Chapter 2

The syntax of focus in Ìkálẹ̀

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This paper presents novel data and analysis of the focus constructions in Ìkálẹ̀, a southeastern dialect of Yorùbá. I show that, although many morphosyntactic focus marking African languages have their morphological focus marker(s) in a post-focal, pre-focal position or suffixed to the verb, Ìkálẹ̀ realizes its focus marker at the clause-final position, regardless of the constituent that is fronted for focus purposes. This position of the focus marker poses a challenge to Kayne's (1994) *antisymmetry theory of syntax* which claims that, underlyingly, sentence structure has the order: Spec-Head-Complement, and that the differences found cross-linguistically are due to different movement possibilities. To account for this, I propose two analyses, one in favour of the antisymmetry theory, and another that simply merges the focus head to the right of its complement. Considering the principle of economy, I argue that the latter analysis is preferred due to its simplicity, while showing that the analysis that meets the antisymmetry syntax is uneconomical and unmotivated. In addition to the focus description and analysis, I present data on association with focus and argue that the exclusive focus sensitive particle *nùkàn* 'only' has both an adnominal adjunction and an adverbial/extended verbal projection adjunction (à la Büring & Hartmann 2001).

1 Introduction

Studies on the syntax of focus constructions have been carried out across a wide range of languages and language families. African languages, especially, have shown different, yet interesting, focus realization patterns. From the mechanism employed for focus marking to the asymmetries between subject and non-subject focus, local and non-local focus, and so on, African languages have provided not only interesting data, but also analytical strength to the theory of focus and its interpretation, especially within the cartography framework.

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For a simple definition of *focus*, I adopt Aboh et al.'s (2007: 1) definition where focus is "that part of the clause that provides the most relevant or most salient information in a given discourse situation." In line with Rooth's (1985, 1992) *alternative semantic approach* to focus, a focus constituent invokes alternatives that are contextually salient and relevant to the linguistic discourse (cf. Krifka 2008). In order to make these definitions explicit, consider the examples below. One of the contexts for testing for focus is through a *question-answer pair* (Hamblin 1976). When a question like (1a) is asked, it requires an answer which must be in focus (1b). It is this focus (in this case, banana) that indicates the presence of a set of salient alternatives (which the banana is a part of). Thus, the thing that Adam ate yesterday could have been any of the things in the following set: [banana, egg, rice, avocado, ...]. Importantly, the set of alternatives has to be contextually relevant (cf. Rooth 1992, Beaver & Clark 2008).

(1) a. What did Adam eat yesterday?
b. Adam ate A BANANA yesterday.

In fact, (1b) can be used to answer not just (1a), but also questions such as: *What did Adam do yesterday?*; *What did Adam do to the banana yesterday?*; *Who ate a banana yesterday?*; *When did Adam eat a banana?*. The only difference would be the placement of the focal stress. Languages that mark focus in such a way (i.e. using stress) are *intonation focus marking languages*. For example, English and German mark focus prosodically (a.o., Büring & Hartmann 2001, Krifka 2006, 2008, Féry & Ishihara 2009, Rochemont 2013). Apart from prosody, there are languages that mark focus via morphology and/or syntactic reordering. Such focus-marking strategies are dominant among African languages, and there is a large body of research in this regard (see, among many others, Hartmann & Zimmermann 2004, Aboh et al. 2007, Hartmann & Zimmermann 2009, Amaechi & Georgi 2019, Korsah & Murphy 2020, Issah & Smith 2020).

Different questions have been raised regarding focus over the years. Some of these questions are:

1. What are the types of focus found in languages?
2. What are the different focus marking strategies?
3. Do these strategies lead to different interpretations of focus (contrastive vs. new information focus interpretation, for example)? (cf. É. Kiss 1998) and so on.

The syntactic representation of focus has also been of interest for the past decades. Particularly, Rizzi's (1997) split-CP (cartographic) approach has provided different structural positions for different information structural elements. This does not only occur in the left periphery of the entire clause but can also occur in what Belletti (2004) calls the *clause-internal periphery* (cf. Belletti 2009, Belletti & Rizzi 2017). This means that while the left periphery has the FocP in the region above the TP/FinP, the clause-internal periphery has the same projection within the clause – in the region above the little vP or the VP (cf. Belletti 2004, Aboh 2007).

Thus, this paper seeks to contribute to the already existing studies on focus realization in Yorùbá (Owolabi 1981, 1983, Awoyale 1985, Awobuluyi 1987, 1992, Yusuf 1989, Adesola 2005, Ilori 2010). What is new about this paper, however, is that it considers one of the dialects of Yorùbá – Ìkálẹ̀ – and proposes a theoretical analysis for it. Such an endeavour is well motivated considering the focus marking pattern that is observed in the dialect, which is slightly different from that of Standard Yorùbá, as discussed by some of the Yorùbá scholars mentioned above. One major difference is with respect to the surface realization of the focus markers. While the focus marker *ni* immediately follows the ex-situ focus constituent in Standard Yorùbá (2),[1] the focus marker *rín* is realized in the clause-final position in Ìkálẹ̀ (3).[2] In addition to focus, association with focus has been a relatively well studied phenomenon in African languages (cf. Grubic 2015, Carstens & Zeller 2020). This study attempts a brief description of this phenomenon in Ìkálẹ̀, and proposes a superficial analysis for it. The aim is to show that there is potential work to be done in this area, i.e. among African languages, compared to what has been done for European languages, for example.

(2) a. Standard Yorùbá
Kí **ni** Adé pa?
what FOC A. kill
'What did Adé kill?'

b. Ìkálẹ̀
[Eku]$_F$ **ni** Adé pa.
rat FOC A. kill
'Adé killed A RAT.'

[1]The focus marker is in boldface, while the focus constituent is inserted in an F-marked square bracket [XP]$_F$ (à la Jackendoff 1972). The corresponding focus constituent in the English translation is in uppercase.

[2]I must note here the existence of a comparative descriptive study on Ìkálẹ̀, Ondo and Igede by Akintoye (2020).

(3) a. Nèé Adé rí-i?
who A. see-Q
'Who did Adé see?'
b. [Tolú]$_F$ Adé rí **rín**.
T. A. see FOC
'Adé saw TOLÚ.'

The rest of the paper is structured as follows. §2 gives a brief background to some relevant aspects of Ìkálẹ̀ grammar. Afterward, §3 begins by introducing the focus marking strategies in Ìkálẹ̀, pointing out the asymmetry between Subject Focus (SF) and Non-Subject Focus (NSF) respectively. Furthermore, arguments in favour of a movement approach, instead of a base-generation approach are provided. §4 briefly discusses the Association with Focus (AwF) phenomenon, with an emphasis on the exclusive Focus Sensitive Particle (FSP) *nùkàn* 'only'. The paper is concluded in §5.

2 A brief background to Ìkálẹ̀

Ìkálẹ̀ is a southeastern dialect of Yorùbá, a Benue-Congo language (cf. Akinkugbe 1976, Adeniyi 2010).[3] Going by Akintoye (2020), it is spoken in areas such as Okitipupa, Érínjẹ, Òde-Aye, Òṣóòrò, Òde-Ìrèlè, Igbódìgò, Ìkòyò Ọmẹ̀n, Àyèká, Ìgbìsìn-Olóò, Àkótógbò, Àjàgbá, Ìyònsòn and Ìjì-Òsun of Ondo state, Nigeria. The total number of speakers is unknown. However, the dialect is expected to have over 500,000 speakers, according to Wikipedia.

There is a consensus on the fact that the different dialects of Yorùbá make use of the Yorùbá orthography (Bámgbóṣé 1967, Awobuluyi 1978). Ìkálẹ̀ can be said to have three discrete level tones: high, mid, and low. While the high and the low tones are overtly marked, the mid tone is not marked in the orthography of the language. This is in line with the already established tonal system in Standard Yorùbá (cf. Courtenay 1971, La Velle 1974, Akinlabi 1985, Laniran 1988, Connell & Ladd 1990, Laniran 1992, Laniran & Clements 2003). Moreover, apart from minor differences in the pronunciation of some words, and some dialect-specific tonal interactions, there is no difference with regard to the number of tones in the dialect, based on my elicitation. Similarly, there is no observed tonal reflex which is significant to our analysis in this paper.

[3]Some other dialects include Ègbá, Ṣakí, Ìlàjẹ, Àkúré, Mọ̀bà, Ìjẹ̀ṣà, Èkìtì, Ifẹ̀, Yàgbà, Ọwórọ̀, Ondó, Ọwọ̀, among others (see, a.o., Adetugbo 1967, Akinkugbe 1976, Adeniyi 2010, Akintoye 2020 for a regional classification of Yorùbá dialects).

