

THE UNIVERSITY OF YAOUNDE I

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DEPARTMENT OF AFRICAN
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DEPARTEMENT DE LANGUES
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INFORMATION STRUCTURE

AND

THE BASA'A LEFT PERIPHERAL SYNTAX

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the
Award of a Ph.D. in Linguistics

by

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(English/ French)

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DEDICATED TO

Jesus Christ, the source of all Knowledge and Wisdom

MY BELOVED FATHER & MOTHER,

Jéremie BASSONG & Colette LOKI for EVERYTHING,

MY BELOVED AND CHERISHED GRANDMOTHERS & UNCLE,

LATE

†Généviève NGASSA, Mrs. †Téclaire BASSONG & †Fils Bienvenu BIYA

who have not unfortunately seen my dream become reality!!!

REST IN PEACE!!!

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Wɔɔ wádá ú ñ- kanj bé jómbí
3.hand 3.one 3.SM-PRS-tie NEG 5.bundle
 ‘One hand cannot tie a bundle.’

(Basàá proverb)

When it was time to write this part of my work, the very first thing that came to my mind was the above Basàá proverb which, indeed, summarizes all. In acknowledgement of what many people have contributed to the realization of this work, it is likely that this section would turn into some sort of ingratitude as some names, probably, would not be mentioned here. Beforehand, I will be hard-pressed to convey my gratitude to more people than I can mention here, and apologize in advance for possible oversights vis-à-vis the people whose names will not be remembered. I won’t be able to tell the whole story here in order not to get the reader exhausted in advance, but this work, which, on its own, constitutes an action, is certainly more telling than the words to describe it. From the foregone, I would like to convey all my gratitude to the following people without whom this endeavour would not have been fulfilled.

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation is a contribution to an on-going debate on whether information structure has direct access to syntax, or not since Rizzi's (1997) seminal paper 'The Fine Structure of the Left Periphery'. I provide arguments from Basàá, a noun class, focus-drop, topic-drop and tone language from the Bantu language family spoken in Cameroon, that scope-discourse properties such as focus, topic, interrogation, evidentiality and the like are grammatical primitives which take part in the syntactic derivation. In line with the current cartographic approach to syntactic structures, it is shown that Basàá, like many other natural languages, is inclined to using overt morphemes when expressing scope-discourse properties. Of interest is the fact that focus, topic, interrogative as well as evidential markers are realized only in ex-situ contexts and never in-stu. It is demonstrated that just like Basàá expresses the I(inflection)-related information such as tense and aspect overtly, so does it with information structure-related categories. Focus, topic, interrogation and evidentiality should be considered as formal features just like other formal features. In order to achieve the goal of this work, the analysis is based on Rizzi's (1997 and subsequent works) split-CP hypothesis. It is showed that the Basàá left edge is a prolific and articulated domain due to a proliferation of different functional categories which 'populate' (Rizzi 2013) the complementizer domain of the language. Focus fronting, topic fronting, evidentiality as well as interrogation are expressed in the left periphery via the use of distinct and specific morphemes which signal the presence of each scope-discourse property in the sentence. One salient characteristic of this language is that it exhibits rich agreement morphology. Such a property enriches its complementizer layer so much so that fronted foci, fronted topics and evidential constituents trigger not only morphological marking related to each discourse property, but they also trigger overt agreement morphology. In addition to the clausal left periphery, there exists in the language a low focus projection in the vicinity of the VP. Due to minimality effects, this focus position attracts only wh-items and never focalized non-wh constituents. It seems to be the case that the Basàá empirical material enriches not only theoretical syntax, but also comparative syntax in terms of ellipsis, a domain of linguistic theory which, probably, has not yet been (significantly) explored in the context of African linguistics at large and Bantu linguistics in particular. The study of sluicing and fragment answers is well accounted for under a restrictive theory of phonology-morphology-syntax and semantics interfaces and the division of labour between these interfaces. Such a theory does justice to the ellipsis approach according to which these constructions involve PF-deletion of the propositions out of which extraction has been applied prior to A-bar movement of the sluiced or the fragment. Thus, the major contribution of Basàá is that the E-feature which is responsible for ellipsis and

which has been said to be covertly realized in English-like languages can be sometimes realized overtly in Basàá. This state of affairs confirms the claim that Basàá is a mixed language i.e. it is in-between languages with overt formal features and those with covert features. Overall, failure to include scope discourse categories in core syntax would violate the *Inclusiveness Condition* (Chomsky 1995; Aboh 2010) and would lead to a purely impoverished traditional syntax which requires that syntactic structures be confined to the sole classical C-I-V architecture as defended by Minimalist syntax, and as opposed to cartography which militates in favour of a detailed, articulated and precise study of syntactic atoms in terms of content, number, hierarchical order and function.

Globally, the study proposes a novel framework for the derivation of focus and topic fronting in Basàá. More precisely, it is proposed that focus and topic (except hanging and frame setting topics) fronting involve a bi-clausal non-cleft structure which requires that focalized/topicalized elements get moved into the embedded FocP/TopP first, prior to moving into the matrix TP position for the purpose of the EPP. While the first movement step is said to be motivated scope-discourse requirements, namely focus and topic, the second one is motivated by the EPP i.e. the requirement that the matrix TP should have a subject. This second movement operation is attributed to the unavailability in the language of expletive/dummy subjects that would otherwise satisfy the EPP in the matrix TP. Fragment answers, by virtue of being considered as fronted foci are also derived using the same mechanism except in a very rare case while sluicing is said to be derived by wh-movement of the sluiced into Spec-EvidP or Spec-Wh-P, depending on the nature of the wh-item. Whereas the target of ellipsis in fragment answers is a functional FocP projection in almost all cases, what deletes in the context of sluicing is an AgrSP projection. The idea that focus and topic fronting are not cleft constructions pertains to their semantic interpretation. Focus fronting is not necessarily associated with exhaustive or contrastive interpretation in light of their morphosyntax, semantics and pragmatics. Exhaustivity and contrastiveness can be attested only in specific discourse contexts. The semantic interpretation of topics never allows them to be exhaustive and their contrastive interpretation is not that of exclusion as expected from bona fide clefts.

The Basaá clausal left periphery is a prolific, composite, complex and articulated layer which is made up of four main sub-domains as briefly depicted in the following snapshot:

{^{Domain A[fixed word order]} ForceP > IntP >} {^{Domain B[flexible word order]} TopP^[Scene setting] > TopP^[Hanging] > Wh-P} {^{Domain C[flexible word order]} TopP^[Aboutness/Contrastive] > TopP^[Additive]} {^{Domain D[fixed word order]} EvidP > FocP >} [AgrS-P/TP...]

Keywords: Basàá, cartography, core syntax, EPP, information structure, left periphery.

RESUME

Avec la publication des travaux de Rizzi (1997) sur la structure de la périphérie gauche propositionnelle, il s'est vu entrer au cœur du débat syntaxique la nature et la fonction des catégories discursives telles que le topique, le focus, l'interrogation, l'évidentialité entre autres. Etant donné les divergences de tendances entre chercheurs, l'unanimité n'a jamais été faite au sujet de la fonction de ces catégories grammaticales. En d'autres termes, pour certains chercheurs, les notions de la structure informationnelle ne doivent pas faire partie de la dérivation syntaxique. Dans cette logique, le focus, le topique, l'interrogation, l'évidentialité et autres n'appartiennent pas au tronc syntaxique. Pour ces auteurs, ces catégories discursives sont plutôt des éléments d'interface, et toute analyse qui les incorporerait dans la dérivation syntaxique violerait la ‘Condition d’Inclusivité’. Le mouvement des foci et topiques s’opère donc pour des raisons prosodiques et non syntaxiques. A l’opposé de ces chercheurs, d’autres linguistes, à savoir les cartographes, pensent que les notions de la structure informationnelle sont visibles en syntaxe, c'est-à-dire qu’elles constituent, au même titre que le temps, l’aspect, la négation, le mode etc. les traits grammaticaux et doivent être projetées en syntaxe. Au vu de ces deux prises de positions, ce travail a pour objectif de montrer, sur la base du basàá, langue bantu du Cameroun à classe nominale, aux focus et topique nuls, que les catégories discursives font partie de la dérivation syntaxique. A la lumière de l’approche cartographique, il est démontré qu’il existe en basàá, et comme dans la plupart des langues naturelles, des morphèmes bien spécifiques qui encodent le focus, le topique, l’interrogation, l’évidentialité etc. Tout comme la négation, le temps et l’aspect, les catégories discursives doivent faire partie du tronc syntaxique. Etant donné que ces catégories n’apparaissent que lorsqu’il y a déplacement en syntaxe, il est démontré qu’elles attirent au niveaux de leurs spécificités respectifs les projections maximales porteuses des mêmes traits , d’où la relation de localité spécifieur-tête a une avant le stage final de la dérivation. Les données de la langue et les analyses menées corroborent l’hypothèse du syntagme du complémenteur éclaté telle que proposée par Rizzi (1997) et les travaux subséquents qui démontrent que le domaine du complémenteur est une zone prolifique qui abrite diverses projections fonctionnelles. En plus de la périphérie gauche propositionnelle, il existe également un syntagme du focus à la périphérie gauche du SV qui, pour des raisons de minimalité, abrite uniquement les syntagmes Qu déplacés. Le présent travail aborde également la notion d’ellipse; notion qui, probablement, n’a pas encore considérablement fait l’objet d’une étude syntaxique dans le cadre de la linguistique africaine. Cette étude est menée au niveau des composantes phonologique, morphologique, syntaxique et sémantique de la langue. S’appuyant sur ‘l’approche de l’effacement de la composante phonologique’, il est démontré que les fragments de réponse et les syntagmes Qus flottants (*sluicing* en anglais) sont dérivés en syntaxe par une série d’opérations de mouvement à la périphérie gauche des fragments et des syntagmes Qus flottants suivie de l’effacement à la composante phonologique de la proposition hors de laquelle l’extraction s’est appliquée antérieurement. L’originalité du basàá réside aussi sur le fait que, par opposition à la plupart des langues naturelles, le trait responsable de l’application de l’ellipse peut être phonologiquement réalisé. Ce comportement observé sur la langue fait en sorte que cette dernière soit considérée comme une langue intermédiaire, c'est-à-dire une langue au carrefour des langues aux traits grammaticaux visibles/explicites et celles aux traits grammaticaux implicites/abstraits. Au total, il ressort que toute approche qui dispenserait la

dérivation syntaxique des catégories discursives violerait la ‘Condition d’Inclusivité’ (Chomsky 1995; Aboh 2010) et confinerait l’architecture de la phrase sous sa forme restrictive et traditionnelle SC-SI-SV en rapport avec le Programme Minimaliste, au lieu d’une Approche Cartographique dont l’objectif est de rendre compte de façon plus détaillée et exponentielle des structures syntaxiques en tenant compte de leur nombre, leur contenu, leur ordonnancement et leur fonction.

La contribution majeure dans le cadre de ce travail se situe au niveau de l’approche adoptée. Il est proposé que le déplacement des foci, des topiques et des réponses fragmentaires requiert une structure copulative non-clivée, dont la tête est phonétiquement abstrait. Pour ce faire, le déplacement de ces éléments s’opère en diverses étapes. Pour le cas des foci et topiques, ils doivent nécessairement atterrir au niveau de Spéc-SFoc/Spec-Top pour la vérification des traits [+foc/top] avant de se déplacer vers la proposition matrice pour des besoins du Principe de la Projection Etendue (PPE). Eu égard à leurs propriétés morphosyntaxiques, sémantiques et pragmatiques, il est proposé que ni les foci, ni les topiques ne peuvent être dérivées sous la forme d’une clivée dans la langue.

Quant aux réponses fragmentaires, en plus de passer par la position Spec-SFoc enchâssé, ils doivent nécessairement passer par le spécifieur de la projection fonctionnelle PF intermédiaire entre SFocP et la proposition matrice, où ils laissent un trait fort qui échappe à l’opération d’élision. Les questions fragmentaires (sluicing) quant à elles, se déplacent vers Spec-SEvid pour des raisons de vérification des traits d’évidentialité. D’une manière générale, la cible de l’opération d’effacement dans le cadre des réponses fragmentaires est le syntagme du focus alors que la cible d’effacement dans le cadre des questions fragmentaires est le syntagme d’accord (Sacc).

Au total, l’étude révèle que la périphérie gauche propositionnelle du basàá est un domaine prolifique, composite, complexe et articulé en ce sens qu’elle se compose de quatre sous-domaines hiérarchisés dont l’ordonnancement se présente ainsi qu’il suit:

{^{Domaine A[ordre de mots fixe]} SForce > SInt > }{^{Domain B[ordre de mots flexible]} STop^[modification] > STop^[pendant]
> S-Qu} {^{Domain C[ordre de mots flexible]} STop^[de propos/contrastif] > STop^[Additif]} {^{Domain D[ordre de mots fixe]} SEvid
> SFoc >} [S-Acc-/ST...]

Mots clés : Basàá, cartographie, périphérie gauche, PPE, structure informationnelle, tronc syntaxique.

ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

AC	:	Activation Condition
ACC	:	Accusative
ACP	:	Attract Closest Principle
ADJ	:	Adjective
ADV	:	Adverb
ADVP	:	Adverbial Phrase
AGR	:	Agreement
AgrP	:	Agreement Phrase
Agr-S	:	Agreement Subject
ANT	:	Anterior Aspect
APPL	:	Applicative
a.o	:	Among others
BEN	:	Benefactive
BT	:	Binding Theory
C°	:	Head of the Complementiser Phrase
C	:	Consonant/Complementizer
C-Command	:	Constituent-Command
CED	:	Condition on Extraction Domain
cf.	:	See/Confer
CF	:	Contrastive Focus
CFP	:	Criteria Freezing Principle
CHL	:	Computational system for Human Languages
Cl	:	Class
CLLD	:	Clitic Left Dislocation
CP	:	Complementiser Phrase
COM	:	Comitative
Comp/COMP	:	Complementiser
CONT	:	Continuous aspect
CT	:	Contrastive Topic
CTM	:	Copy Theory of Movement
CV	:	Consonant Vowel
-C	:	Before Consonant
CNPC	:	Complex Noun Phrase Constraint
CSC	:	Coordinated-Structure Constraint
DEF	:	Definite marker
DEM	:	Demonstrative
D/DET	:	Determiner
DFCF	:	Doubly Filled Comp Filter
D-linked	:	Discourse-linked
DP	:	Determiner Phrase
D-S	:	Deep Structure
DUR	:	Durative aspect
ECP	:	Empty Category Principle
EMPH	:	Emphatic
EPP	:	Extended Projection Principle
EPTH	:	Epenthetic
et al	:	And Others
Etc	:	And so on

EVID	:	Evidential(ity)
EvidP	:	Evidentiality Phrase
Expl	:	Expletive subject
FUT1	:	Future tense one (immediate future tense)
FUT2	:	Future tense two (near future tense)
FUT3	:	Distant (remote) future tense
FHC	:	Functional Head Constraint
FIP	:	Full Interpretation Principle
FOC	:	Focus
FocP/FP	:	Focus Phrase
ForceP	:	Force Phrase
FV	:	Final Vowel
GB	:	Government and Binding
GEN	:	Genitive
GER	:	Gerund
GP	:	Ground Phrase
HAB	:	Habitual
HMC	:	Head Movement Constraint
HRA	:	Head Raising Analysis
HT	:	Hanging Topic
HTLD	:	Hanging Topic Left Dislocation
IAV	:	Immediately After Verb position
ICV	:	Inherent Complement Verbs
I°	:	The head of Inflectional Phrase/Inflection
IS	:	Information Structure
IMP	:	Imperative
IMPF	:	Imperfective aspect
INF	:	Infinitive
INJ	:	Injonctive
Int	:	Interrogative
Inter alia	:	Among others
IntP	:	Interrogative Phrase
IP	:	Inflectional Phrase
i.e.	:	That is
LD	:	Left Dislocation
JC	:	Jamaican Creole
LF	:	Logical Form
L-related	:	Locally related
Loc	:	Locative
MA	:	Matching Analysis
MC	:	Minimal Configuration
MFCF	:	Multiply Filled Comp Filter
MG	:	Modern Greek
MLC	:	Minimal Link Condition
MP	:	Minimalist Program
MP	:	Minimize Pronunciation
Mod	:	Modifier
NSF	:	Non subject focus
ModP	:	Modifier Phrase
NSP	:	Null Subject Parameter

NSL	:	Null Subject Language
NEG/Neg	:	Negation
NegP	:	Negative Phrase
NP	:	Noun Phrase
Op	:	Operator
Op Cit	:	Already Cited
OT	:	Optimality Theory
PASS	:	Passive
PERF	:	Perfective aspect
Pg	:	Parasitic gap
PL	:	Plural
PLA	:	Principle of Lexical Association
PIC	:	Phase Impenetrability Condition
PF	:	Phonetic Form
P-M	:	Phrase Marker
Pol	:	Polarity
PolP	:	Polarity Phrase
POSS	:	Possessive
PP	:	Prepositional Phrase
PPT	:	Principles and Parameters Theory
PREP	:	Preposition
PRS	:	Present Tense
PRO	:	Null subject in non finite clauses
pro	:	Null subject in finite clauses
PROG	:	Progressive
PROX	:	Proximal
PST1	:	Past tense one
PST2	:	Past tense two
PST3	:	Past tense three
QM	:	Question Marker
QUD	:	Question Under Discussion
REC	:	Reciprocal
Rel	:	Relative
RelP	:	Relative Phrase
RM	:	Reflexive Marker
Rev	:	Reversive
REFL	:	Reflexive
RM	:	Relativized Minimality
SDR	:	Shortest Derivation Requirement
SIMUL	:	Simultaneous
SM	:	Subject Marker
SMC	:	Shortest Movement Condition
SMP	:	Shortest Movement Principle
Spec	:	Specifier
SF	:	Subject focus
SFF	:	Supart of Focus Fronting
S-S	:	Surface Structure
SVO	:	Subject Verb Object
(t)	:	Trace
T°	:	The head of Tense Phrase

TNS	:	Tense
TP	:	Tense Phrase
TOP/Top	:	Topic
TOPP/TopP	:	Topic Phrase
UG	:	Universal Grammar
-V	:	Before Vowel
V	:	Vowel
V	:	Verb
VP	:	Verb Phrase
v	:	Light verb
Vk	:	Vowel plus the morpheme /K/
VOC	:	Vocative
VSO	:	Verb Subject Object
Wh-P	:	Wh-Phrase
X°	:	Zero level Category
X	:	Any variable
XP	:	Maximal Projection
Y	:	Any variable
YP	:	Any maximal projection
1S	:	First Person Singular
+	:	Plus/ Added to
-	:	Minus
±	:	Minus or Plus
/	:	Or
*	:	Ungrammatical
Ø	:	Zero morpheme
/' /	:	High tone
/ ` /	:	Low tone
/ ^ /	:	Falling tone
/ ~ /	:	Rising tone

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PART I
PRELIMINARIES

Introduction of the part

This part of the dissertation, which is divided into three main chapters, focuses on some preliminary notions with respect to the language, the theoretical framework and the distribution and interpretation of focus as attested in Basàá. Chapter one provides a grammatical sketch of the language as discussed in previous works. Chapter two focuses on some terminological issues related to information structure in order to familiarize the reader with the different aspects discussed throughout the dissertation. In chapter three, the analysis of focus as an instance of information structure-related category shows that in Basàá, this category can be realized in-situ, i.e. when the focalized constituent occupies its canonical position and ex-situ, i.e. when the focused item is fronted in clause initial position. It is shown that the different interpretations associated with each position depend on the context and not from the structural positioning of focus. In addition, focus can be realized in the presence of focus-sensitive operators or particles such as negation and only-like particles etc..

CHAPTER I

GENERAL INTRODUCTION:

BACKGROUND ON INFORMATION STRUCTURE

AND THEORETICAL ASSUMPTIONS

Introduction

This chapter focuses on some basic notions of information structure and theoretical assumptions. The aim of this chapter is to provide the reader with the various key terms and theoretical assumptions in order to familiarize him/her with technical issues related to the work. The chapter is organized as follows. From § 1.1. to § 1.1.1.4, focus is on how information structure is rendered possible and how it interacts with discourse. In this vein, we present some dichotomies i.e. opposing pairing systems between notions of information structure. Put differently, § 1.1.1 handles the dichotomies existing between basic terminological notions of information structure. § 1.1.1.1 handles the topic/comment dichotomy, § 1.1.1.2 handles the theme/rheme dichotomy; § 1.1.1.3 discusses the given/new distinction and § 1.1.1.4 closes off the section with the focus/background dichotomy. In § 1.1.1.5, it is shown that the partitioning of information into focus/background or focus/presupposition is not always attested in focus constructions. For instance, in all-new sentences, subpart of the semantic focus can be fronted and leaving behind a larger part of new information. In such context, the distinction between the focus and the background/presupposition is not attested. All the same, in the case where nothing is fronted in all-focus sentences, it is not possible to establish the new/background or focus/presupposition distinction. As a result, it is proposed that all-new sentences are instances of selfish foci since the focus is self-centred or self-sufficient. Consequently, one ends up with a focus which comments itself. § 1.1.1.6 discusses evidentiality as another notion of information structure and shows that evidential constructions in Basàá are realized morpho-syntactically via the fronting of the ‘evidential’ constituent to sentence initial position. The fronted constituent exhibits overt class agreement with a gender-specific morpheme which is right adjacent to the fronted material. In § 1.2, stress is on the interaction between information structure and syntactic theory. § 1.2.1 provides an overview on the cartographic project. § 1.2.1.1 discusses the interplay between the cartographic approach and information structure. Section 1.2.1.2 provides a cursory difference between cartography and minimalism. In § 1.2.2, focus is on some theories against the cartographic approach. Special stress is on the Strong Modularity Hypothesis which claims that information structure categories should not be part of core syntax in § 1.2.2.1 while § 1.3 is concerned with the research problem. More precisely, § 1.3.1 sets the stage for the and is concerned with the challenges faced by adjunction approaches. In light with the Keynes's (1994) Linear Correspondence Axiom and using the X-bar template, it is shown that no adjunction approach can adequately account for the syntax of discourse-related properties that (co-) occur in the left periphery of the clause. The presence of specific markers such as topic, focus, and evidential(ity) markers in the left periphery of the Basáá sentence constitutes a major challenge

to adjunction approaches, because they inadequately account for the presence of discourse projections that occur in the complementizer domain, violating therefore basic properties of X-bar theory in terms of phrase structure building mechanisms. § 1.3.2 discusses Rizzi's (1997) Split-CP hypothesis as a breakthrough, by showing how it adequately accounts for the syntax of scope-discourse properties. § 1.3.3 focuses on the theoretical contribution of the work. More precisely, it is shown that the cartographic approach adequately accounts for the syntax of the various scope-discourse properties attested in Basaaá, because it is not only concerned with the co-occurrence of these projections, but it nicely helps to understand that basic notions of X-bar theory and the antisymmetry framework are useful tools for the understanding of the Basaaá empirical data. Throughout, arguments are provided in support of the cartographic approach which claims that scope-discourse features are derived in the syntax. This is well demonstrated in Basaaá as the language is highly inclined to expressing discourse-related properties morpho-syntactically in dedicated positions in the left periphery of the clause. Given that morphological marking of discourse-related properties only occur in ex-situ contexts, this boils down to minimalist assumptions that movement is morphology-driven. § 1.4 is concerned with the organization of the dissertation.

1.1 On information structure (IF)

The term *information structure* in the literature probably goes back to Halliday (1967), but it has been extensively used by many other authors as the partitioning of sentences into categories such as focus, background, topic, comment, interrogation, evidentiality etc. According to Halliday (1967: 200), information structure is concerned with the organization of a spoken sentence which is sometimes independent and sometimes orthogonal to syntactic constituency in such a way that *Any text in spoken English is organized into what may be called units. (...) this is not determined (...) by constituent structure. Rather could it be said that the distribution of information specifies a distinct structure on a different plan.*?

In other words, information structure deals with the partitioning of spoken language into informational units which do not automatically overlap/coincide with syntactic units. In this vein, one can informally conceive information structure as the fact of presenting messages into blocks or units of information. Globally, talking of information structure has much to do with how the interlocutors in a specific context try to meet the communicative needs by taking into account different techniques whose goal is to optimize the form of the message so much so that it is understood by the addressee in a proper context. Other well-known related definitions include Chafe's (1976) *information packaging* and the *functional sentence perspective* of the Prague School (Firbas 1964, 1974; Sgall et al. 1973, 1986 etc.). In terms of Chafe for instance,

information structure is not concerned with the information itself, but rather, with how it is transferred to the hearer. In this vein, depending on the intention of communication and the background, given information can be packed in different ways as mentioned by Zerbian (2006: 4) in the following German examples.

(1)

- a. **Der Gärtner** hat mit der Köchin am Freitag gesprochen
the.NOM gardener has with.the.DAT cook on Friday spoken
- b. **Mit der Köchin** hat der Gärtner am Freitag gesprochen
- c. **Am Freitag** hat der Gärtner mit der Köchin gesprochen
'The gardener talked with the cook on Friday.'

Zerbian reports that not only does German allow free word order, but the sentences in (1) also differ in terms of information structuring. For instance, it is true that all the above sentences are not about the same entity. Sentence (1a) is about the subject *der Gärtner* 'the gardener', sentence (1b) about *der Köchin* 'the cook' and (1c) about the temporal adverb *Freitag* 'friday'. In more technical terms, each of the bold-printed constituent in sentence initial position in (1) above is a sentence topic. What is interesting is that the same sentences with the same constituents in (1) are repeated below in (2) but with a different interpretation depending on the position of the pitch accent (marked here by CAPITALS).

(2)

- a. Der Gärtner hat mit der Köchin am FREITAG gesprochen
- b. Der Gärtner hat mit der KÖCHIN am Freitag gesprochen
- c. Der GÄRTNER hat mit der Köchin am Freitag gesprochen
- d. Der Gärtner HAT mit der Köchin am Freitag gesprochen
'The gardener talked with the cook on Friday.'

The difference between (1) and (2) is that, as opposed to the former whereby one has constituents reordering, the word order in the latter is constant but the sentences differ with respect to accent placement. Zerbian argues that in German, an unmarked declarative utterance has a rightmost accent. Leftward movement of accent correlates with a change in discourse meaning. That sentences in (2) fulfil different discourse functions in German is supported by the fact that each of them constitutes a different direct answer to a different question as illustrated respectively in the following questions in (3).

(3)

- a. **When** did the gardener talk to the cook?
- b. **Who** did the gardener talk to on Friday?

- c. **Who** talked to the cook on Friday?
d. **Did** the gardener **talk** to the cook on Friday?

Recall that in no circumstances can (2a) be a direct answer to (3b). All the same, (2b) cannot be a direct answer to (3c) etc. Any attempt to associate (2a) with (3b) or (2b) with (3c) for instance, will lead to question-answer incongruence or simply, to discourse infelicity. Consequently, one will end up with an unacceptable utterance as in the following minimal pairs in (4).

(4)

a. Q: Wann hat der GÄRTNER mit der Köchin gesprochen?

when has the.NOM gardener with the.DAT cook spoken
‘When did the gardener speak to the cook?’

A:# Er hat mit der KÖCHIN am Freitag gesprochen

He.NOM has with the.DAT cook on Friday spoken
‘#He has spoken to the COOK on Friday.’

b. Q: Mit wem hat der GÄRTNER am Freitag gesprochen?

with who.DAT has the.NOM gardener on Friday spoken
‘To whom has the gardener spoken on Friday?’

