FOCUS CONSTRUCTIONS IN Ọ̀HỌ̀RÍ YORÙBÁ

Ọlaide Akinwande
University of Lagos
oaakinwande@unilag.edu.ng
08103217426

Abstract

Focus construction is a universal syntactic phenomenon that is used to indicate prominence in natural language through the use of syntactic or prosodic device. The construction has been widely examined in various Yorùbá dialects, pinpointing the morpheme that expresses the phenomenon and how the construction is projected in each dialect. However, Ọ̀họ̀rí as a dialect of Yorùbá (Oyelaran 1976; Adeniyi, 2000) has not benefited from research work on focus constructions. Therefore, this paper attempts to investigate focus constructions in Ọ̀họ̀rí Yorùbá. The data used in this study were elicited from six adult native speakers of Ọ̀họ̀rí in Kétu, Ègùwá, and Asá located in Yewa North Local Government Area of Ogun State, Nigeria via structured interviews using digital recording device. The study employed minimalist program of Chomsky (1995, 1998, and 2002) and alternative semantics of Rooth (1992, 1999, 2005, and 2015) in its analyses. The article discusses focusable constituents in the dialect and claims that focusing is ex-situ in Ọ̀họ̀rí. The paper proposes two structural configurations for focus projections in the dialect. The study thereafter argues for in-situ focus constructions as answer to in-situ content questions in Yorùbá. The article conclusively discusses the semantic roles and interpretations of focus constructions in Ọ̀họ̀rí Yorùbá.

Keywords: Focusing, Minimalist Program, Projections, Ọ̀họ̀rí, Alternative Semantics

1.   Introduction

Focus is a grammatical phenomenon across languages. The term is not unique to Yorùbá. The notion has been widely discussed in Yorùbá and its varieties. For example, Awobuluyi (1978) analyses focus constructions as noun phrases. Awobuluyi (1978) argues that sentences cannot and do not function as complements in Yorùbá. He opines that predicates are routinely focused in Yorùbá and they are allowed to remain intact inside their clauses while they are obligatorily nominalised by copying and introducing item **ni**. Owolabi (1981) debates in contrast to Awobuluyi's claim that focus construction is a derived sentence where either subject, object,

verb or the whole sentence can be focused. Yusuf (1990) discusses the status of **ni** which occurs in focus expressions as copula. Yusuf acknowledges **ni** as focus marker, which is also found in content questions. He maintains that **ni** behaves as verb and therefore analyses it as a copula verb to be precise. Yusuf therefore labels **ni** as a bleached or defective verb. The paper establishes the fact that **ni** (a copula verb) lacks the inherent property of a complete verb, in that it cannot be nominalised by reduplication and does not take nominalising prefixes. Awoyale (1990) contends that focus has a case feature (nominative or accusative) because there is a distinct marker for it in Yorùbá. Awoyale argues that the focus marker **ni** assigns nominative case to the preceding argument in the discourse position. Adewọle (1991) claims that **ni** (focus marker) has VP-form feature. Dechaine (1993) opines that in Yorùbá focus, object DP is fronted to the left of the complementizer **ni**, whereas, if a subject DP is focused, a resumptive pronoun *ó* appears in the canonical position. Dechaine contends that in serial verb constructions, it is V_1 and not V_2 that is focusable. Dechaine (2002) discusses focus from the perspective of cleft construction. He proposes an analysis that derived Yorùbá focus via predicate raising from a small clause thus:

1.   [SUBJ^{DP} PRED^{XP}]   [XP]$_i$ ni [SUBJ^{DP} PRED^t_i]

(Dechaine, 2002, p.146)

Bisang and Ṣonaiya (2003) analyse **ni** as focus marker, as well as copula. The paper claims that focus in Yorùbá has three prototypical functional properties, which include [+preconstruction], [+identification], and [+exhaustiveness]. With this, it argues that focus in Yorùbá is a complete subset out of the set of preconstruction elements for which the rest of the clause holds. Ajiboye (2006) reports that **ni** in Mọ̀bà is sensitive to context allomorphs and it is in a complementary distribution with **ni** in Standard Yorùbá (SY). The article submits that the focus marker **ni** has variants in Mọ̀bà, which are: **nì, ìn, rìn, à**. Jones (2006) claims that arguments and predicate are focused in Yorùbá. The study argues that focus in Yorùbá is a type of A-Movement, whereby a focused constituent is raised to the leftward position. Adeṣọla (2015) analyses **ni** in second position as focus marker but claims that **ni** expresses Yes/No question when it features in sentence-final position. Oshodi (2016) investigates focus constructions in Ọ̀wọ̀. It claims that only nominal and verbal items can be focused in Ọ̀wọ̀. It reports that unlike in SY, focus marker does not directly follow focused item in Ọ̀wọ̀, rather, it appears in sentence-final position. The

study posits that pronominal, *òun* obligatorily combines together with focus marker to realise focus construction in Ọ̀wọ̀. The review of the existing works shows that Ọ̀họrí focus constructions have not been discussed in the literature. I discuss focus elicitation in Ọ̀họrí in the following section.

2.   Focus Elicitation in Ọ̀họrí

This section discusses mechanisms for focus marking cross-linguistically with the aim of identifying the one Ọ̀họrí employs. Thus, different paradigms of focus marking have been mentioned in literature. The paradigms are: prosodic, morphological, and syntactic approaches. The prosodic approach is otherwise known as intonation or stress. Various scholars have attested to this criterion as a productive means of expressing focus, most especially, in the area of Information Structure (IS) of any language (Halliday, 1967; Chafe, 1976; Prince, 1981; Lambrecht, 1994; Erteschik-Shir, 2007; van der Wal et al, 2025; among others). Prosodic approach is also tagged accentual system of marking focus (Delin, 1989; Geluykens, 1984; among others). The next paradigm of eliciting focus is via morphological tool. There are languages that mark focus morphologically, e.g., African languages such as Gùrùntùn in West Chadic (Hartmann & Zimmermann, 2009). The third approach is syntactic movement, which is mostly prominent in African languages, such as Yorùbá (Awobuluyi, 1978, 1987, 1992; Owolabi, 1981; among others), Gungbe (Aboh, 2000), etc. However, the Ọ̀họrí data elicited showed that the dialect employs both morphological and syntactic mechanisms of expressing focus. In Ọ̀họrí, the focus morpheme merges to the targeted element in the basic clause and raises it to the specifier position for head-specifier feature checking, while the rest items in the basic clause converge. I discuss focusable constituents in the next section.

3.   Focusable Constituents in Ọ̀họrí

A number of constituents can be focused in Ọ̀họrí. The marker that expresses focus in Ọ̀họrí is *li,* which is a variant of the focus marker *ni* in SY. To derive focus in Ọ̀họrí, the focus marker *li* externally merges to the basic clause/proposition to express focus phrase (FocP). Thereafter, FOC *li* internally merges to the prominent item in the mind of the speaker (in the basic clause) and raises it to the specifier position of FocP, while the remaining convergent clause merges with it. Raising as used here is the movement of a constituent from a syntactic position to

another syntactic position for feature checking purpose (Radford, 2001, p. 315-366). The constituents that can be focused in Ọ̀họ̀rí are grouped into two - argument focusable constituents and non-argument focusable constituents. I explain the constituents one after the other in the following sub-section.