The canonical word order of a simple sentence in Ìkálẹ̀ is the same as in Standard Yorùbá, viz: Subject + (Tense Aspect Modal) + Verb + Object (S (TAM) V O). The sentence in (4a) is in the simple past tense (which is morphologically unmarked), and consists of a subject, followed by a verb, and then a direct object. This sentence can be used as an answer to the question *What happened?*. On the other hand, (4b) and (4c), show that the tense and aspect markers in the language are in a preverbal position. Usually, the tense morpheme is followed by the aspect morpheme when they co-occur in a sentence as in (4d).[4]

(4) a. Adé pa ekún nẹ̀.
A. kill rat DEF
'Adé killed the rat.'

b. Adé áa pa ekún nẹ̀.
A. FUT kill rat DEF
'Adé will kill the rat.'

c. Adé ti pa ekún nẹ̀.
A. PFV kill rat DEF
'Adé has killed the rat.'

d. Adé áa ti pa ekún nẹ̀.
A. FUT PFV kill rat DEF
'Adé would have killed the rat.'

Furthermore, there is what is called the High Tone Syllable (HTS) in Yorùbá and its dialects. It is a tonal reflex that occurs on the last syllable of the subject of a sentence (see a.o., Bámgbóṣé 1967, Fresco 1970, Oyelaran 1970, Stalhke 1974, Awobuluyi 1978, Adewọle 1988, Awobuluyi 1992, Bisang & Sonaiya 1999, Ilori 2010).[5] It becomes obvious when the subject ends in a mid or low tone. For instance, Ṣògo originally ends in a mid tone, but in a sentence like (5a), its final syllable has a high tone. Otherwise, a high toned syllable in the form of *ó* is inserted (5b). With the subject ending in a high tone as in (6), the HTS does not become obvious, allowing the insertion of *ó* to be optional. The HTS is said to occupy the head of TP (cf. Ilori 2010).[6]

[4]All the Ìkálẹ̀ data used in this study are from a series of interviews with my language consultants: Mr. Ayomide Akinlalu and Pa Akinlalu. I am grateful to them.

[5]There are controversies around the functional status of the HTS (see, for a brief summary on the different claims about the HTS, Ilori 2010, Akintoye 2020)

[6]See Section 3.1.1 for further discussion on the HTS and resumptive pronouns.

(5) a. Ṣògó pa ekún nẹ̀.
S.HTS kill rat DEF
'Ṣògo killed the rat.'
b. Ṣògo ó pa ekún nẹ̀.
S. HTS kill rat DEF
'Ṣògo killed the rat.'

(6) Bọ́lá (ó) jẹ ejíjẹ nẹ̀.
B. HTS eat food DEF
'Bọ́lá ate the food.'

The data above show that (a) Ìkálẹ̀, just like the standard dialect, is isolating, and (b) there is, at least, a tense phrase (TP) and an aspect phrase (AspP) in the syntactic structure of the dialect. Furthermore, the fact that the dialect linearly shows the subject preceding the tense and/or the aspect morphemes suggests that the subject does not remain in the Spec,vP, but moves to the Spec,TP. Thus, we have the following structure for a simple sentence in Ìkálẹ̀:

(7) [$_{TP}$ Adé [$_{T'}$ [$_{T}$ áa] [$_{AspP}$ ti] [$_{vP}$ ⟨Adé⟩[$_{v'}$ [$_{v}$ pa][$_{VP}$[$_{V}$ ⟨pa⟩][$_{DP}$ ekún nẹ̀]]]]]]

The left periphery of the clause consists of the projection that clause-types a sentence as declarative or interrogative, for example. Traditionally, the CP layer is responsible for clause-typing. However, since Rizzi's (1997) famous cartographic structure in the left periphery of the clause, the traditional CP has been split into different functional projections that represent distinct information structural notions such as Focus (FocP) and Topic (TopP). The former has been argued to possess the focus feature or interpretation. In a language like English and Italian, the head of the FocP is assumed to be null. In contrast, in languages with morphological focus marking (like Nupe, Dagbani, Igbo, Yorùbá, Gungbe, Guruntum, and many others), the head of the FocP is occupied by an independent morpheme that possesses the focus feature (cf. Yusuf 1989, Rizzi 1997, Aboh 1998, Aboh et al. 2007, Kandybowicz 2008, Hartmann & Zimmermann 2009, Fiedler et al. 2010, Ilori 2010, Amaechi & Georgi 2019, Issah & Smith 2020). Therefore, as we will see in Section 3, the ex-situ focus in the dialect occupies the specifier position of the FocP. Extending our structure in (7) to the complementizer domain, the following structure is proposed.

(8) [$_{ForceP}$ ⋯ [$_{FocP}$ ⋯ [$_{TP}$ [$_{T'}$ [$_{T}$] [$_{AspP}$] [$_{vP}$ [$_{v'}$ [$_{v}$][$_{VP}$[$_{V}$][$_{DP}$]]]]]]]]

In order to account for how the focus feature is interpreted, and how focus movement takes place in the present study, I adopt Pesetsky & Torrego's (2007) *feature sharing* approach to agreement and an EPP-feature. The latter requires that the specifier position of any functional head must not be null. It must be filled with a phrase with an overt head. Pesetsky & Torrego (2007) believe that agreement does not necessarily need to be based on whether a feature is (un)interpretable. In Chomsky's (2000, 2001) agreement approach, within the Minimalist Inquiry (MI) and Derivation by Phase (DbP) framework, an uninterpretable feature must be unvalued, and when it is valued, it must be deleted. Thus, the probe (with an uninterpretable unvalued feature [*u*F]) searches for a goal with an interpretable valued feature [*i*F]. After Agree has taken place, the uninterpretable feature on the probe gets deleted. Pesetsky & Torrego's (2007) feature sharing approach, on the other hand, provides more agreement patterns and/or possibilities. Feature deletion is not a necessary requirement for Agree. In fact, features can be shared between the probe and the goal, i.e "when Agree applies between a probe feature F at a syntactic location α and a goal feature F at location β, we propose that the output is a single feature F shared by two locations" (Pesetsky & Torrego 2007: 267). The following prose statement is adapted from Pesetsky & Torrego (2007: 268).

(9) **Agree (Feature sharing version)**

a. An unvalued feature F (*a probe*) on a head H at syntactic location α (F_α) scans its c-command domain for another instance of F (*a goal*) at location β (F_β) with which to agree.

b. Replace F_α with F_β so that the same feature is present in both locations.

One of the consequences of this approach is that the probe that is valued can serve as the goal for an unvalued higher head H with the same feature F. This would then be an instance of F in three locations, and it can go on. Thus, the Agreement pattern can be iterative. This approach will be important for the proposed analysis in this paper.

3 Focus realization in Ìkálẹ̀

Both ex-situ and in-situ foci exist in Ìkálẹ̀. Ex-situ focus is realized, firstly, when the focused constituent occurs in a position in the left periphery of the clause, and secondly, with the presence of the morphological focus marker *rín* in the clause-final position. In in-situ focus, on the other hand, the focused constituent remains

in its canonical position with no morphological marking. The consequence of this is that the pragmatics of the discussion, whether in form of the Current Question (CQ) or in form of the context of the discussion, would be resorted to, in order to know what is in focus (cf. Roberts 1996, 2004, Beaver & Clark 2008).

In this section, first, I describe the data showing the focalization of both the Subject and Non-subject in Ìkálẹ̀. In the process, I show that there are a few asymmetries between SF and NSF. For instance, while SF cannot occupy an in-situ position, NSF can occur both in-situ and ex-situ. Secondly, I provide arguments for the movement approach of the focalized constituents.

3.1 Subject focus

Subjects are usually topics (cf. Rizzi 1997, Fiedler et al. 2006, Krifka 2008). Thus, in intonation focus-marking languages, the focal stress is realized on the subject in order to focalize it. However, since Ìkálẹ̀ is not an intonation focus-marking language, it employs a different way of distinguishing between a subject topic and a subject focus. When the subject is in focus, it occurs outside the matrix clause.[7] With a *wh*-question context like (10a), the answer in (10b) is the only one that is felicitous. The focused subject is realized outside the Spec,TP, leaving a third person singular resumptive pronoun (henceforth RP) *ó* behind. The sentence in (10c) is not a felicitous answer to the question in (10a), with the subject in an in-situ position. Thus, SF in Ìkálẹ̀ is only ex-situ.