A: #Er hat mit Ihr am FREITAG gesprochen

He.NOM has mit.DAT him.DAT on Friday spoken
‘#He has spoken to him on FRIDAY.’

The reading obtained in (4) constitutes an indication that question-answer congruence affects the information structure of the sentence. So, the question on a temporal adverbial (4a) cannot be answered by placement of the pitch accent on the prepositional object. All the same, a question such as (4bQ) cannot be felicitously answered by placing the pitch accent on the time adverbial. Basically, sentences in (1) and the ones in (2) have the same truth-value, i.e. the conditions under which (1) and (2) are true are the same. They are true in every context whereby there is ‘a gardener who talked to a cook on Friday.’ The different discourse meanings obtained are such that while the sentences in (1) denote topic constructions, the ones in (2) denote foci. So, in order to fulfil communication needs, information packaging has to be ‘tailored’ or well structured either way so as to take into account the context, the discourse participants etc. in line with Prince’s (1981:224) definition of information packaging quoted recently in Zerbian (2006: 5) as

‘the tailoring of an utterance by a sender to meet the particular assumed needs of the intended receiver. That is, information packaging in natural languages reflects the sender’s hypothesis about the receiver’s assumptions and beliefs and strategies.’

From the foregone, information structure is subject to requirements such as the speaker's intentions, assumptions, and the context in order to make relevant linguistic means which help satisfy the hearer or receiver's expectations.

By the same token, in Basàá, a direct question to a subject wh-question such as (5aQ) below is felicitously answered by obligatorily focus marking the subject (5bA1) while an answer with focus marking on the object either in-situ by associating the object with the exclusive focus-sensitive particle *ndígí* 'only' (5bA2) or ex-situ (5bA3) is infelicitous. This state of affairs is tantamount to saying that question-answer congruence needs to be respected because any mismatching between the question and the answer under discussion leads to an infelicitous, absurd or nonsensical utterance.

(5)

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| a. Q: njéé a- bí- sómb bítámb | <i>subject wh-question</i> |
| 1.who 1.SM-PST2-buy 8.shoes | |
| ‘Who bought the shoes?’ | |
| b. A1: bééngé *(bó-n) bá- bí- sómb gwá | <i>subject focus</i> |
| 2.children 2-FOC 2.SM-PST2-buy 8.them | |
| ‘The CHILDREN bought them.’ | |
| A2: # bééngé bá- bí- sómb ndígí bítámb | <i>in-situ object focus</i> |
| 2.children 2.SM-PST2-buy only 8.shoes | |
| ‘#The children bought only SHOES.’ | |
| A3: # bítámb gwá-n bééngé bá- bí- sómb | <i>ex-situ object focus</i> |
| 8.shoes 8-FOC 2.children 2.SM-PST2-buy | |
| ‘#The children bought the SHOES.’ | |

In like manner, a corrective answer with contrastive focus reading on a time adverbial (6C) is not felicitously interpreted as a contradiction to a previous utterance with an object focus interpretation (6A) whereby the direct object *kón* 'rice' is being highlighted. Conversely, only a corrective utterance with focus on the object (6B) felicitously contradicts a previous statement with an object focus interpretation (6A).

- | | |
|--|------------------------|
| (6) A: Mε n- nōY lé mudaá a- n- lámb kón | <i>Input statement</i> |
| I PST1-hear that 1.woman 1.SM-PST1-cook 10.rice | |
| ‘I heard that the woman has cooked RICE.’ | |
| B: tó minsowá *(mó-n) pro _i ai- n- lámb, kón béeé | |
| no 4.ripe plantains 4-FOC pro 1.SM-PST1-cook, 10.rice NEG | |
| ‘No! she cooked RIPE PLANTAINS, not RICE.’ | |
| C: # tó βikɛkla nyé-n pro _i ai- n- lámb kón | |
| no 1.morning 1-FOC pro 1.SM-PST1-cook 10.rice | |
| ‘# No, she cooked rice in the MORNING.’ | |

Partially summarizing, it has been demonstrated that although the information structure device of focus is attested cross-linguistically, the mechanisms put in place in its realization are not always common. Constituent reordering appears to be the common denominator between German and

Basàá. However, while accent placement is German-specific, morphological marking is Basàá-specific.

It is worth mentioning that there is no consensus as to the number of different information structure-related categories and their identification. This is due to the diversity of views and approaches. Definitions as well as approaches differ in one way or the other depending on schools of thought.

1.1.1 Some basic terminological notions of information structure

There are as many parts of information structure as possible. Our intention is not to offer an exhaustive terminological inventory of the various notions that revolve around the notion of information structure. The terms discussed in this section only constitute the foreground of what is going to be discussed in details in subsequent chapters. This implies that the terminology provided is simply indicative, as it will enable the reader to familiarize with the literature to be developed throughout the dissertation so as to avoid some confusions and inconsistency in the use of the basic terminology in the field of information structure. And as noted in Levison (1983), there is a lot of profusion, confusion and inconsistency underlying conceptual vagueness and misconception in the domain of information structure such that unanimity is hardly reached by researchers as for the terminology related to the field. The different minimal pairs discussed below include the following: *psychological subject* versus *psychological predicate*, *topic* versus *comment*, *theme* versus *rheme*, *given/old* versus *new*, *focus* versus *background*, and *presupposition* versus *focus*. These are discussed in turn below following Büring (1997). Finally,

we shall discuss the notion of selfish focus and evidentiality.

1.1.1.1 Topic versus comment

What Paul (1880) refers to as ‘psychological subject’ and ‘psychological predicate’ corresponds to present-day’s ‘topic and comment’. So, talking of the dichotomy ‘psychological subject/psychological predicate’ is referring to the pairing topic/comment. In this vein, talking about the psychological subject’ or ‘topic’ simply refers to what the entity about which a comment is being made. In this case, we can informally say that the psychological predicate and the comment denote the same thing as they constitute the proposition or comment made about a given topic. Some other authors talk about the *theme/rheme* dichotomy (cf. Ammann 1928; Thema-Rhema, Mathesius 1929a-b, Prague School (Functional Sentence Perspective, e.g. Firbas (1964, 1974), Halliday (1967); see also Von der Gabelentz 1869; Paul 1880)) to refer to what a given statement is about (theme) and the comment associated with it (rheme).The dichotomy between topic and comment is well established by several scientists including Chafe (1976) and

Reinhart (1981) among others. In the spirit of Reinhart (1981), for instance, a topic or ‘sentence topic’ as she calls it properly, refers to what the rest of the sentence is about, hence the term ‘aboutness topic’ in the literature. The identification of ‘topichood’ or ‘sentence topic’ in more easier terms is subject to restrictions in such a way that knowing what a given entity is about involves some distinguishing criteria or diagnostic tests (cf. Reinhart 1981). Firstly, a topic carries an existential presupposition; secondly, a topic must be referential; thirdly, a topic can be introduced in the discourse by expressions such as ‘she said about’ and ‘as for’; fourthly, presentational and existential sentences contain no topic. Accordingly, unspecific and indefinite (except for generic terms) cannot be topics because a sentence cannot be about an unspecific or indefinite entity. Quantificational expressions such as ‘nothing’, ‘no one’, ‘everything’, ‘all’ ‘at least’, ‘nearly’ etc. cannot be topics for semantic reasons (cf. Rizzi 1986; & Cinque 1990 on the special behaviour of expressions such as *qualcosa*, ‘something’ *qualscuno* ‘someone’ in Italian; see also Rizzi 1997). The following sentences are instances of topic constructions.

(7)

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| a. As for the book , John bought <i>it</i> yesterday. | <i>Definite DP</i> |
| b. <i>This man</i> , I met <i>him</i> at the airport. | <i>Specific/referential DP</i> |
| c. On Monday , John went to the supermarket. | <i>Referential PP</i> |

The following sentences show that quantificational as well as indefinite expressions cannot be topics.

(8)

- | | |
|---|----------------------------|
| a. *As for a book , I bought it yesterday. | <i>Indefinite DP</i> |
| b. * A student , she met <i>him</i> yesterday. | <i>Unspecific DP</i> |
| c. * Everything , John knows. | <i>Quantificational DP</i> |
| d. * Nobody , I met on the way to the airport. | <i>Quantificational DP</i> |

Very often, the term ‘topic’ is also associated with ‘old information’ but Reinhart (1981) argues that topics do not have to be old information in the discourse i.e., a topic does not always denote what a sentence is about. In this context, ‘aboutness’ as a criterion for topichood appears to be limited. This is held true for languages like German, Japanese and Korean where frame setting expressions (spatio-temporal or individual expressions) are marked in the same way as aboutness topics. In German, frame settlers (in this context) are not accented just as other topics. They are therefore de-accented (cf. Jackendoff 1972; Büring 1994, Roberts 1996; Büring 1997, 2003 *inter alia* for accentuation and de-accentuation in English and German). In Korean and Japanese, frame settlers are marked by morpholexical markers just like ‘aboutness topics’ do as in the following examples from (Jacobs 2001:655).

(9)

a. *German*

Körperlich geht es Peter gut
 physically goes expl. Peter.Dat well
 ‘Physically, Peter is well.’

b. *German*

Im Fall eines Sieges wird die Mannschaft eine Belobigung durch den
 in-the case of-a win will the team a commendation by the
 Staatpräsidenten erhalten
 president-of-state receive
 ‘If the team win, they will receive a commendation from the president.’

c. *Korean*

Sünglihal kyòngu-e-nùn tim-il taetonglyòng-ekesò pyochangùl pan-úl kòsita
 win case-in-top

‘If the team win, they will receive a commendation from the president (adapted from Jacobs 2001:655.)

The bold-printed German expressions *Körperlich* ‘physically’, and *Im Fall eines Sieges* ‘if the team win’ as well as the Korean ‘expression *Sünglihal kyòngu-e-nùn* ‘if the team win’ are called frame settlers. As the reader can see, the glosses are not entirely provided for the Korean sentence, as in the original source (Jacobs 2001:655). The bold-printed expressions above have no aboutness meaning, that is they are neither about ‘Peter’s health’ nor about ‘the team victory’. Rather, they set the frames or contexts in which each statement above holds. More concretely, the frame settlers above restrict the application of the propositions expressed by the rest of the sentence in a certain domain. For instance, the frame settler *Körperlich* ‘physically’ (9a) restricts the situation (Peter’s health) to his sole physical aspect, and nothing else as his ‘financial’ or ‘family’ situation is evoked. All the same, the settlers *Im Fall eines Sieges* ‘if the team win’ and *Sünglihal kyòngu-e-nùn* ‘if the team win’ restrict the propositions in which they are contained. So, being received by the president in the contexts above is conditioned or restricted to ‘the team victory’ and nothing else.

(10) *Frame-setting* (Jacobs 2011:666).

In (X Y), X is the frame for Y iff X specifies a domain of (possible) reality to which the proposition expressed by Y is restricted.

As already mentioned, and in order to establish a parallel between (10) and (9) above, X in (10) corresponds to the frame settlers *Körperlich* ‘physically’, *Im Fall eines Sieges* ‘if the team win’ as well as the Korean ‘expression *Sünglihal kyòngu-e-nùn* ‘if the team win’ as each of them specifies/restricts the domain in which the propositions (Y) are expressed. The topic/comment

pairing deals with how the information is oriented in the receiver's mind with respect to linear constituents ordering so much so that the topic of the sentence precedes its comment (statement about it).

In Basàá, although frame-settings may be limited in number, there exist, however, some linguistic expressions which help delimit the propositional content of sentences. Just like in German and Korean, frame settlers are not old information in the discourse setting, and they do not have to be what the sentence is all about. In the following contexts, it is true that the frame settlers *ni sombol* 'by God's grace' and *iɓálê pro_i bá-i- ní-nYîl ɳgándaY* 'if they study hard' restrict each, the meaning of the propositions in which they are contained respectively.

(11) *Context*

- a. Q: lihaa lí- ý- ke láá
5.family 5.SM-PRS-go how
'How is the family?'
A: **ni sombol** Nyámbê, bot bóbáso bá- yé mbóó
Loc 7.will 1.God 2.people 2.all 2.SM-be.PRS healthy
'By God's grace everybody is fine.'
- b.
Q: baá baúdú bá- gá- něd mákekse è
Pol 2.students 2.SM-FUT2-pass 6.exams Pol
'Will the students pass the exams?'
A: **iɓálê pro_i bá-i- ní-nYîl ɳgándaY** pro_i bá-i- gá- něd
if pro 2.SM-PRS-study a lot pro 2.SM-FUT2-pass
'If they study hard, they will pass.'

(11) shows that a frame settler in Basàá can be a phrase (11aA) or a whole proposition (11bA). It is obvious that the prepositional phrase in (11aA) 'by God's grace' is neither about 'God's grace', nor does it constitute old information in the discourse. Instead, it is new information with respect to the question under discussion (Q) and restricts or limits the family state to 'God's grace' without which they may not be fine. All the same, the conditional proposition *iɓálê pro_i bá-i- ní-nYîl ɳgándaY* 'if they study hard' is neither about 'studying' or 'studying hard'. By the same token, the conditional proposition is not old information as it has not been previously mentioned in the question under discussion (Q). Simply, the role of this conditional proposition is to restrict or condition the accomplishment of the event 'passing the exams'. The condition in this context is 'studying hard.'

If unanimity seems to be the order of the day as far as the definition of the category of 'focus', it is widely known that opinions are still divided as for the definition of 'topic' is concerned. The field of 'topic' is so broad that it requires some delimitation according to the subject of investigation. For instance, one can distinguish *sentence topic* and *discourse topic*. As for the

former, also known as *theme* it establishes in most cases (except for frame-setting topics) a pragmatic relation of aboutness holding between what the sentence is about (topic) and the proposition or the comment made about what is said in the sentence. Categorically and structurally, sentence topics are maximal projections that occur sentence initially followed by their comment, or the predication made about it as in the preceding examples in (7), (9) and (11). A discourse topic is different from a sentence topic in that the former needs previous mention/reference in the discourse and then, it continues to function as the topic of various clauses which constitute a larger discourse unit. Discourse topics are typically realized in the forms of weak and /or strong pronouns, null pronominals as *pro*, or by rich verbal morphology in null subject languages. The following sentence is an instance of discourse topic in Basàá whereby the nominal referential expression *baúdúi* ‘students’, which is the discourse topic is introduced at the very outset of a micro-discourse. As the discourse progresses, the nominal expression is dropped altogether but is resumed by the subject marker *ba-* which establishes subject verb agreement between the subject and the verbs *bê* ‘be (in the past)’, *beeYá* ‘carry’ and *húú* ‘return’. The subject marker in this case acts as a weak pronominal and since Basàá is a pro-drop language, the sentence is licit. Similarly, the discourse topic *baúdúi* ‘students’ is also recovered through pronominalization and anaphoricity by the means of the strong pronominal *bó* ‘them’ and the possessive *máp* ‘their’.

(12)

baúdú_i bá_i- bí- bómá málêt yaaní í mbom. pro_i **bá_i- bê**
 2.students 2.SM-PST2-meet 1.teacher 1.yesterday Loc 7.market pro 2.SM-be.PST
 pro_i **bá_i- beeYá** βiböt bí súklu. Malêt a- bí- tí **bá_i**
 pro 2.SM-carry.PROG 7.bags 7.GEN 7.school 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-give 2.them
 maébá lé pro_i **bá_i- húú** í mambáy **mâp_i**
 6.advice that pro 2.SM-return.SUBJ Loc 6.homes 6.their
 ‘The **students_i** met the teacher yesterday in the market. **They_i** were carrying school bags. The
 teacher advised **them_i** to go home.’

Within the framework of this thesis, special focus is on sentence topic i.e.; the one which occurs in sentence initial position, or in more technical terms, at the left peripheral spine of the sentence and separated from the presupposition/comment by the means of morpho-syntactic and phonological properties. No attention will be paid to discourse topic as it does not necessarily affect word order alternation and has much to do with discourse analysis.

1.1.1.2 Theme versus rheme

As mentioned earlier, the theme/rheme dichotomy in the literature goes back to researchers such as Ammann (1928), Mathesius (1929), the Prague School (Firbas (1962, 1964), Halliday (1976)

among others to refer to what a given statement is about (theme) and the comment associated with it (rheme). Initially introduced to refer to the psychological subject and psychological predicate, it became later on used either in the sense of topic/comment dichotomy (Halliday 1967) or given/new distinction (The Prague School). In this sense, further reference to the theme/rheme pairing implies that one should take into account the topic/comment dichotomy instead of a separate discussion on the issue.

1.1.1.3 Given versus new information

The given/new distinction is concerned with the availability of discourse referents i.e., whether information is shared, known, old or familiar to both the speaker and hearer or whether information is unknown, unfamiliar to the discourse participants. In this latter case, information is newly introduced to the knowledge of the speaker and addressee as it was not activated in ones's mind. In simple terms, information is said to be given if it is already available, activated or packed in the mind of the discourse participants. To say that a piece of information is given entails that it has been mentioned before explicitly or implicitly. It is customary to realize that some linguists establish a parallel between the topic/comment dichotomy and the given/new one. However, as discussed above, a topic is not necessarily old or given information, and this was demonstrated above where frame-setting topics constituted newly introduced in the discourse. In such contexts, topics are not known or presupposed in the context. Even if in most cases topical information is given, not all topics are given, and not all given information are topics. For instance, in (13) below, it is true that the referential expression *dil5Yá* 'boys' in (13A) is the sentence topic as it is mentioned in a preceding discourse, i.e. in the question under discussion (Q). Semantically, it functions as a contrastive topic as it contrasts with the referential expression *dīngɔnda* 'girls'. We obtain a contrastive topic reading in the sense that, as opposed to 'the girls who are cooking', 'the boys are rather sent by the teacher to the market'. So, here *dil5Yá* 'boys' and *dīngɔnda* 'girls' contrast because they do not fulfill the same task. On the contrary, in (14), although the same referential expression *dil5Yá* 'boys' is mentioned in the question under discussion (14Q), that it functions as topic in the answer (14A) is far from being true. All the same, as it can be seen, all information contained in (14A), apart from the bold-printed direct object *mákala* 'doughnuts' is given i.e. known, old, presupposed, or better still, is known since it is mentioned in the question in (14Q). However, although the sentence *dil5Yá dí-bí-sómb* 'the boys bought' is already mentioned in the discourse, it is by no means the topic of the sentence.

Rather, the given part of information here functions as the presupposition or the background in the sense that it is shared knowledge already activated in the discourse.

(13) *Contrastive topic context*

- Q: Mε n̄- yí lé dīngōnda dí- n̄- lámb. ndí pód-ól me **dilóYá**
 I PRS-know that 13.girls 13.SM-PRS-cook but speak-APPL me 13.boys
 ‘I know that the girls are cooking. But tell me about the boys (what about the boys?).’
- B: **dilóYá tʃɔ-**ø malêt a- n̄- óm **tʃɔ** í bom
 13.boys 13-TOP 1.teacher 1.SM-PST1-send 13.them LOC 7.market
 ‘As for the boys, the teacher sent them to the market.’

(14)

- Q: kíi dilóYá dí- bí- sómb yáání í bom
 9.what 13.students 19.SM-PST2-buy 1.yesterday LOC 7.market
 ‘What did the boys buy yesterday in the market?’

- A: dilóYá dí- bí- sómb **mákala**
 13.boys 19.SM-PST2-buy 6.doughnuts
 ‘The boys bought doughnuts.’

From the preceding lines, it is well proven that ‘given’ information is not always associated with topic interpretation. All the same, topic information is not always associated with givenness.

Given that *mákala* ‘doughnuts’ in (14A) is not mentioned in the question under discussion in (14Q), it constitutes undoubtedly new information as it is non-pressupposed, unfamiliar or unknown in the context. So, newness here deals with the fact that a constituent which was not formerly activated in the mind of the participants is newly introduced in the discourse setting. In the context of (14) above, newness concides with focus since this latter sometimes refers to new information in the discourse as we shall discuss in a subsequent section. All in all, it is important to treat topic/comment and given/new distinctions separately because although they coincide sometimes, they denote by no means the same reality. In terms of Chafe (1976:30), the given/new dichotomy should be extended to the hearer-oriented aspect of information structure in psychological terms in the sense that

‘*Given (or old) information is that knowledge which the speaker assumes to be in the consciousness of the addressee at the time of the utterance. So-called new information is what the speaker assumes he is introducing into the addressee’s consciousness by what he says.*’

1.1.1.4 Background versus focus

The information structure category of focus covers phonological, semantic, syntactic, morpho-syntactic and pragmatic properties. These characteristics, although existent, may not be attested in all natural languages. In some languages, focus may display phonological, semantic, and syntactic properties while in some other languages, only morpho-syntactic and semantic cues are attested. It is probably hard to find a given language which associates all these values. However,

what seems to be mostly shared by natural languages is the semantic value as this latter is inextricably linked to semantic interpretation.

Semantically, and since (Chomsky 1971; Jackendoff 1972; Lambrecht 1994 *inter alia*), focus can be associated with non-presupposed information in the discourse. Note that Chomsky (1971: 26) explicitly conceives focus as

'the phrase containing the information center; the presupposition, an expression derived by replacing the focus by a variable. Each sentence then is associated with a class of pairs (F, P) where F is a focus and P is a presupposition, each such pair corresponding to one possible interpretation.'

The above quotation from Chomsky attests that focus is derived from intonation, which is not true for all languages. However, what seems to be interesting is the notion of presupposition which is closely related to the term background and which, along the lines of Jackendoff (1972:16), is ‘the information in the sentence that is assumed by the speaker to be shared by him and the hearer.’ For instance, one way of establishing the background/focus distinction is through the test of question-answer pairs. Focus in intonational languages like English, German and the like can refer to the new and accented constituent within a comment (cf. Halliday 1967; Vallduví & Engdahl 1996 etc.) as illustrated in the question-pairs below where the focused constituents *PEN* and *BUCH* ‘book’ bear pitch accent shown by the use of CAPITALS.

(15)

- | | |
|---|----------------|
| a. She bought a PEN on Friday. | <i>English</i> |
| b. Sie hat ein BUCH am Freitag gekauft | <i>German</i> |
| she has a book on Friday bought.past participle | |
| ‘She bought a BOOK on Friday.’ | |

That the direct objects *PEN* and *BUCH* ‘book’ in (15) are focused is supported by the fact that they are felicitous answers to the content questions ‘What did she buy?’ and *Was hat sie gekauft* ‘what has she bought?’ in English and German respectively. So, apart from the accented direct object which is focused in each case, the rest of information contained in each sentence constitutes the presupposition or background information. This information is conceived of as being shared or known by both the speaker and hearer. In other words, in a context such as (15), the presupposition is that ‘there is some female individual x’, some action of ‘buying’ as well as a given ‘time y’ already known or stored in the mind of the discourse participants. What remains unknown here is the focus of the utterance namely *PEN* or *BUCH* ‘book’.

Basàá is different from German and English in that although the focus can be new information and may remain in-situ, there is no prosodic effect on the focalized constituent. Rather, the focalized subject (a direct answer to a wh-question) is marked morpho-syntactically i.e., by moving from its original position (immediately before the subject marker) to the focus position

where it is left adjacent to the complex morpheme made up of the class agreement morpheme and the focus morpheme *-n*. Object focus, on the contrary, may be realized in-situ as in (16b A1) when associated with information focus interpretation.

(16)

a. *Subject focus*

Q: **njéé** a- n- sómb mátówa
1.who 1.SM-PST1-buy 6.car
'Who bought a car?'

A: **mudaá** *(**nyé-n**) a- n- sómb mó
1.woman 1-FOC 1.SM-PST1-buy 6.car
'The WOMAN bought it.'

b. *Object focus*

Q: **kíí** mudaá a- n- sómb
9.what 1.woman 1.SM-PST1-buy
'What did the woman buy?'

A1: pro_i a_i- n- sómb **mátówa** *in-situ focus* (information focus)
pro 1.SM-PST1-buy 6.car
'She bought a CAR.'

What we can retain so far is that the bold-printed subject and object constituents in (16) are foci associated with new or non-presupposed information. As can be seen from each question under discussion above, everything except for the bold-printed material is known or given in the context. The pro category which simply replaces the drop subject *mudaá* 'woman' is by no means new in the real sense. This shows that the sentence part which is not in bold constitutes background information or the presupposition while the bold-printed material is the focus.

That focus refers to new information in the discourse is not conclusive because there are other contexts in which focus is realized without necessarily being associated with newness. Rooth (1985, 1992, 1996) introduces a new dimension in the understanding of focus. In his terms, focus is considered as introducing alternatives in the discourse. It is in this vein that he employs the notion of *p-sets* to denote the set of alternatives under consideration in the discourse. For instance, in contrastive focus situations, alternative members are presented so that the identification of one member out of the set rules out or excludes other members of the same set. For instance, in (17) below, the constituents 'book', 'pen', 'pencil' and 'suitcase' are discourse-old elements that constitute the member of the largest set, say 'furniture'. By choosing (17b), the speaker excludes all other possibilities, that is the possibility that 'the woman bought something else in addition to 'a suitcase''. So, for instance, if (17b) is true, the proposition that 'the woman bought a pen too' cannot be true simultaneously. (17) simply shows that focused information does necessarily involve newness because even discourse-old or given information successfully functions as the focus depending on the context.

(17) a. What did the woman buy, a pen, a book, a pencil or a suitcase?

b. She bought a SUITCASE

However, the notion of alternatives introduced by Rooth is not only restricted to contrastive foci. So, if focus introduces a set of alternatives, then the semantic value of a phrase in Rooth's (1992:7) terms is 'the set of propositions obtainable from the ordinary semantic value by making a substitution in the position corresponding to the focused phrase.' For instance, in the context in (18) below, the question under discussion sets up a set of alternatives such as 'John bought X pen', where the variable X can stand for the various possible colours including 'the blue', 'the colored', 'the green', 'the black' etc. In the answer, the 'BLUE' color is selected to be substituted to the variable X and becomes therefore the focus value in Rooth's terminolgy. By asking the question 'what pen did John buy', there is an existential presupposition that there is a set of pens with different colours so that the adjective 'blue' is selected among other colours to constitute the focus value for which the proposition holds true.

(18) Q: What pen did John buy?

A: He bought a BLUE one.

Lastly, in this section, focus can also obtain in corrective situations whereby a previously uttered statement is contradicted by the speaker. In (19) below, it is true that the direct object *bitámb* 'shoes' in (19b-c) is not known or given in the discourse, rather it is newly introduced by the speaker in order to contradict a preceding statement. This can be achieved by associating the focused constituent with a focus-sensitive particle/operator (19b) or simply placing the newly focused element in sentence initial position where it gets morpho-syntactic marking (19c).

(19)

- a. mudaá a- bí- sómb mámbót
1.woman 1.SM-PST2-buy 6.clothes
'The woman bought the clothes.'
- b. tó, pro_i a- bí- sómb *ndígí bitámb*
no pro 1.SM-PST2-buy only 8.shoes
'No, she only bought the SHOES.'
- c. **bitámb gwó-n** pro_i a- bí- sômb
8.shoes 8-FOC pro 1.SM-PST2-buy
'No, she bought the SHOES.'

1.1.1.5 Selfish focus

Hitherto, the background/focus distinction has revealed that focus involves the partitioning of the sentence into two parts, namely the focus part and the background/presupposition part. The focus part can be new or old information in the discourse while the background contains that part of information which is presupposed or known. Informally, the background part can be called the comment, i.e. what is said about the entity which is focused. However, focus displays a complex

issue which is attested cross-linguistically and which makes one recast the definition of focus in terms of sentence partitioning. There are cases of focus constructions whereby the partitioning of the sentence into focus/presupposition is highly challenged. In all-new contexts for instance, there are two striking phenomena which are attested cross-linguistically.