3.1. Argument Focusable Constituents

The focusable constituents in this section are purely arguments. They are subject, direct object, indirect object, and possessors. I discuss them in the next section.

3.1.1. Subject Argument Focus

One of the focusable arguments in Ọ̀họ̀rí is subject. When subject is focused in Ọ̀họ̀rí, it moves out from canonical position to the specifier position of focus phrase (Spec-FocP) via merge, i.e., FOC *li* merges to the subject and raises it to the Spec-FocP. This raising makes the subject to feature outside the matrix clause. When the raising happens, a pro-form (Oyelaran 1976) *ọ́* immediately appears in the position of the raised subject. This makes the focus construction to converge meticulously. If the pro-form element does not feature in the syntactic position of the raised subject, the convergence will crash, as exemplified in (2) and (3).

2a. Súlè   rha   ẹija abórhí lí   ànọ́
     Sule   buy   fish heady LOC yesterday
     'Sule bought cat fish yesterday.'

 b. [Súlè]   [li [~~Súlè~~ ọ́   rha ẹija abórhí lí   ànọ́]].
     Sule   FOC   3SG.HTS buy fish heady LOC yesterday
     'SULE bought cat fish yesterday.'

 c. *[Súlè] [li [~~Súlè~~   rha ẹija abórhí lí ànọ́]].
     Sule   FOC   buy fish heady LOC yesterday

3a. Báyọ̀   lọ   sọ́jàà
     Bayọ   go   LOC-market
     'Bayọ went to the market.'

 b. [Báyọ̀]   [li   [~~Báyọ̀~~ ọ́   lọ   sọ́jàà]]
     Bayọ   FOC   3SG.HTS   go   LOC-market
     'BAYỌ went to the market.'

 c. *[Báyọ̀]   [li   [~~Báyọ̀~~   lọ   sọ́jàà]]
     Bayọ   FOC   go   LOC-market

(2a&3a) are basic clauses while (2b&3b) are focus expressions, where the subject arguments are focused. The examples in (2b&3b) divide the constructions into two - the focalised[1] arguments and the basic clauses/proposition. The focalised arguments move out from the proposition to the leftward position of the FocP. A pro-form[2] element glossed as '3SG.HTS' (third person singular/high tone syllable), immediately features in (2b) and (3b). (2c) and (3c) are ungrammatical expressions in Ọ̀họ̀rí because there is absence of the pro-form item in the position of the raised subjects.

---

[1]Note that the focalised items in upper case align with the IS approach (Halliday, 1967; Chafe, 1976; Prince, 1981; Lambrecht, 1994; Erteschik-Shir, 2007).

[2]There have been different positions among scholars on the pro-form *ó* that occupies the position of the raised subject argument. Awobuluyi (1988, 2001) analyses the pro-form *ó* as preverbal modifier and resumptive pronoun respectively. Dechaine (1993), Sanusi (2002) describe the element as agreement marker. The pro-form *ó* is high tone syllable (Culioli 1990, Bisang and Sonaiya, 1999 & 2000). Ajiboye (2005) analyses the pro-form *ó* as inflectional element that instantiates Specifier-Head agreement in inflectional phrase (IP).

3.1.2. Direct Object Argument Focus

Direct object argument can also be focused in Ọ̀họ̀rí. When direct object is targeted for focus, the FOC *li*, merges with that direct object and moves it out from its main clause to the discourse position. Unlike subject focusing which allows a pro-form item in the extraction site of the subject, direct object focus does not, rather, it leaves a gap in the canonical position, as shown in (4) & (5).

4a.　Ọláewé　　　yọ́ọ́　rha　eija　abórhí　lí　　ɔlàà
　　　Ọlaewe　　　FUT　buy　fish　heady　LOC　tomorrow
　　　'Ọlaewe will buy cat fish tomorrow.'

 b.　[Eija　abórhí]　[li　[Ọláewé　　　yọ́ọ́　rha ~~eija abórhí~~ lí　　ɔlàà]]
　　　Fish　heady　FOC　Ọlaewe　　　FUT　buy　　　　　　LOC　tomorrow
　　　'Ọlaewe will buy CAT FISH tomorrow.'

5a.　Bùnmi　　　mọ　omi　lọ́nọ̀ọ́
　　　Bunmi　　　drink　water　yesterday
　　　'Bunmi drank water yesterday.'

 b.　[Omi]　[li　[Bùnmi　　　mọ　~~omi~~　lọ́nọ̀ọ́]]
　　　Water　FOC　Bunmi　　　drink　　　yesterday
　　　'Bunmi drank WATER yesterday.'

(4a&5a) are basic clauses from which direct object focus is elicited in (4b&5b). The direct object DP in (4b) contains a noun and its modifier. The two items encode object of the verb *rha* 'to buy' in the clause (4b) and as a result, they have to be raised together as a single constituent to the leftward position of the focus phrase. An attempt to leave one and take the other will yield ill-formed constructions, as expressed in (6a&b).

6a.   *[Ẹija] [li   [Ọláewé   yọ́ọ́   rhà <ẹija> abórhí   lí   ọlàà]].
          Fish   FOC   Ọlaewe   FUT   buy   heady   LOC   tomorrow

  b.   *[Abórhí] [li   [Ọláewé yọ́ọ́   rha ẹija <abórhí>   lí   ọlàà]].
          Heady   FOC   Ọlaewe   FUT   buy fish   LOC   tomorrow

3.1.3. Indirect Object Argument Focus

Indirect object, i.e., object of preposition[3] also benefits from the constituents that can be focused in Ọ̀họ̀rí. The focus operation follows the other ones explained above, i.e., FOC *li* merges with the targeted indirect object and moves it to the leftward axis of FocP, thereby, leaving a gap in the neutral position, as exemplified in (7&8).

7a.   Mò   ó   rha   ilé   sí   Èkó.
          1SG   HTS buy   house LOC   Lagos
          'I bought a/the house in Lagos.'

  b.   [Èkó] [li   [mò   rha   ilé   sí   <èkó>]]
          Lagos FOC   1SG   buy   house LOC
          'I bought a/the house in LAGOS.'

8a.   A   sọ̀rhọ̀   sí   Àrhíkẹ́
          1PL   say-word LOC   Arikẹ
          'We talked to Àríkẹ́.'

  b.   [Àrhíkẹ́] [li   [a   sọ̀rhọ̀   sí   <Àríkẹ́>]]
          Arikẹ   FOC   1PL say-word LOC
          'We talked to ARIKẸ.'

(7b) & (8b) above show that after the raising of the indirect objects to the Spec-FocP, the focus marker, *li,* immediately follows the raised indirect objects. (7b) and (8b) are the cases of preposition stranding, i.e., the preposition *sí* in (7b) and (8b) is stranded after its object has been focused but the structure and the meaning of the expressions there are not disrupted.