(10) a. Nọ̀ọ́ jẹ ejíjẹ nẹ̀?
who eat food DEF
'Who ate the food?'

b. [Adé]$_F$ *(ó) jẹ ejíjẹ nẹ̀ *(**rín**).
A. RP eat food DEF FOC
'ADÉ ate the food.'

c. *[Adé]$_F$ jẹ ejíjẹ nẹ̀.
A. eat food DEF
'ADÉ ate the food.'

The focus marker *rín* is realized in the clause-final position. While the position that the focus marker occupies is uncommon in morphological focus-marking languages, Ìkálẹ̀ is not the only dialect of Yorùbá to have its focus marker in this

[7] I employ the Question-Answer congruence in order to realize focus (Hamblin 1976, Beaver & Clark 2008).

position. Ìlàjẹ is another dialect that morphologically marks focus clause-finally (Akintoye 2020). Similarly, Nupe (Benue-Congo), another Nigerian language, has its focus marker in the clause-final position too (Kandybowicz 2008, Mendes & Kandybowicz 2023).

Similar properties to what we have seen for matrix SF are present in embedded SF. The sentence in (11a) is an embedded subject *wh*-question.[8] In English, this will not be possible with an overt complementizer *that*. This will result in a *that*-trace effect; except if the complementizer head is null (as in the translation). However, there is no such effect in Ìkálẹ̀. In fact, the complementizer *fi* is obligatory in this case. The answer to (11a) is typically (11b). The embedded SF is realized in the left periphery of the matrix clause. It then leaves an RP behind. What these data show is that resumption in Ìkálẹ̀ is not only present in long-distance dependency but also in matrix sentences (compare 10b and 11b). It is also possible to realize embedded SF in the left periphery of the embedded clause itself. This is the case in (11c). The embedded subject occupies a position in the embedded clausal spine of the sentence and leaves an RP behind. The position of the focus marker *rín* remains the same, i.e. clause finally.

(11) a. Nẹ́ẹ́ Adé fọ̀ fi *(ó) fẹ́ràn Tolú?
who A. say COMP RP love Tolú
'Who did Adé say loves Tolú?'

b. [Bọ́lá]$_F$ Adé fọ̀ fi *(ó) fẹ́ràn Tolú *(**rín**).
B. A. say COMP RP love T. FOC
'Adé said that BỌLÁ loves Tolú.'

c. Adé fọ̀ fi [Bọ́lá]$_F$ *(ó) fẹ́ràn Tolú *(**rín**).
A. say COMP B. RP love T. FOC
'Adé said that BỌLÁ loves Tolú.'

[8] Why there is a difference between the *wh*-phrase in (10a) and (11a) is not entirely clear at this point. The only observation, as far as I know, is that while *nọ̀ọ́* always precedes a verb, *nẹ́ẹ́* can both precede a verb and a noun. Going by the data, one might want to predict that this has to do with local versus non-local (subject) *wh*-question. However, a closer look shows that *nẹ́ẹ́* (and not *nọ̀ọ́*) is also used when a local object *wh*-question is formed (i). I will leave the details of their distribution for future research.

(i) a. Nẹ́ẹ́ Bọ́lá rí?
who B. see
'Who did Bọ́lá see?'

b. *Nọ̀ọ́ Bọ́lá rí?
who B. see
'Who did Bọ́lá see?'

3.1.1 The High Tone Syllable (HTS) and resumption

In this section, I address an anonymous reviewer's comment on what is classified as an RP in this paper. A reviewer disagrees with calling *ó* an RP, and claims that it should be called a High Tone Syllable (HTS) *ó* instead. While I agree on the existence of a high tonal reflex (floating tone) between a subject and its predicate (as discussed in Section 2 above), I disagree that the pronoun in this context is the HTS.[9] Firstly, the overt realization of the HTS as *ó* is said to be optional as in (12) below. However, in all the examples where the subject RP is realized, they are obligatory, otherwise the sentence becomes ungrammatical. This is obviously not the case with examples like (12) and (13). If the high tone is identical to the tone on the final syllable of the preceding subject (12), *ó* can be overt, but the high tone docks to the final syllable of the subject when the latter has a different tone (13a). In fact, the overt realization of *ó* can result in a topic interpretation, where the subject is topicalized. For instance, in a contrastive topic context, the sentence in (14a), and not (14b), can be used to answer a question such as *Tell me what the children kill?*. The topic *Ṣògo* is given (i.e. one of the alternatives among the children), but the focus *ekún nẹ̀* is the new information (cf. Büring 2016). The point here is that (14b) should be perfectly fine if *ó* is only an HTS (as it was when the subject was not contrastively topicalized in (13a)). On a closer look, even the example in (13b) can be analyzed as an aboutness subject topic.

(12) Bọ́lá (ó) jẹ ejíjẹ nẹ̀.
B. HTS eat food DEF
'Bọ́lá ate the food.'

(13) a. Ṣògó pa ekún nẹ̀.
S. kill rat DEF
'Ṣògo killed the rat.'
b. Ṣògo ó pa ekún nẹ̀.
S. HTS kill rat DEF
'Ṣògo killed the rat.'

[9]There is an ongoing debate, in the Yorùbá literature, as to the status of the HTS *ó*. One group claims that it is a subject marker (cf. Fresco 1970, Oyelaran 1970). Another group argues that it marks perfective aspect (cf. Adewọle 1988, Bisang & Sonaiya 1999). A third group sees it as a non-future tense marker (Awobuluyi 1978, 1992, 2006, Ilori 2010). Others call it a predicate junction marker (Bámgbóṣé 1967), a subject concord prefix (Stalhke 1974), and so on (see, for some discussions, Ilori 2010).

(14) a. Ní ti Ṣògo, ó pa ekún nẹ̀.
EXPL for S. RP kill rat DEF
'As for Ṣògo, he killed THE RAT.'

b. *Ní ti Ṣògó, pa ekún nẹ̀.
EXPL for S.HTS kill rat DEF
'As for Ṣògo, he killed THE RAT.'

Secondly, in standard Yorùbá, while linguists like Adesola (2005) analyze *ó* as an RP, others like Ilori (2010) analyze it as HTS when the focus subject is third person and singular, and the RP is assumed to be null (15a). The latter's analysis is problematic because it leaves us with the question of why a singular subject has a null RP (15a), while a plural subject chooses between a null RP, and an overt one (15b).[10]

(15) Standard Yorùbá (adapted from Ilori 2010: 240)

a. Olùkọ́$_i$ ni [∅$_i$] ó na Akin.
Teacher FOC 3SG HTS beat Akin
'It was the teacher that beats Akin.'

b. [Olùkọ́ àti Akọ̀wé]$_i$ ni [∅/wọn]$_i$ ó na Akin.
Teacher and secretary FOC 3SG/3PL HTS beat Akin
'It was the teacher and the secretary that beat Akin.'

The problem with such an analysis is not only with regard to a difference in number features, but also person features. If the focused subject is first person (16a) or second person (16b), the HTS cannot be present, whether as a floating tone or as an overt *ó*. Similarly, in an out-of-focus context, the weak pronouns retain their tones. The confusion seems to concern only the third person singular weak pronoun because it has the same tone as the floating high tone. This is not unexpected.

(16) Standard Yorùbá

a. Èmi ni [mo$_i$] (*ó) na Akin.
1SG FOC 1SG HTS beat Akin
'It was me that beat Akin.'

b. Ìwo ni [o$_i$] (*ó) na Akin.
2SG FOC 2SG HTS beat Akin
'It was you that beat Akin.'

[10] In these examples, I maintain the gloss for the RP from Ilori (2010), instead of using RP. Both are the same.

Furthermore, Awobuluyi (2006) gives an argument based on the lack of agreement of *ó*. This concerns the grammaticality of constructions such as (17), where *ó* does not agree with the subject in number.[11] As a result, Awobuluyi claims that this is not an RP but a preverb. First, these constructions are marked, and are seldom used by speakers. Secondly, cross-linguistic studies have shown that RPs and their antecedents do not always agree in (complete) phi-features (see for example, McCloskey 1990, Aoun et al. 2001, Sichel 2002, Demirdache 2005, Salzmann 2017). Thus, even if the sentences are marginally acceptable, it still falls within the purview of cross-linguistic analysis for resumption. So, this is not a concrete argument against a resumption account.[12]

(17) Standard Yorùbá (adapted from Akintoye & Ariyo 2015: 12962-3)

a. Àwa ni ó lọ.
1PL FOC HTS go
'We were the ones that went.'

b. Àwọn ni ó lọ.
3PL FOC HTS go
'They were the ones that went.'

c. Òjó àti Olú ni ó lọ.
Òjó CONJ Olú FOC HTS go
'Ojo and Olu were the ones that went.'

