



WCCFL-43, UW
April 25-27, 2025

A parametric view on exclusive focus particles

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D- vs. A-quantification

- Two basic apparatuses of natural language meaning
 - #1 **D-quantification** (e.g., *every, some, ...*) vs. **Adfocal only**
 - #2 **A-quantification** (e.g., *always, sometimes, ...*) vs. **Adverbial only**
- (1) a. John gave **only**_{adfoc} MARY a book.
b. John **only**_{adv} gave MARY a book.
- Recent attempts to **reduce** D- to A-quantification
 - Universal, existential, negation, ... (Kratzer 2005; Szabolcsi 2017, 2024)
 - Prominent view on exclusives: the **Operator-Particle approach**
 - OP_{EXCL} [VP ... Prt -XP_F] (Lee 2005; Quek & Hirsch 2017; Bassi et al. 2022; Sun 2021; Branan & Erlewine 2023; Aremu 2024; i.a.)
 - A-quantifier/operator “concord” particles
- Claim: this view is too strong and cannot be universal.
 - Both D- and A- quantification strategies are available for exclusives, but the choice is **parameterized** in languages
 - Systematic variations in **exclusive doubling**
 - Parallels the typology of **negative concord** (Biberauer & Zeijlstra 2012)

Exclusive doubling

- Doubling of adverbial & adfocal particles with the **same focus association in Vietnamese** [VN] & **Yoruba** [YO]
(VN: Hole 2013, 2017, Erlewine 2017, Sun 2021, Yip 2023; YO: Yip & Adedeji 2024)
 - VN Data: fieldwork in Vietnam (HN, HCM, DL) with 33 spkrs; YO: Y&A 2024
- (2) Nam **chỉ** [VP tặng hoa cho [mỗi Lan_F]].
Nam only give flower to only Lan
‘Nam only gave flowers to *Lan*.’
- (3) Bòdé **kàn** [VP fún [Adé_F **nikan**] ní ìwé].
Bode only give Ade only SEC book
‘Bode only gave *Ade* the book.’
- Apparent syntax-semantic mismatch
 - cannot** both be carrying exclusive semantics
 - **Which one** carries the exclusive semantics?
- Spoiler: **Vietnamese adverbial chỉ = A-quantifier**
Yoruba adfocal nikan = D-quantifier

A four-way typology

- Exclusives encoded on: (i) Adv; (ii) Adfoc; (iii) both; (iv) neither (but on null OP)
 - Borne out! → Also displays parallelism with negative concord (Biberauer & Zeijlstra 2012)
- Typology of exclusive doubling
- Typology of negative concord
- Type I: doubling, adverbial particle = OP_{EXCL}
 OP_{EXCL} [VP ... Prt -XP_F] (Vietnamese, English)
- Type II: doubling, adfocal particle = Qu_{EXCL}
 Prt [VP ... Qu_{EXCL} -XP_F] (Yoruba)
- Type III: doubling, OP_{EXCL} = null
 OP_{EXCL} -∅ ... Prt [VP ... Prt -XP_F] (Kasem)
- Type IV: no doubling, with OP_{EXCL} & Qu_{EXCL}
 OP_{EXCL} [VP ... Qu_{EXCL} -XP_F] (Mandarin)
- Non-strict NC, only negative markers are negative (Spanish, Italian, ...)
 $Neg_{[iNEG]}$ [VP ... $n_{[iNEG]}$ -NP]
- Only N-words are negative (Afrikaans A)
 $Neg_{[iNEG]}$ [VP ... $n_{[iNEG]}$ -NP]
- Strict NC, Neg markers & N-words are non-negative (Czech, Serbo-Croatian, Afrikaans B)
 $OP_{-[iNEG]}$ -∅ ... $Neg_{[iNEG]}$ [VP ... $n_{[iNEG]}$ -NP]
- DN languages: Neg markers & N-words are negative (Dutch, Swedish, ...)
 $Neg_{[iNEG]}$ [VP ... $n_{[iNEG]}$ -NP]
- Kasem: single ‘only’ reading with 2 Adfoc; ellipsis bleeds wide scope → Type III (contra. Aremu 2024)
- Mandarin: doubling disallowed → Type IV (contra. Sun 2021)

Differential semantic import: parametric variations

1 Backward association

- Cross-linguistically robust pattern: adverbial *only* must **c-command its focus associate and cannot associate “backward”** with a moved focus (Jackendoff 1972; Tancredi 1990’s Principle of Lexical Association; Erlewine 2014, i.a.)
Compare: Mary only saw *this dog_F* vs. #*This dog_F* Mary only saw. (only verbal focus possible, different truth conditions)
- Vietnamese: No** backward association for adverbial **chỉ**. **Yoruba: Possible** for preverbal **kàn**!
- (4)a. Hôm qua Nam **chỉ** ăn **mỗi** [thịt bò]_F. yesterday Nam only eat only beef.
‘Nam only ate BEEF yesterday.’
b. *Hôm qua (**mỗi**) [thịt bò]_F Nam (**mới**) **chỉ** ăn __. yesterday only beef Nam just only eat
Int.: ‘Nam only ate *beef* yesterday.’
- (5)a. Akín **kàn** se German_F. Akin only do German
‘Akin only took *German*.’
b. [German]_F (**nikan**) ni Akín **kàn** se __. German only FOC Akin only do
‘It is only *German* that Akin took.’