3.1.4. Possessor Focus

Possessors are amenable to focus constructions in Ọ̀họ̀rí. Possessors are modifiers of a head noun. To derive focus of a possessor in Ọ̀họ̀rí, the FOC *li* merges with the targeted possessor in the proposition and raises it to the specifier position of the focus phrase. Thereafter, a pro-form item that functions as possessor occupies the neutral position of the raised possessor, as illustrated in (9&10).

9a.   Elégbèédé   ka   ìwé   Táyọ̀
          Elegbeede   read   book   Tayọ
          'Elegbeede read Tayọ's book.'

  b.   [Táyọ̀]$_i$ [li   [Elégbèédé   ka   ìwé   è$_i$]]
        Tayọ   FOC   Elegbeede   read   book   POSS
        'Elegbeede read TAYO's book.'

  c.   *[Táyọ̀] [li   [Elégbèédé   ka   ìwé]]
          Tayọ   FOC   Elegbeede   read   book

10a.   Àṣá   gbé   ọmu   adìẹ̀
          Eagle   carry   child   chicken
          'Eagle carried chick.'

---

[3] Object of the preposition has been named *oblique* in the literature (Givon 1976; Stalhke 1976; Lawal 1987; among others).

  b.   [Adìẹ̀]$_i$ [làṣá   gbé   ọmu   è$_i$]
        Chicken FOC-eagle carry   child POSS
         'Eagle carried CHICK.'

  c.   *[Adìẹ̀]   [làṣá   gbé   ọmu]
          Chicken   FOC-eagle carry   child

(9b) & (10b) are grammatical focus expressions because the pro-form possessor appears in the neutral position but (9c) and (10c) are ungrammatical expressions because the pro-form item that functions as possessor is absent in the canonical position of the raised possessor and the construction therefore, crashed.

3.2. Non-Argument Focusable Constituents

The focusable constituents in this section are completely non-arguments [-nominals]. They include verb, VP, adverb, PP, and conditional clause, as discussed in the following sub-sections.

3.2.1. Verb Focus

The first focusable category under the non-argument focus in Ọ̀họ̀rí is verb. Verb (V) focus involves verb doubling (De Vries, 1992, p. 81). Verb focus goes through morphological process called gerund in most Yorùbá dialects. The traditional morphological system of processing verb focus in Yorùbá is to copy the initial consonant of the verb and introduce epenthetic vowel /í/. Thereafter, the verb in the base clause would be copied to it, as in *rírà* 'act of buying'. However, different processes of deriving gerund have been expressed in the literature. For instance, Awobuluyi (2016, p. 5-6) claims that every consonant in Yorùbá is a prefix and as such, the initial consonant of any verb in Yorùbá can be copied and merged with the root verb. Awobuluyi claims that since consonant cluster is prohibited in Yorùbá, epenthetic vowel /í/ would be inserted in between the consonant cluster to derive acceptable nominal word, as exemplified below in (11).

11. | *Base word* | *Copy the consonant of the base word* | *Merging of the copied consonant with base verb* | *Insertion of epenthetic vowel [í]* |
|---|---|---|---|
| rà | r | rra | rírà |

'rírà 'act of buying'

Similarly, (Ẹlẹshin 2017) opines that the morphological process of deriving verb nominalization in Yorùbá is to add epenthetic vowel /í/ to the base word (verb). He argues further that because high tone initial is prohibited in Yorùbá derived word, the consonant of the base word has to be copied and attached to the beginning of the verb to successfully derive the partial duplication item, as illustrated below in (12).

12. | *Epenthetic vowel [í]* | *Base word* | *Copy the consonant of the base word to the left of epenthetic vowel* | *Output* |
|---|---|---|---|
| í | rà | r | rírà |

rírà 'act of buying'

However, in Ọ̀họ̀rí verb focus, the moment a verb is copied, nominalised, and raised to the Spec-FocP, the focus marker *li* follows it immediately. Meanwhile, a copy of the V remains in the canonical position. Examples of such are given in (13) & (14).

13a. Àbúrò   iDàda   rha   nné   sí   Èkó
       Younger-brother Dada   buy   house LOC   Lagos
       'The younger brother of Dada bought house in Lagos.'

  b.   [Rhírha]   [li   [àbúrò   iDàda   rha   nné   sí   Èkó]]
       Buy-Nom   FOC   younger-brother Dada   buy   house LOC   Lagos
       'The younger brother of Dada BOUGHT house in Lagos.'

  c.   *[Rha]   [li   [àbúrò   iDàda   rha   nné   sí   Èkó]]
        Buy   FOC   younger-brother Dada   buy   house LOC   Lagos

14a. Ajá   iṢọlá   jẹ   ẹiran   tútù
       Dog   Ṣọla   eat   meat   fresh
       'Ṣọla's dog ate fresh meat.'

  b.   [Jíjẹ]   [li   [ajá   iṢọlá   jẹ   ẹiran   tútù]]
       Eat-Nom   FOC   dog   Ṣọla   eat   meat   kfresh
       'Ṣọla's dog ATE fresh meat.'

  c.   *[Jẹ]   [li   [ajá   iṢọlá   jẹ   ẹiran   tútù]]
        Eat   FOC   dog   Ṣọla   eat   meat   fresh

As illustrated in (13b) and (14b), the verb in the expressions has been copied, nominalised, and raised to the specifier position of the focus constructions there, which is immediately followed by the focus[4] marker *li*. (13c) and (14c) crashed in the course of merging because the verbs there did not go through reduplication[5] process but only raised to the Spec-FocP and therefore produced ill-formed expressions.

3.2.2. VP Focus

Jones (2006, p. 144) claims that verb phrase (VP) focus is achievable in Yorùbá. Since Ọ̀họ̀rí is a typical dialect of Yorùbá, the Ọ̀họ̀rí data elicited show that VP focus is also possible in the dialect. VP here simply implies V plus its object. The V and its object are raised together as a

single constituent to the discourse position for focus marking. VP focus follows the process of V focus, i.e., via gerund[6], as discussed shortly above. This is illustrated in (15) & (16).