The tentative conclusion is that the non-future tense is marked with a floating high tone that associates with a preceding subject ending in a low/mid tone syllable (à la Aremu & Weisser 2024). In contrast, the case of a subject ending in a high tone syllable seems to involve the Obligatory Contour Principle (OCP), where one of the adjacent identical high tones gets deleted (cf. Akinlabi & Liberman 2001).[13] On the other hand, the overt realization of the *ó* syllable is a case of resumption of either a subject topic or subject focus.[14] Since the 3SG RP has a high tone, it also creates the same OCP context with the floating high tone, akin to the canonical subject cases.[15]

[11] See Adesola (2005: ch. 3) for a discussion on agreeing and non-agreeing RPs in Yorùbá.

[12] As a matter of fact, others such as Yusuf (1989), Bámgbóṣé (1990), Adesola (2005) analyse *ó* as an RP.

[13] Which one gets deleted is not known at this point.

[14] I leave an extensive discussion for future research.

[15] For subjects, I will use names that end with a high tone which is the same as the HTS to avoid confusion.

3.1.2 Movement and structural analyses for SF

I propose that A'-movement takes place for both local and non-local SF. The presence of an RP is only an EPP requirement. One way to support my proposal is to apply island tests. Certain syntactic domains obstruct movement out of them. These domains are called *islands* (cf. Ross 1967, Chaves & Putnam 2020). Thus, when an island is sensitive to the (sub)-extraction of an A'-dependency, the result is that the A'-dependency involves movement in a non-island context, like focus. On the other hand, when it is base-generated in the left periphery, we do not expect an island violation; since no movement has taken place. In order to argue for the movement of the subject focus, I employ two island tests: *adjunct island* and *complex noun phrase constraint*.

Adjunct (temporal) clauses ban A'-movement out of them (Cattell 1979, Chaves & Putnam 2020). The sentence in (18a) has a temporal adjunct clause. If the subject of the adjunct clause is sub-extracted, the sentence becomes ungrammatical, as in (18b). This is irrespective of the presence or absence of the RP inside the adjunct clause.

(18) a. Bọ́lá kú [jí Adé i fẹ́ Tolú].
B. die before A. PRT marry T.
'Bọ́lá died before Adé married Tolú.'

b. *[Adé]$_F$ Bọ́lá kú [jí (ó) i fẹ́ Tolú] **rín**.
A. B. die before RP PRT marry T. FOC
Lit. 'Adé Bọ́lá died before he married Tolú.'

Similarly, the extraction of the subject of a relative clause in a complex noun phrase is prohibited (19b). The presence or absence of the RP does not matter. If the subject dislocation is not as a result of movement, we would expect (19b) to be grammatical since no movement would have occurred from within the island.

(19) a. Bọ́lá rí [okònren nẹ̀ yí Tolú kí].
B. see man DET REL T. greet
'Bọ́lá saw the man whom Tolú greeted.'

b. *[Tolú]$_F$ Bọ́lá rí [okònren nẹ̀ yí (ó) kí] (**rín**).
T. B. see man DEF REL RP greet FOC
Lit. 'TOLÚ Bọ́lá saw the man who greeted.'

The result above is not only true for SF in root clauses. The fronting of long-distance SF also violate islands. I use adjunct island below (20). Extracting the

subject of the temporal adjunct clause in (20a) is prohibited whether the movement is to the left periphery of the embedded clause (20b), or to the left periphery of the matrix clause (20c). This is regardless of the presence or absence of an RP. In other words, just like the root clause cases, resumption does not repair the island.[16] We now turn to the proposal for the structural analysis of SF in Ìkálẹ̀.

(20) a. Jídé fọ̀ fi Adé ti lọ [jí Tolú ù rí Bọ́lá ní ọjà].
J. say COMP A. PFV go before T. PRT see B. at market
'Jídé said that Adé left before Tolú saw Bọ́lá at the market.'

b. *Jídé fọ̀ fi Tolú Adé ti lọ [jí (ó) ù rí Bọ́lá ní ọjà] rín.
J. say COMP T. A. PFV go before RP PRT see B. at market FOC
'Jídé said that Adé left before Tolú saw Bọ́lá at the market.'

c. *Tolú Jídé fọ̀ fi Adé ti lọ [jí (ó) ù rí Bọ́lá ní ọjà] rín.
T. J. say COMP A. PFV go before RP PRT see B. at market FOC
'Jídé said that Adé left before Tolú saw Bọ́lá at the market.'

Following what has been argued for many languages with morphological focus marking, including Standard Yorùbá and some of its dialects, I propose that the focus marker *rín* occupies the head (Foc^0) of a Focus Phrase (FocP) (Yusuf 1989, Rizzi 1997, Aboh 1998, Bisang & Sonaiya 2000, Adesola 2005, Ilori 2010, Amaechi & Georgi 2019, Akintoye 2020, Amaechi 2020).[17] Using the SF sentence in (10b), the structure in Figure 1 shows that the subject of the clause *Adé* external merges at the Spec,vP to receive the agent thematic role before moving to Spec,TP. It is at this position that it serves as the goal of a higher probe which is the Foc^0. Foc^0 has an interpretable but unvalued [*i*Foc[__]] feature that must be valued. It probes down its c-command domain for an identical valued feature. It finds the uninterpretable but valued subject [*u*Foc[__]], and Agrees with it. The result of the agreement is a feature valuation [*i*Foc[3]] ... [*u*Foc[3]]. In the recent view of agreement, the Spec-head relationship does not necessarily play a role (Chomsky 2000, Baker 2008). In other words, the focused constituent does not need to move to Spec,FocP in order to establish an agreement with Foc^0, excusing agreement as a trigger for movement. Therefore, I adopt the EPP to account for the presence of the focused constituent in Spec,FocP. The definition that I adopt for

[16] I want to thank an anonymous reviewer for pointing out the need to replicate the island test for long-distance SF as well.

[17] While some Yorùbá linguists argue that focus construction in the language is a noun phrase (cf. Awobuluyi 1978, 1987, Awoyale 1985), others believe that it is a full sentence whose part (or whole) has undergone information structuring (cf. Bámgbóṣé 1990, Yusuf 1989, 1990, Owolabi 1981, 1983). I agree with the latter position here.

the EPP requirement is that of Landau (2007: 489) (see also Safir 2019), as given in (21). EPP requires that the Spec of FocP is filled, and the phrase that fills the Spec position must have an overt head. Thus, it is like a feeding relationship, where the focused constituent that moves, is the goal that the probe has agreed with (Chomsky 2001). The presence of an RP in Spec,TP is also due an EPP feature on T. Originally, the EPP requires that every clause must have a subject by obligatorily filling the Spec of TP (Chomsky 1982). Thus, the RP occupies the canonical subject position of the clause.[18]

(21) Landau's (2007) EPP requirement
In $[_{HP}$ ZP $[_{H'}$ $H_{[P]}$ . . .]], Z must be pronounced.

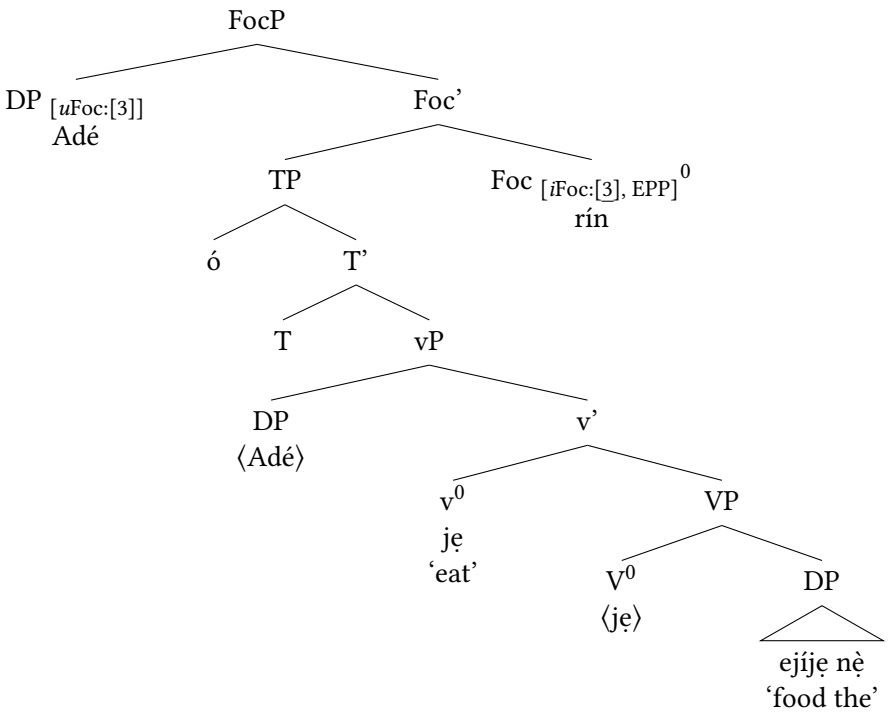

Figure 1: Syntactic tree for (10b)

[18]Alternatively, Rizzi's (2006) criterial approach suggests that cross-linguistic studies have shown that resumption can be used to obviate the *subject criterion*. In contrast, there is no object resumption because there is no *object criterion* (see also Rizzi & Shlonsky 2007, Shlonsky 2014, Rizzi 2017).

