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Aspects of the structure of the determiner phrase in Igbo

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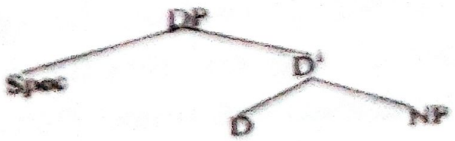
This paper investigates the structure of the Determiner Phrase (DP) in Igbo, a Benue-Congo language spoken in southeastern Nigeria. It aims at examining the demonstratives and some other classes of determiners and other constituents of the DP in the language; describing the sequential order of elements within it. It was found that the proximate and distal demonstratives, ọ and ahụ found in the language also combine with some other nominal in the language to form the demonstrative pronouns and the locational demonstrative adverbs. It was found that these demonstratives do not occur in isolation in response to a question as it is attested in most languages, but must take nke and ndị, the former for singular and the latter for plural.

Introduction

The DP has been an object of study by various linguists since the 1980s, following the proposal of extending x-bar theory to functional categories. Abney (1987) and Szabolsci (1989) proposed that nouns, like verbs, must also project functional structure. The DP represents the extended, and maximal, projection of the lexical head, the noun (Bernstein, 2001). DP takes an NP complement in the DP Hypothesis. The DP structure proposed



Abney argues that the determiner is a lexical instantiation of inflection in the NP, in the same way as the modals, tense/aspect markers in English can be taken as the lexical instantiation of the functional head Infl. Bernstein (2001) demonstrated that there are morphological, syntactic and semantic arguments for adopting a DP structure, recalling the sorts of argument made for IP/CP in the clausal domain.

Aboh (2010) claims that the noun phrase has a sentence-like inflection node (D). All determiners (e.g. demonstratives, articles) first merge under D, and word order variations in languages result from N-to-D

movement, the nominal counterpart of V-to-I movement. From the minimalist viewpoint where movement are motivated by the need for certain features to be checked, Bernstein (1993) argues that N-stem raising to functional heads in the DP is motivated by the need for it to check its morphological features in Romance languages. Her argument is that N movement alone is not adequate to account for the cross linguistic variations in the DP: thereby proposing a functional phrase corresponding to NumP in Romance.

Accounting for the postnominal order of adjectives, and some other modifiers, Fassi (1999) assumes that this is derived by assuming Kayne's (1994)antisymmetrical left movement. This movement, he argues are motivated by the presence of strong features at d namely case, definiteness, gender and number. Aboh (2004) with his work on the structure of DP in Gungbe, a Gbe language proposes that the surface order of the DP is arrived at by moving the whole of the inflectional nominal domain cyclically through the spec of NumP and DP respectively. This movement is necessitated by the need for the N to check its [±plural] and [±specific] features at Num^0 and D^0 respectively, assuming a Split–D hypothesis. The DP–hypothesis with its potential of accounting for the various word orders of the languages of the world has proven to be more complex. Several functional phrases are argued to occur in the structure of the DP including QP, AP, NumP, DemP etc. application of this hypothesis to languages has actually witnessed modifications without affecting the central idea (Sulemana, 2012).

This paper is structured as follows. In the remainder of the introduction, a brief background on the Igbo language is provided. In section 2, the order of nominal modifiers is discussed as well as the movement operation that occurs to give the right order. Section 3 examines how specificity is expressed in Igbo with the use of the demonstratives. Section 4 concludes.

Igbo

Igbo belongs to the Kwa language family going by Greenberg's (1963a) classification. These languages alongside some other Kwa languages were grouped together and named West Benue-Congo by Blench (1989), and together with the East Benue-Congo make up the Proto-Benue-Congo. The language is spoken mainly in south eastern Nigeria.

Igbo is a tonal-accent language with two distinctive tones; high (H) marked with (´) and low (L) marked with (`). The language also has a downstep tone (Igwe, 1999). Aboh (2010) describes the downstep as one of the complicated tonal situations which occurs in Kwa languages with only two basic-level tones. The following examples show how tone distinguishes lexical items.

(1) a. òkέ 'rat'
b. ókέ 'male'
c. òkè 'share'
d. ókè 'boundary'

The word order in Igbo is SVO, as shown in (2).