15a. Ọláewé   yọ́ọ́   rha   ẹija   abórhí   lí   ɔlàà
     Ọlaewe   FUT   buy   fish   heady   LOC   tomorrow
     'Olaewe will buy cat fish tomorrow.'

b. [Rhírha   ẹija abórhí] [li   [Ọláewé yọ́ọ́   rha   ẹija   abórhí lí   ɔlàà]]
   Buy-Nom fish heady   FOC   Ọlaewe FUT   buy   fish   heady LOC   tomorrow
   'Ọlaewe will BUY CAT FISH tomorrow.'

c. *[Rha   ẹija   abórhí] [li   [Ọláewé yọ́ọ́   rha   ẹija   abórhí lí   ɔlàà]]
   Buy   fish   heady   FOC   Ọlaewe FUT   buy   fish   heady LOC   tomorrow

16a. Ajá   iṢọlá   jẹ   ẹiran   tútù
     Dog   Ṣọla   eat   meat   fresh
     'Ṣọla's dog ate fresh meat.'

b. [Jíjẹ   ẹiran tútù] [li   [ajá   iṢọlá   jẹ   ẹiran   tútù]]
   Eat-Nom meat fresh FOC   dog   Ṣọla   eat   meat   fresh
   'Ṣọla's dog ATE FRESH MEAT.'

c.*[Jẹ   ẹiran   tútù] [li   [ajá   iṢọlá   jẹ   ẹiran   tútù]]
   Eat   meat   fresh FOC   dog   Ṣọla   eat   meat   fresh

From the examples in (15b) & (16b), it is clearly shown that VP focus is realisable in Ọ̀họ̀rí. The V and its object are moved as a single element to the leftward region of the focus expressions there. There is a copy of the VP in the neutral position. Meanwhile, (15c) and (16c) are ungrammatical expressions because the verbs there together with the objects only moved to the Spec-FocP but are not nominalised to allow acceptable focus constructions in Ọ̀họ̀rí.

---

[4]Different scholars have discussed verb focus in the literature (Awobuluyi, 1978, 1987, 2013, 2016; Owolabi, 1981; Bamgboṣe, 1990; among others).

[5]Akinlabi & Oyebade (1987), Pulleyblank & Akinlabi (1988) describe Yorùbá gerund reduplication as *phrasal phonology*.

[6]Dechaine & Manfredi (1995) view Yorùbá gerund reduplication as *syntax-phonological cohabitation*.

3.2.3. PP Focus

Another focusable constituent in Ọ̀họ́rí is prepositional phrase (PP). PP has been described as adjunct in the literature (Quirk, Leech, & Svartvik, 1985, p. 504). Adjunct is said to be free from obligation of the Linear Correspondence Axiom (LCA) (Takano 2003, Carstens 2008, 2017; Kayne 1994). The PP focus also follows suit in Ọ̀họ́rí, i.e., the FOC *li* merges with the PP item in the basic clause and moves it to the discourse position of the FocP, leaving a gap in the extraction site, as evident in (17) and (18) below.

17a. Àhọn akẹ́kọ̀ọ́   kha   ìwé sẹ́ké   lọ́nọ̀ọ́
      3PL   students   read book small LOC-yesterday
      'The students read small book yesterday.'

  b. [Lọ́nọ̀ọ́]   [li   [àwọn akẹ́kọ̀ọ́   kha   ìwé sẹ́ké   <lọ́nọ̀ọ́>]]
      LOC-yesterday   FOC 3PL   students   read book small
      'The students read small book YESTERDAY.'

18a. Ọba rha   ẹsin kpukpa   lọ́jàà
      King buy   horse red   LOC-market
      'The king bought red horse in the market.'

  b. [Lọ́jàà]   [li   [ọba rha   ẹsin kpukpa   <lọ́jà>]]
      LOC-market   FOC king buy   horse red
      'The king bought red horse IN THE MARKET.'

The adjunctive items in (17b) and (18b) are raised from the base clause to the clause-initial position of the focus expressions via merging of FOC *li*. The focused PP is deleted immediately in the canonical position after raising. Therefore, there is no visible phonetic item in the extraction site any more.

3.2.4. Adverbial Focus

Adverbs are among the prominent constituents that can be focused in Ọ̀họ́rí. Adverbs are moved from the small clause to the focus position through merging of FOC *li*, while the remaining finite clause get merged to derive grammatical focus expression in Ọ̀họ́rí. The focused adverb leaves a gap in form of invisible phonetic item in the canonical domain, as shown in (19) and (20).

19a. Àmọ̀kẹ́ lọ kíákíá
      Amọkẹ   go quickly
      'Amọke went quickly.'

b. [Kíákíá]   [lÀmòkẹ́   lọ <kíákíáa>]
    Quickly   FOC-Amokẹ   go
    'Amoke went QUICKLY.'

20a. Olówó   ń   jẹùn   wẹ́ẹ́wẹ́ẹ́
      Rich-man   PROG   eat-something slowly
      'The rich man is eating slowly/quietly.'

b. [Wẹ́ẹ́wẹ́ẹ́]   [lolówó   ń   jẹùn   <wẹ́ẹ́wẹ́ẹ́>]
    Slowly   FOC-rich-man PROG   eat-something
    'The rich man is eating SLOWLY.'

The focused adverbs in (19b) and (20b) are deleted immediately from the base clause after merging, so as to prevent the constructions from being ill-formed.

3.2.5. Focus of Conditional Clause

Conditional clause is focusable in Ọ̀họ̀rí. This is achieved when FOC *li* merges with the conditional clause and raises it to the Spec-FocP. The focused conditional clause drops a gap in the canonical position, as shown in (21b) & (22b).

21a. Adé   á   kọ́né   bọ́   bá   nówó
      Ade   FUT   build-house COND-3SG.HTS be   LOC-money
      'Ade will build house if he has money.'

b. [Bádé   bá   nówó]   [li   [á   kọ́né   <bọ́ bá nówó>]].
    COMP-Ade   be   LOC-money   FOC   FUT   build-house
    'IF ADE HAS MONEY, he will build house.'

22a. Ǹ   ń   ṣiṣẹ́   fú   n   lè   nówó   lọ́wọ́.
      1SG   PROG   do-work   COMP 1SG may   LOC-money   LOC-hand
      'I am working so that I can have money.'

b. [Fú   n   lè   nówó   lọ́wọ́]   [li   [mọ̀   ṣe   ń   ṣiṣẹ́ <fú kí n lè nówó lọ́wọ́>]]
    COMP 1SG may LOC-money LOC-hand FOC 1SG do PROG do-work
    'I am working SO THAT I MAY HAVE MONEY.'

Evidently, the conditional clauses in (21b) and (22b) are raised as a single constituent to the discourse domain via merging, which allows the focus marker to follow it. The focused constituent has been deleted in the extraction sites to prevent the constructions from crashing.
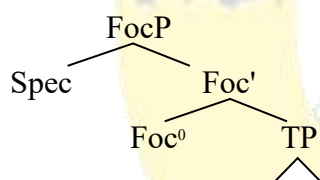
So far, nine focusable constituents have been critically discussed in this section. From the illustrative examples above, it appears that focus is ex-situ in Ọ̀họrí because all the focusable constituents are found in the left periphery of the constructions. I discuss focus projection in the next section.