Having proposed the structure with a head-final focus marker above, we see that this seems to pose a challenge to Kayne's (1994) antisymmetry theory of syntax. Kayne (1994) and the proponents of the antisymmetry theory of syntax argue for a universal asymmetry to c-command, where (underlyingly) the head of a phrase always precedes its complement. Thus, the variation in word order that is present in languages of the world is due to different steps of movements. The implication of this, therefore, is that "languages all have S-H-C (Spec-Head-Complement) order" (Kayne 1994: 45). If we want to be strict with the antisymmetry theory, we would have to assume that the FocP is left-headed. But that would mean that the whole TP has to move (to Spec,FocP, for example) at some point in order to get the surface order, which would result in having the focus marker in a clause-final position. However, this itself is not the best solution because we would be left with the question of where then does the ex-situ SF or OF constituent move to, if the TP is already in Spec,FocP? In fact, such TP to Spec,FocP movement would be unmotivated. There are other potential problems to such a proposal.

An alternative proposal might be to assume a functional projection (FP) above the TP, where any constituent in focus would have to move to first before pied-piping the whole FP to Spec,FocP. Such a structure would look like what is in Figure 2. Assuming that the head of FP has an uninterpretable and unvalued focus feature, plus an EPP [*u*Foc:__, EPP], it probes down to Agree with the subject, and then gets valued. Afterward, the subject moves to Spec,FP due to the EPP, and leaves an RP behind. At this point, there are two instances of the focus feature. The Foc^0 head is then merged, having the whole of FP as its complement. Foc^0 has an interpretable but unvalued focus feature that probes downward for a goal. It finds FP which by now is valued as a result of its earlier agreement with the focus DP. The whole of FP is then pied-piped to Spec,FocP. The latter movement allows the focus marker *rín* to appear clause-finally as well as having the focus constituent in the sentence-initial position.

Although this seems to be a plausible analysis, it has some problems. Firstly, going by the principle of economy, the derivation of the structure is uneconomical (cf. Chomsky 1995, 2000). It is built on a number of unmotivated assumptions which is a violation of both the economy of derivation and the economy of representation. For instance, what exactly is the function of FP? Its projection is simply unmotivated. Although it helps in deriving the linear order, based on Kayne's (1994) anti-symmetric syntax, it does not play any role with regard to information structure. Obviously, the sort of motivations that warrant the use of FP elsewhere do not apply here (cf. Cinque 2010, 2023). If we agree that movement is not free, i.e., it is semantically-driven or pragmatically-driven, then the

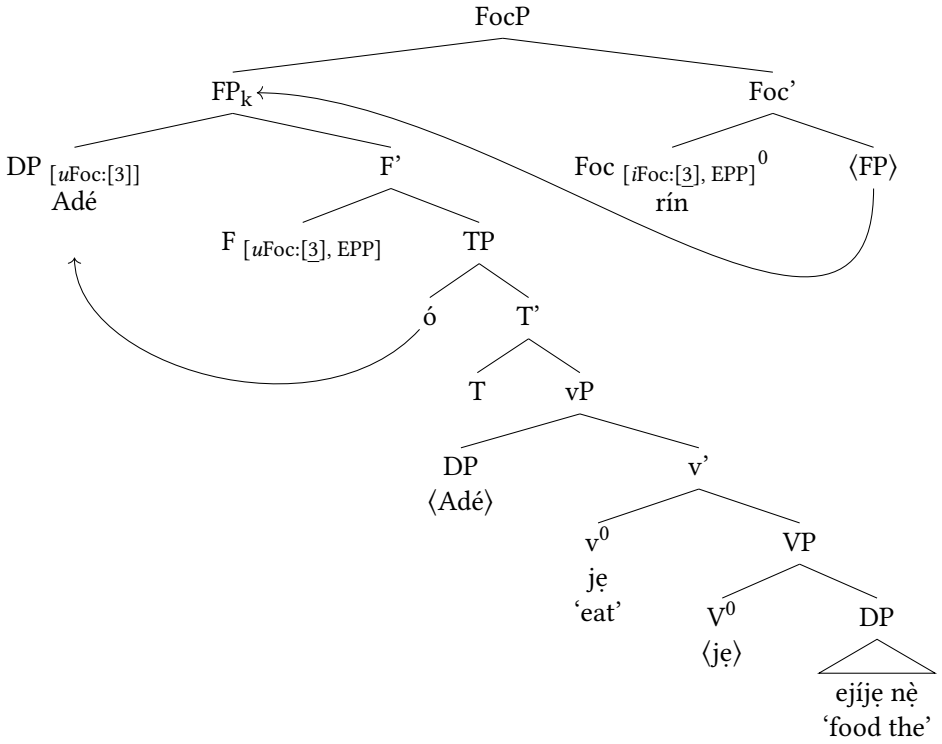

Figure 2: Alternative syntactic tree for (10b)

movement to Spec,FP does not seem to be driven either by semantics or pragmatics.[19] Secondly, the structure in Figure 2 requires the postulation of different operations of agreement which makes the analysis more complex than the structure in Figure 1 above. The latter captures all the necessary steps in the derivation in a simple manner. It is able to capture the semantic property of focus, which is primarily to invoke alternatives. This is realized through F-marking which is overtly expressed via the morphological focus marker *rín*, and/or focus movement in the dialect under investigation. The focus constituent that invokes alternatives enters agreement with the focus head, thereby establishing a syntax-semantic relationship. It only does not fit into the antisymmetry theory of syntax, which is not a problem for the analysis itself (cf. Carstens 2008, 2017, Carstens & Zeller 2020).[20] Lastly, the structure in Figure 2 violates Chomsky's (1995) *in-*

[19]See, however, Cinque (2010, 2023) and Chomsky (2021) for an unmotivated movement approach.

[20]See also Occam's razor.

clusiveness condition which primarily restricts the introduction of elements or features which are non-lexical (or lexically related), or the traces which result from the movement of such lexical items. Introducing projections and features that are not lexically-induced, seems to give syntax too much power; a problem Chomsky tries to restrict with the inclusiveness condition.

3.2 Non-subject focus

Non-subject focus (NSF) may involve an object (direct or indirect), an adjunct, a verb, or a verb phrase. All these categories, with exception of the VP, can be focalized both in-situ and ex-situ. NSF differs from SF because while the former can occur in both in-situ & ex-situ postions, the latter only occurs in an ex-situ position (cf. Section 3.1 above).

3.2.1 Object focus (OF)

When an object is in focus, it can be fronted to the left periphery of the clause (22b) or it can stay in-situ – in its external merged position (22c). Unlike SF, OF does not use an RP. It instead leaves a gap in its extraction site (22b). Similarly, the in-situ focused answer cannot be marked with the overt morphological focus marker *rín*. In this context, an ex-situ *wh*-question as in (22a) can be answered with either an ex-situ focus or an in-situ focus, with the former being preferred. However, if the *wh*-phrase is in-situ, the focused answer usually stays in-situ.

(22) a. Nèé Adé rí-i?
who A. see-Q
'Who did Adé see?'

b. [Tolú]$_F$ Adé rí (*ó) *(**rín**).
T. A. see RP FOC
'Adé saw TOLÚ.'

c. Adé rí [Tolú]$_F$ (***rín**).
A. see T. FOC
'Adé saw TOLÚ.'

