldwork, 2019)