4.   Focus Projections in Ọ̀họrí

This section presents focus projections. The analyses here employ Minimalist Program of Chomsky (1995, 1998, and 2002). However, I present just two structures to account for all the focusable constituents discussed in the preceding sections. The first structure captures constituents that leave a phonetic item or a copy of itself in the extraction site after raising to the specifier position of FocP. These are subject, possessor, verb, and VP focusing. The second structure accounts for the constituents that leave a gap/non-visible phonetic item in the extraction site after raising to the Spec-FocP. These are direct object, indirect object, adverb, PP, and conditional clause focusing. However, following Rizzi (1997, 2003) split-CP hypothesis, I adopt focus phrase (FocP) for focus projections in Ọ̀họrí under the configuration below in (23).
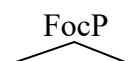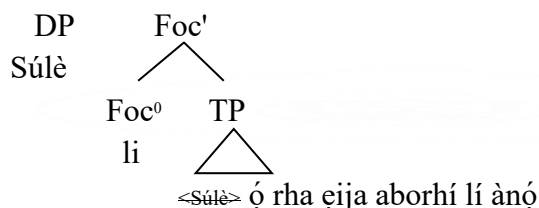
23.

$$
\begin{array}{c}
\text{FocP} \\
\diagup \quad \diagdown \\
\text{Spec} \qquad \text{Foc'} \\
\diagup \quad \diagdown \\
\text{Foc}^0 \qquad \text{TP} \\
\triangle
\end{array}
$$

4.1. Projection of the Constituent Representing itself with phonetic item or a copy in the extraction site in Ọ̀họrí

The FocP projection here accounts for the focusable constituents that leave a phonetic word item or a copy of itself in the extraction site after merging to the Spec-FocP. These are subject focus, possessor focus, verb focus, and VP focus. The projection below in (24) shows that the constituent that is valued for focus, *Súlè* 'personal name' first raised to the Spec-FocP (the landing site), for specifier feature checking. Straightforwardly, the probe, **li,** merges with the goal, TP, serving as its complement, *ọ́ rha ẹija abọ́rhí lí ànọ́* 'he bought cat fish yesterday', to project Foc'. Foc' later projects FocP. FocP thereafter attracts the valued focus item, *Súlè,* to its specifier position, for maximal projection.

24.   FocP

```
        DP          Foc'
        Súlè        /\
               Foc⁰    TP
               li      /\
                    <Súlè> ọ́ rha ẹija aborhí lí ànọ́
```
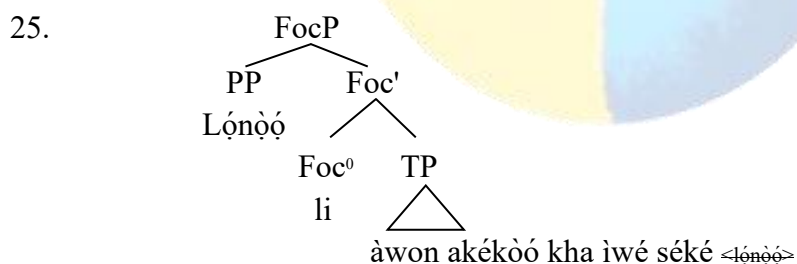
A cursory look at the structural configuration in (24) shows that other focused items in this section align with the representation.

4.2. Projection of the Constituents that leave a gap/non-visible phonetic item in the extraction site in Ọ̀họ̀rí

This section accounts for the projection of the focusable constituents that leave a gap/non-visible phonetic item in the extraction site after merging to the Spec-FocP. These constituents are direct object focus, indirect object focus, adverb focus, PP focus, and conditional clause. The projection below in (25) shows that the constituent that is valued for focus, *lọ́nọ̀ọ́* 'yesterday' first raised by one step to the landing site (Spec-FocP) to check head-specifier agreement feature and deleted immediately from the base structure. Thereafter, the probe, **li** merges with the goal, TP, serving as its complement, *àwọn akẹ́kọ̀ọ́ kha ìwé ṣéké* 'the students read small book', to project Foc' *li àwọn akẹ́kọ̀ọ́ kha ìwé ṣéké*. Foc' later projects FocP. FocP immediately attracts the specifier item, *lọ́nọ̀ọ́* 'yesterday', which yields maximal projection, *lọ́nọ̀ọ́ li àwọn akẹ́kọ̀ọ́ kha ìwé ṣéké* 'the students read small book YESTERDAY.

25.
```
              FocP
             /    \
           PP      Foc'
          Lọ́nọ̀ọ́    /\
               Foc⁰    TP
               li      /\
                   àwọn akẹ́kọ̀ọ́ kha ìwé ṣéké <lọ́nọ̀ọ́>
```

Other items that are valued for focus in this group/section conform with the structural representation in (25). The next section discusses in-situ focus versus (vs) in-situ content question.

5.   In-situ Foci vs In-situ Content Questions in Yorùbá

This section examines in-situ foci vs in-situ content questions in SY. There have been speculations in the literature that focus constructions and content questions have the same structure and that in most cases, answer to content questions is focus construction (Rooth 1996; Kadmon 2001; Jones 2006; Aboh 2010; Aboh & Pfau, 2011; Ilọri 2017; Ọlaogun 2018; among others). In this section, I claim that whenever content question word[7] is in-situ, focus construction, which is the answer, must equally be in-situ, for the sake of parallelism and compatibility. However, internal language evidence shows that in-situ content question and in-situ focus expression are possible in SY, as exemplified in (26) & (27).

Question: 26a.	Táyọ̀	jẹ	[kí	ni]?
	Tayọ	eat	what	FOC
	'Tayo ate WHAT?'			

Answer 1: b.	Táyọ̀	jẹ	[ẹja	ni]
	Tayọ	eat	fish	FOC
	'Tayo ate the FISH.'			

| Answer 2: c. | *[Ẹja | ni] | Táyọ̀ | jẹ |
| | Fish | FOC | Tayọ | eat |

(Ex-situ focus incompatible as answer to (26a))

Question: 27a.	Olùkọ́	ń	pe	[ta	ni]?
	Teacher	PROG	call	who	FOC
	'The teacher is calling WHO?'				

Answer 1: b.	Olùkọ́	ń	pe	[Adé	ni]
	Teacher	PROG	call	Ade	FOC
	'The teacher is calling ADE.'				

| Answer 2: c. | *[Adé | ni] | olùkọ́ | ń | pè |
| | Ade | FOC | teacher | PROG | call |

(Ex-situ focus incompatible as answer to (27a))

To avoid unmatching contextual examples in (26) and (27), the appropriate answer to the question in (26a) is (26b) and not (26c). The same thing in (27). The response in (27b) and never (27c) matches the question in (27a). This is because the questions in (26a) and (27a) and answers in (26b) and (27b) appear contiguously. Such parallelism is compatible in Yorùbá language. If the responses in (26c) and (27c) are considered as answers, they would violate the rule of matching and compatibility in content questions and focus constructions in the language (Barbara et al 2000; Oshodi 2016). I therefore propose that if content question is expressed in-

situ, focus construction (answer/response) should also be in-situ in Yorùbá. The example in (26) can be realised from the following context.

Context 1:   A mother kept two fishes in the kitchen and warned her children (Táyọ̀ and Ṣọlá) not to eat them because they would use the fishes for dinner. Later, Táyọ̀ sneaked to the kitchen and ate part of the fish. Ṣọlá saw Táyọ̀ and reported to their mother. The mother surprisingly and annoyingly said:

---

[7]When content question word and focused constituent occur in clause-initial position, it refers to ex-situ content question and ex-situ focus construction (Kadmon 2001; Jones 2006; among others).