Embedded OF can also involve long distance A'-movement, either to the left periphery of the matrix clause (23b) or the left periphery of the embedded clause itself (23c). In these two cases, the focus marker *rín* is obligatorily realized in the clause-final position. Embedded OF can also remain in its base position. It is morphologically unmarked in this case (see ex. 23d). As stated earlier, in cases

where the focus stays in-situ, the context would have to be relied on in order to know which constituent is in focus. This is because focus is marked with a morphosyntactic strategy in Ìkálẹ̀, and not intonation. Thus, the absence of this strategy triggers ambiguity.

(23) a. Nèé Adé fọ̀ fi Bọ́lá rí ní ọjà?
who A. say COMP B. see at market
'Who did Adé say that Bọ́lá saw at the market?'

b. [Tolú]$_F$ Adé fọ̀ fi Bọ́lá rí ní ọjà *(**rín**).
T. A. say COMP B. see at market FOC
'Adé said that Bọ́lá saw TOLÚ at the market.'

c. Adé fọ̀ fi [Tolú]$_F$ Bọ́lá ri ní ọjà *(**rín**).
A. say COMP T. B. see at market FOC
'Adé said that Bọ́lá saw TOLÚ at the market.'

d. Adé fọ̀ fi Bọ́lá rí [Tolú]$_F$ ní ọjà (***rín**).
A. say COMP B. see T. at market FOC
'Adé said that Bọ́lá saw TOLU at the market.'

So far, I have claimed that ex-situ OF (just like ex-situ SF) undergoes A'-movement to the left periphery. To argue for this claim, I apply both adjunct island (temporal clause) and complex noun phrase constraint (relative clause) tests. The matrix verb in (24a) embeds a temporal clause. The focus extraction of the direct object of the temporal clause *Bọ́lá* is prohibited (24b). Thus, in focus constructions, the realization of the OF in the left periphery of the clause involves movement and not base-generation. If it were by base-generation, we would expect that the extraction from adjunct islands should be possible, since no movement would be involved.

(24) a. Adé ti lọ [jí Tolú ù rí Bọ́lá ní ọjà].
A. PFV go before T. PRT see B. at market
'Adé left before Tolú saw Bọ́lá at the market.'

b. *[Bọ́lá]$_F$ Adé ti lọ [jí Tolú ù rí __ ní ọjà] (**rín**).
B. A. PFV go before T. PRT see at market FOC
'Adé left before Tolú saw BỌLÁ at the market.'

Another classic movement test is the Complex Noun Phrase Constraint (CNPC). A complex NP or DP usually involves a noun phrase (or a DP) that takes either a relative clause or a clausal complement. A'-movement is banned from these

domains. Thus, when the object of the relative clause is extracted, the sentence becomes ungrammatical (see 25b).

(25) a. Adé rí [okònren nẹ̀ yí ó jẹ ejíjẹ nẹ̀].
A. see man DET REL RP eat food DEF
'Adé saw the man who ate the food.'

b. *[Ejíjẹ nẹ̀]$_F$ Adé rí [okònren nẹ̀ yí ó jẹ __] (**rín**).
food DEF A. see man DEF REL RP eat FOC
Lit. 'THE FOOD Adé saw the man who ate .'

Not only local object focus, but also non-local object focus involves A'-movement. The adjunct island data below attest this. In (26), the direct object of the adjunct clause cannot move out of the adjunct clause to either the embedded left periphery (26a) or the matrix left periphery (26b). If it does, the sentence becomes ungrammatical (26c).

(26) a. Jídé fọ̀ fi Adé ti lọ [jí Tolú ù rí Bọ́lá ní ọjà].
J. say COMP A. PFV go before T. PRT see B. at market
'Jídé said that Adé left before Tolú saw Bọ́lá at the market.'

b. *Jídé fọ̀ fi [Bọ́lá]$_F$ Adé ti lọ [jí Tolú ù rí __ ní ọjà]
J. say COMP B. A. PFV go before T. PRT see at market
(**rín**).
FOC
'Jídé said that Adé left before Tolú saw Bọ́lá at the market.'

c. *[Bọ́lá]$_F$ Jídé fọ̀ fi Adé ti lọ [jí Tolú ù rí __ ní ọjà]
B. J. say COMP A. PFV go before T. PRT see at market
(**rín**).
FOC
'Jídé said that Adé left before Tolú saw Bọ́lá at the market.'

The overall consequence of these movement tests is that there is an A'-movement with regards to ex-situ (non)-local OF in Ìkálẹ̀.

Having established the mechanism for realizing ex-situ OF, we can now propose a syntactic analysis for it. The structure proposed for object focus in Figure 3 is similar to what I proposed for subject focus above. The only difference here is that it is the object that possesses the valued focus feature. Thus, it serves as the agreement controller. In addition, unlike SF, which leaves an RP in Spec,TP, OF leaves a movement trace instead in its base position (complement of V). The

alternative analysis that was proposed for the subject focus above faces the same challenge with object focus (and adjunct focus), too. I will not present the structure for want of space.

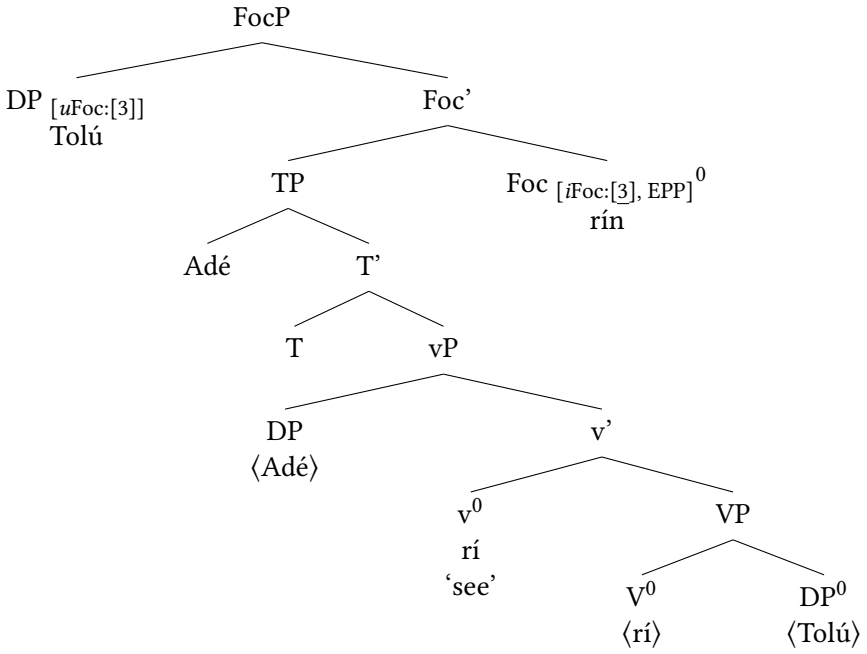

Figure 3: Syntactic tree showing object focus

3.2.2 Other non-subject focus

Adjuncts can also be focused in Ìkálẹ̀. They can either be fronted or realized in-situ. The *wh*-phrase in (27a) inquires the time that Adé saw Tolú. (27b) provides the focused answer by fronting *àná* ('yesterday') to the left periphery, while (27c) has its focus remain in-situ.

(27) a. Ugbo Ayọ̀ rí Tolú?
when A. see T.
'When did Adé see Tolú?'

b. [Àná]$_F$ Ayọ̀ rí Tolú *(**rín**).
yesterday A. see T FOC
'Adé saw Tolú YESTERDAY.'

c. Adé rí Tolú ni [àná]$_F$ (*__rín__).
A. see T. at yesterday FOC
'Adé saw Tolú YESTERDAY.'

As expected, the same strategies are present in embedded clauses. The embedded adverbial phrase *ọjá* ('market') is fronted to the left periphery of the matrix clause (28b). The adjunct focus can also be realized in-situ and to the left periphery of the embedded CP.

(28) a. Kúbo Adé fọ̀ fi Bọ́lá rí Tolú?
where A. say COMP B. see T.
'Where did Adé say that Bọ́lá saw Tolú?'
b. [Ọjà]$_F$ Adé fọ̀ fi Bọ́lá rí Tolú *(__rín__).
market A. say COMP B. see T. FOC
'Adé said that Bọ́lá saw Tolú AT THE MARKET.'

Another category that can be focused is the verb or verb phrase. The answer to a question like *What did Adé do?* requires a VP focus. In Ìkálẹ̀, VP focus can only be in-situ (29a). However, a verbal focus can be either in-situ or ex-situ. When it is ex-situ, it involves verb doubling (see 29b). The fronted verb is formed by partial reduplication. The onset of the verb *rà* is reduplicated, and then a high toned high front vowel /i/ is inserted, resulting in *rí*. The outcome is a nominalized verb *rírà*. Thus, the moved element has a copy within the clause (see Hein 2020 for an extensive discussion on the typology of V(P) fronting and/or doubling).