To begin with Basàá, in all-new sentences, the whole sentence constitutes the focus on its own. In this case, the focalized sentence has no separate comment/presupposition and cannot be therefore partitioned into two different parts as in (20a). On the other hand, in all-new focus situations, only a subpart part of the whole new sentence can get fronted in sentence initial position where it gets marked morpho-syntactically as in (20b).

- (20) Kíí í yé ñken ? *All-new focus*
 9.what 9.SM-be.PRS new
 ‘What is new?’

- a. Măñ wém a- nĕd makekse yaaní
 1.child 1.my 1.SM-pass.PST2 6.exams 1.yesterday
 ‘My child passed the exam yesterday.’
- b. Măñ wém nyé-n a- nĕd makekse yaaní
 1.child 1.my 1-FOC 1.SM-pass.PST2 6.exams 1.yesterday
 ‘My CHILD passed the exam yesterday.’

As can be seen above, (20) denotes a context whereby everything is new. There is no presupposition or background information given in the discourse. The speaker asking the question does not focus on something specific but the whole situation. In fact, (20a) is the most expected answer in a context such as (20). However, since (20b) is perfectly felicitous in the same context, one may wonder, given the word order attested, whether what is being focused is the subject of the sentence, which is not true on theoretical ground. The question under discussion does not indeed focus on the subject of the sentence. One realizes that in (20b) for instance, only a subpart of the whole focused material is marked morpho-syntactically. Note that both sentences convey the same interpretation, i.e. they convey all-new information although structurally different. What is true is that neither (20a) nor (20b) contains a presuppositional part or background material.

We can conclude from (20) that all-focus sentences are selfish because whether they are rendered like in (20a) or (20b), they have no background information and therefore constitute their background/comment simultaneously on their own. In other words, all-new foci comment themselves simultaneously, i.e. they act as foci and comment at the same time. As a result, due to the impossibility of new-foci constructions to be partitioned into the focus-presupposition frame as generally widely proposed in the literature (e.g. Rizzi 1997), these foci are self-centred, or

'self-sufficient' as they need no presupposition or comment, hence the label selfish foci in our terminology.

Selfish foci are not restricted to Basàá, as they are attested cross-linguistically. In Roman, Germanic and Slavic languages, for instance, it has been demonstrated in the literature that in all-new contexts, a subpart of the semantic focus can be fronted in sentence initial position although this subpart is not the focus of the sentence as the following Czech and German (Fanselow & Lenertová 2011) examples show. In (21-22), that the accented subjects *MATka* 'mother' and *Eine KRANKENschwester* 'a nurse' respectively have been subject to movement is supported by the fact each of them is linked to a co-indexed trace (t_i).

- (21) Q: Why did you do that?

A: MATka_i mi to t_i porucâila *Czech*
 mother.nom me.dat it ordered.sg.fm
 'Mother ordered it to me.'

- (22) Q: What happened?

A:[Eine KRANKENschwester]_i hat t_i einen PaTIENTen getötet *German*
 a nurse has a.acc patient killed
 'A nurse killed a patient.'

By the same token, DP and PP fronting is also attested in all-focus contexts in both languages as shown in the following examples in (23-24) whereby the elements *GRAben* 'ditch' and *GULásâ_i* 'goulash' leave each a co-indexed trace in the extraction site.

- (23) Q: What happened?

A: [Im GRAben]_i ist er t_i gelandet! *German*
 in ditch has he landed
 'He drove into the ditch!'

- (24) Q: What's new?

A: GULásâ_i jsem uvarâila t_i *Czech*
 goulash aux.1sg cooked. Sg.fm
 'I cooked goulash.'

Lastly, in French a subpart of the semantic focus may be fronted in all-new sentences as seen in (25) below whereby the accented subject 'mother' can stay in-situ (25a) or be clefted as in (25b).

- (25) Q: Pourquoi es-tu triste?

'Why are you sad?'

A1 : MAMAN m' a battue
 mother me.CL have.3SG beat.PST PART.3SG.FEM
 'My mother beat me.'

A2: C'est *Maman* qui m' a battue
 it is mother who me.CL have.3SG beat.PST PART.3SG.FEM

Intended: 'My mother beat me', Lit: 'It is my mother who has beaten me.'

From what precedes, it becomes obvious that the focus-presupposition frame is not always obeyed since in all-new situations such as (21-25), everything is new; there is no presupposition

in advance in the speaker/hearer's mind. In this vein, it is true that one can front only a subpart of the semantic focus (25a) or can front nothing at all as in (e.g. 25b). Whatever strategy is used, the result is the same from an interpretative point of view. That is, only an all-new focus reading is possible. In such cases, focus is not on the fronted/accented subpart of the sentence, but on the sentence as a whole. Partially concluding, all new-foci do not obey the traditional focus-presupposition frame/partitioning, rather they constitute selfish, self-centred or self-sufficient foci which comment themselves simultaneously. In sum and more simply, all-new foci are special types of foci which will be given a special syntactic derivation in chapter four.

1.1.1.6 Evidentiality

In addition to the discourse-scope categories discussed above, evidentiality has also been the subject of linguistic investigations although it is just quite recently that it has been incorporated into the study of information structure and the syntax-discourse interface. Evidential markers are encountered cross-linguistically either in the form of verbal inflectional suffixes, adverbs or special particles endowed with discourse-related properties (cf. Muysken 1977; 1995; Cinque 1999; Camacho et al. 2010; Sánchez 2010 etc.). Evidential markers are mostly encountered in Amerindian languages (Muysken 1977; 1995; Camacho et al. 2010; Sánchez 2010 *inter alia*) and are, as already mentioned, associated with discourse-pragmatic properties. For instance, in a given context, these markers indicate the source of evidence for the proposition. Evidence can be direct, indirect, visual, physical or hearsay depending on language specificities. The following Ecuadorian Quechua example from Muysken (1977:27) cited in Camacho et al. 2010:4) instantiates a hearsay information reading with evidentiality encoding.

- (26) Kaya shamu-nga-shi.
 tomorrow come-3FUT-EVID (hearsay)
 'They say he'll come tomorrow.'

As can be seen, the inflectional morpheme *-nga-* which encodes future tense information is followed by the suffix *-shi* which, in turn, encodes evidentiality and indicates the speaker's perspective of the source of evidence for the propositional content of the sentence (see . Camacho et al. 2010:4).

In Basàá, evidentiality is marked by a special morpheme which is gender-specific in the sense that it displays noun class agreement depending on the noun to which it assigns evidentiality/evidence. The evidential glossed below as 'EVID' is discourse-linked as it only occurs in question formation involving sluicing as will be discussed at length in the last chapter (chapter eight) of this dissertation. As a piece of illustration, the context in (27) below shows that a question with an evidential reading conveys the interpretation that the speaker asking the question is witnessing the event namely 'the fact that the students are eating something'. The

idea is that the speaker asking the question in (27) is witnessing the action visually or physically. S/he is therefore an eye-witness but is not able to identify the entity in question.

(27) Q: **Kí** **í** **baúdú** **bá-** **ń-** **jé**

9.what 9.EVID 2.students 2.SM-PRS-eat

'What are the students eating?' Lit: 'What is it that the students are eating?'

A1: **makala** *(**má**) (**mó-n** pro_i **bá-i-** **ń-** **jé**)

6.doughnuts 6.EVID 6-FOC pro 2.SM-PRS-eat

'DOUGHNUTS.' Lit: 'Doughnuts are what they are eating.'

A2: * pro_i **bá-i-** **ń-** **jé** **mákala** **má** **mó-n**
pro 2.SM-PRS-eat 6.doughnuts 6.EVID 6-FOC

Intended: 'They are eating DOUGHNUTS.'

In the context of a question-answer pair such as (27), the only felicitous answer is (27A1), that is the one which includes a focused constituent with an evidential interpretation. It is the reason why the evidential agreeing marker *má* must occur besides the focus marker. In this case, one can translate (27A1) as 'it is obvious/evident that what the students are eating are doughnuts'. The part of the sentence made up of the agreeing focus marker *mó-n* and the finite proposition *pro_ibá-i-ń-jé* 'they are eating' is optional. The ungrammaticality of (27A2) is an indication that in a context requiring evidential interpretation, an in-situ answer is ruled out. That (27) does not involve a content or bona fide question is the fact that a bona fide question does not require evidential marking. Instead, (28Q), which is a content question counterpart of (27Q), requires either an in-situ focus (28A1) or an ex-situ focus with contrastive interpretation (28A2). Any answer with evidentiality marking is completely ruled out (28A3).

(28) Q: **Kí** **baúdú** **bá-** **ń-** **jé**

9.what 2.students 2.SM-PRS-eat

'What are the students eating?' /'What do the students eat?'

A1: pro_i **bá-i-** **ń-** **jé** **mákala**

pro 2.SM-PRS-eat 6.doughnuts

'They are eating DOUGHNUTS.'

A2: **makala** **mó-n** pro_i **bá-i-** **ń-** **jé**

6.doughnuts 6-FOC pro 2.SM-PRS-eat

'They are eating DOUGHNUTS (not bananas for instance).'

A3: * **makala** **má** **mó-n** pro_i **bá-i-** **ń-** **jé**

6.doughnuts 6.EVID 6-FOC pro 2.SM-PRS-eat

Lit: 'Doughnuts are what they are eating.'

Note that (27Q) and (28Q) involve two diametrically opposed questions in the sense that in the former, there is evidence, or better still, there is no doubt that there exists in the discourse universe something visible that is being eaten. Conversely, in (28Q) there is no evidence that the students are eating 'something'. So, if (28Q) can be felicitously answered negatively, (27Q), on the contrary, cannot or can hardly be.

1.2 Information structure and syntactic theory

Information structure is probably one of the fields of linguistic investigations which have been broadly handled throughout the history of linguistics. The field has witnessed a great deal of attention in generative grammar since the early 1970's with significant scientific works such as Chomsky (1971) and Jackendoff (1972). Since then, the domain has witnessed the birth and rise of continuous and challenging debates about the role and impact of discourse-related properties such as focus, topic and the like in syntax. Given that information structure-related properties cover a wide range of language components from a cross-linguistic perspective, unanimity is far from being reached among researchers with regard to finding a universal theoretical apparatus capable of accounting for the diversity of data encountered among languages. For this reason, a purely syntactic approach to information structure is far from being conceivable, and one wonders whether information structure belongs to grammar proper, to pragmatics or to any other language component. Instead of presenting myriad of competing theoretical proposals discussed in the literature, we delimit our discussion to the current cartographic approach to information structure as it appears to be reliable in accounting for the Basàá empirical material. However, we shall also slightly discuss some opposing approaches to cartography and show how the former handle the issue of information structure. At the end, it shall be demonstrated that the empirical data under scrutiny do not do justice to any competing approach to cartography.

1.2.1 Overview of cartography

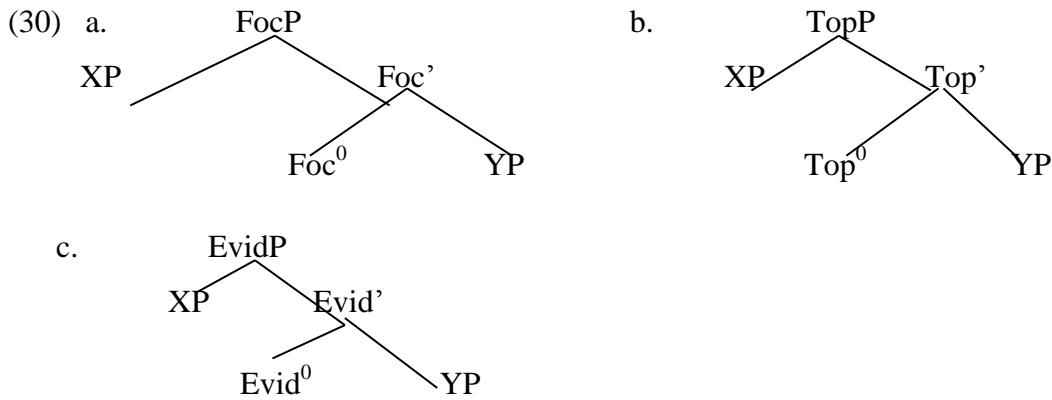
According to Rizzi (2004a:223), the ‘cartographic approach’ is ‘the attempt to draw maps of syntactic configurations as precise and detailed as possible.’ (see also Cinque & Rizzi 2008). In a sense, cartography is interested not only in the study of functional/grammatical categories, but also, in their numbering, ordering and content. If it is true that cartography emerged and gained its name in the late 90’s, there is no doubt that it is only in the early 2000’s that this research framework became widely known thanks to the publication of myriad of scientific works including Cinque (2002), Aboh (2004), Belletti (2004), Rizzi (2004a-b) etc. However, it is important to recall that by the 80’s, the study of functional projections was already the order of the day with the exploration of the nominal spine or layer (Brame 1982; Hellan 1986; Abney 1987), the inflectional layer (Stowell 1981; Safir 1982; Chomsky 1986; Pollock 1989) and the verbal layer (Larson 1988; Hale & Keyser 1993; Chomsky 1995; Kratzer 1996) to name only a few. It is all the same important to recall that cartography covers a wide range of layers, i.e. it touches the thematic layer that is, the verbal layer dedicated to the fulfilment of thematic relations between the verb/predicate and its arguments (internal and external), the inflectional layer which is dedicated to functional relations such as agreement, case, aspect, negation, EPP

etc. and finally, the discourse layer, also known as the complementizer space or the clausal left periphery, that is the domain dedicated to scope-discourse properties such as focus, topic, wh-questions etc. What the aforementioned references share in common in addition to many others is that the functional material can project syntactic structures in conformity with the X-bar schema. What is interesting is that by the early 90's, up to nowadays, the inventory of functional projections has considerably increased exponentially such that each layer of phrasal and clausal configuration is assumed to delineate a richly articulate functional zone. In this vein, one witnessed an exponential proliferation of functional categories in an unprecedented manner ranging from the thematic domain including the nominal frame (Cinque 1994, 2010; Matthewson 1998; Aboh 2002; Brugè 2002; Giusti 2002; Scott 2002; Coene & D'hulst 2003a; 2003b; Nicolis 2008; Svenonius 2008; Biloa 2013 etc.), the prepositional area (Asbury et al. 2008; Cinque & Rizzi 2010) and the verbal frame (Larson 1988; Hale & Keyser 1993; Chomsky 1995; Kratzer 1996; Ramchand 2008 etc.), to the discourse-oriented spine (Rizzi 1997; 2001; 2004a-b; 2013; Benincà 2001, 2006; Benincà & Poletto 2004; Bocci 2004; Benincà & Munaro 2010; Cruschina 2006; Frascarelli & Hinterhölzl 2007; Biloa 2013 *inter alia*), via the inflectional layer (Pollock 1989; Belletti 1990; Chomsky 1991; Cinque 1999, 2006; Shlonsky 1997, 2000; Cardinaletti 2004; Aboh & Nauze 2008; Biloa 2013) among others. The list of scientific works within the cartographic framework is far from being exhaustive, but all of them revolve around the following tenet defined in (29) below.

(29) *One Feature One Head (OFOH)* (Cinque & Rizzi 2008:2).

Each morpho-syntactic feature corresponds to an independent syntactic head with a specific slot in the functional hierarchy.

In the spirit of cartography, and in conformity with Kayne's (1984 & 1994) binary branching hypothesis and Linear Correspondence Axiom respectively, syntactic configurations of discourse-related properties such as topic, focus, evidentiality etc. conform to the X-bar schema (as mentioned before) such that each discourse-related functional head projects its own maximal projection, the specifier and head of which may be overt or/and covert simultaneously in a local Spec-Head relation as in the following schemas in (30). In (30), functional heads may be overt or covert. As (29) indicates, morpho-syntactic features such as topic, focus, evidentiality and the like each projects a syntactic head with a specific slot in the clause and with specific semantic content.



In (30) above, the specifier position can be occupied by focalized, topicalized or evidential constituents while the respective functional head may be overtly or covertly realized depending on the language internal make-up. This only arises when a given material is activated in the discourse (see Rizzi 2001: 1). In terms of Rizzi (1997) and subsequent works, a constituent endowed with a focus, topic or evidential feature must end up in a local Spec-Head relation with the functional Foc^0 , Top^0 , or Evid^0 head respectively. By so doing, Rizzi establishes a parallel between the well-known Wh and Neg Criteria (Rizzi 1990; Haegeman 1995) and shows that topicalized and focalized constituents also move to the left periphery for the satisfaction of focus and topic criteria or for feature-checking in line with Chomsky's (1993) terminology.

1.2.1.1 Cartography and information structure

Generative grammar in the late 90's witnessed considerable theoretical development with the advent of Rizzi's (1997) seminal paper on the fine-grained characterization of the C-layer, the clausal left periphery. By this time, the birth and rise of the functional categories have never stopped as the exploration of the different grammatical primitives making up the clausal spaces goes increasingly. In this influential contribution, Rizzi proposes that the complementizer domain, which was hitherto considered as a uniform space, be split into several functional projections such the Force Phrase (ForceP), Focus Phrase (FocP), Topic Phrase (TopP) and Finiteness Phrase (FinP) as in (31). In (31) below, the left edge of the clause comes out as a prolific domain with recursive topic projections as opposed to force and focus projections which are unique. The specification of finiteness (FinP) determines whether the propositional content (IP) is finite or non-finite, and the finite/non-finite distinction correlates with a number of characteristics from a cross-linguistic perspective. For instance, finite forms tend to manifest mood distinctions, agreement, and tense as opposed to non-finiteness forms which lack mood and agreement information.

(31)

Credo *che* a Gianni, *QUESTO*, **domain**, gli dovremmo dire (Rizzi 1997: ex 37).

C Top Foc Top IP

‘I believe that to Gianni, THIS, tomorrow, we should say.’

In (31), the italicized lexical complementizer *che* ‘that’ expresses the declarative/illocutionary force of the sentence, the italicized constituent *QUESTO* ‘THIS’ encodes focal information while the bold-printed constituents *a Gianni* ‘to Gianni’ and *domani* ‘tomorrow’ are sentence topics. The realization of focus, topic, evidentiality and other functional heads varies cross-linguistically. In Roman and Germanic languages such as Italian, Spanish, English, German for instance, these heads are covert i.e. are not phonetically realized. In other languages such as Basàá, Gungbe, Quechua, Tuki etc. these discourse-related properties are overtly realized (Biloa 1995, 1997, 2013; Aboh 2004, 2010; Bassong 2010; Camacho & al. 2010; and Sánchez 2010 respectively). Rizzi (1997: 283, 284) uses the force-finiteness terminology to refer to the structural zone opened upward by the force phrase and closed off downward by the finiteness phrase and claims that

‘Complementizers express the fact that a sentence is a question, a declarative, an exclamative, a relative, a comparative, an adverbial of a certain kind, etc; and can be selected as such by a higher selector. This information is called the specification of Force [...] the C-system expresses the specification of finiteness which in turn selects an IP system with the characteristics of finiteness: mood distinctions, subject agreement licensing nominative case, overt tense distinctions.’

Partially summarizing, and as already mentioned, at the very inception of the cartography of the clausal left periphery in (1997), Rizzi’s proposal for a more fine-grained and articulate structure of the C-space includes a unique Force Phrase, a recursive Topic Phrase, a unique Focus Phrase and a unique Finiteness Phrase as portrayed in (32) below.

(32) [ForceP [TopP [FocP [TopP [FinP [IP...]]]]]]]

Later on in (2001), Rizzi proposed a refinement of the complementizer layer by including another functional projection called Interrogative Phrase (IntP), whose role is to encode the interrogative force of the sentence. The head Int⁰ of IntP, which is lower than the ForceP, is said to be occupied the lexical complementizer *se* introducing embedded yes/no questions in Italian while *perché*, ‘why’, *come mai* ‘how come’ and other wh-elements corresponding to higher adverbials can occupy Spec-IntP. The introduction of these new data contributed once more to the splitting up of the complementizer space into several distinct functional categories as in (33a) below where the asterisk indicates recursion. In (2004a), Rizzi further improved his (2001)’s account of the left peripheral functional projections by adding a new projection called Modifier Phrase (ModP), the specifier of which is dedicated to displaced adverbs and adverbial

expressions, and the head of which is implicit in Italian. (33) provides a snapshot of Rizzi's (2004a) refined structure of the left periphery.

(33)

- a. [ForceP [TopP* [IntP [FocP [TopP* [FinP [IP...]]]]]]]
- b. ForceP [TopP* [IntP [FocP [TopP* [ModP [TopP*[FinP [IP...]]]]]]]]]

Subsequent works by Benincà & Poletto (2004), Rizzi (2004a, b), Frascarelli & Hinterhölzl (2007), and Frascarelli (2007) recast Rizzi's previous proposals by proposing a specific position for fronted adverbs (Rizzi 2004a,b proposes that fronted adverbs occupy the specifier position of a functional projection called modifier phrase (ModP)), and distinguishing different kinds of hierarchically ordered topics at the left periphery (cf. Benincà 2004; Benincà & Poletto 2004; Frascarelli & Hinterhölzl 2007; and Frascarelli 2007 & 2012). These former cartographers (i.e. Benincà 2001, 2006; Benincà & Poletto 2004; Poletto 2005; Frascarelli & Hinterhölzl 2007; and Frascarelli 2007) think that topic phrases are not freely recursive given that topics differ in terms of semantic interpretation. Rizzi's initial proposal in (33a) first witnessed further improvement as proposed in Benincà (2001, 2006), Benincà & Poletto (2004), Frascarelli & Hinterhölzl 2007; and Frascarelli 2007). In their approaches, the left periphery is more prolific and therefore, there should be offered a more fine-grained semantic distinction between different thematic and contrastive elements than in Rizzi's initial Split-CP proposal. In this vein, the recursiveness of functional topic projections at the left periphery must be recast given that topics occur in a hierarchical order depending on their semantic interpretation. The clausal left edge in their approach is thus conceived of as being made up of three main domains/fields, namely the frame field, the theme field and the focus field. The frame layer is made up of frame/scene settings expressions/adverbials (this is probably Rizzi's (2004a) modifier phrase) as well as hanging topics. The role of the frame layer is to encode the global Topic and/or set the spatio-temporal frame of the sentence. The theme field/domain, made up of the left dislocated topic and list topic (also known as contrastive topic), corresponds to the sentence-level topic. As for the focus-field, the authors argue that it is made up of contrastive focus (I FocP) and new information focus (II FocP). According to the authors, given that both contrastive and information foci can simultaneously co-occur at the left periphery of the sentence, their structural and hierarchical order is such that contrastive focus precedes new information focus. Of interest is that Benincà & Poletto (2004:61) demonstrate that both contrastive and new information foci can occur in the left periphery in a position where they are c-commanded by the topic position (s). They argue

that there exists no topic position below the focus. In their terminology, what was formerly called the lowest topic phrase in the Rizzian terminology rather corresponds to the focus phrase with new information interpretation. As a result, Benincà & Poletto, as opposed to Rizzi, argue against the uniqueness principle which stipulates that a clause should contain at most one focus projection (see Rizzi 1997 and subsequent works). The overall left peripheral architecture as proposed by Benincà & Poletto (2004) is adapted and offered in (34) below whereby LD stands for left dislocation, HT for hanging topic, List Top for list topic or the well-known contrastive topic. Each specific field is contained within curve brackets.

(34) [ForceP]{_{Frame}[SceneSetP] [HT]}{_{Theme}[LD][ListToP]}{_{Foc}[I FocP][II FocP]}[FinP]

In their opinion, different topics can be located in specific positions at the left periphery depending on their discourse properties because there exists ‘a systematic correlation between discourse roles and the formal properties of topics which is encoded in a specific ordering of functional heads in the C-domain (Frascarelli 2012:2).’ In this vein, the authors attempt a typology of topics as well as their hierarchical structural ordering depending on their discourse properties as presented in (34).

In terms of Frascarelli (2012:2), ‘The Aboutness-Shift topic (A-S) connects Reinhart’s (1981) *aboutness* with the property of being newly introduced or reintroduced and changed to; the Contrastive Topic (C-T) induces alternatives in the discourse which have no impact with the focus value and creates oppositional pairs with respect to other topics, and ultimately, the authors distinguish Familiar (Fam)Topics which constitute given information in the discourse and are used either for topic continuity (continuation topic) or to resume background information (cf Frascarelli 2007:2).’ According to this latter approach (Frascarelli 2007, 2012), only familiar topics are subject to recursion because more than one constituent can be dislocated to retrieve given information. As a direct consequence of this, the new clausal left peripheral architecture in (35) below is derived in core syntax by means of functional features so that each functional head encoding discourse properties acts as an overt ‘flag’ carrying very transparent information to the interface (Rizzi & Cinque 2008:51). Put differently, each discourse feature is responsible for the movement of a specific constituent bearing the same features. For instance, Fam⁰, the head of FamP (familiar topic) probes over a corresponding familiar topic; Contrast⁰, the head of the contrastive topic, when activated in the discourse, attracts the corresponding contrastive topic in the C-domain etc (the asterisk indicates recursion is possible).

(35) The fine structure of the left periphery (adapted from Frascarelli 2012:2)

[ForceP [Force⁰ [ShiftP [Shift⁰ [ContrP [Contrast⁰ [IntP[Int⁰ [FocP[Foc⁰ [FamP*[Fam⁰ [FinP [Fin⁰ [IP...]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]

The above proposals (34-35) offer each a fine-grained characterization of the left periphery of the clause. However, as opposed to Rizzi's, Benincà & Poletto's as well as Frascarelli's proposals offer a more fine-grained atomization of the left periphery in that they provide a clear cut distinction between different topic categories. Furthermore, as portrayed in (34), Benincà & Poletto's (2004) approach licenses focus recursion (each focus encodes a different discourse property) as compared to Rizzi (1997 and subsequent works) who advocates only topic recursion. Although all based on Italian data, the aforementioned approaches have been widely extended cross-linguistically by several authors.

Similarly, other authors have postulated the existence of a lower focus phrase position in the VP periphery. In Caribbean Spanish, Bosque (1999) and Camacho (2006) have proposed a focus position above VP in cleft constructions. Jayaseelan (1996, 2001), on the basis of the distribution of wh-words in Malayalam, proposes the existence of focus and topic projections within IP. In the same vein, the analysis of cleft constructions in Trinidad Dialectal English carried out by Cozier (2006) pushed this latter to postulate an IP internal focus position in this variety of English. Along similar lines, Belletti (2005) proposes the existence of lower focus and topic functional projections in Italian while Aboh (2004, 2007, 2010) postulates that there exists in Aghem (Bantu) a lower focus position in the VP periphery as well as functional focus and topic projections in the nominal layer in Gungbe (Kwa).