(2) a. Àdá hụ̀rụ̀ Ńgózí.
Ada see-PST Ngozi
'Ada saw Ngozi.'
b. Ó gòtèrè akwá níile áhụ̀.
3SG bought egg all DEM
'He/She bought all those eggs.'

Igbo has determiners are other nominal modifiers as in example (2b) above, where the object NP is being modified by the quantifier *níile* and the demonstrative *áhụ̀*.

Order of nominal modifiers

Cinque (2005) noted that the universal order of merge pronominally if nothing moves is:

[Dem… [Num…[A… [N]]]]

The word order variations within DP across languages are fundamentally a function of how (different phrases containing) the NP move up the structure. According to him, what triggers the movement of the NP (with or without pied-piping) within the DP is licensing. Each of the phrase within the DP, that is, DemP, NumP, AP etc. need to be endowed with a nominal feature to be licensed (i.e., to count as part of the extended projection of

NP).

The different types of movement that have been proposed in the literature to account for languages that have the NP complement preceding the D are either N movement to D (Bernstein, (1993); Longobardi, (1994), or NP movement to spec DP (Aboh, 2004; Cinque, 2005).

(3) a. DP
D NP
N_i -D $t_{i[+SG]}$

b. DP
$NP_{[+DEF]}$ D'
D <NP>
[+DEF] [+SG]

The structure in (3a) involves N movement to D in which case D is a suffix on N while structure (3b) is NP movement to spec DP. Aboh (2004) argues that the Gbe languages lack inflectional morphology compared to the Romance languages where N-raising is prevalent. The absence of inflectional morphology on the noun should be regarded as a sign of the lack of N-raising in there languages.

Cinque (2005) and Aboh (2004) propose that each of the modifiers within the DP are hosted by func tional projections and intervene between the DP and NP. In the with this, the NP raises in two ways to arrive at the postnominal orders: either the NP moves from Spec to Spec (cyclically) or moves successively in a roll-up fashion through the Spec positions and pied-piping the modifiers to arrive at the postnominal order (Cinque 2005 : 317–318).

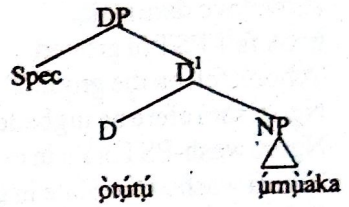
NP-movement

In the cases of some D head that do not involve movement, we assume that the D do not trigger movement of the NP to SpecD position. The NP is in-situ.

(4) a. ótù ákwà
one cloth
'one (piece of) clothe'

b. ụfọ́dụ mmádụ
some person
'some people'

c. ọtụ̀tụ̀ ụmụ̀aka
many children
'many children'



The common order of the constituents within the DP is that where the NP precedes the modifiers in the structure. This is shown in the following.

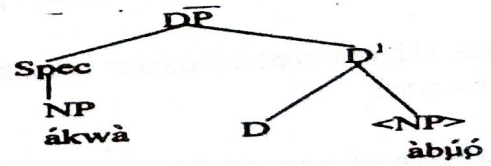
(5) a. Há hụ̀rụ̀ àkpà ọ́má atọ́.
3PL saw-PST bag beautiful three
'They saw three beautiful bags.'

b. Ó gòtèrè àkwá níile áhụ̀.
3SG bought egg all DEM
'He/She bought all those eggs.'

c. ákwà àbụ́ọ́
clothe two
'two(pieces of) clothes'

The structure for (5c) above where the noun occurs before the modifier is thus:

(6)



The NP complement of D is moved to Spec-D position to arrive at the order of noun preceding the modifiers.

(In)definite marking

Aboh (2010) notes that Kwa languages display bare nouns in a variety of contexts where Germanic and Romance languages will require a DP that includes a determiner.

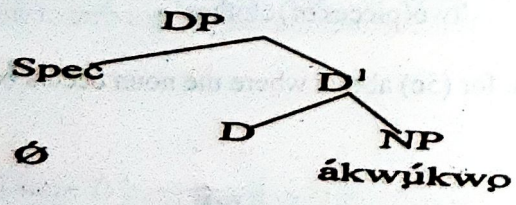
(7) a. Ákwukwo dàrà n'ala.
book fall-PST in ground
'A book fell on the ground.'

b. Ngózí sàrà éfére na mgbèdè.
Ngozi wash-PSTplate in evening.
'Ngozi washed the plate in the evening.'

c. Égbé nà-èbú ọkụ́kụ̀.
hawkPROG-carry chicken
'(The) Hawk carries chicken.' (Hawks-like chicks.)