(29) a. Adé [rà ìwé]$_F$ (*__rín__).
A. buy book FOC
'Adé BOUGHT A BOOK.'
b. [Rí-rà]$_F$ Adé rà ìwé *(__rín__).
NMZL-buy A. buy book FOC
'Adé BOUGHT a book."

Before concluding this section, I want to point out that there is a body of research that argues for a semantic and/or pragmatic distinction between in-situ and ex-situ foci (Rizzi 1997, É. Kiss 1998, Drubig 2001, Becker et al. 2019). Aboh et al. (2007: 6) asked the following questions regarding languages with two focus strategies: in-situ and ex-situ (30).

(30) a. Are there semantic/pragmatic differences between the two focus strategies? And if so, what are they?

b. Do the ex-situ vs. in-situ strategies comply with the new information versus contrastive focus dichotomy as proposed for certain intonation languages (e.g. É. Kiss 1998, Drubig 2001)?

The effect that a Contrastive Focus (CF) (or *identificational focus* à la É. Kiss 1998) has on the salient set of alternatives is that of the presence of at least one other alternative that is being contrasted in the same context. It, therefore, expresses a quantification-like meaning (É. Kiss 1998). Although the two questions in (30) seem to be the same, the following discussion answers question (30b) explicitly for Ìkálẹ̀.

In Ìkálẹ̀, ex-situ focus, whether subject or non-object, is contrastive in nature, while the in-situ non-object focus (recall that there are no cases of in-situ subject focus) is new informational (non-presupposed information) in nature. Consider the SF data in (31).

(31) a. [Adé]$_F$ ó jẹ ejíje nẹ̀ *(**rín**) (kìí se Bọ́lá). *Contrastive SF*
A. RP eat food DEF FOC NEG COP B.
'ADÉ ate the food (and not Bọ́lá).'

b. * [Adé]$_F$ jẹ ejíje nẹ̀ (**rín**) (kìí se Bọ́lá). *New information SF*
A. eat food DEF FOC NEG COP B.
'ADÉ ate the food (and not Bọ́lá).'

As shown earlier, SF can only occur in an ex-situ position. Thus, they are always contrastive.[21] When the proposition is contrasted with the negative phrase in the bracket, the result is that (31a), but not (31b), is grammatical. The implication is that ex-situ SF is contrastive in nature.

Object focus, on the other hand, can be both contrastive and new information. The object focus in (32a) is ex-situ, and has a contrastive reading. However, the in-situ object focus in (32b) has a new information interpretation. The presence of the focus marker *rín* and the negative phrase in the bracket is prohibited. Thus, it cannot be contrastive.

(32) a. [Ìrẹsì]$_F$ Adé jẹ *(**rín**) (kìí se ẹ̀wà). *Contrastive SF*
rice A. eat FOC NEG COP beans
'Adé ate RICE (and not beans).'

[21] As to why this is so, is not clear yet. However, this might be due to the fact that subjects are typically topics. Thus, in order to distinguish topics from subject foci in a language that marks focus morphosyntactically (and not prosodically), contrastive focus marking is employed (cf. Rizzi & Shlonsky 2007, Shlonsky 2014).

b. Adé jẹ [ìrẹsì]$_F$ (*__rín__) (*kìí se ẹ̀wà). *New information SF*
A. eat rice FOC NEG COP beans
'Adé ate RICE (*and not beans).'

In this section, I have presented the data on the realization of focus in Ìkálẹ̀, and proposed two structural analyses: one that is free from the antisymmetry theory of syntax, and another that adopts it. In the next section, I will briefly discuss association with focus, with an emphasis on the focus sensitive particle *nùkàn* 'only'.

4 Association with focus

Certain particles are said to require or interact with the focus in a clause (Rooth 1985, 1992, Krifka 1992, 2006). Such elements are famously called *Focus Sensitive Particles* (FSPs), and the phenomenon is called *Association with Focus* (AwF).[22] Although the popular view is that FSPs require overt focus in their scope (or c-command environment), it has been argued that this is not always the case (Beaver & Clark 2008, Grubic 2015). Beaver & Clark (2008) argue that only *Conventional Association Particles* obligatorily require the presence of the focus associate in their scope. Such particles include *only*, *also*, and *even*.[23] This is what Tancredi (1990) calls the *Principle of Lexical Association* (PLA).

(33) **Principle of Lexical Association** (Tancredi 1990: 30)
An operator like *only* must be associated with a lexical constituent in its c-command domain.

Thus, in (34), (34a) has the reading that the only thing that Adam bought was a car, and nothing else. Here, the focus is on the direct object, and the FSP *only* c-commands its focus associate. Similarly, in (34b), the focus is on the subject and the surface structure shows that *only* c-commands it. (34b) is true if and only if it is only Adam who bought a car, and no one else.

[22]Another name for AwF is *Association with Alternative or Alternative Sensitivity*, according to Hartmann & Zimmermann (2008). This makes sense on the ground that FSPs only interact with focus indirectly, and relate directly with the salient alternatives triggered by the focus (cf. Rooth 1992, Beaver & Clark 2008).

[23]There is, however, a crosslinguistic variation regarding the nature of the three particles as conventional operators. For instance, Grubic (2015) argues that in Ngamo (West-Chadic) only *only*, and not *also* and *even*, is a conventional operator (see also Zimmermann 2006, Hartmann & Zimmermann 2008, Grubic & Zimmermann 2011, Duah 2015, Zimmermann 2015).

(34) a. Adam bought only A CAR.
b. Only ADAM bought a car.

In this section, I will briefly discuss the distribution of the focus sensitive particle *nùkàn* 'only' in Ìkálẹ̀. I chose *nùkàn* because, firstly, it has widely been discussed in the literature as a true focus sensitive particle in other languages (see a.o., Lee 2005, Beaver & Clark 2008, Sun 2021, Branan & Erlewine 2023), and secondly, it shows more consistency in its distribution compared to *also* and *even*, for example. In addition, since the association with focus is not the paper's main focus, it suffices to pick one out of the popular FSPs.

The exclusive focus sensitive particle in Ìkálẹ̀ is *nùkàn*. It has an exclusive interpretation, which presupposes that the only optimal candidate out of a salient set of alternatives is the constituent in focus. The question in (35a) is the context, and (35b) shows an association with SF. Notice that the structure in (35b), without the FSP *nùkàn*, is the same as what we have seen in Section 3.1 where the subject is in an ex-situ position but has an RP in Spec,TP. What is new in (35b) is the adjunction of *nùkàn*. It means that no one else worked apart from Bọ́lá.

(35) a. Nòó se usẹ́: Bọ́lá àbí Adé?
who do work B. or A.
'Who worked: Bọ́lá or Adé?'
b. [Bọ́lá]$_F$ **nùkàn** *(ó) se usẹ́ *(**rín**).
B. only RP do work FOC
'Only BỌLÁ worked.'

Similarly, in (36) *nùkàn* can associate with the object focus whether in-situ (36a) or ex-situ (36b). While the former lacks the focus marker *rín* because it is in-situ, the latter compulsorily has the focus marker. Both sentences mean that Adé slaughtered only a fowl, and nothing else.

(36) a. Bọ́lá pa ẹ̀dìyẹ **nùkàn**.
B. kill fowl only
'Bọ́lá slaughtered only A FOWL.'
b. [Ẹ̀dìyẹ]$_F$ **nùkàn** Bọ́lá pa *(**rín**).
fowl only B. kill FOC
'Bọ́lá slaughtered only A FOWL.'

Structurally speaking, the position of FSPs has been argued to be either *adnominal* or *adverbial* (cf. Jacobs 1983, König 1991, Büring & Hartmann 2001, Mursell

2021). In German, for example, Büring & Hartmann (2001) and Mursell (2021) argue that the FSPs adjoin to *Extended Verbal Projections* (EVPs) such as VP, TP, and CP (37a) (see also Jacobs 1983). English, on the other hand, seems to have a mixed adjunction, i.e., adjunction to both DPs and EVPs, as the case may be (37a & 37b) (König 1991). There are, however, only a few studies that discuss the positions of FSPs in African languages. See, for example, Hartmann & Zimmermann (2008) on Bura, and Carstens & Zeller (2020) on Nguni, respectively.