Cf. Question: 28a.   Táyọ̀   jẹ   [kí   ni]?
                                Tayọ   eat   what   FOC
                                'Tayọ ate WHAT?'

Cf. Answer: b.   Táyọ̀   jẹ   [ẹja   ni]
                            Tayọ   eat   fish   FOC
                            'Tayọ ate the FISH.'

The answer in (28b) is an affirmation that *Táyọ̀* actually carried out the action. However, the scenario in (27) can be realised from the context below.

Context 2:   A group of students were playing within the school premises. A teacher asks Bọ́lá to call Adé for him. Bọ́lá went to call Adé but Adé did not hear Bọ́lá.Then, one of the students who was playing asked that:

Cf. Question: 29a.   Olùkọ́   ń   pe [ta   ni]?
                                Teacher   PROG   call   who   FOC
                                'The teacher is calling WHO?'

Cf. Answer: b.   Olùkọ́   ń   pe [Adé   ni]
                            Teacher   PROG   call   Ade   FOC
                            'The teacher is calling ADE.'

I presume that the question in (29a) triggers specificity reading (Akinwande, 2022). Specificity reading in the sense that the students who are playing were many and it is likely that they did not hear that Bọ́lá is calling Adé because they have been carried away with their play/activity. In order to actually pinpoint the fellow that the teacher sent for, the question in (29a) was raised. The answer/response in (29b) is an affirmative reading of whom the teacher is calling, which is *Adé* 'personal name'.

6.   Semantic Interpretations of Focus Constructions in Ọ̀họ̀rí Yorùbá

This section examines semantic interpretations of focus constructions in Ọ̀họ̀rí Yorùbá. Following Hartman and Zimmermann (2009), focus construction can be interpreted in the light of question-answer congruence in Ọ̀họ̀rí Yorùbá. Though, there are other foci that do not require question. I discuss the semantic interpretations of focus constructions below. The Alternative Semantics of Rooth (1992, 1999) is employed here for the analysis.

6.1.   Focus as Answers to Questions

Focus is construed and employed to answer question in Ọ̀họ̀rí and SY. The questioned phrases can be subject, object, adjunct, etc., as shown in (30) & (31).

Context of Question and Answer

Ọ̀họ̀rí

30a.	Lò	li	ọ́	rha	aṣọ	yèé?		[Content Question]
	Who	FOC	3SG.HTS	buy	cloth	DEM		

'WHO bought that cloth?'

b.	Ewémọ̀jẹ̀		lọ́	rha	aṣọ	yèé	[Answer/Focus Construction]
	Ewemọjẹ		FOC-3SG.HTS	buy	cloth	DEM	

'EWEMỌJẸ bought that cloth.'

SY

31a.	Kí	ni	Adé	rà?		[Content Question]
	What	FOC	Ade	buy		

'WHAT did Ade buy?'

b.	Ẹja	ni	Adé	rà	[Answer/Focus Construction]
	Fish	FOC	Ade	buy	

'Ade bought the FISH.'

The questions raised in (30a) & (31a) are open to alternative answers. For example, possible alternative answers to the subject focus/answer in (30b) may be {Ṣọlá, Báyọ̀, Dàda, Ṣadé, etc.}, while the possible alternative answers to the object focus/answer in (31b) may be {meat, egg, catfish, crayfish, etc.}.

6.2.   Alternative Selection

Another interpretation of focus in Ọ̀họ̀rí and SY is alternative selection. By alternative selection, it implies in a set of alternatives, focus picks one and not two. Alternative selection can be realised from the following context.

Context 3:   Ṣadé is a teacher in a Nursery and Primary school.
                    She taught her pupils about identification of animals.
                    To ascertain that the pupils have known it, she drew
                    and labelled each animal in a small card. She asked
                    her pupils to mention the animal they see when she
                    picks a card and raises it up. Then, she picked a card
                    and made the utterance in (32a), while a pupil
                    responded with (32b).

Ọ̀họ̀rí

32a.   Kó   li   o   rhí   {ẹiran,   ẹija,   ọ̀bí   eijò}?   [Content Question]
        What   FOC   2SG   see   goat   fish   CONJ   snake
        'WHAT did you see {goat, fish or snake}?

   b.   Ẹiran   li   mọ̀   rhí   [Focus construction]
        Goat   FOC   1SG   see
        'I saw GOAT.'

SY

33a.   Níbo   ni   o   lọ   {pápá iṣeré, ojà, odò}?   [Content Question]
        Where   FOC   2SG   go   football pitch, market, river
        'WHERE did you go   {football pitch, market, river}?

   b.   Odò   ni   mo   lọ.   [Focus construction]
        River   FOC   1SG   go
        'I went to the RIVER.'

In line with the alternative semantics, out of the three alternatives available in (32a), the focus construction in (32b) picks one, *ẹiran* 'goat'. Similarly, out of the three alternatives available in (33a), the focus construction in (33b) picks one, *odò* 'river'. The scenarios above suggest that in natural language, it may be impossible to focus on two issues at a time but one at a time.

6.3.   Correction/Appropriateness

Focus is interpreted to play the role of correction/appropriateness in Ọ̀họ̀rí and SY. Correction is used in different occasions. It could be when a native speaker of Ọ̀họ̀rí or SY makes mistakes in speech acts by violating the rules of the language or when erroneous expression is asserted. Either of the two, focus is employed to correct such expression(s). This is demonstrated in (34) & (35).

Ọ̀họ̀rí

34.   Speaker A: Ibi   sí   Ẹgbẹ́dá   lọ̀   [Question]

		Where FOC Ẹgbẹda go	
		'WHERE did Ẹgbẹda go?'	
	Speaker B:	Ẹgbẹ́dá lọ oko.	[Declarative Clause]
		Ẹgbẹda go farm	
		'Ẹgbẹda went to the farm.'	
	Speaker C:	Rhárhá, ọjàà li Ẹgbẹ́dá lọ̀	[Focus Construction]
		No market FOC Ẹgbẹda go	
		'No, Ẹgbẹda went to the MARKET.'	

SY

35.	Speaker A:	Kí ni Báyọ̀ rà?	[Question]
		What FOC Bayọ buy	
		'What did Bayọ buy?'	
	Speaker B:	Báyọ̀ ra ìwé	[Declarative Clause]
		Bayọ buy book	
		'Bayọ bought the book.'	
	Speaker C:	Rárá, bíírò ni Báyọ̀ rà.	[Focus Construction]
		No, pen FOC Bayọ buy	
		'Bayọ bought the PEN.'	