The above sentences show that bare nouns can occur in any syntactic position in Igbo sentences. The bare nouns in (7a) in the subject position and the nouns in (7c) are interpreted as indefinite. However, the other bare nouns in the sentences (7a&b) and interpreted as definite. The NP complement of the preposition in (7a) refers to a unique entity 'the ground', thus it takes the definite article in English. The distinction between definiteness and indefiniteness is not usually marked with an overt determiner in Igbo.

(8)



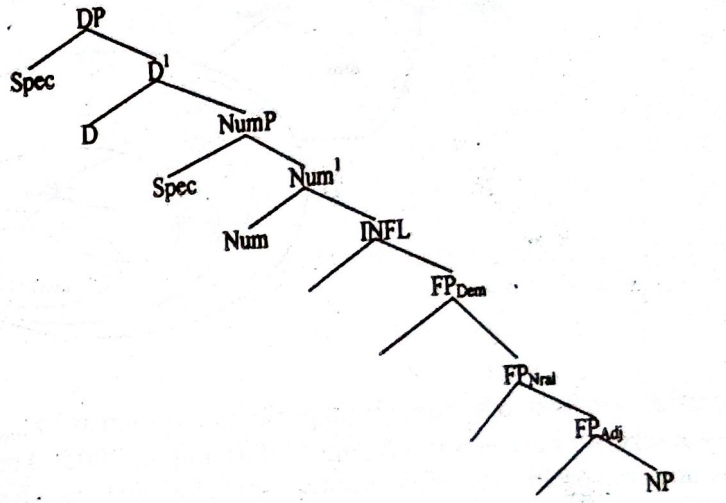
The bare nouns with non-overt determiners have the above structure in which the D head is null.

Noun-adjective-numeral-demonstrative sequence in Igbo

Of the four major patterns of order of nominal modifiers found in the world's languages (Hawkins, 1983), the pattern where the modifiers follow the noun is the order found in Igbo, Yoruba and the Kwa languages (Aboh, 2010). Assuming Kayne's (1994) antisymmetricity and the order

specifier-head-complement is universal, it has been proposed that the order Noun-Adjective-Numeral-demonstrative is derived from the pattern where the modifiers precede the noun as found in Germanic languages (Cinque, 1994; Aboh, 2004). The basic DP structure as proposed is thus:

(9)

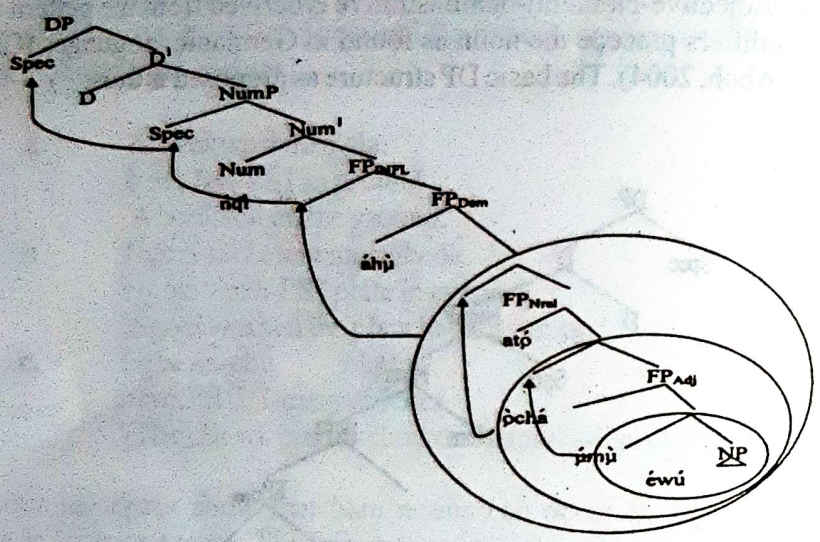


(Aboh 2010:25)

The order found in Kwa languages are arrived at through snowballing and cyclic movement.