1.2.1.2 Cartography and Minimalism

The goal of this section is not to profoundly scrutinize all the tenets that uphold the Minimalist Program and Cartography as the reader would expect. Rather, emphasis is laid on the major distinguishing factors that exist between these two projects in terms of the mapping of clause structure. In this vein, for much understanding of these two projects, the reader should consult Chomsky (1993, 1994, 1995, 2001, 2008 etc), Rizzi (1997, 2001, 2004, 2013; Cinque 2002; Belletti 2004b; Cinque & Rizzi 2008, Shlonsky 2010 among others). At first sight, there seems to be a significant conflict/tension between Minimalism and Cartography in the sense that while the former aims at minimizing or reducing syntactic computations to the strict minimum, the latter, on the contrary, aims not only at splitting or multiplying syntactic atoms as much as possible, but also at examining them in terms of content, number and ordering. In this vein, Minimalism appears as being simple while Cartography appears to be a complex tool in the representation of syntactic categories. However, note that the rise of Cartography coincides with the advent of Minimalism in (1995) and both notions fall within the Principles and Parameters framework of syntactic theory. In terms of clause structure, and as pointed out by Shlonsky (2010: 426), following Cinque & Rizzi (2008), syntactic structures within the framework of the

Minimalist Program are reduced to a simple impoverished system which reduces the mapping of the clause into the traditional v/VP, TP, CP layers/domains while Cartography is concerned with the richness or proliferation of syntactic representations which ‘populate’ (Rizzi 2013) syntactic domains. Cartography strives to expand the inventory of syntactic categories, their content as well as their ordering so as to see to what extent these categories interact not only within the same language, but also crosslinguistically. Instead of reducing the clause structure into a simple v/VP-TP-CP configuration as advocated by Minimalism, cartographers aim at providing an inventory of interpretable features by exploring their full interpretation. As opposed to the traditional view according to which the mapping of the clause is restricted to the sole v/VP-TP-CP domains as previously thought, the cartographic framework proposes that syntactic atoms are more complex and should be provided a richly articulated account. This is what establishes the division of labour between both approaches. Summarizing, the apparent tension between Minimalism and Cartography is that while the former is guided by economy considerations in terms of representation and derivation, the latter is guided by the richness or proliferation of syntactic representations and derivations.

1.2.2 Alternatives to cartography

Since Rizzi’s (1997) seminal paper on ‘the fine structure of the left periphery’ and subsequent works, a lot of controversies have arisen and there exists an ongoing debate on whether information structure-related categories such as focus, topic and the like are syntax-driven or not. In other words, as opposed to the cartographic framework, there have arisen several frameworks which claim that syntax is blind to information structure i.e.; there is no direct relation between core syntax and information structure. Many frameworks against the cartographic enterprise have been proposed in the literature by several authors and alternatives even have been advanced. Some theoretical approaches range from Minimalism, Optimality Theory, Meaning-Text Theory (cf. Craenenbroeck 2009 and references cited therein), to the so-called Strong Modularity Hypothesis among others. In the following section, we focus only on the Strong Modularity Hypothesis. Other opposing proposals can be found in a wide range of literature including Emonds (2004), Reinhart (2006), Erteschik-Shir (2007), López (2009) among others.

1.2.2.1 The Strong Modularity Hypothesis and discourse-features

According to many authors, focus, topic and other scope-discourse properties should not be qualified as righteous syntactic features (Szendroi 2001; Brunetti 2003; Slioussar 2007; Horvath 2010; Fanselow & Lenertová 2011 *inter alia*) on the assumption that including such discourse-features in the syntactic derivation would violate Chomsky’s (1995) *Inclusiveness Condition*, which requires that no new objects be added in the course of the syntactic derivation apart from

those that were initially included into the numeration. Accordingly, focus, topic and the like are inherently relational, in the sense that, they are identified on the basis of the relation between the denotation of the given item and the proposition. In this vein, they should not be considered as lexical items or grammatical primitives in the same manner as other formal lexical items such as tense, aspect etc. Instead of adopting a purely syntax-driven approach, the anti-cartographers propose an interface-driven approach to the interpretation of discourse categories such that no information structure-related category, i.e. ‘purely discourse-related notions’ (Horvath 2010) can be encoded in the grammar as a formal feature. As a result, there can be no feature-driven ‘focus movement’ or ‘topic movement’. It is undoubtedly in this vein that Fanselow & Lenertová (2011: 173) claim that

‘The use of focus/topic features in the syntactic derivation violates the inclusiveness condition (Chomsky 1995), according to which only those features can figure in syntactic computations that represent properties of lexical items. On obvious grounds, being a focus or a topic is not a lexical property [...] words and phrases can be classified as such only when used in a specific context.’

According to these two former authors, the movement of scope discourse properties to the left periphery of the clause is not motivated by feature-checking purposes, but rather, they are triggered by an unspecific ‘edge feature’ of C (Chomky 2008) and its restrictions can be attributed to the requirements of cyclic linearization (cf. Fox & Pesetsky 2005). Globally, Fanselow & Lennertová (2011) among others claim that movement of discourse-related categories are prosody-driven. Either way, they argue that ‘accentuation rather than informational status determines which categories can be fronted’ (pp. 170). The special role attributed to accentuation, however, does not imply a prosody-driven syntax, rather, it stems from the fact that accentuation is a ‘side effect of cyclic linearization.’ Grosso modo, according to these anti-cartographers, any attempt to include discourse-related categories into core syntax spoils this latter. As such, and as recently stated in (Rizzi 2013), anti-cartographers assume an extremely impoverished syntax because they reduce syntactic configurations to the sole basic C and I projections and ‘pragmaticise’ syntax, i.e. ‘shifting much of the computational burden to post interface interpretative systems, not only for interpretation proper, but also for ordering in the sequence and co-occurrence restrictions.’ (pp. 221).

1.3 Research problem and contribution of the dissertation

The language under investigation in this work is Basàá, an SVO, tone and noun class language of the Bantu language family spoken in Cameroon (in Central Africa). The aim of the analysis is to explore information structure-related categories not only in their realization and interpretation, but also in their interaction with syntax. By discussing the Basaá empirical material, the major

issue is to know what theoretical and conceptual tool(s) adequately account(s) for the ordering of functional categories that occupy the complementizer domain known under the label clausal left periphery in recent terminology (Rizzi 1997 and related work). Like in any language study, the overall goal is to determine to what extent the data from this Bantu language contribute to our knowledge and understanding of language and syntactic theory.

1.3.1 Setting the stage

The Basaá empirical material raises conceptual and empirical problems, the solutions of which strongly militate in favour of a rethinking and reshaping of clause structure. From a conceptual angle, it is known that the complementizer domain is conceived of as a domain which deals with elements that participate in clause typing and illocutionary force phenomena. Starting from Chomsky (1986), it has been admitted that functional categories such as lexical complementizers, also known as subordinating conjunctions occupy C the head of CP (complementizer Phrase), the specifier position of which hosts fronted wh-phrases in English-like languages.

Following this line of reasoning, the Basaá sentences in (36a-b) can be given the simplified structures in (36c-d) respectively whereby the declarative lexical complementizer *lé* ‘that’ and its interrogative counterpart *tɔ́* ‘if/whether’ occupy C the head of CP.

- (36) a. Mudaá a- íj- hój̄ol **lé** me bí- sómb mámbót malâm
1.woman 1.SM-PRS-think that I PST2-buy 4.clothes 4.nice
‘The woman thinks that I bought nice clothes’
- b. Mudaá a- ní- jí béeé **tɔ́** me bí- sómb mámbót malâm
1.woman 1.SM-PRS-know NEG whether/if I PST2-buy 4.clothes 4.nice
‘The woman doesn’t know if I bought nice clothes’
- c. ...[CP [C **lé** [TP me [T bí- [VP [V sómb [DP mámbót malâm]]]]]
that I PST2- buy 6.clothes 6.nice
‘...that I bought nice clothes’
- d. ...[CP [C **tɔ́** [TP me [T bí- [VP [V sómb [DP mámbót malâm]]]]]
if/whether I PST2- buy 6.clothes 6.nice
‘...if I bought nice clothes’

Similarly, fronted question words in question formation contexts like in (37a-b) can be derived as in (37c-d) respectively where the fronted wh-argument *kíí* ‘what’ and its non-refential counterpart *ínguúkíí* ‘why’ occupy the specifier position of CP (movement is indicated by angled brackets (Starke 2001)).

- (37) a. **Kíí** mudaá a- bí- sómb yáání
9.what 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-buy 1.yesterday
‘What did the woman buy yesterday?’
- b. **ínguúkíí** mudaá a- bí- sómb mámbót malâm
why 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-buy 4.clothes 4.nice
‘Why did the woman buy nice clothes?’

- c. [CP **kíí** [C [AgrS-P mudaá [AgrS a- [TP [T bí-[VP [V sômb <**kíí**>]]]]]
 9.what 1.woman 1.SM- PST2- buy 9.what
 d. [CP **ínuúkíí** [C [AgrS-P mudaá [AgrS a- [TP [T bí-[VP [V sômb ...<**ínuúkíí**>...]]]]]
 why 1.woman 1.SM- PST2- buy why

In terms of X-bar theory (Chomsky 1970, Jackendoff 1977) every phrase is a projection of a head word (lexical or functional) such that in every language the specifier precedes the head (at least underlyingly) which in turn is followed by its complement according to the *Linear Correspondence Axiom* (Kayne 1994¹). In this vein, the sentences in (36c-d) above show that C the head of CP can be occupied by lexical complementizers while Spec-CP can be occupied by fronted wh-phrases (37c-d). The head C is followed by its complement TP/AgrS-P. These structures clearly comply with a strict minimalist approach to clause structure according to which the latter (clause structure) should be confined to the sole CP > TP > VP/vP configuration.

However, if the derivations provided in the (c-d) representations nicely accommodate the Basaá data such that they are likely to predict the clause structure of this language, there is no doubt that such predictions would be short-lived because they are quickly falsified by the following sentences whereby the lexical complementizers *lé* ‘that’ and *tó* ‘if/whether’ co-occur with fronted wh-phrases.

- (38) a. Mudaá a- mí- bat **lé** **kíí** me bí- sômb yáání
 1.woman 1.SM-PRS-ask that 9.what I PST2-buy 1.yesterday
 ‘The woman is asking what I bought yesterday’ Lit: ‘*The woman wonder that what I bought yesterday’
- b. me n- jí bée **tó** **ínuúkíí** maangé a- n- nôg bée máébá
 I PRS-know NEG if/whether why 1.child 1.SM-PRS-hear NEG 6.advice
 ‘I don’t know why the child doesn’t follow advice’ Lit: ‘*I don’t know if why the child doesn’t follow advice’
- c. * Mudaá a- mí- bat **kíí** **lé** me bí- sômb yáání
 1.woman 1.SM-PRS-ask 9.what that I PST2-buy 1.yesterday
- d. *me n- jí bée **ínuúkíí** **tó** maangé a- n- nôg bée máébá
 I PRS-know NEG why if/whether 1.child 1.SM-PRS-hear NEG 6.advice

The above sentences show that lexical complementizers are compatible with fronted wh-phrases as in (38a-b). However, although complementizers and wh-phrases can co-occur, this co-occurrence is highly constrained. In other words, never can wh-phrases precede lexical complementizers as illustrated in the ungrammatical sentences in (38c-d). The ungrammaticality of (38c-d) can simply be caused by the classical *Doubly Filled Comp Filter*², a PF condition

¹ According to Kayne’s (1994) LCA approach, there is no head initial versus head final parameter. All languages underlyingly exhibit a uniform structure and differences are superficial. In a given language X whereby the head follows its complement, it is the case that the latter is underlyingly merged in a position where it is c-commanded by the former, but has simply been subject to leftward movement where it precedes the head on the surface.

² Bayer & Brandner (2008) among others show that the DFCF is grammatical in older stages of English and German.

which rules out simultaneous spell out of a lexical complementizer in C and a wh-phrase in Spec-CP. In terms of theoretical considerations, one should wonder how sentences like (38a-b) can be accounted for using the X-bar template. One possible attempt would be to propose an adjunction approach whereby fronted wh-phrases are attached to the TP by left adjunction (39a). Another possibility would be to propose that they are rather attached to the CP projection by right adjunction (39b).

- (39) a. ...[CP [C **lé** [TP **kíí** [TP me [T bí- [VP [V -sómb <**kíí**> yááni]]]]]
 that 9.what I PST2- buy 9.what 1.yesterday
 b. ...[CP [C **tóó** [CP **ínuúkíí** [TP me [T bí-[VP -sómb mámbót malám <**ínuúkíí**>]]]]
 if why I PST2- buy 6.clothes 6.nice 1.why

None of the these approaches seems to be adequate. For uniformity considerations, one cannot offer a different account for the same wh-phrases in the same language. In other words, if in the derivation in (37c-d) above the wh-phrases *kíí* ‘what’ and *ínuúkíí* ‘why’ occupy Spec-CP by substitution, it cannot be proposed that in (39a) the wh-phrase *kíí* ‘what’ is rather adjoined to TP. Such an analysis is not uniform, and as a result, does not elegantly account for the behaviour of wh-phrases in the language. The second possibility according to which these wh-phrases occupy the complementizer domain by right adjunction (39b) is strictly ruled out under Kayne’s (1994) antisymmetry approach. Accordingly, no right adjunction is permitted, there cannot be more than one head per phrase, just as there cannot be more than one complement per head (see also Cinque 1996). More precisely, right adjunction of the CP hosting the wh-phrase *ínuúkíí* ‘why’ to the highest CP headed by the interrogative complementizer *tóó* ‘if/whether’ is not permitted under Kayne’s analysis.

Globally, not only is adjunction inadequate for the above structures, but it also offers a non-uniform account of the distribution of wh-phrases in Basaá, that is, it contradicts the analysis provided in (37c-d).

That no adjunction theory can account for the Basaá data is furthermore supported by the fact that a sequence of a lexical complementizer and a fronted wh-phrase is compatible with focalized and topicalized phrases as shown in (40a-b).

(40)

- a. mudaá a- mí- bat-bá **lé** *ínuúkíí maangé njé-n* me n- tí mákebla
 1.woman 1.SM-PRS-ask-RFM that why 1.child 1-FOC I PST1-give 6.presents
 Lit: ‘*The woman wonders **that why** to the CHILD I gave the presents’

- b. mudaá a- n- jí bée **tóó** *ínuúkíí maangé njé-k* me n- tí njé mákebla
 1.woman 1.SM-PRS-know NEG if why 1.child 1-TOP I PST1-give 1.him 6.presents
 Lit: ‘*The woman wonders **that why as for the child**, too I gave the presents to’

Ultimately, where any adjunction approach would fail again are cases like (41a-b) whereby a sequence of two lexical complementizers is allowed and simultaneously followed by focalized and topicalized elements.

(41)

- a. mudaá a- mí- bat-bá **lé** **toó** ínjuúkíí maangé njé-n me n- tí mákebla
1.woman 1.SM-PRS-ask-RFM that if why 1.child 1-FOC I PST1-give 6.presents
Lit: '*The woman wonders that if why to the CHILD I gave the presents'
- b. mudaá a- mí- bat-bá **lé** **toó** ínjuúkíí maangé njé-k me n- tí njé mákebla
1.woman 1.SM-PRS-ask-RFM that if why 1.child 1-TOP I PST1-give 1.him 6.presents
Lit: '*The woman wonders that if why as for the child too I gave the presents to'

The grammaticality of the above sentences suggests that an adjunction approach is not capable of accounting for the Basaá data. In addition, a strict minimalist view of phrase structure according to which CP is the sole highest functional projection would face difficulties in capturing a succession of two lexical complementizers, which, taken independently, encode different illocutionary forces (cf ex. 36c-d & 39a-b). The first lexical complementizer *lé* 'that' encodes declarative force while its counterpart *toó* 'if/whether' encodes interrogative force. In other words, no adjunction-based approach can handle cases like (40-41) whereby focalized and topicalized constituents are followed by functional morphemes which encode, in addition to agreement, focal and topic information. Admitting that the constituents preceding the canonical subject *me* 'I' are adjoined to TP, a sentence like (40a) would not predict the positions of both the agreement morpheme *njé-* and the focus marker, namely the nasal morpheme *-n*. The same holds for all other sentences. Sentence (40a), repeated below as (42a), under an adjunction approach would be given a structure such as (42b) whereby the positions of the agreement and focus morphemes remain unspecified (see question marks).

(42)

- a. mudaá a- mí- bat-bá **lé** ínjuúkíí maangé njé-n me n- tí mákebla
1.woman 1.SM-PRS-ask-RFM that why 1.child 1-FOC I PST1-give 6.presents
Lit: '*The woman wonders that why to the CHILD I gave the presents'
- b. [CP[C **lé** [CP ínjuúkíí [TP maangé ??[njé-n][TP me n- tí <maangé> mákebla <ínjuúkíí>]]]
that why 1.child 1-FOC I PRS-give 1.child 6.presents why

It is clearly shown that (42b) cannot account for the exact position of the complex morpheme *njé-n*. In like manner, it seems to permit right adjunction of the wh-phrase to the highest CP projection, an operation which is not accepted under the LCA. Assuming adjunction to be the correct approach, and adopting the view that phrasal adjunction involves simple addition of a maximal projection to a pre-existing maximal projection which is a projection of only one head category, the research question to be answered at this juncture would be the following: Where are the functional morphemes encoding agreement, focus and topic information hosted in the

pre-subject position? If it is true that (42b) is not the right derivation for sentence (42a), as a result, all the sentences in (38-41) constitute a theoretical challenge just as the crosslinguistic data in (43-44) below do.

(43) Basáá

Mɛ mí- bat-bá lé tɔ́ baiúdú bɔ́-k, makebla mó-n malêt a- ñ- tí
I PRS-ask-RFM that if 2.students 2-TOP 6.presents 6-FOC 1.teacher 1.SM-PST1-give
bó
2.them

Lit: '*I wonder **that if** as for the students, the teacher gave them the PRESENTS too.'

(44) Gungbe and English (Haegeman 2012: 13 & 18, citing Aboh 2004:299, & Koizumi 1995:140)

a. **Kòfí** ya gànkpà me we kpònɔn lé sú-ì dó.

Kofi TOP prison in FOC policeman NUM shut-PERF-3SG LOC

'As for Kofi , the policeman put him in prison .'

b. % He said **that**, beans, never in his life had *he* been able to stand

The data in (43-44) provide prima facie crosslinguistic evidence against the adjunct approach given its inability to account for the exact positioning of the fronted material preceding the subject of the sentence in Basáá, Gungbe and English. In Basáá, in addition to the two lexical complementizers, there are two fronted constituents, namely the topicalized indirect object *baiúdú* 'students' and the focalized direct object *makebla* 'presents' which precede the canonical subject of the sentence *malêt* 'teacher'. Besides, just as the topicalized constituent *baiúdú* 'students' is followed by an agreeing morpheme *bɔ́-* and the topic marker *-k*, so do the agreeing morpheme *mó-* and the focus marker *-n* follow the focalized constituent *makebla* 'presents'. In the same vein, the Gungbe and the English data constitute a major challenge for the adjunction approach as it would not predict the structural positioning of the topicalized and focalized constituents *Kòfí* 'Kofi' and *gànkpà me* 'in prison' as well as the topic and focus markers *ya* and *we* in Gungbe. Moreover, if the topicalized constituent *beans* and its focalized counterpart *never in my life* can be admitted to be adjoined to TP, the positioning of the fronted auxiliary *had* would still remain problematic for the adjunction approach.

Taken together, and according to an adjunction-based approach, sentences (43-44) would have the derivations in (45a-b-c) respectively (question marks indicate unspecified positions).

(45)

- a. [CP [C lé [CP[C tɔ́ [TP baiúdú ??bɔ́-k [TP makebla ??mó-n [TP malêt a- n- tí...]]]]
that if 2.students 2-TOP 6.presents 6-FOC 1.teacher 1.SM-PRS-give
- b. ...[TP **Kòfí** ??ya [TP **gànkpà** me ??we [TP kpònɔn lé sú-ì dó]]
Kofi TOP prison in FOC policeman NUM shut-PERF-3SG LOC
- c.[CP that [TP beans [TP never in my life ??had_k [TP he <had_k> been able to stand]]]

The preceding derivations show that topicalized and focalized constituents are adjoined to TP. Unfortunately, even if this can be true at first blush, given that the respective constituents are adjoined to the left of the original TPs, the positions of the functional morphemes following topicalized and focalized constituents in Basáá and Gungbe still remain unspecified (45a-b). In the case of English, it is clear that the perfective auxiliary *had* originates inside the lowest TP, but raises into an unspecified pre-subject position.

The derivation in (45a) in Basáá seems to show that one and the same CP can be projected by two different heads, posing therefore a serious conceptual problem related to X-bar theory. More precisely, the derivation in (45a) violates two basic tenets of X-bar defended in Kayne's (1994) LCA, namely the idea that there cannot be more than one head per phrase and that no head can be a complement to another head (cf. Kayne 1994:8). Under this view, (45a) cannot be admitted given that the highest C hosting the declarative lexical complementizer *lé* 'that' selects as a direct complement another head category hosting the interrogative complementizer *toó* 'if/whether' in the lowest CP.

1.3.2 Rizzi (1997) as a breakthrough

Recent developments in generative grammar have proved that the area of the sentence known as COMP since (Bresnan 1970) and later on as CP (Chomsky 1986) can be conceived of as a prolific domain made up of various functional projections with specific scope-discourse properties. In line with Rizzi (1997 and subsequent work), it has been demonstrated crosslinguistically that the traditional/classical CP, known as the left periphery of the sentence is more articulated and contains a variety of distinct and hierarchically organized functional projections, each associated with a specific scope-discourse semantics (cf. Haegeman 2012, Rizzi 2013a,b among others). According to the cartographic approach, each phrasal category with a scope-discourse semantics is associated with a specific feature which should project a functional projection or which should be typed in line with (29), repeated as (46) below for convenience:

(46) *One Feature One Head (OFOH)* (Cinque & Rizzi 2008:2).

Each morpho-syntactic feature corresponds to an independent syntactic head with a specific slot in the functional hierarchy.

In light with (46) and in sentences like (47) below, every functional morpheme preceding the subject of the sentence should project a specific functional projection.

(47)

- a. mudaá a- mí- bat-bá **lé** **toó** ínjuúkíí maangé njé-n me n- tí mákebla
 1.woman 1.SM-PRS-ask-RFM that if why 1.child 1-FOC I PST1-give 6.presents
 Lit: '*The woman wonders **that if why** to the CHILD I gave the presents'

- b. mudaá a- mí- bá- bá **lé tɔ́ iñjuúkíí maangé njé-k** mε n- tí njé mákebla
 1.woman 1.SM-PRS-ask-RFM that if why 1.child 1-TOP I PST1-give 1.him 6.presents
 Lit: '*The woman wonders **that if why** as for the child too I gave the presents to'

In this vein, the focalized indirect object *maangé* ‘child’ in (47a) and its topicalized counterpart in (47b) should occupy the focus and topic fields respectively. Similarly, each of the lexical complementizers *lé* ‘that’ and *tɔ́* ‘if/whether’ should independently occupy a head of a functional projection by virtue of its semantic role in the discourse in the left periphery of the sentence. In the same vein, the fronted wh-phrase *iñjuúkíí* ‘why’, by virtue of being a phrasal category, should be hosted in the specifier position of some functional phrase following the interrogative lexical complementizer *tɔ́* ‘if/whether’. Furthermore, each of the functional morphemes following focalized and topicalized elements should project a functional projection in clause structure. Under cartographic assumptions, complex structures such as sluicing and fragment answers attested in the language as shown (48-49) can be adequately captured.

(48)

- a. maangé a- m- bómá **ŋgím mut** mε mí-bat-bá **lé tɔ́ ndʒéé nû**
 1.child 1.SM-PST1-meet INDF 1.person I PRS-ask-RFM that if 1.who 1.EVID
 ‘The child has met somebody, I wonder who’ Lit: ‘*The child has met somebody, I wonder **that if who**’
- b. maangé a- m- bómá **ŋgím mut** mε mí-bat-bá **lé tɔ́ ndʒéé nû**
 1.child 1.SM-PST1-meet INDF 1.person I PRS-ask-RFM that if 1.who 1.EVID
 pro a- m- bómá <**ndʒéé**> ***nû**
 pro 1.SM-PST1-meet 1.who 1.who
 ‘The child has met somebody, I wonder who he has met’ Lit: ‘*The child has met somebody, I wonder **that if who** he has met’

(49) Q: **kíí î bɔɔngé bá- j-** kat
 1.who 1.EVID 2.children 2.SM-PRS-chase

‘What are the children chasing away?’ Lit: ‘What is it that the children are chasing away?’

A1: (mε j- hójól **lé**) **mintómbá mî**
 I PRS-think that 6.sheep 6.EVID
 ‘SHEEP’

A2: (mε j- hójól **lé**) **mintómbá mî** mó-n pro bá- j- kat <**mintómbá**> ***mî**
 I PRS-think that 6.sheep 6.EVID 6-FOC pro 2.SM-PRS-chase 6.sheep 6.EVID
 ‘They are chasing SHEEP’

Sentence (48a) is an instance of sluicing whereby the wh-phrase ‘who’ is followed by an agreeing noun class evidential(ity) marker and preceded by two lexical complementizers, i.e. the declarative *lé* ‘that’ and the interrogative *tɔ́* ‘if/whether’. In (48b) which is the non-elliptical counterpart of (48a), it is shown that the evidential(ity) marker *nû* does not occur in-situ i.e. it does not occur immediately after the canonical position of the wh-phrase *ndʒéé* ‘who’. The evidential marker only occurs when the wh-phrase is extracted from its base. (49A1) is an

instance of fragment answer which conveys the same semantic interpretation as its non-elliptical sentence in (49A2). Just as it is the case with sluicing, the fragment answer is followed by an agreeing evidential(ity) marker which only occurs when the focalized element is extracted from its canonical. Under no circumstances can the evidential(ity) marker occur when the focalized constituent is in-situ. A salient difference between sllicing and fragment structures in (48-49) is that while the complement of the latter is an AgrS-P/TP clause, the complement of a fragment answer is rather a focus structure as seen in (49A2). Sentences in (49) show that a fragment answer can be embedded. In this case, it is preceded by the declarative lexical complementizer *lé* ‘that’.

1.3.3 Theoretical contribution

The study is carried out within the cartographic approach to syntactic structures, with special focus on information structure, and is inspired by previous works in the literature such as (Rizzi 1997; 2000; 2001; 2004a-b; 2013a, b), Pukás (2000), Grewendorf (2002), Aboh (2004a, 2007, 2010), Belletti (2004a-b, 2009), Benincà & Poletto (2004), Poletto & Pollock (2004), Roberts (2004), Paul (2005), Tsai (2007), Benincà & Munaro (2010), Durrelman (2008), Endo (2008), Jayaseelan (2008), Aboh & Dyakonova (2009), Dyakonova (2009), Bassong (2010), Haegeman (2012, 2013), Torrence (2012), Biloa 2013) to name only a few.

The departure point of this research work is that discourse-related categories such as focus, topic, interrogation, evidentiality etc. are in most cases overtly realized by specific morphemes that encode such information uncontroversially. The presence of these discourse-related markers and the structural positioning and ordering in which constituents endowed with such related interpretations occur, provide *prima facie* evidence in support of the cartographic framework.

Based on previous works carried in the literature, and with reference to the Basàá data, I provide evidence which do justice to the cartographic project, by defending the idea that discourse-features such as focus, topic, evidentiality³, interrogation and the like are part of the numeration, i.e. the lexical array which, in terms of Chomsky (1995), is made up of lexical items necessary for the building of syntactic blocks. Given that Basàá, like many other natural languages, is highly inclined to expressing syntactic categories such as tense, aspect, agreement, among others overtly, and as discourse-features are also expressed overtly in most cases, it is assumed that ruling out the inclusion of all these features (tense, aspect, negation, agreement, focus, topic, evidentiality, interrogation etc.) would violate Chomsky’s (1995) *Inclusiveness Condition*, the

³ Evidentiality is generally associated with the TAM system crosslinguistically and has not yet been very well known in African linguistics (cf. Botne 1997 for modality and evidentiality in Lega (Bantu). Recent works by Dierck (2010) and Sánchez (2011) discuss left peripheral evidentiality.

main tenet of which is to preclude any addition of extra material in the course of the syntactic derivation which is not part of the numeration (an array of lexical choices). In other words, only lexical items selected by the numeration should be part of the syntactic derivation. So, I follow the line of analysis according to which, just as the inclusion of other formal grammatical primitives such as tense, aspect, negation participate in the building of syntactic blocks, so should discourse-features.