(37) a. **[**$_{VP}$ **only [**$_{VP}$ ...**]]**
b. **[**$_{DP}$ **only [**$_{DP}$ ...**]]**

Based on the discussion so far, at least two structural questions need to be answered for Ìkálẹ̀:

(38) a. Does the particle adjoin to the focused DP or to an extended verbal projection? In other words, is *nùkàn* adnominal or adverbial?
b. How can we account for the rightward position of *nùkàn* in relation to the Principle of Lexical Association (PLA), and considering Kayne's (1994) antisymmetry theory of syntax.

The answer to the first question is that *nùkàn* in Ìkálẹ̀ is both adnominal and adverbial; similar to English. It is adnominal with regards to argument focus, but adverbial with regards to V(P) focus. One good piece of empirical evidence for the adnominal analysis is that *nùkàn* cannot be stranded when its focus associate moves to the left periphery (39a). It must pied-pipe along with its focus associate (39b).

(39) a. *[Ẹdìyẹ]$_F$ Bọ́lá pa **nùkàn rín**.
fowl B. kill only FOC
'Bọ́lá slaughtered only A FOWL.'
b. [Ẹdìyẹ]$_F$ **nùkàn** Bọ́lá pa *(**rín**).
fowl only B. kill FOC
'Bọ́lá slaughtered only A FOWL.'

In verbal or verb phrase focus, however, *nùkàn* is adverbial, and it associates with an extended verbal projection. In an intransitive sentence like (40a), *nùkàn* adjoins to an EVP. However, there is more to the transitive sentence in (40b). Unlike argument focus, *nùkàn* cannot occur immediately after the verb for an

association with the verb. It can only occur after the direct object.[24] The structural position of *nùkàn* in (40b) can cause an ambiguous reading, where it could associate with the verb, the direct object, or the entire verb phrase. The three levels of AwF ambiguity are presented in (41).[25]

(40) a. Bọ́lá [sùn]$_F$ **nùkàn**.
B. sleep only
'Adé only SLEPT.'

b. Bọ́lá pa (***nùkàn**) ẹdìyẹ **nùkàn**.
B. kill only fowl only
'Bọ́lá SLAUGHTERED only a fowl/slaughtered A FOWL/
SLAUGHTERED A FOWL.'

(41) a. **V**: Bọ́lá did nothing else to a fowl, but slaughtered it.
b. **DO**: Bọ́lá slaughtered nothing else, but a fowl.
c. **VP**: Bọ́lá did nothing else, but slaughtered a fowl.

A proposed structure for adnominal *nùkàn* is presented in Figure 4, where the FSP adjoins to the DP. Figure 5 and Figure 6 represent association with V(P) or DO respectively. It is the context that will determine whether it is an association with V focus or VP focus in (5).[26]

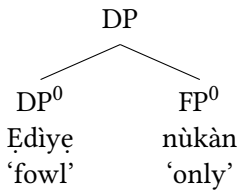

Figure 4: Syntactic structure for adnominal *nùkàn*

[24]Although *nùkàn* seems to appear after the verb in (40a), it actually adjoins to the entire VP. Example (40b) makes this obvious.

[25]I do not F-mark any of the constituents because of the ambiguity of the sentence. So, context (e.g., a question) would have to be resorted to in order to know which of the constituents is in focus.

[26]A reviewer asked why the FSP projection is called FP. I use FP (functional phrase) for the focus sensitive particle projection here because it is a more general name, considering the fact that there are other FSPs such as *also*, *even*, etc. (see Beaver & Clark 2008). It could as well be called Exclusive Phrase (ExclP), OnlyP, Particle Phrase (PrtP), an so on (cf. Hole 2017, Quek & Hirsch 2017, Bayer 2018, Sun 2021). Nothing hinges on this, however.

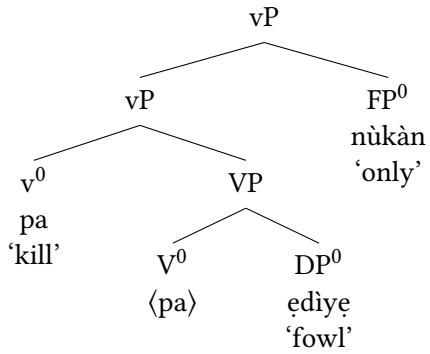

Figure 5: Syntactic structure for adverbial *nùkàn*

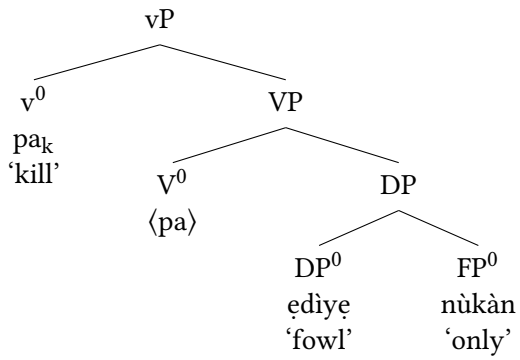

Figure 6: Syntactic structure for *nùkàn* with direct object.

The structures presented lead to the question in (38b). The PLA requires a c-command relation between the FSP and its focus associate (see (33)), and Kayne's (1994) *Linear Correspondence Axiom* (LCA) requires the c-command to be asymmetric. I adopt the formulation in (42) for LCA.

(42) A lexical item α precedes a lexical item β iff
   a. α asymmetrically c-commands β or
   b. an XP dominating α asymmetrically c-commands β.
   (Adapted from Carstens & Zeller (2020: 207–208) quoting Hornstein et al. (2005: 277))

However, the data presented show that *nùkàn* occurs in a post-focal position, always to the right of the focus associate. Drawing ideas from Carstens & Zeller's

(2020) analysis for Nguni, there are at least three possibilities that can be considered to answer what we observe in Ìkálẹ̀.

(43) a. *Nùkàn* does not need to c-command its focus associate.
b. *Nùkàn* can associate with the trace of the moved focus associate.
c. *Nùkàn*, as an FP, is an adjunct that can c-command the focus associate to its left.

Similar to what Carstens & Zeller (2020) argue for Nguni, the third possibility (43c) seems to be the best option for Ìkálẹ̀. Adjuncts have been argued to be free from the obligation of the LCA (cf. Takano 2003, Carstens 2008, 2017). In fact, Kayne (1994: 15) says that "specifiers and *adjoined phrases* appear to have no place in the theory (of LCA)." Therefore, the adjoined FSP *nùkàn* can c-command its focus associate to the left.

Option (43a) is out because *nùkàn* needs to c-command its focus associate in order to establish the association, while option (43b) is out because *nùkàn* is adjoined to the focus adnominally (with DPs), or adverbially (with V(P)s). Thus, we are left with the third possibility, which, in fact makes it possible for us to account for the mixed positioning (adnominal and EVP) of the FSP in Ìkálẹ̀. I wish to admit here that there is a need for more arguments for my proposal in this section. However, I will leave this for future research since this section is only meant to give an overview of the syntax of association with focus in Ìkálẹ̀.

5 Conclusion

So far, we have seen that focus realization in Ìkálẹ̀ can be both in-situ and ex-situ. However, only non-subject focus (object, verb, and adverb) can be realized ex-situ or in-situ. Subject focus can only be ex-situ. I argued that both ex-situ subject and non-subject foci are realized via A'-movement (and not via base-generation). The use of resumption by subject focus, however, is due to an EPP requirement on T (in the spirit of Landau 2007). I proposed two syntactic structures for ex-situ focus. The first structure is simpler and devoid of LCA requirements. It merges the focus head to the right clause-final position. The second structure follows the LCA by realizing the focus head to the left. The focused constituent is first moved to the Spec of a higher functional phrase (FP), before pied-piping the whole FP to Spec,FocP. I showed that although this gives us what we want structurally, it is unmotivated and uneconomical, considering the economy of derivation and representation. Thus, I argued that the first structure is better.

Finally, I gave an overview of the structural relationship and distribution between the focus sensitive particle *nùkàn* 'only' and its focus associates. The mixed analysis appears to be the best analysis. The FSP can have both adnominal adjunction and EVP adjunction, depending on whether the focus is a DP or a V(P). I showed that following PLA and LCA, the data on AwF seem to pose a challenge at first. However, at a closer look, *nùkàn* happens to be an adjunct that is less strict in compliance to the LCA requirement. It can therefore c-command its associate to the left.

Abbreviations

1	first person	HTS	high tone syllable
3	third person	NEG	negative
COMP	complementizer	PFV	perfective
CONJ	conjunction	PL	plural
COP	copula	PRT	particle
DEF	definite	Q	question particle
EXPL	expletive	REL	relative
FOC	focus	RP	resumptive pronoun
FUT	future	SG	singular

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