The contexts in (34) & (35) show that the speakers B either by error or deliberately answered the question of the speaker in (34a) but the speaker in (34c) is not comfortable with the answer because the speaker in (34b) responded wrongly. Thus, the erroneous answer is being corrected by the speaker in (34c). The presupposition in (34) is that *Ẹgbẹ́dá* must have gone somewhere, which is unknown to speaker B but known to speaker C. In an attempt to guess where *Ẹgbẹ́dá* went, speaker B answered the question wrongly. Speaker C perceived that what speaker B said in not true and quickly corrected it in (34c). In the same vein, the presupposition in (35) is that *Báyọ̀* 'personal name' bought something, which is unknown to speaker B but known to speaker C. In an attempt to guess what *Báyọ̀* bought, speaker B answered the question in (35a) wrongly. Speaker C who knew what *Báyọ̀* bought quickly corrected the answer in (35c). In Alternative Semantics of Rooth (1992, 1999), (34c) and (35c) are the cases of *substitutions* in focus interpretation, where *ọjàà* 'market' is substituted for *oko* 'farm' in (34c), being a correct place that Ẹgbẹ́dá went to. Similarly, *bíírò* 'pen' is substituted for *ìwé* 'book' in (35c), as appropriate item that *Báyọ̀* bought.

6.4. Exclusion

Focus is also construed to perform the role of exclusion in Ọ̀họ̀rí and SY. In a set of alternatives made available, focus rejects all the alternatives (ALT) and picks new alternative outside the available alternatives (ALT), as illustrated in (36) & (37).

Ọ̀họ̀rí

Cf.36a. Ibi   sí   Ẹgbẹ́dá   lọ̀?   [Question]
     Where FOC Ẹgbẹda   go
     'WHERE did Ẹgbẹda go?'

    ALTs: {oko 'farm' odò 'river', nné 'house' ọjàà 'market'}

  b. *Nné-ìwé* lìkan li   Ẹgbẹ́dá lọ̀   [Focus Construction]
    School   only FOC Ẹgbẹda go
    'Ẹgbẹda only went to SCHOOL.'

  SY

37a. Kí   ni   Táyọ̀   rà?   [Question]
   What FOC Tayọ   buy
   'WHAT did Tayọ buy?'

    ALTs: {ọsàn 'orange', ìbẹ́pẹ 'pawpaw', àgbálùmọ́ 'cherry', máńgòrò 'mango'}

  b. Ọ̀gẹ̀dẹ̀ nìkan ni Táyọ̀ rà.   [Focus Construction]
    Banana only FOC Tayọ buy
    'Tayọ only bought BANANA.'

(36b) & (37b) are focus of exclusion. Out of the three alternatives available in (36a), the focus expression in (36b) picks none but picks another one, *nné-ìwé* 'school' which is not among the alternatives provided. Likewise, out of the four alternatives available in (37a), the focus construction in (37b) rejects all of them but picks another one, *ọ̀gẹ̀dẹ̀* 'banana' which is outside the alternatives available. In line with the discussion on Alternative Semantics, 'only' is used to express focus, i.e., giving an exception to a particular item. Thus, the presence of *lìkan* 'only' in (36b) and nìkan 'only' in (37b) express focus of exclusion in Ọ̀họ̀rí and SY.

7.   Conclusion

This study has critically examined focus constructions in Ọ̀họ̀rí Yorùbá. The article discussed focusable constituents in Ọ̀họ̀rí. The paper divided focusable constituents into two - arguments and non-arguments. It discussed the projections of the focusable constituents in Ọ̀họ̀rí. The article continued to propose for in-situ focus constructions vs in-situ content questions in SY.

It claimed that if content question word is in-situ, focused constituent as answer must also be in-situ, for the sake of matching, compatibility, and parallelism. The study finally discussed the semantic interpretations of focus constructions in Ọ̀họ̀rí and SY.

References

Aboh, E.O. (2000). *The Morphosyntax of Complement-Head Sequences: Clause Structure and Word Order Patterns in Kwa*. Oxford University Press.

Aboh, E.O. (2010). The Phonology Syntax Interface. In Enoch Aboh and James Essegbey (eds.). *Topics in Kwa Syntax.* Dordrecht: Springer.

Aboh, E.O. & Pfau, R. (2011). *What's wh-item got to do with it*? Oxford University Press.

Adeniyi, H.R. (2000). *Ìlò Èdè àti Ẹ̀ka-Èdè Yorùbá: Apá Kìíní*. Lagos: Harade Publisher.

Adewole, F. (1991). Heads Without Bars: A Solution to the Problem of Yoruba Focus and Relative Constructions. *Odu, 38*, 19-27.

Adeṣọla, O. (2015). Sentence-final *ni* in Yorùbá. In Ọla-Orie, O., Ilọri, J. F. & Yuka, C. (eds). *Current Research in African Linguistics*. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Ajiboye, O. (2005*). Topics on Yorùbá Nominal Expressions*. PhD Thesis, UBC.

Ajiboye, O. (2006). A Morpho-syntactic Account of *ni* in Mọ̀bà Yorùbá. *Journal of West African Languages,* XIII 2.

Akinlabi, A. & Oyebade, F. (1987). Lexical and Post Lexical Rule Application Vowel Deletion in Yorùbá. *Journal of West African Languages, 17*, 23-42.

Akinwande, O. (2022). On the Categorial Status of (*è*)*wo* in Yorùbá. Proceedings of 34th Western Conference on Linguistics, California State University, Fresno.

Awobuluyi, O. (1978). *The Essentials of Yorùbá Grammar.* Oxford University Press, Nigeria.

Awobuluyi, O. (1987). Focus Constructions as Noun Phrases: A Reply. *Journal of the Yoruba Studies Association of Nigeria, 1*, 73-87.

Awobuluyi, O. (1988). Aspect of Contemporary Standard Yorùbá in Dialectological Perspective. J.F. Ọdunjọ Memorial Lectures Organizing Committee, Lagos.

Awobuluyi, O. (1992). Aspects of Contemporary Standard Yorùbá in Dialectological Perspective. *New Findings in Yorùbá Studies,*1-79.

Awobuluyi, O. (2001). *Mọfólójì Èdè Yorùbá*. In Babajide Ajayi (Ed.)., Ẹ̀kọ́ Ìjìnlẹ̀ Yorùbá: Ẹ̀dá-Èdè, Lítíréṣò̩, àti Àṣà. Ìjẹbú-Òde: Shebiotimo Publications.

Awobuluyi, O. (2013). *Ẹ̀kọ́ Gírámà Èdè Yorùbá.* Atman Limited, Oṣogbo.

Awobuluyi, O. (2016). *Ẹ̀kọ́ Ìṣẹ̀dá-Ọ̀rọ̀ Yorùbá*. Kingdom Arts Publishing, Ibadan.

Awoyale, Y. (1990). Focus as an Unbounded Movement Rule in Yorùbá. *JOLAN, 3*(2), 75-83.

Barbara, H. et al (2000). Case Matching and Relative Clause Attachment. *Journal of Psycholinguistic Research, 29*(1), 81-88.

Bámgbóṣé, A. (1990). *Fonọ́lójì àti Gírámà Yorùbá*. University Press Plc.