I propose various approaches to handle information structure-related properties in Basáá. Each of these approaches is motivated by some UG requirements as attested in the literature. In the following sections, I propose a sketchy account for each construction discussed in the whole work so as to familiarize the reader with the different aspects at issue.

First of all, I propose that focus fronting in the language is triggered by two UG requirements, namely the *Focus-Criterion* (Brody 1990, Rizzi 1997 and related work) and the *Extended Projection Principle* (Chomsky 1981/2, 1995, Grimshaw 1991 among others). I provide arguments by demonstrating that focus fronting requires a non-cleft copula structure, the head of which is a null verbal element and the complement of which is an embedded focus phrase as shown in (51).

- (50) Q: **ndʒéé** a- bí- sómb lítowa jaaní
 1.who 1.SM-PST2-buy 5.car 1.yesterday
 ‘Who bought a car yesterday?’

A: **malêt njé-n** a- bí- sómb jó yaaní
 1.teacher 1-FOC 1.SM-PST2-buy 5.it 1.yesterday
 ‘The TEACHER bought it yesterday’

A2: **tɔ, malêt bée njé-n** a- bí- sómb jó jaaní
 no 1.teacher NEG 1-FOC 1.SM-PST2-buy 5.it 1.yesterday
 ‘No, the TEACHER did not buy it yesterday/ No, not the TEACHER buy it yesterday’

A3: ***tɔ, bée malêt njé-n** a- bí- sómb jó jaaní
 no NEG 1.teacher 1-FOC 1.SM-PST2-buy 5.it 1.yesterday

- (51)

 - a. [TP **malêt₁** [T^[EPP] \emptyset_3 [VP <**t₃**> [FocP **t₁** [Foc **njé₂-n** [AgrCP [AgrC **t₂** [AgrS-P **t₁...**]]]]]]]]
1.teacher COP 1-FOC
 - b. [TP **malêt₁** [T^[EPP] \emptyset_3 [NegP **béé** [Neg **t₃** [VP <**t₃**> [FocP **t₁** [Foc **njé₂-n** [AgrCP [AgrC **t₂**
1.teacher COP NEG 1-FOC
[AgrS-P **t₁...**]]]]]]]]]]
 - c.* [TP [T^[EPP] \emptyset_3 [NegP **béé** [Neg **t₃** [VP <**t₃**> [FocP **malêt₁** [Foc **njé₂-n** [AgrCP [AgrC **t₂**
1.teacher COP NEG 1-FOC
[AgrS-P **t₁...**]]]]]]]]]

The derivations in (51) show that the focalized subject *mal t* ‘teacher’ moves stepwise on its way to the matrix TP, that is, it first moves into the embedded Spec-FocP to satisfy the focus-criterion (the requirement that the specifier of every focus phrase should have a focalized constituent at a

certain level of the derivation), then it moves into the matrix TP clause to satisfy the EPP (the requirement that every sentence should have a subject). I postulate that the null verbal copula acts as a light verb which is initially merged within the lowest VP of the matrix clause in-between NegP (if negation is present) and TP. It subsequently moves into the highest T head via Neg. The ungrammatical sentence in (50A4), derived as (51c) provides support to the idea that focus fronting in Basáá is motivated by both the focus and EPP requirements. It is simply shown that constituent negation in Basáá requires that negation should follow the negated constituent (50A2) and not precede it. This ungrammaticality is explained under the derivation in (51c) whereby the focalized subject *malét* ‘teacher’, after raising into Spec-FocP, fails to raise furthermore into the matrix TP, violating therefore the EPP. So, sentence (50A3) is ungrammatical because it violates the Extended Projection Principle. In simple terms, this sentence lacks a subject in Spec-TP as opposed to its grammatical counterparts in (A1 & A2) where both the focus and EPP requirements are satisfied. Another reason which explains the ungrammaticality of (50A3) is that in focus fronting cases, no expletive subject is available in Spec-TP of the Basáá matrix clause in order to avoid an EPP violation. As illustrated above, it is proposed that the complex morpheme *njé-n* encoding agreement and focus information are fundamentally two separate morphemes which project two different functional projections in the embedded left periphery (i.e. the portion of the sentence preceding the embedded Agreement Subject Phrase (AgrS-P)). These functional projections are AgrCP⁴ (Agreement Complementizer Projection, cf. Shlonsky 1994, Schneider Zioga (2007) (for left edge agreement in Bantu) headed by the agreement morpheme *njé* and the FocP (Focus Phrase) headed by the focus marker *-n*. For spellout purposes, there should be head movement of the agreement morpheme *njé-* from AgrC to Foc. After this head movement has taken place, both morphemes incorporate and form the complex morpheme *njé-n*. The reasons why focus fronting cannot be associated with a cleft construction in the manner of English and French is linked to semantic/pragmatic and morphosyntactic factors that will be clearly discussed thoroughly in subsequent chapters (chapters three and four).

The derivation of topics involves two different processes depending on their typology. While additive, contrastive and aboutness topics are derived like focus fronting, hanging and scene-setting topics are derived by a simple A-bar mechanism in the manner of Rizzi (1997) and subsequent work). Put differently, in this work, I propose that additive, contrastive and aboutness

⁴ Agreement complementizer is not taken in the sense of Complementizer agreement in Germanic languages. Complementizer agreement here has to do with morphological agreement that occurs in the COMP domain i.e. the pre-subject position.

topics involve a copula structure headed by a null verbal element while hanging and scene-setting topics simple move into a Spec-TopP position without any bi-clausal copula structure.

To begin with, note that a topic with an additive presupposition exhibits almost the same morpho syntactic properties as focus fronting. The only difference is at the level of the form of their markers. While focus is marked by the nasal *-n* as seen above, a topic with an additive interpretation is marked by the morpheme *-k* as in (52), but the agreement morphology remains the same. Semantically, B's statement is true in every situation where other people/somebody else bought a car too. In other words, B's statement presupposes that some people or somebody in addition to the teacher bought a car'.

(52) A: I heard that many people bought cars yesterday, but **what about the teacher?**

B: *ŋjí, malêt njé-k a- bí- sómb lítowa jaaní*
 yes 1.teacher 1-TOP 1.SM-PST2-buy 5.car 1.yesterday
 'Yes, **as for the teacher**, he bought a car too.'

On the contrary, a contrastive topic does not exhibit exactly the same morphosyntactic properties as a fronted focus or an additive topic. In (53), the topic marker is implicit but the agreement marker is overtly realized.

(53)

A: What did the **students** (presumably male and female) receive yesterday at the ceremony?

B: *dīngənda tʃɔ̃-ø dí- bí- kosná máwíndí dilóyá tʃɔ̃-ø dí- bí- kosná bée*
 12.girls 2-TOP 12.SM-PST2-receive 6.pencils 12.boys 12.TOP 12.SM-PST2-receive NEG
tɔ-jɔm
 no-9.thing

'As for the girls, they received the pencils, as for the boys, they received nothing.'

Aboutness topics display the same morphosyntactic properties as contrastive topics. The topic marker is covertly realized whereas the agreement marker is overt. Sentence (54) is an instance of aboutness topic.

(54) A: I told the teacher not to give the presents to the students anymore. But

B: (**malêt**) *njé-ø a- ŋgí- tí- ní- ây baúdú makebla*
 1.teacher 1-TOP 1.SM-CONT-give-EPTH-PROG 2.students 6.presents
 'As for the teacher, he is still giving the presents to the students.'

From the foregone, it can be realized that topic and focus fronting exhibit almost the same morphosyntactic process. It is proposed that like focus fronting, topic fronting in cases like (52-54) involves a copula structure, a slight morphological difference being that the topic morpheme may be covert. These are taken in turn below.

(55)

- a. [TP **malêt₁** [T^[EPP] \emptyset_3 [VP <**t₃**> [TopP **t₁**[Top **njé₂-k** [AgrCP [AgrC **t₂** [AgrS-P **t₁...**]]]]]]]
 1.teacher COP 1-TOP
- b. [TP **dingganda₁** [T^[EPP] \emptyset_3 [VP <**t₃**> [TopP **t₁**[Top **tʃ̩₂-ø** [AgrCP [AgrC **t₂** [AgrS-P **t₁...**]]]]]]
 12.girls COP 12-TOP
- c. [TP **malêt₁** [T^[EPP] \emptyset_3 [VP <**t₃**> [TopP **t₁**[Top **njé₂-ø** [AgrCP [AgrC **t₂** [AgrS-P **t₁...**]]]]]]
 1.teacher COP 1-TOP

Partially summarizing, the structures in (55) show that topic fronting requires head-to-head movement of the agreement morpheme from AgrC to Top where it incorporates into an overt or covert topic marker in the embedded topic field. In addition to this head-to-head movement, there is another head-to-head movement which targets the null verbal copula from V to T in the matrix clause. These are followed by the fronting of the topicalized constituent into Spec-TP via Spec-TopP. I argue that the first movement operation is triggered by the need for the topicalized constituent to check the topic features in Top (the topic-criterion in Rizzi's terminology) while the second movement operation is motivated by the EPP requirements which cannot be satisfied otherwise.

Hanging and scene-setting topics like (56-57) are similar to what is attested in languages like English, German, Italian etc in that they exhibit no morphological topic marking. The topicalized constituent is not followed by overt topic markers. The following examples show that even the agreement marker is not overtly realized after the topicalized constituent. I argue that hanging and scene-setting topics are derived as depicted in (58) where the topic occupies the specifier position of a topic phrase, the head of which is sielnt). I assume that the topic marker in Top the head of the topic phrase is implicitly realized and is represented by the null morpheme \emptyset .

- (56) A: Mε n- nôy lé mudaá a- bí- kε-ná **Bíkûn ni** **Ewas** í tísõn
 I PST1-hear that 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-go-COM 1.Bikun CONN 1.Ewas LOC 9.city
 'I heard that the woman took Bikun and Ewas to the city.'

- B: **dilóyâ tʃi**, me bí-bõmá **tʃó** í sóŋ í- bí- tágbe
 12.boys 12.DEM I PST2-meet 12.them LOC 9.month 9.SM-PST2-pass
 'As for those boys, I met them last month.'

- (57) A: A lóyá, lihaa lí- j- kε (lé)láá
 VOC 19.boy 5.family 5.SM-PRS-go how
 Lit: 'Guy, how is the family?'

- B: **ni sombol Njámbê**, bot bõ- bá-sô bá yé mbóó
 with 7.will 1.God 2.persons 2.PRN-2.AGR-all 2.SM be.PRS health
 'By God's will, everybody is fine.'

- (58) [TopP **XP_i** [Top \emptyset [AgrS-P/TP...<**XP_i**>...]]]

In light of the (in) compatibility effects attested in the distribution between wh-phrases and focalized elements, I claim following Bassong (2010), that fronted arguments and referential adjuncts occupy the specifier position of a focus phrase (FocP) while their non-referential

counterparts occupy the specifier position of a functional Wh-P projection above the focus phrase. The following examples show that an argument and a referential adjunct are incompatible with a focalized element (59a-b) whether the latter is preceded or followed by the former, while a non-referential adjunct can successful co-occur with a focalized element (59c-d). Sentences in (60) show that when an argument or a referential adjunct co-occurs with a non-referential adjunct, the latter should always precede the former. In like manner, focalized elements always follow and never precede non-referential adjuncts.

- (59) a. *(ndʒéé) mambót mó-n (ndʒéé) mudaá a- bí- sómb-ól
 1.who 6.clothes 6-FOC 1.who 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-buy-APPL
 b. *(kélkíí) mambót mó-n (kélkíí) mudaá a- bí- sómb-ól
 1.when 6.clothes 6-FOC 1.who 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-buy-APPL
 c. léláá mambót mó-n (*léláá) mudaá a- bí- sómb-ól bóóngé
 how 6.clothes 6-FOC how 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-buy-APPL 2.children
 ‘How come/how the woman bought the CLOTHES for the children?’
 d. ínjuúkíí mambót mó-n (*ínjuúkíí) mudaá a- bí- sómb-ól bóóngé
 why 6.clothes 6-FOC why 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-buy-APPL 2.children
 ‘How come/how the woman bought the CLOTHES for the children?’

- (60) a. léláá ndʒéé (*léláá) a- bí- níiyá báúdú minsɔŋgí
 how 1.who how 1.SM-PST2-teach 2.students 4.mathematics
 ‘*How did who teach the students mathematics?’

- b. ínjuúkíí héé (*ínjuúkíí) malêt a- bí- sómb-ól lítowa
 why 1.where why 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-buy-APPL 5.car
 ‘*Why where did the teacher buy a car?’

The derivations in (61) show that the referential adjunct occupies Spec-FocP while the non-referential adjunct is hosted in Spec-Wh-P. (61b-c) are illustrations for the positioning of wh-phrases in Basaá.

- (61) a. [Wh-P^[non-referential adjuncts] [Wh [FocP^[Arguments/referential adjuncts] [Foc [AgrS-P/TP...]]]]
 b. [Wh-P ínjuúkíí [FocP héé [Foc^[+foc] [AgrS-P ...<héé> <ínjuúkíí>]]]]
 why 1.where 1.where why
 c. [Wh-P léláá [FocP héé [Foc^[+foc] [AgrS-P ...<héé> <ínjuúkíí>]]]]
 how 1.where 1.where why

Complex constructions such as fragment answers (62-63) and sluicing (64) also seem to be well accounted for from a cartographic perspective. The following sentences in (62-63) are instances of fragment answers in the language. They show that fragments can be embedded. In a context like (62), the speaker has no (direct) evidence that ‘the women are buying/bought something’, but s/he simply presupposes that the action took place. In this case (62Q) can also be answered negatively like in (62A4). Recall that the focalized constituent cannot be morphologically marked in-situ as shown in (62A3) where the complex morpheme *mó-n* is ruled out after the focused object *mambót* ‘clothes’.

(62)

Q: **Kíí** bodaá bá- n- sômb

9.what 2.women 2.SM-PRS-buy

'What is it that the women are buying?'

A1: (m^e ñ- hójôl l^é) **mambót**

I PRS-think that 6.clothes

'(I think) the CLOTHES' Lit: ('I think) that the CLOTHES.'

A2: (m^e ñ-hójôl l^é) **mambót mâ mó-n** pro bá- n-sômb

I PRS-think that 6.clothes 6.EVID 6-FOC pro 2.SM-PRS-buy

'I think that The CLOTHES' 'I think the CLOTHES'

A3: *pro bá- n-sômb **mambót mó-n**

pro 2.SM-PRS-buy 6.clothes 6-FOC

'They are buying the CLOTHES.'

A4: **tɔ-jɔm**

no-9.thing

'Nothing.'

On the contrary, a question with an evidential(ity) presupposition like (63Q) conveys the meaning according to which the speaker is aware that something has happened i.e. it has (direct) evidence or proof that the event is true. In this case, it cannot be answered negatively as shown by (63A4). The ungrammaticality of (63A4) indicates that evidential(ity) and focus markings are not licensed when the focus is in-situ.

(63)

Q: **Kíí** î bodaá bá- n- sômb

9.what 9.EVID 2.women 2.SM-PRS-buy

'What is the woman buying?' Lit: 'What is it that the women are buying?'

A1: (m^e ñ- hójôl l^é) **mambót mâ**

I PRS-think that 6.clothes 6.EVID

'(I think) the CLOTHES' Lit: ('I think) that the CLOTHES.'

A2: (m^e ñ-hójôl l^é) **mambót mâ mó-n** pro bá- n-sômb

I PRS-think that 6.clothes 6.EVID 6-FOC pro 2.SM-PRS-buy

'I think that The CLOTHES' 'I think the CLOTHES'

A3: *pro bá- n-sômb **mambót mâ mó-n**

pro 2.SM-PRS-buy 6.clothes 6.EVID 6-FOC

'They are buying the CLOTHES.'

A4: #**tɔ-jɔm**

no-9.thing

'Nothing.'

This work is also interested in elliptical fragment answers such as (62A1 & 63A1) and their non-elliptical counterparts in (62A2 & 63A2), the derivations of which are depicted in (64). It is proposed that fragment answers are fronted foci the derivation of which involves a copula structure headed by a null verb. The difference between (62A1) and its counterpart in (63A1) is that the former does not contain an overt evidential(ity) morpheme whereas the latter does. However, each of them triggers PF deletion of a Focus Phrase (FocP). The two cases are taken in turn below whereby the evidential (ity) morpheme acts as the [E-]feature in Merchant's 2001 terminology and triggers ellipsis (indicated by angled brackets) of the focus phrase complement. As illustrated in (64), the evidential(ity) morpheme can be overt (64a) or covert (64b).

(64)

a.

[ForceP[Force **Ié** [TP **mámbót₁**[T^[EPP] \emptyset_3 [VP[V t_3 [EvidP t_1 [Evid **mâ**^[E] <[FocP t_1 [Foc **mó₂-n**
that 6.clothes COP 6.EVID 6-FOC
[AgrCP[AgrC t_2 [AgrS-P ... t_1 ...]]]]]]]]>

b.

[ForceP [Force **Ié** [TP **mámbót₁**[T^[EPP] \emptyset_3 [VP [V t_3 [EvidP t_1 [Evid^[E] <[FocP t_1 [Foc **mó₂-n**
that 6.clothes COP 6-FOC
[AgrCP[AgrC t_2 [AgrS-P ... t_1 ...]]]]]]]]>

The derivation of fragment answers requires successive cyclic movement of the focalized constituent into Spec-TP of the matrix clause via Spec-FocP and Spec-EvidP⁵ respectively. The first movement step into the focus field is motivated by focus requirements, the second is motivated by evidentiality purposes while the last movement is dictated by EPP. In addition to this phrasal movement, there is a head-to-head movement from AgrC to Foc where both the agreement morpheme *mó-* and the focus morpheme *-n* combine to form the complex head *mó-n* by incorporation.

It is important to mention that Basaá fragments do not always require a pre-established linguistic antecedent and they do not always involve FocP deletion as depicted in (64) above.

The following example shows that a negative polarity item can be a fragment answer in the absence of a sentential negation in a preceding discourse (here the QUD).

(65) Q: Kíí mudaá a- bí- tí báúdú jaaní
9.what 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-give 2.students 1.yesterday
'What did the woman give to the students yesterday?'

A1: **tɔ-jɔm**

no-9.thing

'NOTHING'

A2: **tɔ-jɔm₁** mudaá a- bí- tí **béé** báúdú **t₁** jaaní
no-9.thing 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-give NEG 2.students 1.yesterday
'The woman did not give ANYTHING to the students'

(66) Q: Kíí mudaá a- bí- tí báúdú jaaní
9.what 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-give 2.students 1.yesterday
'What did the woman give to the students yesterday?'

A1: A1: **tɔ-jɔm** **béé**

no-9.thing NEG

'NOTHING' Lit: 'Not nothing'

A2: **tɔ-jɔm₁** **béé** **jó-n** mudaá a- bí- tí báúdú jaaní
no-9.thing NEG 9-FOC 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-give 2.students 1.yesterday
'The woman did not give ANYTHING to the students'

⁵ This structure is provisional. It will be shown that there exists a functional FP projection in-between EvidP and FocP. FP is the locus of a strong -*marked trace which evades ellipsis. So the structures above are simply used for expository purposes.

Assuming that A1's fragment answers in (65-66) derive from their non-elliptical counterparts in A2, it can be observed that deletion does not operate in like manner in both cases. More concretely, given that each elliptical sentence above conveys the same semantic interpretation as its non-elliptical counterpart, it can be observed that both (65A2) and (66A2) do not have the same syntactic structure. While the negative polarity item *tɔ-jɔm* 'nothing' is followed by an AgrS-P projection in the former as depicted in (67a), it is rather followed by negation and a focus phrase (67b).

(67)

- a. [TP ***tɔ-jɔm***₁ [T^[EPP] \emptyset_2 [VP [V *t₂* <[AgrS-P *mudaá a- bí- tí béeé báúdú t₁]]]>
no-9.thing COP 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-give NEG 2.students*]
- b. [TP ***tɔ-jɔm***₁ [T^[EPP] \emptyset_2 [NegP ***béeé*** [Neg *t₂* [VP *t₂* <[FocP *t₁* [Foc ***jɔ́-n*** [AgrCP [AgrC *t₃*
no-9.thing COP
[AgrS-P *mudaá a- bí- tí béeé báúdú t₁ jaaní]]]]]]>
1.woman 1.SM-PST2-give NEG 2.students 1.yesterday*]

These structures show ellipsis under fragments can be realized in two different ways in Basaá. Ellipsis can target an AgrS-P/TP complement as in (67a) or a FocP complement as in (67b). As highlighted in the preceding lines, fragment answers are fronted foci, the derivation of which involves a copula clause headed by a null verbal element. The derivation of a fragment can involve an embedded focus phrase (67b) so that the fronted fragment moves into the matrix TP via Spec-FocP to satisfy focus requirements. In the absence of a FocP in the embedded clause, the fronted fragment directly moves into the matrix TP to satisfy the EPP followed by PF deletion of an AgrS-P complement.

The derivation of Basaá fragments does not only provide evidence in support of Merchant's (2001) E-feature-based approach from a crosslinguistic perspective, but it also shows that the formal E-feature responsible for ellipsis and which can also be abstractly realized in English-type languages.

Additional contribution to the investigation of the interface between syntax and information structure in this work is the study of sluicing, another aspect of linguistic research which still remains unexplored or under explored in the context of African linguistics (very few works on sluicing are Aboh 2010, Lipták & Aboh 2013). As compared to fragments which are uniformly driven, the derivation of sluicing is subject to a structural asymmetry. While sluicing with arguments and referential adjuncts involve movement into Spec-EvidP, sluicing with non-referential adjuncts is movement into Spec-Wh-P. However, the target of ellipsis in both cases is AgrS-P/TP. The following examples show that, just as fragments, sluicing in Basaá can be embedded and realized in two different ways.

First of all, in the case of sluicing with arguments and referential adjuncts, if the speaker has ((in)direct) evidence that a given action has taken place, evidential(ity) can be overtly marked like in (68). On the contrary, sluicing with a referential adjunct may not license morphological evidential(ity) as shown in (69).

(68)

- a. maanjé a- mí- pód-ôs **ŋim bôt**, me mí-bat-bat *lé tɔ́ bɔndʒéé bâ*
 1.child 1.SM-PRS-talk-APPL INDF 2.persons I PRS-ask-RFM that if 2.who 2.EVID
 ‘The child is talking to some people, I wonder who’ Lit: ‘*The child is talking to some people, I wonder **that if who**.’
- a'. maanjé a- mí- pód-ôs **ŋim bôt**, me mí-bat-bat *lé tɔ́ bɔndʒéé bâ*
 1.child 1.SM-PRS-talk INDF 2.persons I PRS-ask-RFM that if 2.who 2.EVID
 pro a- mí- pód-ôs
 pro 1.SM-PRS-talk-APPL
 ‘The child is talking to some people, I wonder who he is talking to’ Lit: ‘*The child is talking to some people, I wonder **that if who** he is talking to.’
- b. maanjé a- íj- ké **ŋgím hɔmá**, me ní- jí béeé *tɔ́ héé nû*
 1.child 1.SM-PRS-go INDF 1.place I PRS-know NEG if 1.where 1.EVID
 ‘The child has gone somewhere, I don’t know where’ Lit: ‘*The child has gone somewhere, I don’t know if where’
- b'. maanjé a- íj- ké **ŋgím hɔmá**, me ní- jí béeé *tɔ́ héé nû pro* a- íj- ké
 1.child 1.SM-PRS-go INDF 1.place I PRS-know NEG if 1.where 1.EVID pro 1.SM-PRS-go
 ‘The child has gone somewhere, I don’t know where he has gone’ Lit: ‘*The child has gone somewhere, I don’t know if where he has gone’

The above examples show that sluicing can be embedded in Basaá whereby the embedded structure can include both the declarative and the interrogative complementizers simultaneously as shown in (68a-a').

In (69) below, sluicing involves a non-referential adjunct and the wh-remnant can be embedded under the interrogative lexical complementizer. At this stage, no evidential(ity) marking is attested. This asymmetry between arguments, referential adjuncts and non-referential adjuncts is due to the fact the latter do not have any corresponding noun class in the language while arguments and referential adjuncts correspond to noun class one. Given that agreement between the evidential(ity) marker and the wh-phrase is sensitive to noun class, non-referential adjuncts cannot have a corresponding agreeing marker for evidentiality because they do not have any nominal(noun) reference in the language.

(69)

- a. bot bápé bá- ní- dʒé béeé nílamb, me mí-bat-bá- *lé tɔ́ ínjjúkíí*
 2.persons 2.INDF 2.SM-PRS-eat NEG 3.meat I PRS-ask-RFM that if why
 ‘Some people don’t eat meat. I wonder know why’

- a'. bot bápé bá- n- dʒé bée nłamb, me m-bat-bá- lé tɔ́ ínjjúkíí
 2.persons 2.others 2.SM-PRS-eat NEG 3.meat I PRS-ask-RFM that if why
 pro bá- n- dʒé bée w̄
 pro 2.SM-PRS-eat NEG 3.it
 ‘Some people don’t eat meat. I don’t know why they don’t eat it’ Lit: ‘*Some people don’t eat meat. I don’t know why they don’t eat it’

The following derivations indicate that clause structure under sluicing is also richly articulated. The target of ellipsis in sluicing is AgrS-P/TP while its target can be covert or overt.

(70)

- a. [ForceP[Force *lē* [IntP[Int *tɔ́* [EvidP **bəndʒéé** [Evid **bâ^[E]** <[AgrS-P...t₁...]]]]]]>
 that if 2.who 2.EVID
- b. [ForceP [Force *lē* [IntP[Int *tɔ́* [Wh-P ínjuúkíí₁ [Wh^[E] <[AgrS-P...t₁...]]]]]]>
 that if why

The difference between (70a) and (70b) is that sluicing with a non-referential adjunct does not involve an evidential construction and as shown by the template in (61), non-referential adjuncts and other wh-phrases do not target the same landing position in clause structure but they have the same target of ellipsis, namely AgrS-P/TP.

At this juncture, one can realize that the study of discourse-related categories attested in Basáá does not only enable one to come out with a hierarchically organized and articulated structure of the left periphery, but it also significantly contributes to our understanding of the interaction between syntax and information structure. As it will discussed thoroughly in the whole work, the different functional projections highlighted hitherto can be much more combined, and this combination gives rise to a highly prolific architecture of the left periphery of the clause.