2 Multiple association

- Multiple foci: an exclusive operator is expected to establish **independent focus association**
- Vietnamese: Possible** for adverbial **chỉ**. **Yoruba: Preverbal kàn’s association depends on nikan!**
- (6) **Mỗi** [Minh]_F (là) Nam **chỉ** tặng [hoa hồng]_F (thôi). only Minh COP Nam only give rose SFP.only Ade only FOC 3SG only HAB-PROG read
‘M. is the only one who N. only gave *rose* to.’
(N. gave rose and lavender to other people.)
- (7) [Adé]_{F1} **nikan** ni ó {i. **kàn**} máa-ń ka [àwọn iwé Gẹ̀gẹ̀sì]_{F2} {ii. **nikan**}. PL book English only
i. ‘A. is the only person who reads En. books.’
ii. ‘Only A. only reads En. books.’

3 Scopal interaction with negation

- The scope of ‘only’ with other operators should be determined by the position of the “carrier” of exclusive semantics
- Vietnamese: Scope determined by adverbial chỉ.** **Yoruba: Preverbal kàn’s position to Neg does not affect scope!**
- (8) a. Nam **chỉ** **không** học **mỗi** [tiếng Pháp]_F. Nam only not learn only French
‘Nam only does not learn French.’ (only>¬)
b. Nam **không** **chỉ** ăn **mỗi** [tiếng Pháp]_F. Nam not only learn only French
‘Nam does not only learn French.’ (¬>only)
- (9) a. **kì-í** se German_F (**nikan**) ni Adé **kàn** se __. NEG do German only FOC Ade only do
‘It is not only German that A. takes.’ (¬>only)
b. German_F (**nikan**) ni Adé **kò** **kàn** se __. German only FOC Ade NEG only do
‘It is only German that A. didn’t take.’ (only>¬)

4 Wide scope under ellipsis

- Exclusive operators cannot associate into ellipsis site; whereas Quantifier Raising (QR) survives ellipsis (Han & Romero 2004; Beaver and Clark 2008; Bassi et al. 2022) (Sag 1976; Fox 2000; Bassi et al. 2022)
- Vietnamese: Ellipsis bleeds wide scope adfocal mỗi.** **Yoruba: Wide scope adfocal nikan survives ellipsis!**
- (10) Nam có thể mang **mỗi** [rượu vang]_F. Nam may bring only wine
i. ‘It’s allowed that Nam only brings wine.’ (may>only)
ii. ‘Nam may only bring wine.’ (only>may)
... Lan cũng có thể.
Lan also may
ONLY: ‘... It is also allowed that Lan only brings wine.’ (may>only, *only>may) [VN]
- (11) Olùkò nàà gba John láàyè [látí se German_F **nikan**]. teacher the permit John give.chance to do German only
i. ‘The teacher allows John to only take German.’ (permit>only)
ii. ‘The teacher only allows John to take German.’ (only>permit)
... Olùkò gba Mary nàà láàyè.
teacher permit Mary as.well give.chance
i. ‘The teacher also allows M. to only take Ger.’
ii. ‘The teacher also only allows M. to take Ger.’

Selected references • Bassi, Hirsch & Trinh. 2022. Pre-DP only is a propositional operator at LF: a new argument from ellipsis. *SALT* 32, 814–830. • Beaver & Clark. 2008. *Sense and Sensitivity: How Focus Determines Meaning*. • Branan & Erlewine. 2023. Anti-pied-piping. *Language* 99 (3): 603–653. • Biberauer & Zeijlstra. 2012. Negative Concord in Afrikaans: filling a typological gap. *JoS* 29 (3): 345–371. • Erlewine. 2014. Movement out of focus. PhD diss., MIT. • Erlewine. 2017. Vietnamese focus particles and derivation by phase. *JEAL* 26 (4): 325–349. • Quek & Hirsch. 2017. Severing focus form and meaning in Standard and Colloquial Singapore English. *NELS* 47, 15–24. • Yip & Adedeji. 2024. A quantifier-particle approach to exclusive focus particles in Yorùbá. Ms., Yale University. <https://lingbuzz.net/lingbuzz/008470>