Bisang, W. & Sonaiya, R. (1999). 'The Functional Motivation of High Tone Syllable in Yorùbá'. *JALL, 20*, 1-9.

Bisang, W. & Sonaiya, R. (2000). Information Structuring in Yorùbá. *Linguistics, 38*(1), 169-197.

Carstens, V. (2008). DP in Bantu and Romance. In the Bantu-Romance Connection: A Comparative Investigation of Verbal Agreement, DPs, and Information Structure. Amsterdam, 131-166.

Carstens, V. (2017). Noun-to-Determiner Movement. *In the Blackwell Companion to Syntax.* 2, 2758-2783.

Chafe, W. (1976). Givenness, Contrastiveness, Definitiveness, Subject Topics, and Point of View. In Li, C. N. (Ed.), *Subject and Topic*, New York Academic Press.

Chomsky, N. (1995). *Minimalist Program*. MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass.

Chomsky, N. (1998). The Minimalist Enquiries: The Framework. MIT. *Occasional Papers in Linguistics*, *15*, 30-75.

Chomsky, N. (2002). *On Nature and Language*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Culioli, A. (1990). *Pour Une Linguistique de Lenonciation. Tome1*: Operations et Representations. Paris: Ophrys.

Dechaine, R. M. (1993). Serial Verb Constructions. In J. Jacobs, A. von Stechow, W. Sternefeld, & T. Vennemann (Eds.), *Syntax*: An International Handbook of Contemporary Research, 799-825.

Dechaine, R. M. & Manfredi, V. (1995). Cohabitation of Syntax and Phonology. Paper Presented at HILP2, Universiteit van, Amsterdam.

Dechaine, R. M. (2002). Decomposing Focus: Evidence from Yorùbá. In Jones (Ed.), *Papers in Linguistics*, *46*(8), 143-160.

De Vries, G. (1992). *On Coordination and Ellipsis*. Doctoral Thesis, Katholiek University, Brabant.

Delin, J. L. (1989). *Cleft Construction in Discourse*. PhD Thesis, University of Edinburgh.

Erteschik-Shir, N. (2007). *Information Structure: The Syntax-Discourse Interface*. Oxford University Press, New York.

Eleshin, A.A. (2017). *A Unified Analysis of Nominalization in Yorùbá Language*. PhD Dissertation, University of Lagos.

Geluykens, R. (1984). Focus Phenomena in English: An Empirical Investigation into Cleft and Pseudo-Cleft Sentences. *Technical Report*, 36.

Givon, T. (1976). Topic, Pronoun and Agreement. In C. Li (ed.). *Subject and Topic,* 149-188.

Halliday, M. A. (1967). Notes on Transitivity and Theme in English: Part 2. *Journal of Linguistics, 3*, 199-244.

Hartmann, K. & Zimmermann, M. (2009). Morphological Focus Marking in Gùrùǹtùm. *Lingual, 119*(9).

Ilọri, J. F. (2017). Interrogative Projections in Yoruboid Languages. *Journal of West African Languages*, *44*(1), 1-17.

Jones, S. (2006). Focus in Yorùbá: A Semantic/Pragmatic Account. *Papers in Linguistics*, *46*(8), 143-160.

Kadmon, N. (2001). *Formal Pragmatics: Semantics, Pragmatics, Presupposition, and Focus.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Kayne, R. S. (1994). *The Antisymmetry of Syntax.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Lambrecht, K. (1994). *Information Structure and Sentence Form: Topic, Focus, and the Mental Representation Discourse Referents.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lawal, N.S. (1987). Yorùbá Relativization and Continuous Segment Principle. *Studies in African Linguistics*, *18*(1), 67-79.

Owolabi, K. (1981). *Focus Constructions as Noun Phrases*: A Critique presented at the Linguistics and Nigerian Languages, Seminar of the Department of Linguistics and Nigerian Languages, University of Ibadan.

Oṣhodi, B. (2016). Question Formation and Focus Construction in Ọ̀wọ̀: a Yorùbá Dialect. *Macro Linguistics*, *4*(4).

Ọlaogun, S. (2018). Yes/No and Wh-Question in Ǹjò-kóó: A Unified Analysis. *Corela Cognition, Représentation Language, 16*(1).

Pulleyblank, D & Akinlabi, A. (1988). Phrasal Phonology in Yorùbá. *Lingua, 74*, 141-166.

Prince, A. S. (1981). *Toward a Theory of Feature Structure in Phonology*. Indiana University Linguistics Club.

Quirk, L. & Svartvik, M. (1985). *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English language*. London, Longman.

Radford, A. (2001). *Syntactic Theory and the Structure of English*. Cambridge University Press.

Rizzi, L. (1997). The Fine Structure of Left Periphery. In Liliane Haegeman (Ed.), *Element of Grammar*, Dordrecht, Kluwer, 89-110.

Rizzi, L. (2001). Relativized Minimality Effects. In Baltin and Colins (Eds.), *Element of Grammar*, Dordrecht, Kluwer, 85-115.

Rizzi, L. (2003). Locality and Left Periphery. In Belletti (Ed.), *Structures and Beyond: The Cartography of Syntactic.* Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Rooth, M. (1992). A theory of Focus Interpretation. *Natural Language Semantics*, *1*(1), 75-116.

Rooth, M. (1996). *Focus*. In The Handbook of Contemporary Semantic Theory. Oxford, Blackwell.

Rooth, M. (1999). Association with Focus or Association with Presupposition? In Peter Bosch and Rob Van der Sandt (eds.), *Focus,* 232-244.

Rooth, M. (2005). Scope Disambiguation by Ellipsis and Focus without Scope Economy. In Paul Dekker and Michael Franke (eds.), *Proceedings of Amsterdam Colloquium,* ILLC University of Amsterdam.

Rooth, M. (2015). Replication Data for Alternative Semantics. *Harvard Data Verse Network,* Dx.doi.org/10.7910/DVN/29158

Sanusi, I. O. (2002). A Survey of Subject Agreement Markers in selected African Languages. *Alore, 12*(5), 55-75.

Sonaiya, R. & Bisang, W. (2003). *Left of Focus – Insights on Topic and Information Structure from the Perspective of Yorùbá.* Leiden University Press, Netherlands.

Stalker, J. C. (1976). *The Structure of the English Noun Phrase.* PhD Dissertation, University of Edinburgh.

Takano, Y. (2003). Nominative Objects in Japanese Complex Predicate Constructions: A Prolepsis Analysis. *Journal of Natural language and Linguistic Theory*, *21*, 779-834.

Van der Wal, J. (2025). *On the Expression of Information Structure in Bantu.* Leiden University Press, Netherlands.

Yusuf, O. (1990). Yorùbá Copula *ni. Journal of West African Linguistics, 20*(1), 83-93.

Oyelaran, O.O. (1976). Linguistic Speculations of Yorùbá History. In O. Oyelaran (ed.), Seminar Series 1, Pp. 624-651. Ife: Department of African Languages and Literatures.