What is interesting is that Basáá appears to be an intermediate language, or better still, a mixed language, in the sense that it resorts to a mixed strategy by sharing properties of languages which express grammatical categories overtly as well as those with covert grammatical/functional categories. On the one hand, features such as tense, agreement, aspect, topic and evidentiality are sometimes expressed overtly, and sometimes, these features can be covertly expressed. On the other hand, agreement, focus, interrogative morphemes can always be expressed overtly. This state of affairs is an indication that the fact that grammatical primitives may be covertly realized in a given language does not necessarily boils down to their ruling out of the syntactic derivation. Some languages make use of overt features while others make use of covert features. However, besides these two language types are mixed languages such Basáá which makes use of both overt and covert strategies. That Basáá is a mixed language is not limited in the expression of functional categories. The language also exhibits a mixed strategy in wh-questions, in the sense that wh-items can be fronted to sentence initial position, can stay in the base or move into

the IAV position. Another aspect which characterizes Basàá as a mixed language is that she also makes use of phonological clues in the expression of information structure. This is attested in topic constructions whereby topicalized non-subject constituents are followed by a prosodic break (represented by a comma in writing). So, as opposed to subject topicalization, non-subject topicalization involves not only morphological marking, but also phonological marking because the topicalized element is set off from the following proposition by a morphological marker and a phonological break. Given that morphological marking is attested only when fronting takes place in the syntax and nowhere else in the expression of discourse properties, it is argued that this is in line with minimalist assumptions that movement is morphology-driven (Chomsky 1995), and as a result, movement of phrasal discourse categories is related to numeration i.e. discourse markers are lexical entries that enter the derivation as soon as possible. Discourse-related categories must take place at the very inception of the syntactic derivation, i.e. they must be there as soon as possible in conformity with Pesetsky's (1995) earliness principle, and in order to comply with the *Inclusiveness Condition* (see Aboh 2010 and Miyagawa 2010 for similar cases in Gungbe, Korean & Japanese respectively).

Grosso modo, the Basáá empirical data clearly provide further support to the idea that one cannot simply rely on the sole traditional/classical CP-IP/TP-VP template of clause structure as advocated by supporters of a ‘radically impoverished syntax’ who think that much of the computational burden should be shifted to post-syntactic components after the interface (cf. Rizzi 2013a for ‘pragmaticising versus syntacising’ of discourse-scope properties). Conceptual and empirical arguments are available and prove that even when combined with adjunction based-approaches, the traditional template of clause structure cannot adequately accommodate the different functional projections that build up the Basáá clausal left periphery. Conversely, such an enterprise appears to be uncontroversially possible under cartographic assumptions that syntactic representations are rich and complex objects (Cinque & Rizzi 2008; Shlonsky 2010; Rizzi 2013a-b) which should be offered a very rich, detailed, hierarchically articulated and precise exploration.

1.4 Organization of the dissertation

This dissertation is made up of nine chapters, each of which targets specific research goals and results. This section constitutes the road map for the whole thesis and provides the reader with a sense and issues discussed in each chapter. Apart from the first two preliminary chapters which are concerned with basic notions of information structure, theoretical assumptions and background information on Basàá, the remaining seven chapters of the work are structured as follow:

Chapter three focuses on focus realization and interpretation from a descriptive perspective. It shows that Basàá makes use of two focus strategies, namely the in-situ and ex-situ mechanisms. In general, focus is considered either as new, unfamiliar or non-presupposed information in the discourse (Halliday 1967; Vallduví & Engdahl 1996 *inter alia*), or as an expression which introduces alternatives in the discourse (*contrastive focus*) (Rooth 1985, 1992, 1996; Rochemont 1986). However, focus can also be realized independently of question-answer pairs. More precisely, there are cases such as narrative, scene-setting or existential contexts where focus can be realized ex-situ, which is an indication that focus fronting is not always associated with semantic factors such as exhaustivity or contrastiveness. Subject focus i.e. a direct answer to a wh-question is always expressed ex-situ and is always associated with an exhaustive focus reading while subject focus with a non-exhaustive interpretation has no marking at all. Instead, the subject stays at its base position. The test used in the identification of non-exhaustive focus is due to Abels & Muriungi (2008) who show that in Kîtharaka, just like in English, subject focus can be associated with a non-exhaustive interpretation. The fact that subject focus, i.e. a direct answer to a wh-question is always marked morpho-syntactically is explained in line with Fiedler & al 's (2010) and Li & Thompson 's (1976) assumptions that a subject in its canonical sentence-initial position is prototypically interpreted as a topic. In this vein, subject focus should be marked in order to be different from a sentence topic. Non-subject focus in the language is marked either in-situ or ex-situ. The position of non-subject focus does not determine its semantic interpretation. Both in-situ and ex-situ focus can convey new and contrastive information depending on the context. This largely contrasts with some works (e.g Kiss 1998) in which ex-situ focus is always said to be linked with a contrastive interpretation while information focus is said to be associated with non-exhaustive interpretation. In addition, focus is analysed in relation to focus-sensitive operators such as the negative particle *béé*, 'not' the exclusive *ndígí* 'only' and the polysemic particle *-támá*. The distribution of the first two particles is such that when used sentence-internally, they always occur at the Immediately After Verb position (*IAV*) (cf. Watters 1979; Hyman 1979 etc), where they can convey narrow focus interpretation or VP focus interpretation. It is briefly shown that the fact that these focus particles in the postverbal position can successfully convey a VP focus interpretation is due to verb movement above the focus particles so much so that at some stage of the derivation, the V(P) is c-commanded by the focus particles prior to verb movement across these particles. The difference between negation and the exclusive operator *ndígí* 'only' is that while postverbal negation can scope over a preceding subject, a postverbal *ndígí* 'only' cannot. The interaction between focus and these operators raises theoretical implications that are postponed to chapter

six where more explanations are provided. But note that the Basàá data to some extend rule out Beaver & Clark's (2008) *Principle of Lexical Association* which stipulates that a focus-sensitive operator cannot associate with the trace of an extracted constituent. In Basàá, on the contrary, it is possible to associate the exclusive focus particle *ndígí* 'only' with the trace of a fronted focalized constituent. Furthermore, the discussion reveals that the Immediately After Verb position is the locus of information structure as it hosts some displaced wh-items. Here again, the discussion on wh-movement to the IAV is postponed to chapter six where theoretical issues related to such movements are discussed. Finally, the analysis demonstrates that the IAV position has prosodic properties which are not related to information structure. It is simply shown that every constituent occurring at the position generally bears a high tone on the first syllable. Basàá is also special in that she allows for focus-drop constructions, which, to the best of my knowledge, has not yet been attested in the literature of natural languages. Basàá is a language in which focus-drop is possible and is dependent on two factors: the presence of rich verbal morphology and the salience of the discourse referent in the context. When these two conditions are not satisfied, focus-drop is impossible. The same phenomenon is attested in other neighbouring Bantu languages such as Etón, Ewondo etc. Verb/predicate focus is discussed and appears to be quite different from non-verbal/predicate focus in the sense that the former, in most cases, exhibits doubling effects. Put differently, predicate focus in the language in most cases involves the doubling of the focalized verb. Two cases are attested. On the one hand, the nominalized predicate can be fronted leftward and doubled sentence internally by a non-identical inflected verbal copy. On the second hand, the nominalized verbal copy can appear in sentence final position and preceded sentence internally by its inflected counterpart. It is shown that predicate fronting and doubling can convey new information or contrastive information depending on the context. Finally, the discussion reveals that there is some asymmetry in the distribution of arguments, adjuncts and the predicate in all-new sentences in Basàá. Fronting in all-new sentences is only limited to the sole arguments and the predicate itself while adjunct fronting in the same contexts is not allowed. It is claimed that in 'all-new' contexts and related constructions (what's new/what happened/what's the matter? etc.), what matters is the event from a pragmatic point of view. It this vein, only the participants (arguments) and the predicate itself are necessary for the event. In this case, adjuncts are not supposed to front because neither the place, nor the time of the event is necessary. Another argument which is briefly advanced is syntactic. It is assumed that fronting in all-new sentences is due to morpho-syntactic purposes, to be discussed in chapter four. So, as fronting in all-new contexts also has theoretical implications, the discussion is postponed to chapter four.

Chapter four provides a syntactic account of focus in Basàá with special stress on focus derivation and representation. The chapter shows that focus fronting involves a copula non-cleft structure headed by a null verb and that its derivation is well accounted for within the framework of the cartographic approach. In concrete terms, focus fronting in Basàá offers a fine-grained characterization of the clausal left periphery as the latter contains two distinct and inextricably related functional categories which occur in a strict and hierarchical order. A focus phrase, which is the locus of focal information, hosts an overt invariant focus marker *-n* in Foc⁰ the head of the focus phrase which c-commands a left peripheral agreement projection called agreement complementizer phrase (AgrCP), the head of which is occupied by an overt agreeing class and number morpheme. AgrCP is so-called because it hosts an agreeing morpheme which only occurs in the pre-subject position (COMP) and is different from AgrS-P, the head of which is occupied by the subject marker (SM). This morpheme in AgrC, is sensitive to noun class i.e. it changes depending on the noun class of the focalized constituent. In all, it is argued that focus as a grammatical primitive triggers two simultaneous movements and is morphologically realized. The first movement step takes place into the embedded focus field for the focus-criterion, while the second movement step involves movement of the same constituent into Spec-TP of the matrix clause for EPP requirements. The discussion extends to other natural languages investigated in the literature by showing that all languages are in fact uniform, and that differences are simply superficial (cf. Chomsky 2001; Miyagawa 2010). The *focus criterion* (Brody 1990; Rizzi 1997 and subsequent works) can be fulfilled either at LF when focus movement does not take place in the syntax, or in the syntax when movement applies overtly. In Basàá, focus fronting can target a big chunk of constituents. For instance, when an element contained in an environment which is opaque to movement, i.e. a criterial position (Rizzi 2003, 2013a etc), and if that element is furthermore probed over by a higher focus head, it pied-pipes all the super structure containing it into the specifier position of the matrix TP via the focus field. The discussion shows that focus pied-piping is possible via a feature percolation mechanism in which the probed constituent spreads or percolates its focus features over the whole structure containing it, and then, dragging the whole chunk along higher in the structure. The chapter is closed off with focus on the derivation of the so-called subpart of focus fronting, i.e. cases in which a subpart of the semantic focus apparently gets fronted leaving behind the remnant or the rest of the semantic focus. The proposal is that in all-new contexts where only the predicate or its arguments seem to get fronted, one obtains an instance of second position effects. In concrete terms, it is argued that what fronts into Spec-FocP in all-new sentences is in fact the whole clause (TP/AgrSP). However, given that the matrix TP is devoid expletive subjects which would

satisfy the EPP, part of the semantic focus in Spec-FocP, is compelled to be subsequently extracted and moved into the matrix TP for EPP requirements. Given the requirement that an overtly realized Foc head cannot be stranded at spellout, and that it needs to precede its complement, there should be a Foc-to-Force/F movement such that the focus morpheme can c-command its complement at spellout. Globally, it is claimed that focus fronting in ‘all-new’ utterances and related constructions is a normal focus fronting operation which is simply an instance of second position effects, i.e the requirement that the complement of the focus head follows and not precedes it at the final stage of the derivation. This state of affairs is subsumed under the Linear Correspondence Axiom.

Chapter five handles the syntax of predicate focus. The theoretical underpinning of predicate focus in Basàá is partly due to Aboh & Dyakonova (2009) who propose that predicate fronting with doubling is an instance of parallel chains where one goal, namely the verb is attracted simultaneously by two different probes, notably the aspect/tense head and the focus head. As predicted by Aboh & Dyakonova, predicate fronting with doubling depends on the presence and/or absence of a lexical material in the inflectional domain (tense and/or aspect). When verb movement to the inflectional layer is possible, predicate doubling is attested. On the contrary, in cases where verb movement is blocked by intervening aspectual morphemes, auxiliaries, restructuring verbs or any other intervening material in the inflectional domain, predicate doubling fails. In addition to Aboh & Dyakonova’s predictions, the originality of Basàá data lies in the fact that like every fronted focus, the focalized verb does not end up within the focus field. After the focus requirements are satisfied, the verb subsequently raises into the matrix TP to comply with the EPP. Basàá comes out as a mixed language because the nominalized verb can occur either in sentence initial position or in sentence final position. However, in case the nominalized predicate apparently seems to have moved rightward, it is argued that at some stage of the derivation, it undergoes leftward movement, but since the whole clause out of which this predicate has been previously extracted is moved higher in the structure than the fronted predicate, one has the impression that the fronted predicate has undergone rightward movement, which is not true under antisymmetric assumptions. The chapter also addresses cross-linguistic facts as discussed in previous works and discusses focus with Inherent Complement Verbs (ICVs).

Chapter six deals with question formation and the Immediately After Verb position (IAV), a position well known cross-linguistically in the literature as the locus of information structure. It reveals that content questions in Basàá can stay in-situ, ca raise to sentence initial position or be raised in the IAV position. It is argued that there exists a disparity in the

distribution of wh-items in the language. Arguments and referential adjuncts can raise to the sentence initial position or to the IAV position where they occupy the specifier position of the focus phrase. That arguments and referential adjuncts are focalized is supported by a number of factors such as their incompatibility with focalized non-wh constituents, compatibility with topics etc. In addition, it is shown that the impossibility to raise non-wh constituents in the IAV position is linked to minimality conditions. Given that the Basàá verb raises to the inflectional domain which structurally c-commands a lower focus phrase in the VP periphery, and since fronted focalized non-wh constituents are always marked morphologically, verb movement to the aspectual/tense domain would be blocked by the intervening focus marker in Foc. Wh-movement to the IAV is licensed because wh-items are not morphologically marked for focus. So, the discussion shows that there are three focus positions in the Basàá clause, namely a left peripheral focus position, a lower focus position in the vicinity of VP and an in-situ focus position. However, these focus projections cannot occur simultaneously, as this would otherwise violate the *Uniqueness Principle* which requires that a sentence should contain at most one focus (Rizzi 1997; Brody 1998, but see Benincà & Poletto 2004 for an opposing proposal). As for the semantic of questions, it is shown that content questions are information-seeking questions as their role is to look for non-presupposed or unfamiliar information in the discourse setting. Echo questions on the contrary have pragmatic effects because they are uttered to express confirmation, doubt, surprise or unexpectedness. Non-referential adjuncts behave differently in the language. Non-referential adjuncts are also part of the discussion. The non-referential *léláá* denotes more than one lexical entry and its interpretation depends on its position. It can express reason; in this case, it is interpreted as the English ‘why’ or ‘how come’ and can be sentence initial or final depending on the context of communication. When interpreted as ‘how’ i.e. when expressing manner, it is used sentence initially. Finally, when used in the IAV position, the non-referential *léláá* conveys an argument interpretation that is, it can be interpreted as the English ‘what’. As for the non-referential *ínyuúkií* ‘why’, it can occur either in sentence initial position or at the end of the sentence. When used in a given sentence, it may affect the morpho-syntactic structure of the verb, i.e. the verbal base can be extended via the addition of an applicative morpheme to it. This non-referential adjunct cannot occur in the IAV position. Given that non-referential adjuncts are compatible with focalized non-wh constituents, as opposed to their arguments and referential counterparts, it is postulated that the former occupy the specifier position of a functional projection called Wh-phrase. Another interesting phenomenon discussed in this chapter is negation. It is shown that constituent negation in the language is an instance of focus construction which involves a verbless construction, i.e. a construction with a null verbal

copula. As a result, one obtains a bi-clausal structure in which the negated constituent raises into Spec-TP of the matrix clause for EPP purposes, while the null verbal copula raises by head movement into T⁰ via Neg⁰. The fact that focus cannot be followed by negation is said to be linked to minimality effects, and precisely because not only does the null copula base-generated in V⁰ block Foc-to-T movement but also because head movement cannot apply across a clause boundary. Polar questions are expressed overtly by specific yes/no markers. There is an obligatory sentence final marker and an optional marker in the initial position. It is proposed that the markers used in polar question project in the syntax and occupy the head position of two functional projections called polar phrases (PolP).

Topic constructions are discussed in chapter seven. The chapter does not only focus on the typology of topics, but it also looks at their distribution and interpretation. Five topic types, namely the additive topic, the contrastive topic, the aboutness topic, the hanging topic and frame setting topics are discussed. Apart from the hanging topic and the frame setting topic, other topic types are marked morphologically and are derived like fronted foci, i.e. from a copula structure headed by a null verb. A slight difference between these topics is morphosyntactic. The additive topic construction does not only exhibit agreement morphology, but also topic morphology. In other words, a topic with an additive presupposition agrees in class and number with a gender-specific complex morpheme which conveys not only noun class information, but also topic one. The contrastive and aboutness topics have a morphological noun class marker but are devoid of overt topic morphemes. It is shown that topic fronting, as opposed to focus fronting is a hybrid construction in the sense that although topics are sensitive to some conditions/constraints on movement, but at the same time, they seem to be insensitive to other constraints. This state of affairs is an indication that Basàá topics are only insensitive to constraints that involve operators or quantificational elements. It is argued that since topic are non-quantificational, they cannot be sensitive to conditions that involve quantificational elements. The presence of discourse-related markers used in topic constructions suggests that just like other formal grammatical primitives, the topic markers should be part of the syntactic derivation i.e. they should be included in the numeration. Basàá is also a topic-drop language because it allows for contexts whereby the topicalized element or the discourse referent can be dropped altogether if it is semantically recoverable and if there is availability of agreement morphology on the verb. Finally, the chapter discusses topic-focus interaction by providing some co-occurrence restrictions between focus and topic (s).

Chapter eight is about sluicing another instance of elliptical constructions, and a domain of linguistic research which, to the best of my knowledge has not yet been explored in African

linguistics, apart from very few recent works by Aboh (2010) and Lipták & Aboh (2013). Borrowing from Merchant's (2001, 2004, 2008 and subsequent work), it is shown that sluicing is derived syntactically. The Basàá empirical data discussed are novel because sluicing gives rise to a variety of distinct functional projections in the left periphery, and each of these projections is headed by an overtly realized morpheme. These functional projections are in most cases projected by overt morphemes which encode specific discourse functions. In Basàá, a sluiced, i.e. the wh-fragment in most cases is followed by a specific morpheme which encodes evidentiality. The evidentiality morpheme agrees in noun class and number with the sluiced (wh-remnant). As compared to English-like languages where the [E]-feature responsible for ellipsis is said to be abstract, it is shown that in Basàá, this feature can be overtly realized. The term evidentiality in this work is used to refer to contexts in which the speaker and/or the hearer can witness an event, can have (in)direct evidence about it and can be certain that something has taken place. The chapter shows that a fine-grained characterization of the left periphery of the Basàá clause is well accounted for in sluicing constructions. For instance, in the case of an embedded sluicing, the sluiced wh-item can be preceded by two functional heads, namely Force⁰ occupied by the declarative complementizer *lɛ* 'that' expressing the illocutionary force of the sentence and Int⁰ occupied by the interrogative morpheme *tɔ́* 'if/whether' which expresses interrogative force. Put together, the chapter shows that the evidential(ity) phrase (EvidP) hosts the evidential(ity) feature which is the trigger of ellipsis, the target of which is AgrS-P/TP.

Chapter nine is the last chapter which is concerned with fragment answers as another instance of ellipsis. Fragment answers are subsentential utterances which are derived in the syntax as it is the case with sluicing. Borrowing again from Merchant's (2001, 2004, 2008 and related work), it is demonstrated that fragment answers are focused phrases which are derived by means of a copula structure headed by a null verbal copula. Based on the distribution of negation, it is shown that fragment answers involve null copula or verbless clauses in which, for EPP reasons, the fragment ends up in Spec-TP of the matrix clause while the evidential marker is hosted in Evid⁰ the head of the evidential phrase (EvidP). Using morphological, syntactic and semantic evidence, it is shown that Basàá fragments are not base-generated in Spec-TP of the matrix clause. It is shown that in general the target of ellipsis in fragment answers, as opposed to sluicing, is a FocP projection. However, there is a very isolated case where the target of PF-deletion in fragment answers is the same as in sluicing, i.e. an AgrS-P/TP projection. This isolated case is about fragment NPIs. There are cases whereby a fragment NPI is followed not by a focus phrase, but by an AgrS-P/TP. The fact that fragments are sensitive to islands is said to be due to the presence of a strong *-marked trace (Merchant 2008) which evades ellipsis. The

chapter is wrapped up by a unified analysis of focus constructions in Basàá. It is proposed that for economy purposes, there is no in-situ /ex-situ dichotomy as far as foci are concerned. Since fragment answers can be associated with both information and contrastive focus interpretation, it is said that all foci are derived by movement and fragment foci are more economical than foci in non-elliptical structures. As a result of *Minimize Pronunciation*, one can get rid of the so-called in-situ/ex-situ dichotomy.

The last part of the dissertation is the general conclusion. It provides the results obtained in the work and attempts to examine some co-occurrence and ordering restrictions by providing possible structural maps that account for the internal make-up of the Basaá clause.

Conclusion

This chapter laid out the foundation for the present work by providing background information which will help the reader clearly understand subsequent analyses. The notions discussed here are very helpful as they provide the reader with a of road map for the whole work.

CHAPTER II
THE LANGUAGE

Introduction

This chapter provides background information on Basàá with special focus on its geographical, linguistic as well as grammatical features. The goal is to familiarize the reader with the data which will be developed throughout the dissertation. The chapter is organized as follows. § 2.1 to § 2.1.3 presents the geographical and linguistic classification of the language. It also provides an overview of previous works related to Basàá as discussed in the literature. § 2.1.4 deals with the grammatical features of the language including phonology (§ 2.1.4.1), the nominal system (§ 2.1.4.2) and the verbal system which includes verbal extensions as well as information related to tense, aspect and mood. § 2.1.4.4 very briefly discusses word order with focus on agreement patterns attested in the language. The last section is the conclusion.

2.1 The Basàá language

The language under study in this thesis is Basàá (basàá as pronounced by native speakers), a Bantu language mainly spoken in the Centre and Littoral Regions of Cameroon in the Central area of Sub-Saharan Africa. Bantu languages form the largest language family in Africa and are estimated to about six hundreds and sixty of them (cf. Nurse & Philippson 2003 for discussion). They are encountered in the area stretching from the North-Western coastal zone of Cameroon, eastward to the North-East of Kenya and southward to the lowest part of Africa (South Africa) (cf. *Ethnologue*). Like other Bantu languages, Basàá exhibit salient features such as tone, agglutinating morphology, extensive noun class system, complex verbal morphology, richness of agreement morphology etc.

2.1.1 Geographical and dialectal situation

As mentioned above, Basàá is widely spoken in the Nyong and Kelle (Centre Region) and Sanaga Maritime (Littoral Region) areas of Cameroon. However, the language also spreads over other areas such as the Moungo, Nkam, Wouri (Littoral) and the Ocean (South Region) divisions with a relatively small number of speakers. Earlier estimations of Basàá speakers are provided by (SIL 1982) quoted by Grimes (1996). According to these earlier sources, Basàá is said to be spoken by an estimated 282, 000 speakers. It is obvious that more than thirty years since 1982, the number of Basàá speakers has considerably increased in the meantime and may now fluctuate between 800, 000 and 1,000,000 speakers.

From a dialectal point of view, Basàá is undoubtedly one of the languages in which dialectal variations are minor, in the sense that virtually all the different language varieties are closely related to the standard dialect. Guthrie (1967) subdivides the Basàá speakers into two main groups namely, the Mbénê (A 43a), spoken in the Nkam, Nyong and Kelle, Sanaga Maritime, Ocean and Wouri areas and the Bakóko (A 43b), spoken in the Nkam and Sanaga Maritime

areas. Ethnologue distinguishes twelve Basàá dialects among which Bakem, Basɔɔ, Bibeng, Bon, Diboum, Lòg Mpòó, Mbang, Ndokama, Ndokbele, Ndokpenda, and Nyamtam.

In fact, Basàá is made up of five main dialects, namely Mbénê, basàá bá dúálà, Basàá bá Yabbásí, Dibúbúm, and Ikoo (Babímbí báa) as investigated by previous researchers including (Bitja'a Kody 1990, Mbom 1990 *inter alia*). The present dissertation focuses on Mbénê, the dialect which is widely spoken and mutually intelligible to all Basàá speakers.