(10) a. ẹ́wú ọ́chá atọ́ áhụ̀
goat white three DEM
'those three white goats'

b. ụ́mụ̀ ńnùnù ójí a
children (PL) bird black DEM
'these black birds'



The modifiers are hosted by functional projections (such as FP_{Dem}.FP_{Nral}etc.) and they intervene between the DP and NP (Cinque, 2005; Aboh, 2004). The postnominal order of modifiers above are achieved through successive roll-up (i.e., snowballing movement) derivation through the Spec positions and the cyclic movement to Spec NumP and Spec DP to arrive at the postnominal order.

The expression of specificity

Demonstratives occur post-nominally within the DP. The only element that are found after the demonstrative in the order noun-adjective-numeral-demonstratives is the quantifier *níile, dụ̀m*. The quantifiers can appear either before or after the DEM with an appreciable difference.

(11) a. ákwúkwo áhụ̀ níile
book DEM all
'all those books'

b. éwú níile áhụ̀
goat all DEM
'all those goats'

c. àkwá níile áhụ̀ dụ̀m
egg all DEM all
'all those eggs in their entirety (Emenanjo, 1978)

There is the proximal demonstrative *a* and the distal *áhụ̀*.

(12) a. nkíta a
dog DEM
'this dog'

b. ázụ̀ áhụ
fish DEM
'that fish'

These two demonstratives do not stand alone in response to a question or to replace an NP. The particle *nkè* which is interpreted as singular and *ndí* plural is used before the demonstratives. Consider the following conversation between two people:

Speaker A: Ákwà **a** màrà mma.
clothe DEM ICV-PST beautiful
'This (piece of) clothe is beautiful.'
Speaker B: **Nke a** kà mma.
---- DEM exceed beautiful
'This is more beautiful.' (This is better.)
Speaker A: Lee **ndí áhụ̀** di n'élu.
look ---DEM be in up
'Look at those (ones) above.'
Speaker B: **Ndí áhụ̀** di mma.
--- DEM be good.
'Those ones are good.'

Following Diessel's (1999) distribution and categorical status of demonstratives, I argue that the elementswhich are number sensitive and that combine with the demonstratives *a* and *áhụ̀* are pronominals. According to Amfo (2007), demonstrative is pronominal when it occurs independently in argument positions of verbs, as in (13)

(13) I like **this**.

When it occurs with a noun in a noun phrase, as in *this book* in (14), then it is adnominal.

(14) I have **this book.**

Nkè and *ndí* above co-occur with demonstratives *a* and *áhụ̀*. Apart from this, the demonstratives also combine with the noun *ébé* 'place' to form the locational demonstrative adverbs as shown in (15) below.

(15) a. Ọ́ bịàrà ébé a taa.
3SG come-PST place DEM today
'He/she came here today.'

b. Ọ́ gàrà ébé áhụ̀ ụ̀yánhụ̀.
3SG go-PST place DEM yesterday
'He/she came here today.'

Nkè and *ndí* do not only co-occur with the demonstratives, they also occur independently as illustrated in (16).

(16) a. Kèdú **nkè/ndị́** ichọ̀rọ̀?
Kèdú2SG want
'Which one do you want?'

b. Áchọ̀rọ̀ m **nkè** àbụ́ọ.
Want 1SG two
'I want the second (one).'

Example (16a) shows *nkè* in a *kèdú wh*-question construction, one of the *wh*-question constructions found in the language. *Kèdú* usually combine with NPs in this kind of *wh* construction (Goldsmith, 1981).

(17) a. Kèdú ébé ọ́ nà-àgá?
Kèdú place 3SG PROG-go
'Where is he/she going?'

b. Kèdú ónyé í hụ̀rụ́?
Kèdú person 2SG see-PST
'Who did you see?'

In example (16b), *nkè* combines with cardinal numerals to form ordinals.

From the above, it is seen that *nkè* and *ndi*occur in nominal positions, and also alongside with demonstratives, our argument is that they are not only nominal in nature but also inherently marked for number depending on their context in a construction.

Distal demonstrative as specificity marker

(18) a. Ákwụ́kwo áhụ̀ m nyèrè gi di ọ́hụ́rụ.
book DEM 1SGgive-PST 2SG be new
'That/The book I gave you is new.'

b. Ọ́nyé nkúzí gòsìrì ányí ákwụ́kwọNgózí sì nà ọ́ gà-egó ákwụ́kwo áhụ́.
person teach showed 3PL book Ngozi say COMP 3SG FUT-buy book DEM
'The teacher showed us a book and Ngozi said she is going to buy the/(that) book.'

c. Ńgózí sì nà ọ́ gà-egó ákwụ́kwọ.
Ngozi say COMP 3SG FUT-buy book
'Ngozi said that she will buy a/some book(s).'

