

Ex-situ morphological focus marker in complex sentences

Focalization can be viewed in two ways in the context of a complex sentence. First, the focus feature can target a subconstituent of a subordinate clause. Second, the whole CP can be the focus with respect to the complex sentence, as it is the case of the adverbial clause in (2); see the discussion in Matic' et al. (2014: 9ff). The focus is an instance of what is referred to in the literature as External Information structure, as opposed to internal Information structure.

(1) Complex sentence and focalization

- a. I believe [that [it is a BOOK]_F that Mary gave to Paul].
 b. [It was only [after I arrived home]_F that I saw them].

This paper deals with restrictions imposed on morphological focus marking in the contexts when focus involves subordinate clauses in complex sentences. The discussed data comes mainly from Kakabe (Western Mande, Guinea)¹. In this language, prosody is not involved in the expression of focus which is instead marked by the focus particle *lè* (*dè* after nasals). This particle generally appears at the end of the focused constituent that is always in situ.

- (2a) [mùsèè **lè**]_F ka sòbèè tàbí² Sbj focus
 woman.ART FP PFV.TR meat.ART prepare
 THE WOMAN prepare the meat.

- (2b) mùsèè ká [sòbèè **lè**]_F tàbí Obj focus
 woman.ART PFV.TR meat.ART FP prepare
 The woman prepared THE MEAT.

Yet, the position of the focus particle does not always correspond to the semantically focused XP. When the focus is on a subconstituent of a subordinate clause, e.g. an adverbial clause as in (3), *lè* cannot appear at its right boundary as would be expected. Instead, the focus marker is found at the end of the matrix clause:

- (3a) [[à tááta lúúmè tɔ (**lé**)] [à ní [bàntàrà]_F sà̀n]]
 3SG go-PFV.I market-ART in FP 3SG SBJV manioc-ART buy
 He went to the market to buy MANIOK (not rice).

- (3b) *à tááta lúúmè tɔ à ní bàntàrà **lè** sà̀n

The same happens when the focus is, pragmatically, on the whole adverbial clause: here, again, *lè* appears not at the end of the focused constituent, i.e. the dependent clause, but at the end of the matrix clause:

- (4a) káá wò bì táá-lá **lè** [wò nì wó dòn]_F
 or.Q 2PL be go-GER FP 2PL SBJV 2PL dance
 [Do you go there TO STUDY] or do you go there IN ORDER TO DANCE
 (Litt. "SO THAT YOU DANCE"?)

¹ Kakabe is an under-studied Mande language, S-aux-O-V-X word order, lexical tones (H vs. L).

² Abbreviations used in the examples: ART – referential article; BNF – benefactive; F – focus; FP – focus particle; GER – gerund; I – intransitive; OBL – oblique; PFV – perfective; PL – plural; POT – potential; PST – past; Q – question; SBJV – subjunctive; SG – singular; TR – transitive; SBJV – subjunctive.

(4b) *káá wò bì táá-lá wò nì wó dòn dè

A phenomenon close to such ‘focus raising’ found in Kakabe has been described for Tundra Nenets and Tundra Yukaghir by Matic (2014) and Matic and Nikolaeva (2014). In these two languages focus is expressed morphologically as well, and, according to Matic and Nikolaeva (2014), focus feature percolates from non-head subconstituent to the head. This analysis is based on the F-projection theory (von Stechow & Uhmman 1986; Selkirk 1986, 1995), but compared to the latter, their model is less restrictive: F feature can be transmitted to the head from any subconstituent and not only from the argument as it is the case in the F-projection theory. Due to the percolation mechanism, focus that is internal to a subordinate clause is equaled to the focus of the matrix clause constituent.

I will show that, though Matic and Nikolaeva's (2014) percolation analysis is useful to account for some aspects of the focus expression in Kakabe, it is not sufficient to explain the distribution of the focus marker in this language. First, percolation does not take place in all contexts and there is a need to explain to explain this restriction. For example, differently from Tundra Nenets and Tundra Yukaghir, F-feature does not percolate from the subconstituents of the DP to the head. Second, when a subordinate clause or its subconstituent is in focus, the focus often appear in the position which does not correspond to the head of the subordinate clause, as would be expected from the percolation hypothesis.

An explanation of this phenomenon can be found in the cartographic approach in which focus is represented as a syntactic projection in the left periphery (Rizzi 1997, 2004; Aboh 2004, 2007, 2016). I will argue that, whereas the semantic focus feature can appear on any constituent in the sentence structure, the morphological focus marker, which is the focus particle *lè* in the case of Kakabe, has to be licensed by the FocP projection.

The two situations of mismatch between the position of the focus particle and the semantic focus in complex sentences illustrated by (3) and (4) result from this licensing restriction.

The first mismatch concerns the focusing of subconstituents of subordinated clauses. As will be argued, it is due to the fact that, in Kakabe, truncated CP structure creates islands for the focus particle. This explanation relies on the truncation analysis (Haegeman 2003, 2006, 2010, 2012), in which some subordinate clauses have full CP structure, including Force, Topic and Focus projections, whereas others have truncated CP structure where these projections are lacking. I argue that the impossibility of the in situ focusing of subconstituents of certain subordinate clauses is due to the absence of FocP projection in them. This is supported by the fact that utterance complements that have full CP structure, such as utterance complements, allow in situ focus on their subconstituents, e.g.:

(5) à ká-à fǒ [CP Músà kà bántàrà lè sà]n
 3SG PFV.TR-3SG say Musa PFV.TR manioc.ART FP buy
 He said that Musa bought MANIOC.

The second type of mismatch between the position of the focus particle and the semantic focus is the one where the subordinate clause as a whole cannot be focused in situ. According to Haegeman (2003, 2006, 2010, 2012), subordinate clauses differ with respect to the place of adjoining to the matrix clause, with some subordinate clauses adjoining at the CP level and others at the IP level or lower. It will be argued that in Kakabe subordinate clause that attach to the main clause at the CP level and, crucially, higher than the focus projection. The latter circumstance is the reason why the focus particle cannot appear in situ, as in the case the adverbial clauses as in (4). Differently from that embedded relative clauses attach low within the main clause, e.g. to the DP as in (6), accordingly there is no ban on in situ focus marker:

(6) ànu kà [DP kàyèè [CP jàtáà kà mín mágbá lè]] dònì lábútánè tò
 3PL PFV.TR man.ART lion PFV.TR REL wound FP send hospital.ART in
 They sent the man [that the lion wounded]_F, to the hospital (not the man that fell down).

Interestingly, expressive adverbials, ideophones as well as names in naming constructions display the same incapacity to host the focus particle when focused semantically as the CP-adjoined subordinate clauses. The prosodic properties of these constituents, namely, their association with downdrift break indicates as well that they are CP-adjoined.

To conclude, the Kakabe data provides important evidence in favor of the Focus Projection located in the left periphery, even though the focused XP and the focus marker are always in situ. It shows, moreover, that the licensing of the focus marker is independent from the hosting the focus marker and the focused constituent. In languages like Kwa the focused XP is left-dislocated and the focus particle appears right after it, which allows to assume that the focus particle lexicalizes the head of FocP, whereas the XP appears in [Spec, FocP]. Differently from that, in Kakabe, the focused XP is in-situ, nevertheless, the focus marker has to be licensed by the Focus projection located in CP.

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