2.1.2. Linguistic classification

Previous works by Guthrie (1948:31; 1953:28; 1970:11) and Baltin (1983) quoted by Mbom (1990:6) reveal that genetically, Basàá belongs to the northwestern area of Bantu languages, Zone A and is classified as A 43a. According to a lexico-statistical language taxonomy proposed by Baltin (1983), and cited by Mbom (1990), the linguistic classification of Basàá is presented as follows:

A.40 Basàá Group

A.41 Lombi (Rombi-Barombi)

A.42 Bankon (Bo-Abo)

A.43 Basàá (Basa)

A.43a Mbénê (Ndokbele, Yabbásí, Ndokpenda, Nyamtam, Dibeng, Ndokama, Bakem, Mbang, Dibum)

A.43b Koko (Bakóko)

A.44 Banen

A.44a Banen (Tunen)

A.44b Otomp (Poneck)

A.45 Nyo'o (Nyokon)

A.46 Mande

A.46a Mande (Lemande-Numand)

A.46b Nigi (Yambeta)

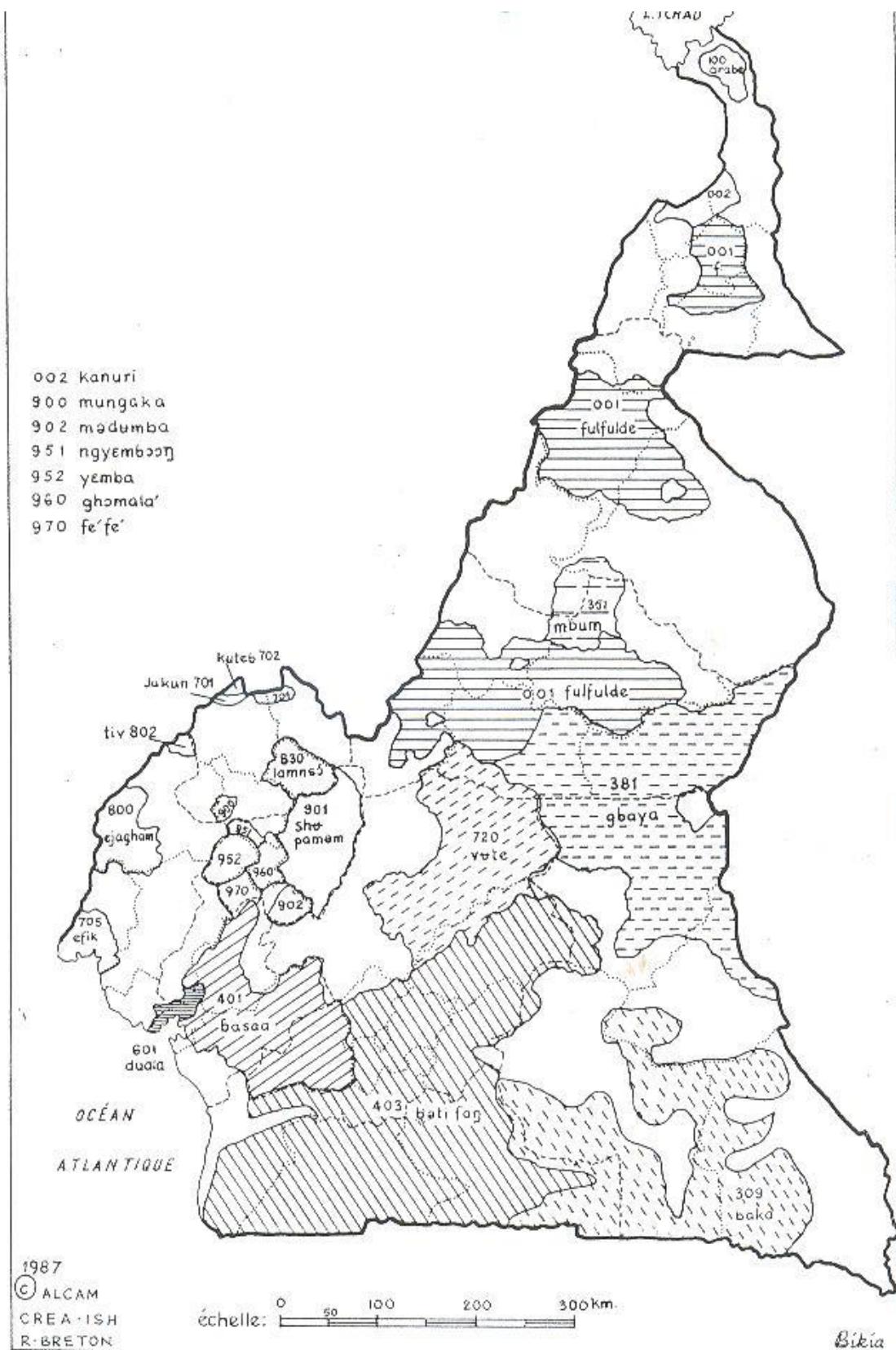
A.46c Mese (Yambeta)

A.46d Kibum (Yambeta)³

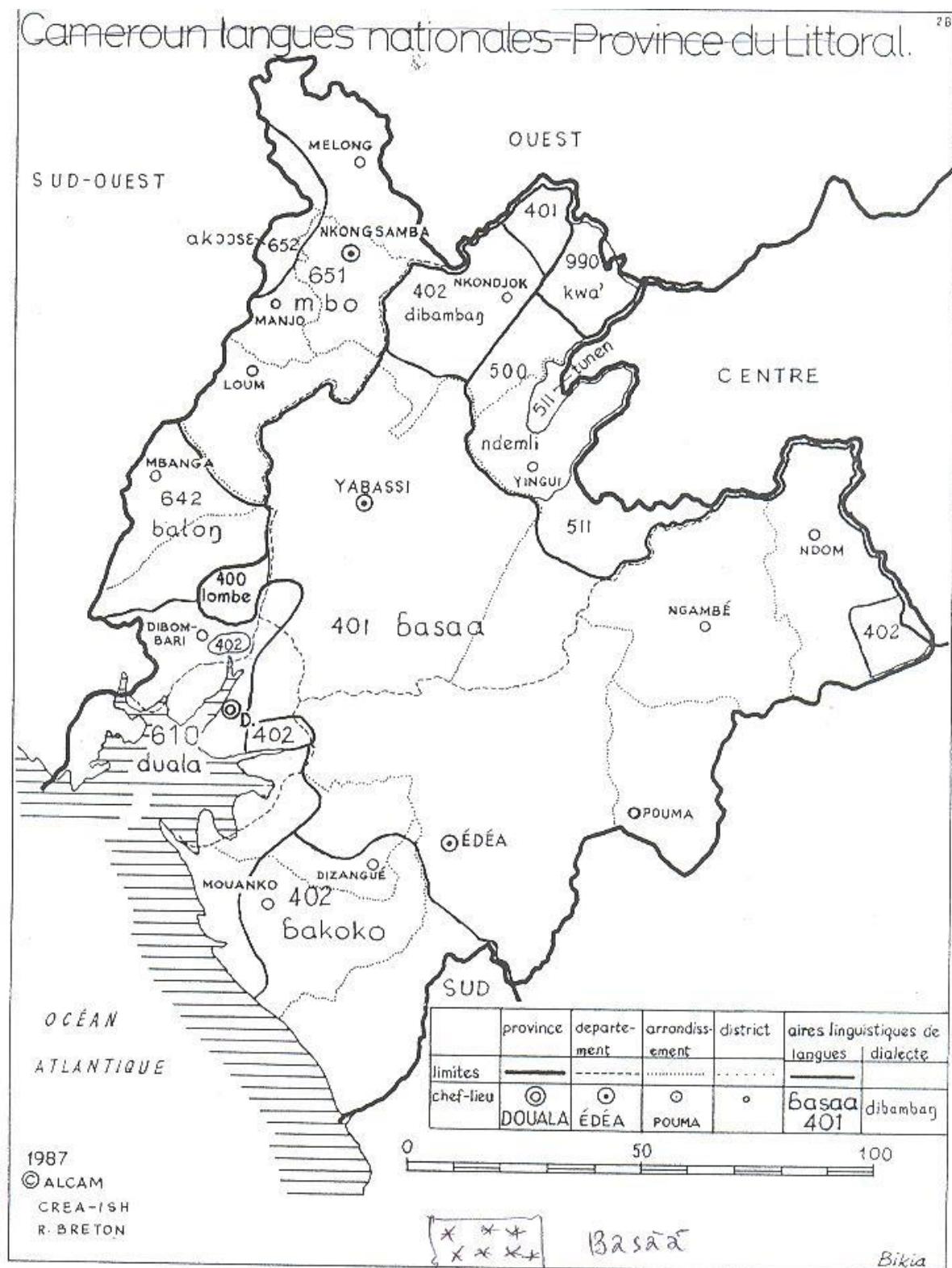
According to Greenberg's (1966) language classification, Basàá belongs to the Benue-Congo language family within the broader phylum of Niger-Kordofanian languages (cf. Mbom 1990: 6). From the foregoing facts, it comes out that opinions are divided as far as the classification of the Basàá language is concerned. However, to the best of our knowledge, we think that Guthrie's classification according to which Basàá is a Zone A language, with A.43a as the language code

is the most relevant as it is widely used by researchers. The following maps on the following pages locate Basàá in the Cameroonian setting (map n°1), the Centre area (map n° 2) and the Littoral area (map n°3).

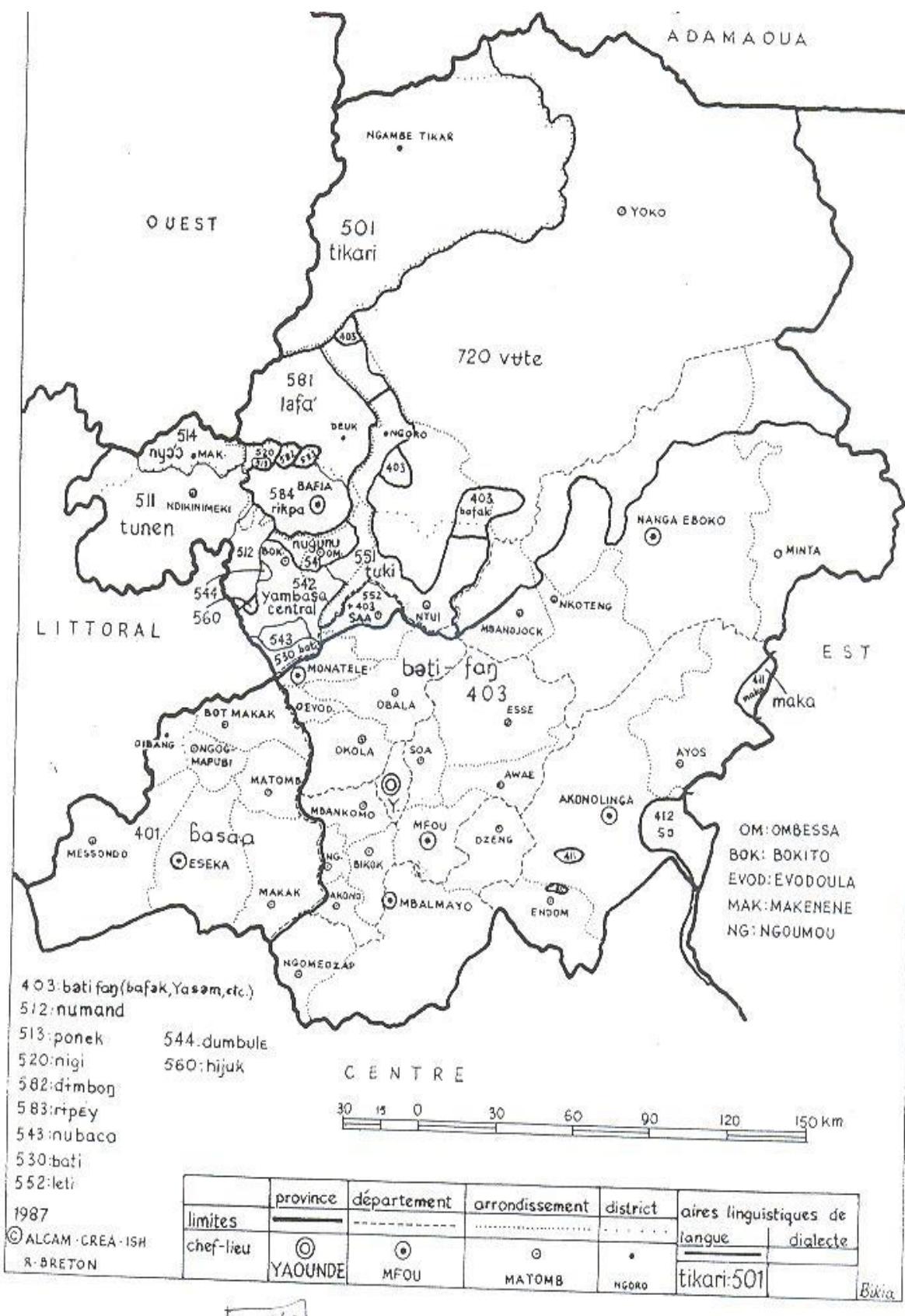
MAP n°1: Standardized languages of Cameroon (adapted from Dieu, M. & P. Renaud 1983)



Map n°2: The Linguistic Map of the Centre Region of Cameroon (adapted from Dieu, M. & P. Renaud 1983)



Map n° 3: The Linguistic Map of the Littoral Region of Cameroon (adapted from Dieu, M. & P. Renaud 1983).



2.1.3. Previous works on Basàá

In Cameroon, Basàá comes out as one of the widely studied Bantu languages from a linguistic perspective as can be attested by a wide range of literature found on the language. These works range from pedagogic and theoretical linguistics to descriptive linguistics. What is going to be provided here concerns some of these works since we cannot exhaustively delineate all that has been done on the language.

From a descriptive linguistics point of view, and as widely attested in the literature, Bôt bá Njock (1962) is unquestionably the first scientific investigation which heralded a new era on the description of Basàá with special focus on structural phonology. His work provides an insight into the internal organization of the Basàá language, by investigating in an in-depth fashion the vowel, consonant and alphabetical systems of the language to some respects. Other phonological and morphological works include (Bitja'a Kody 1990; Bôt bá Njock 1970; Dimmendaal 1976; Janssens 1968; Mbom 1990; Voorhoeve 1980 to name only these few). Globally, the aforementioned authors focused on a synchronic as well as a diachronic study of the language by investigating the nominal, the verbal and the phonological mechanisms that govern the functioning of Basàá as summarized below.

Bôt bá Njock (1970) studies the morpho-syntactic aspect of the language in a purely structuralist framework. He brings out the Basàá noun class system and analyses the internal patterns of the nominal constructions.

Bitja'a Kody (1990) studies the morpho-syntactic aspect of the Basàá verb. He sets out rules and mechanisms that take place in the morpho-syntactic processes and shows how such rules and mechanisms govern the language in general.

Mbom (1990) sets up a conceptual approach to the analysis of tense and aspect which allows an explicit characterization of tense and aspect in their morphological, syntactic and semantic structures in terms of the three temporal entities (past, present, future). Her analysis is based on the systematic relation between underlying temporal meaning and formal expression of time.

Hyman (2003) provides a descriptive study of Basàá based on some previous descriptive works done on the language such as Rosenhuber (1908), Scholaster (1914), Schürle (1912), Bot bá Njock (1970), Lemb & De Gastines (1973), Janssens (1982, 1986), Dimmendaal (1988), Bitja'a Kody (1990). Hyman's work focuses on phonology, the noun, and noun phrase, verbal derivation and inflection as well as the basic clause structure.

Theoretically, it should be retained that although a lot has not yet been done, some insightful works have been dedicated to the theoretical study of the language as summarized below.

Voorhoeve (1980) analyses verb derivation and takes into account the different problems encountered when deriving the verb in Basàá in a transformational point of view following the extended standard theory. In that paper, the author tries to analyze passivization and verb extensions.

Njock (1996) equally studies verb derivation and strives to solve the problems that are related to verb derivation in Basàá. He sets up the rules in a transformational way and analyses the relationship between simple base verbal sentences and extended base verbal ones following the incorporation theory of Baker (1988).

Ngo Ndjeysiha (1996) handles the description of the Basàá sentence in a generative perspective. Following the principles and parameters model of Chomsky (1981, 1986), she briefly analyses question formation processes, relativization, passivization and anaphors.

In (2006), Ngo Ndjeysiha heralded a new era in the studies related to Basàá linguistics per se. Emphasis had then shifted to the Optimality Theory (OT) which reflected the scope of the descriptions. In her thesis she tries to show that the Basàá language is able, as a Bantu language, to bring her contribution to the then new theory. She lays more emphasis on locality, that is, the different positions that certain phrases can occupy in the sentence following certain locality rules. The main goal is to explore how the OT in syntactic descriptions can help Bantu languages contribute to UG.

Makasso (2008), following several authors such as (Caelen-Haumont & Bel 2000), Caelen-Caelen-Haumont (2004a-b & 2006), Morange (2004), Mortreux (2004) *inter alia*, carries out a prosodic study of Basàá from a descriptive and theoretical point of view with special focus on intonation and melism; the latter being for the author, ‘a macrolinguistic phenomenon which is superimposed to other prosodic phenomena like tone and intonation. The author carries out a prosodic study of sounds at the physical and acoustic components. In addition, he analyses the syllabic structure of the sentence, tone interactions and shows to some extent how melism interacts with information structure, phonology, pragmatics, syntax, as well as with semantics. Globally, the author tackles various linguistic devices into play in the processing of prosodic prominence, discourse structure, language subjectivity, information structure, pragmatic as well as semantic interpretation.

Bassong (2010) provides a syntactic study of the language from a generative point of view. He carries out a left peripheral study of the language within the cartographic framework in line with Rizzi (1997) and subsequent works by showing that a fine-grained characterization of the left edge of the Basàá sentence can be well accounted for if one considers the Rizzian split-CP hypothesis according to which the left edge of the sentence can host a good number of functional

projection encoding discourse-related properties such as focus, topic, interrogation and the like and that these discourse-related categories can appear in a certain ordering following some restrictions.

Hamlaoui & Makasso (2011) discuss the prosodic structure of wh-phrases in Basàá and claim that the end of the Basàá Intonation Phrase (IP) can be identified by the presence of a long vowel on the wh-word. In their opinion, wh-words in Basàá have an underlying CV form and introduce a floating tone. The authors reject the interface approach to the Immediately After Verb (cf. Watters 1976 among others) focus position proposed by (Costa & Kula 2008) and argue that wh-fronting in Basàá is predicted by intonational properties. In chapter five, we will reject Hamlaoui & Makasso's analysis and show that their intonation approach to wh-questions in Basàá is far from being convincing.

Hyman et al. (2012) analyse relative clause formation in Basàá following Keenan & Comrie's (1977) Accessibility Hierarchy and discuss the different strategies that govern relative clauses in the language. The authors show that Basàá relatives involve either a gap strategy or a resumptive pronoun strategy and that the predictions which uphold relative clauses formation in the language directly follow from Keenan & Comrie's Accessibility Hierarchy. In addition, they show that the two types of relative clauses in Basàá form a natural class with demonstratives, and that both types license a definite/specific prefix /í-/ on the head noun. Similarly, they show that relative operators are in complementary distribution with demonstratives in relative clauses which license a gap, and that Kayne's (1994) Head Raising analysis of relatives successfully accounts for Basàá relatives with a gap. The fact that relative operators and demonstratives in the language are in complementary distribution led the authors to propose novel empirical data in the analysis of relative clauses, and also, led them to claim that a relative operator is only partially grammaticalized from a demonstrative. In addition to the abovementioned works, which are far from being exhaustive, other important works include dictionaries and basic pedagogical works such as Imrie (1957), Koki Ndombol & al. (1971), Lemb & De Gastines (1973), Bellnoun Momha (2008) etc.

Imrie (1957) carries out a descriptive grammar of the language with an important basis on verb morphology, noun morphology, and the basic clause structure of Basàá. However, her work is just a set of helps and suggestions for a better understanding of the language.

Koki Ndombol et al (1971) provide a basic grammar intended to the '6^e' and '5^e' students of 'Collège Libermann' of Douala. They lay more emphasis on the nominal system and a slight emphasis on the conjugation.

Lemb & De Gastines (1973) set up a bilingual dictionary with lexical and syntactic entries.

Bellnoun Momha (2007) also sets up a dictionary of Basàá in three ways: two bilingual Basàá-French, and French-Basàá versions and a monolingual Basàá-Basàá version.

2.1.4 Grammatical sketch

This section briefly outlines the grammatical component of Basàá with reference to phonology, morphology, and syntax in order to make the interpretation of the data discussed throughout, easier and more understandable as Basàá is a little known language. In fact, most of the data discussed in the overall section are based on works carried out by previous researchers. In this connection, for an in-depth understanding of the phonological and morphological component of Basàá, the reader should consult the references cited here.

2.1.4.1 Phonology

Bot bá Njock (1962) is to the best of our knowledge, the first researcher to have tackled the phonological study of Basàá. Another insightful work on the Basàá phonology is Hyman (2003). Below, the vowel, consonant and tonal systems of the language are presented as previously discussed in the literature.

2.1.4.1.1 The vowel system

The Basàá vowel system is made up of seven vowels, namely three back vowels, three front ones and a central low vowel as represented in the table below.

Table n° 1: The Basàá vowel chart (Mbom 1990:142)

Position	Front	Central	Back
High	I		u
Mid-High	E		o
Mid-Low	ɛ		ɔ
Low		a	

One of the major properties of Basàá vowel system is that it distinguishes between short and long vowels which contrast in open and closed syllables (see also Mbom 1990:142; Hyman 2003:2 & Makasso 2008:23) as can be delineated in the following lists.

/i/ : tì ‘crowd’;	tí ‘give (V)/epilepsy (N);	tíí ‘a kind of sparrow’
/e/ : yè ‘be (present tense)’ ;	é ‘cut the grasses’ ;	péé ‘viper’
/ɛ/ : lè ‘sway/swing’;	lé ‘that (conjunction)/ much (adverb)	hèè ‘carve(verb)’
/u/ : hjù ‘mushroom’ ;	sú ‘face’;	sùù ‘tease/bother’
/o/ : lò ‘leprosy’;	só ‘antelope’;	sòò ‘hide’
/ɔ/ : lò ‘come/arrive’;	ló ‘vomit’;	póó ‘sore/wound’
/a/ : sà ‘rob’;	sá ‘plum (N);	sáá ‘reimburse/pay back’

It should be noted that in Basàá, vowel lengthening is in most cases realized in final open syllables.

2.1.4.1.2 The consonant system

One major characteristic of Basàá resides in its complex consonant system which, in terms of Hyman (2003:4) requires that one distinguishes stem-initial vs other positions in the word. Hyman proposes a taxonomy of Basàá consonants on the basis of the syllabic content of the word.

According to the author, the first group of consonants is made up of consonants with one syllable, the second group is made up of words of two syllables and the third group made up of words of three syllables. These are taken below in turn.

Table n° 2: Group I: Monosyllabic items

CV	CVC
là ‘can’	bèl ‘plant/sow’
kè ‘go’	sèl ‘basket’
lò ‘come/arrive’	bàn ‘make/manufacture’
sè ‘sow’	sàŋ ‘undertake/embark’

Table n° 3: Group IIa: Disyllabic items

CV.CV	CV.CVC
kò.là ‘to be enough/to fit/match’	sà.yàp ‘bless’
hè.yà ‘to move’	kò.yòp ‘to redden’
pà.Yà ‘carp’	bò.ŋòl ‘to use/to do sth for sb’
tò.tò ‘plum’	bà.Yàl ‘to settle/resolve’

Table n° 4: Group IIb: Disyllabic items

CVC.CV	CVC.CVC
bám.dà ‘press/squeeze’	bàs.bàs ‘inextricably’
sàl.Yà ‘sacrifice’	tím.ɓís ‘to give back/return’
sòb.lè ‘baptism/baptize’	sèY.mís ‘a kind of lot’
bèŋ.gè ‘to look’	bàn.dàp ‘to squat’

Table n° 5: Group III: Trisyllabic items

CV.CV.CV	CVC.CV.CV
hì.nù.ní ‘bird’	báY.lè.nè ‘put sth aside for sb’
lì.kò.Yá ‘door’	sèb.lè.nè ‘call sb for’
lí.kúbé ‘banana’	sòl.ɓe.nε ‘hide somewhere’

In addition to Hyman's classification, other syllabic structures are attested in the language which are not predicted by the previous author. The list is far from being exhaustive. However, note that the following syllabic structures are also attested.

Table n° 6: Other syllabic structures

CV.CV.CVC	CV.CVC.CV	CV.CV.CV.CV
ba.gwè.lèl ‘servants’	bí.bòt.lé ‘the start’	mà.nò.dà.na ‘temptations(s)/exams’
bí.nó.lól ‘tools used in murder’	ma.pót.hà ‘visit’	
mà.jù.βúl ‘entrance’	ma.béh.ná ‘recommendations’	

The following table provides a snapshot of the Basàá consonant system.

Table n° 7: Basàá consonant chart (adapted from Bitja'a Kody 1990:32).

	Bilabial.	Alveolar	Palatal/labialised		Velar/labialised		Glottal/palatalised	
implosives	b							
explosive	p b	t d	ts dz	ç j	k g	kw gw		
prenasalized	Mb	nd	ndz		Ng	Ngw		
nasalized	M	n	j		N	Nw		
fricative		s					h	hj
lateral		l						
semi-vowels	W			j				

2.1.4.1.3 The tone system

Like many Bantu languages, Basàá is a tone language which uses tone as a distinguishing feature between different patterns. Tone change is very fundamental in distinguishing between lexical, grammatical and syntactic tones. In line with previous studies on the language, Basàá is assumed to have two major tones namely, a high tone marked by an acute accent i.e. as [́] and a low tone marked by a grave accent i.e. marked as [̀] or simply unmarked (without any visible marking). So, note that as the low tone is inserted by default, and because it is predominant in the language, it may be optionally marked. This means that an item such as *sèl* / *səl* ‘basket’ may have a marked low tone or not as in (1) below showing that the low tone is unambiguously used. As for the high tone, it is always marked as can be seen in (2) below whereby the absence of tone gives rise to an ungrammatical, nonsensical or nonexistent utterance.

- (1) a. sèl ‘basket’ or b. sèl ‘basket’
 (2) a. sál ‘work’ b. kél ‘day’
 c. *sal d. *kèl

In addition to the high and low tones, Basàá also distinguishes contour tones, which result from tones association between high and low or between low and high. So, one has a rising tone marked as [^] and a falling tone marked as [^]. Examples (3-4) provide an illustration of these tones distributions.

- (3) a. nɔ̄p ‘rain’ b. kǎl ‘say/tell.IMP’
 (4) a. télèp ‘stand’ b. çéłéł ‘suffer’

Furthermore, it has been observed that there exists another tone called middle or downdrifted which is marked as [~], and which results from the lowering of high tones in a given sequence as in the following examples below from Mbom (1990:151 & 178) (the bold-printed vowels bear a middle tone).

- (5) a. Betty a- bí-lēbá kāāt yaní
 Betty sp PMed+find book yesterday
 ‘Betty found a book yesterday.’
 b. Hilógá hí- ñ- límhá bílámbé gwóbísō
 boy sp Phod Simul + switch off lamps all
 ‘The boy switched off all the lamps simultaneously.’

Even if we agree with (5b) in terms of middle tone realization, we completely disagree with (5a) and propose that there is no downdrifted in this latter case. We propose that (5a-b) will be given the following distribution in terms of phonology and morphological segmentation (here we use a typical Basàá name in place of Betty).

- (6) a. Tɔnyé a- bí- leβá káat yaaní
 1.T. 1.SM PST2-find 7.book 1.yesterday
 ‘Tɔnyé found a book yesterday.’
 b. Hilógá hí- ñ- lím- há bílámbé gwóbísō
 19.boy 19.SM-PST1-switch off-SIMUL 8.lamps 8.all
 ‘The boy switch off the lamps simultaneously.’

Note that the lexical tone on the item *kaat* ‘book’ is low. High tone assignment on the first vowel sound of *kaat* ‘book’ is due to the fact that this direct object appears immediately after the verb (the so-called Immediately After Verb position in Bantu to be discussed in a short while). So, the high tone on *kaat* ‘book’ is a syntactic tone because it is predicted that in most cases, any item in the vicinity of the lexical verb (right-adjacent to it) bears a high tone on its first syllable.

Lexical tones in the language can be of diverse forms i.e., they can be low, high, rising, falling or middle. Lexical tones are very instrumental in tone languages as they help distinguish different lexical items from each other/one another. Some examples include the following in (7) below.

As mentioned above, Basàá has a syntactic tone which depends on the structural positioning of a given item in context. The Immediately After Verb position (IAV) is the domain par excellence whereby an item with a given lexical tone changes this lexical tone into a high one in most cases. For instance, the items *mboŋ* ‘cassava’ *ŋúdú* ‘student’ and *βikaat* ‘book’ bear each a lexical low tone. But when used immediately after the verb, their first syllable must change its lexical low tone into a high one (note that in Basàá vowel and nasal are syllabic nuclei and only syllabic nuclei can bear tone).

- (8) a. Mudaan a- bí- lámb míbóní yaaní
 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-cook 1.cassava 1.yesterday
 ‘The woman cooked cassava yesterday.’

b. Malêt a- mí- bengé njúdú
 1.teacher 1.SM-PRS-look 1.student
 ‘The teacher looks / is looking at the student.’

c. baúdú bá- nj- áñj ßíkaat
 2.students 2.SM-PST1-read 8.books
 ‘The students read the books.’

Finally, there are also grammatical tones which are used to distinguish between functional categories such as verb tenses as in the following examples in (9) where the difference between the verb tenses is not only morphological, but also phonological.

- (9) a. Mudaá a- ñ- sómb mámbót malâm *immediate past tense*
 1.woman 1.SM-PST1-buy 6.clothes 6.nice
 'The woman has bought nice clothes.'

b. Mudaá a- ñ- sómb mámbót malâm *present tense or progressive aspect*
 1.woman 1.SM-PRS-buy 6.clothes 6.nice
 'The woman buys OR is buying nice clothes.'

c. Mudaá a- ñ- sómb mámbót malâm *immediate future tense*
 1.woman 1.SM-FUT1-buy 6.clothes 6.nice
 'The woman is going to buy nice clothes.'

As can be noticed in the above examples, the difference between the recent/immediate past tense and the others, namely the simple present tense, the progressive aspect and the immediate future tense is that the former (recent/immediate past) is marked by a low tone whereas the three latter

tenses make use of a high tone on the tense marker. Recall that throughout this thesis, the low tone is optionally used and its absence will by no means affect the meaning of the data. Otherwise, its significance will be signalled in appropriate contexts. The following table represents the Basàá tone chart.

Table n° 8: The Basàá tone chart

Major tones	Low	High
...	[`]	[ˊ]
Contour tones	Rising	Falling
.....	[^]	[ˇ]
Middle tone	[˘]	...

2.1.4.2 Morphology

This section is concerned with the morphological account of the language with reference to the nominal and verbal systems. The aspects to be delineated in the whole section are simply sketchy. For an in-depth account of the nominal and verbal systems of Basàá, the reader is referred to Bôt bá Njock (1970), Lemb & De Gastines (1973) Bitja'a Kody (1990), Mbom (1990) to name only these few.