In sentences (18a-b) the distal demonstrative *ahu* is used to indicate specificity of the noun *ákwụ́kwọ*. This shows that this demonstrative do not only function as a pointing word in Igbo. It is also used to indicate specificity or and definiteness of a noun. In sentence (18b), it is interpreted that it is the specific book that the teacher showed (probably the class) that *Ngozi* is going to buy, not any book as interpreted in sentence (18c).

The Igbo language do not have any marker of definiteness such as Yoruba postnominal particle *náà* (Ajiboye, 2005) or Gungbe determiner *lɔ́* (Aboh, 2004; 2010).The distal demonstrative seems to perform the function of marking specificity and definiteness in Igbo as against what we have in Yoruba and Gungbe in which case there are the distal demonstratives *yẹn* and *ehè* and the determiners *náà* and *lɔ́* respectively. In sentences, where *áhụ̀* appears, it is either that it is serving as a deixis (pointing out an entity) or it is understood as indicating specificity. When the noun occurs in its bare form or with modifiers other than the demonstrative, it is interpreted as indefinite(generic) or definite depending on the context.

We could postulate that the distal demonstrative is the same as the definite determiner in Igbo. This is the case with Akan's *no* which is specific/definite and its use indicates that the entity to which the NP refers is away from the speaker/place of utterance in time and space(i.e. it is distal) (see Amfo, 2007 and Saah, 2010).

Conclusion

This paper has been concerned with the structure of the DP in Igbo, and also particular with the class of determiners in the language. Determiners in the language are found to appear post-nominally, but there are some few exceptions as exemplified in (4). The post-nominal order of the modifiers within the DP are realized through snowballing and cyclic movement assuming the fact that Kayne's (1994) antisymmetricity and the order specifier-head-complement is universal. The paper further considers how specificity is marked with the demonstratives in the language.The proximal demonstrative*a* and the distal *ahụ* are the two demonstratives found in the language. These two demonstratives do not stand alone as response to questions but must be combined with some particles which are number sensitive. These particles are argued to be pronominals. The distal demonstrative is shown to also be the definite marker in the language.

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De la traduction des pidgins et des 'nigerianismes' dans la litterature Nigeriane contemporaine

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La majorité de théoriciens et praticiens qui ont abordé la question de la traduction des pidgins et des créoles dans la littérature africaine ont préconisé une approche cibliste, bien que reconnaissant l'inexistence de langues ayant le même statut et la même connotation que ces pidgins et créoles dans plusieurs cultures d'arrivée - en l'occurrence dans la communauté francophone. Cet article prend le contre pied de l'école cibliste. Il argue que vu la relative impossibilité de trouver des pidgins en français ayant le même statut et la même connotation, une traduction sourcière des pidgins et des créoles s'impose. Prenant particulièrement le cas du Nigerian pidgin, l'article tente de démontrer qu'en procédant par un littéralisme intelligent, consistant à faire usage de l'emprunt (complémenté par des explications en bas de page ou des glossaires en fin d'œuvre), le traducteur pourrait bien rester fidèle à la visée stylistique de l'emploi des pidgins nigérians (l'ethnocentrisme et la domestication du texte littéraire de départ). Le texte d'arrivée pourrait présenter une relative étrangeté et un exotisme. Cet exotisme serait néanmoins surmonté par les éclaircissements apportés par des notes et explications en bas de page ou des glossaires en fin de traduction.

***Mots clés** : Pidgins, créoles, ciblisme, traduction sourcière, littérature Nigériane, Nigérianisme, domestication, ethnocentrisme*

Majority of theoricians and practisioners who have addressed the question of translation of pidgin and creole languages in African literature have recommended a target centred approach of translation; although they acknowledge the non-existence of languages that have the same status and connotations as these pidgin and creole languages in many target cultures, especially in French speaking communities. This article takes the opposing view of the ciblist school of thought. It argues that in view of the relative difficulty in finding pidgin French languages that share the same status and connotations, a translation becomes imperative. With particular reference