2.1.4.2.1 The nominal system

Like in other Bantu languages, the noun in Basàá is made up of a prefix which can be overt or covert and a root. The internal organization of the noun phrase is such that agreement is triggered by the head of the phrase (head noun) which dictates nominal features to the elements surrounding its (these elements are called noun satellites such as adjectives, possessive, demonstrative etc.). Basàá is a noun class language in the sense that nouns are classified according to the class to which they belong. This is rendered possible on the basis of criteria such as the form of prefixes, the gender system, concordial/agreement elements and the semantic content. However, note that as time goes by, one realizes that the semantic content criterion is becoming less and less reliable in accounting for the noun classification in noun class languages. Talking about the limitations of the semantic content as a criterion for noun classification, Hedinger (1980:12) argues that

'In the past the Bantu noun classes may have been based on a semantic classification of nouns, but now, it appears to be a purely arbitrary system where in no class can nouns of only one semantic content be found.'

Note that the semantic content requires that kinship nouns such as *man*, *woman*, *parent*, *uncle*, *aunt* etc. belong to the same noun class namely, class one and form their plural in class two whereas nouns relating to animals such as *lion*, *crocodile*, *snake* etc belong to the same class

namely, class nine and form their plural with nouns in class ten in the Bantu noun class system. It is shared knowledge that agreement comes out as a pre-eminent criterion in the determination of noun classes as early proposed by Kadima (1969). According to Kadima, two noun classes are distinct if (i) and (ii) hold:

- (i) they exhibit a difference in agreement,
- (ii) both their nominal prefixes and pairing systems are different in case they share common agreement.

The following table summarizes the noun classes and concordial/agreement prefixes in Basàá.

Table N°9: Noun and concordial prefixes in Basàá (Adapted from Mbom 1990; 166-167)

Noun Classes	Proto Bantu prefixes	Basàá class prefixes		Basàá concordial prefixes		Subject markers
		- C	-C	- C	- V	
1	Mu-	ì- ma- mu- ñ- ñ- ø-	í- ñw- ø	mó- nú- n- ñ- ø-	w- nú-	a
2	Ba-	ba- bo- bɔ-	b- bɑ-	bɑ-	≡-	bá
3	Mu-	ì- ñ- ñ- ø-	ñ- ñw-	μ- v- N- Ú	w-	ú
4	Mi-	mim min miñ ø-	miñ- ñw-	mim- min- miñ-	mi- ñw-	mi
5	Li-	li-	j- li-	li-	j- li-	lí
6	Ma-	ma-	m- ma	ma-	m- ma	má
7	Ki-	ø-	ø- Y-	i-	i- Y-	í
8	Bi-	bi-	bi- gw-	bi-	bi- gw-	bí

9	Ni-	ø-		ø- i- } (yó-)	O- i- } (yó) y- }	i
10	Lini-	ø-		ø- i- } (yó)	O- i- } (yó) y- }	í
12	Tu	di-	di-	di- tu-	di- tu- ç-	dí
14	Bu-	ø-	w-	ú- m- } n- } (wó-) N-	w-	ú
19	πa-	hi-	hy-	hi-	hi- hy-	Hí

The above table shows that there are thirteen noun classes in Basàá and each noun class has a specific agreement marker. The table below illustrate behaviour of the noun in relation with its satellites in a simple noun phrase.

Table n° 10: The noun and its satellites in a simple noun phrase

Noun (prefix-root) classes	Noun-Possessive ‘my (sg/pl’	Noun-Adjective ‘nice’	Demonstrative-noun ‘this/that/these’
1. mu -daá 1-woman 'Woman'	mu -daá w -êm 1-woman 1-my 'My woman'	mu -daá n -lâm 1-woman 1-nice 'A nice woman'	nú -nú mu -daá 1-DEM 1-woman 'This woman'
2. bo -daá 2-woman 'Women'	bo -daá b -êm 2-women 2-my 'My women'	bo -daá ba -lâm 2-women 2-nice 'Nice women'	bá -ná bo -daá 2-DEM 2-women 'These women'
3. n -tómbá 3-sheep 'Sheep (sg)'	n -tómbá w -êm 3-sheep 3-my 'My sheep (sg)'	n -tómbá n -lâm 3-sheep 3-nice 'A nice sheep(sg)'	ú -nú n -tómbá 7-DEM 3-sheep 'This sheep'
4. min -tómbá 4-sheep 'Sheep (pl)'	min -tómbá m -êm 4-sheep 4-my 'My sheep (pl)'	min -tómbá min -lâm 4-sheep 4-nice 'Nice sheep (pl)'	mí -ní min -tómbá 4-DEM 4-sheep 'These sheep'
5. li -laŋ 5-onion 'Onion'	li -laŋ j -êm 5-onion 5-my 'My onion'	li -laŋ li -lâm 5-onion 5-nice 'A nice onion'	lí -ní li -laŋ 5-DEM 5-onion 'This onion'
6. ma -laŋ 6-onion	ma -laŋ m -êm 6-onion 6-my	ma -laŋ ma -lâm 6-onion 6-nice	má -ná ma -laŋ 6-DEM 6-onion

'onions'	'my onions'	'Nice onions'	'These onions'
7. ø-kaat 7-book 'A book'	ø-kaat y-êm 7-book 7-my 'my book'	ø-kaat i-lâm 7-book 7-nice 'A nice book'	i-ní ø-kaat 7.DEM 7-book
8. βi-kaat 6-book 'Books'	βi-kaat gw-êm 8-book 8-my 'My books'	βi-kaat βi-lâm 8-book 8-nice 'Nice books'	βi-ní βi-kaat 8-DEM 8-book 'These books'
9. ø-ndón 9-fox 'Foxe'	ø-ndón y-êm 9-fox 9-my 'My fox'	ø-ndón i-lâm 9-fox 9-nice 'A nice book'	i-ní ø-ndón 9-DEM 9-fox 'This fox'
10. ø-ndón 10-fox 'Foxes'	ø-ndón y-êm 10.fox 10-my 'These foxes'	ø-ndón i-lâm 10.fox 10-nice 'Nice foxes'	i-ní ø-ndón 10-DEM 10-fox 'These foxes'
12. di-nuní 12-bird 'Birds'	di-nuní ç-êm 12-bird 12-my 'Birds'	di-nuní di-lâm 12-bird 12-nice 'Nice birds'	dí-ní di-nuní 12-DEM 12-bird 'These birds'
14. ø-koo 14-leg 'Leg'	ø-koo w-êm 14-leg 14-my 'My leg'	ø-koo n-lâm 14-leg 14-nice 'A nice leg'	ú-nú ø-koo 14-DEM 14-leg 'This leg'
19. hi-nuní 19-bird 'Bird'	hi-nuní hj-êm 19-bird 19-my 'My bird'	hi-nuní hi-lâm 19-bird 19-nice 'A nice bird'	hí-ní hi-nuní 19-DEM 19-bird 'This bird'

The examples delineated in the table above show that noun modifiers agree in class with the head noun within the noun phrase construction. So, on the basis of agreement morphology and the pairing system between singular and plural classes, nouns are said to belong to the same class if and only if they exhibit the same agreement morphology in relation with noun modifiers, or/and they make use of the same pairing system. Note that the pairing between a singular class and a plural one shows that both form the same gender. In what follows, it is shown that nouns in (a) and (b) columns exhibit the same agreement morphology while their corresponding plural forms in (c) and (d) obey the same principle i.e.; they exhibit the same agreement morphology.

(10)

- a. **nú-nú m-aangé w-ádâ**
1-DEM 1-child 1-one
'This single child'
- b. **nú-nú mu-daá w-ádâ**
1-DEM 1-woman 1-one
'This single woman'
- c. **bá-ná b-ɔɔŋgé bá-sámal**
2-DEM 2-child 2-six
'These six children'
- d. **bá-ná bo-daá bá-sámal**
2-DEM 2-woman 2-six
'These six women'

(11)

- a. **ú-nú** **ŋ-kaj** **w-ádá**
 3-DEM 3-root 3-one
 ‘This single root’
- c. **mí-ní** **min-kaj** **mín-sámal**
 6-DEM 4-sheep 4-six
 ‘These six root’

- b. **ú-nú** **n-tómbá** **w-ádá**
 3-DEM 3-sheep 3-one
 ‘This single sheep’
- d. **mí-ní** **min-tómbá** **mín-sámal**
 4-DEM 4-sheep 4-six
 ‘These six sheep’

(12)

- a. **lí-ní** **li-laŋ** **j-ádá**
 5-DEM 5-onion 5-one
 ‘This single onion’
- c. **má-ná** **ma-laŋ** **má-sámal**
 6-DEM 6-onion 6-six
 ‘These six onions’

- b. **lí-ní** **li-kebla** **j-ádá**
 5-DEM 5-present 5-one
 ‘This single present’
- d. **má-ná** **ma-kebla** **má-sámal**
 6-DEM 6-present 6-six
 ‘These six presents’

(13)

- a. **í-ní** **ø-nuYá** **y-ádá**
 7-DEM 7-animal 7-one
 ‘This single animal’
- b. **βí-ní** **βi-nuYá** **βí-sámal**
 8-DEM 8-animal 8-six
 ‘These six animals’

- b. **í-ní** **ø-yimbné** **y-ádá**
 7-DEM 7-sign 7-one
 ‘This single sign’
- c. **βí-ní** **βi-yimbné** **βí-sámal**
 8-DEM 8-sign 8-six
 ‘These six signs’

Note that as opposed to the last ten classes above where the singular plural distinction is based on the form of the nominal prefixes, nouns from class 9 and class 10 exhibit the same morphology, but differ with respect to tone assignment on the agreement prefix of the modifiers (here the prefix agreement of the modifiers bears a low tone in class 9 while it bears a high tone in class 10). The distinguishing feature between both classes relies on tone realization.

(14)

- a. **i-ní** **ø-ŋgwó** **y-ádâ**
 9-DEM 9-dog 9-one
 ‘This single dog’
- c. **í-ní** **ø-ŋgwó** **í-sámal**
 10-DEM 10-dog 9-six
 ‘These six dogs’

- b. **i-ní** **ø-kóp** **y-ádâ**
 9-DEM 9-chicken 9-one
 ‘This single chicken’
- d. **i-ní** **ø-kóp** **í-sámal**
 10-DEM 10-chicken 10-six
 ‘These six chicken’

Furthermore, the pairing between singular and plural classes from class 1 to class 10 requires that each odd class forms its plural in a corresponding even class (e.g. class 1 forms its plural in class 2, class 3 forms its plural in class 4 etc.). However, this pairing is not observed in Basàá and many noun class languages above class 10. So, in Basàá, class 19 forms its plural with class 12 while class 14 may form its plural with any other plural class (even class). This shows that the singular plural pairing is arbitrary. These are taken in turn below.

(15)

- a. **hí-ní** **hi-nuní** **hj-ádá**
19-DEM 19-bird 19-one
'This single bird'
- b. **hí-ní** **hi-ŋgonda** **hj-ádá**
19-DEM 19-girl 19-one
'This single girl'
- c. **dí-ní** **di-nuní** **dí-sámal**
12-DEM 12-bird 12-six
'These six birds'
- d. **dí-ní** **di-ŋgonda** **dí-sámal**
12-DEM 12-girl 12-six
'These six girls'

(16)

- a. **ú-nú** **ø-koo** **w-ádá**
14-DEM 14-leg 14-one
'This single leg'
- b. **ú-nú** **ø-ŋwemél** **w-ádá**
14-door 14-door 14-one
'This single door'
- c. **má-ná** **ma-koo** **má-sámal**
6-DEM 6-leg 6-six
'These six legs'
- d. **má-ná** **ma-ŋwemél** **má-sámal**
6-DEM 6-door 6-six
'These six doors'

From the foregone, it can be realized that Basàá counts thirteen noun classes. The first ten classes are consistent in their singular/plural alternation. Odd numbers indicate singular members/classes and even numbers indicate plural members/classes. It is on these correspondences that the gender system of the language is obtained, contrary to English and French for instance where the gender system is based on the masculine/feminine distinction. From (10) to (14) below, one obtains five regular genders on the basis of the singular/plural correspondence which involves two consecutive noun classes from class 1 to class 10.

Table n° 11: Regular genders

GENDER I	GENDER II	GENDER 3	GENDER IV	GENDER V
Cl. 1 / Cl. 2	Cl. 3 / Cl. 4	Cl. 5 / Cl. 6	Cl. 7 / Cl. 8	Cl. 9 / Cl. 10

In addition to regular genders, one also encounters irregular genders which are obtained from the singular/plural pairing between two non-consecutive noun classes. These include the following below.

Gender VI: Class 19/Class 12

(17)

- a. **hi-nuní** / **di-nuní**
19-bird 12-bird
'Bird' / 'Birds'
- b. **hi-ŋgonda** / **di-ŋgonda**
19-girl 12-girl
'Girl' / 'Girls'

Gender VII: Class 14/ Class 6

(18)

- a. **ø-koo** / **ma-koo**
14-leg 6-leg
'Leg' / 'Legs'
- b. **ø-ŋwemél** / **ma-ŋwemél**
14-door 6-door
'Door' / 'Doors'

Gender VIII: Class 9/Class 6

(19)

- | | |
|---|---|
| a. ø -nda≈p / ma -nda≈p
9-house 6-house
'House/ Houses' | b. ø -Ngeda/ ma -Ngeda
9-time 6-time
'Time/Times" |
|---|---|

Gender IX: Class 7/ Class 8

(20)

- | | |
|--|---|
| a. ø -nuYá / βi -nuYá≈
7-animal 8-animal
'Animal/ Animals' | b. ø -jóŋ / βi -jóŋ
7-idiot 8-idiot
'Idiot/ Idiots' |
|--|---|

Finally, there are single genders which involve abstract, collective or mass nouns. They do not have any pairing system although the nouns forming these genders may bear the same nominal prefix as some other singular or plural nouns. Below are delineated single or one-class genders. That these genders carry the same numbering as the ones presented above is explained by the fact that single genders are in fact sub-genders of the regular and/or irregular one discussed above (see also Mbom 1990:164-5).

(21)

Gender III.a

Class 5

- li**-pém
5-glory
'Glory'
li-pamal
5-insolence
'Insolence'

(22)

Gender V.a

Class 7

- ø**-mbiibε
7-sweat
'Sweat'

(23)

Gender VI. a

Class 9

- ø**-kóhól
9-cough
'Cough'
ø-tíimbε
9-sneeze
'Sneeze'

Gender III.b

Class 6

- ma**-lép
6-water
'Water'
ma-púβí
6-light
'Light'

Gender V.b

Class 8

- βi**-lim
8- bad omen
'Bad omen'

Gender VII. a

Class 14

- ø**-bέ
9-ugliness
'Ugliness'
ø-wɔŋí
14-fear
'Fear'

Additionally, Basàá has a pronominal system. The following table below summarizes the pronominal (subject and object pronouns) system of the language. Note that the first person singular (1sg) and second person plural (2 pl) in addition to class 1 (Cl.1) and class 2 (Cl. 2) subject markers correspond to humans while the other subject markers correspond to other noun classes with non-human properties. They carry [-human] features and belong to other noun classes whose nouns denote things and animals. The subject markers are in fact homophonous with personal pronouns and are mostly used in pro-drop contexts, as their morphology and semantics help recover the semantics of the omitted subject referent in the discourse.

Table n° 12: The Basàá pronominal system

Personal and subject markers	Translation	Object pronouns	Translation
1 sg Mε	'I'	Mε	'Me'
1 pl di	'we'	běs	'Us'
2 sg u	'you'	Wε	You (2sg)'
2 pl ni	'you'	bèé	'You (2 pl)'
Cl.1 a-	'He'	nyé	'Him'
Cl.2 bá-	'They'	bó	'Them'
Cl. 3 ú-	'It'	Wó	'It'
Cl. 4 mí-	'They'	Mó	'Them'
Cl. 5 lí-	'It'	Jó	'It'
Cl. 6 má-	'They'	Mó	'Them'
Cl. 7 i-	'It'	yɔ	'It'
Cl. 8 bí/bí-	'They'	gwó	'Them'
Cl. 9 i-	'It'	yɔ	'It'
Cl. 10 í-	'They'	yó	'Them'
Cl. 12 dí-	'They'	tʃó	'Them'
Cl. 14 ú-	'It'	wó	'It'
Cl. 19 hí-	'It'	hjó	'It'

Table n° 12 below displays the Basàá possessive pronouns in all the thirteen noun classes. As can be seen, the possessive, which is represented by an invariant morpheme, always exhibits class agreement which is represented by a variable class prefix.

Table no 13: The Basàá possessive pronouns (Adapted from Hyman 2003:14)

Classes	'Mine'	'Yours (sg)	'His/hers/its'	'Ours'	'Yours (pl)'	'Theirs'
1	w-εm	w-ጀŋ	w-eé	w-ěs	n-nân	w-âp
2	b-êm	b-ጀŋ	b-éé	b-és	ba-nân	b-âp
3	w-êm	w-ጀŋ	w-éé	w-és	í-nân	w-âp
4	m-êm	m-ጀŋ	m-éé	m-és	mí-nân	m-âp
5	j-êm	j-ጀŋ	j-éé	j-és	lí-nân	j-âp
6	m-êm	m-ጀŋ	m-éé	m-és	má-nân	m-âp
7	y-εm	y-ጀŋ	y-ě	y-ěs	i-nân	y-âp
8	gw-êm	gw-ጀŋ	gw-éé	gw-és	Bí-nân	gw-âp
9	y-êm	y-ጀŋ	y-ě	y-ěs	i-nân	y-âp
10	y-êm	y-ጀŋ	y-éé	y-ěs	í-nân	y-âp
12	tʃ-êm	tʃ-ጀŋ	tʃ-éé	tʃ-ěs	tʃí-nân	tʃ-âp
14	w-ěm	w-ጀŋ	w-éé	w-ěs	í-nân	w-âp
19	hy-êm	hy-ጀŋ	hy-éé	hy-ěs	hí-nân	hy-âp

After this insight into the nominal system, we are going to present some notions of the verbal system of the language in the following section.

The preceding analysis aimed at familiarizing the reader with the nominal system of the language. Note that for economy considerations (economy of space), the segmentation used in the work will be the one adopted so far, i.e. instead of segmenting the noun into its different morphemes separately (prefix-root), both morphemes will be merged together without any segmentation, but the reader will know about the class of a given noun based on the glosses. For instance, instead of making use of the form in (24a), the form in (24b) with no hyphenation will be used in the glosses throughout. So, we shall dispense with hyphenation in data (noun and noun modifiers exclusively) presentation.

(24)

- a. *hi-ŋɔnda hí- βí- sómb-ól bá-ná bá-ken bá-pé ma-kebla má-sámal*
19-girl 19-SM-PST2-buy-APPL 2-DEM 2-guests 2-other 6-presents 6-six
'The girl bought six presents for these other guests'
- b. *hiŋɔnda hí- βí- sómb-ól bá-ná bá-ken bá-pé makebla másámal*
19.girl 19-SM-PST2-buy-APPL 2.DEM 2.guests 2.other 6.presents 6.six
'The girl bought six presents for these other guests.'

2.1.4.2.2 Overview of the verbal system

This section briefly accounts for verb derivation and inflection in the language. Special focus is on the formation of the verb as well as on the formation of the categories of tense and aspect. Little shall be said about mood (cf. Voorhoeve 1980; Janssens 1986; Dimmendaal 1988; Bitja'a Kody 1990; Mbom 1990; Hyman 2003 *inter alia* for further details on verb morphology).

2.1.4.2.2.1 Basic verbal form

The Basàá basic verbal form is conceived of as being made up of a root and a suffix. Generally, the suffix consists of extensive morphemes and the so-called final vowel (FV) in Bantu linguistics. There is a wide variety of verbal bases in the language, among which the forms – CVC, -VC-, -CVV-, -CV-, -VV-, and –V- delineated in (Mbom 1990:170-1) and presented below respectively.

(25) *Verbal structures/forms*

a. -CVC-	e.g. -yap-	'cross';	-léβ-	'throw'
b. -VC-	e.g. -óm-	'send/commission';	-óp-	'bite'
c. -CVV-	e.g. -baa-	'begin/start/initiate';	-soo-	'hide/dissimulate'
d. -CV-	e.g. -há-	'put';	-hó-	'cover'
e. -VV-	e.g. -ɔɔ-	'hate';	-ɛɛ-	'weep'
f. -V-	e.g. -é-	'clear';	-ɔ-	'grow'

The fact that the verbal base can be preceded by other morphemes is due to the complexity of the verbal system of the language. For instance, the verbal base can be preceded by temporal and/or aspectual morphemes as shall be discussed in a short while. Also, the verbal base may be optionally preceded by the infinitive particle (*lí*)- which can be literally translated as the infinitive English ‘to’ as in the following examples.

(26)

- a. baúdú bá- n- lí (lí)- sómb ßikaat
 2.students 2.SM-PST1-come INF-buy 8.books
 ‘The students have come to buy the books.’
- b. (lí)-sómb ßikaat lí- n- lémēl báúudú
 INF-buy 8.books 5.SM-PRS-please 2.students
 ‘Buying the books please the students’

Note that the infinitive particle may be realized as /i-/ or as /lí-/ as can be observed above. In (26a), the vowel /i-/ of the infinitive particle bears a high tone because it occurs immediately after the inflected lexical or modal-like verb -lɔ ‘come’. Conversely, in (26b), where used sentence initially, it bears its lexical low tone. Of interest is also the fact that when an infinitive clause is the subject of the sentence, it displays morphological agreement with the verb. This morphological agreement is represented by the subject marker *lí*- which in fact corresponds to the subject marker of class 5 in the Basàá noun class system (cf. table n° 11 above.). This state of affairs is simply an indication that when a verb undergoes category shift (infinitivization in this case), it gets nominalised, and therefore, it bears nominal features like a normal noun.

Secondly, the fact that the verbal base can be followed by other affixal morphemes is also explained by the complexity of the verbal morphology of Basàá. This constitutes an indication that, it sometimes happens that the verbal base may be extended by being associated with other

extensive morphemes. These derivative verbal morphemes are diverse and encode not only different interpretations, but may also affect the argument structure of the verb. Some derivative morphemes include the applicative, benefactive, causative, comitative, explicative, intensive, instrumental, passive stative, reciprocal, reversives to name only a few (cf. Lemb & De Gastines 1973; Bitja'a Kody 1990; Mbom 1990 among others for an inventory of verbal extensions in Basàá).

2.1.4.2.2.1.1 Some derivative verbal morphemes and their interpretations

Among the various derivative verbal morphemes attested in the language, there are applicative morphemes. Usually of the /-Vi/ or /-ne/ form, the applicative is one of the most productive suffixes in the language and can combine with almost all types of verbal roots. Semantically, the applicative conveys a wide range of interpretations including ‘to do something for somebody’, ‘to do something at a specific place’, ‘to do something at a specific time’, ‘to do something for some reasons’ etc. (cf. Lemb & De Gastines 1973: 37). There are many applicative morphemes such as the benefactive, the locative, the instrumental, and the explicative. One of the major properties of verbal extensions in general is that they trigger regressive vowel assimilation on a preceding verbal root. For instance, if the vowel of the applicative morpheme is open, when combined with a verbal root, the vowel of this latter completely or partially bear the same phonological properties as the applicative morpheme. In (27a) below, the transitive verbal root *-sómb-* ‘buy’, when combined with the applicative morpheme *-ol*, forms the verbal complex *-sómb-ol* which literally means ‘buy for’. Given that the vowel of the applicative is /o/, vowel /ɔ/ of the original verbal base *-sómb-* ‘buy’ undergoes assimilation from vowel /o/ of the applicative morpheme. As a result, the original transitive *-sómb-* ‘buy’ extends its semantics i.e.; it requires another participant (a benefactor) in the discourse by extending the argument structure of the original transitive verb. As a result, one ends up with a ditransitive verb. The same process applies for (27b-c) whereby the intransitive *-lɔ-* ‘come/arrive’ and *-nɔl-* ‘laugh’ extend their argument structure when associated with an applicative. These predicates, which are originally one-place, end up each with an additional participant. Just like with (27a), vowel /o/ of the applicative completely assimilates vowel /ɔ/ of the original verbs *-lɔ-* ‘come/arrive’ and *-nɔl-* ‘laugh’ which are realized as /o/.

(27)

- a. *-sómb-* ‘buy’; *-sómb-ol* ‘buy for’
 mudaá a- bí- sómb-ol bóóŋgé kōn *Benefactive meaning*
 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-buy-BEN 2.children 10.rice
 ‘The woman bought rice for the children.’

- b. -lò- ‘come/arrive’; -lo-l ‘arrive by’
 mudaá a- bí- lō-l mátówa *Instrumental meaning*
 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-come-INSTR 6.car
 ‘The woman came by car.’
- c. -nol- ‘laugh’ nol-l ‘laugh because of/for’
 manjgé a- n- kwó mákekse, pro_i a_i- ní- nol- ól máhél *Explicative meaning*
 1.child 1.SM-PST1-fail 6.exams pro 1.SM-PRS-laugh-EXPL loss
 ‘The child has failed the exams. He is laughing because he has no choice.’

The following sentences involve verbal extensions whereby the verbal root associates with the direct and indirect causative (28a-b), the comitative (28c), the reciprocal (29a), the reversive (29b), the passive (30a), and the reflexive (30b) morphemes.

(28)

- a. -jé- ‘eat’ -j-êš ‘make somebody eat/feed somebody’
 mudaá a- n- j-éš mán kōn *Direct causative*
 1.woman 1.SM-PST1-eat-CAUS 1.child 10.rice
 ‘The woman_i has made the child eat rice/the woman_i has fed the child (herself_i).’
- b. -lém- ‘turn off’ -lím-ís- ‘make something turn off by somebody else’
 mudaa a- n- lím- ís mápúbí *Indirect causative*
 1.woman 1.SM-PST1-turn off-CAUS 6.light
 ‘The woman has made/caused the light turn off. (e.g. she ordered the child to turn it off).’
- c. -kε- ‘go’ -kε-na Lit: ‘go along with/take along’
 báudú bá- íj- kε- ná βítuYúl í súYlu *Comitative reading*
 2.students 2.SM-PRS-go-COM 8.toys LOC 7.school
 ‘The students take the toys to school.’

As can be seen above, the direct causative denotes an action which is directly initiated and performed by the initiator (the subject) as in (28a), while the indirect causative denotes an action which is instigated by somebody else, but performed by a different actor (28b). The comitative morpheme adds an additional participant, i.e., a person or object, in the company of whom/which the action is performed.

In (29a), the action is reciprocal in the sense that ‘the lover’ is also ‘lovee/loved one’. The reversive morpheme -il (29b) denotes opposition i.e., it conveys a meaning which is opposite to that expressed by the original verb base while the passive morpheme -a in (30a) conveys the meaning according to which the passivized object, which functions as the subject of the clause undergoes the effects of some action initiated by somebody else (explicit or implicit). The reflexive morpheme -ba in (30b) conveys the meaning according to which the subject of the sentence acts as agent and patient simultaneously i.e.; the subject acts on itself.

(29)

- a. -gw̄ēs- ‘love/like’ -gw̄ēs-na ‘love each other/one another’
 baúdú bá- ñ- gw̄ēs-na
 2.students 2.SM-PRS-love-REC
 ‘The students love each other/one another.’
- b. -teŋ- ‘tie’ -tiŋ-il ‘untie’
 maangé a- bí- tiŋ-fl kémbê yaaní
 1.child 1.SM-PST2-tie-REVERS 7.goat 1.yesterday
 ‘The child untied the goat yesterday.’

(30)

- a. -gw̄el- ‘catch/arrest’ -gw̄el-a ‘be caught/arrested’
 mintɔnba mí- bí- gw̄el- á yáání (ni batát ndâp)
 4.thieves 4-SM-PST-catch-PASS 1.yesterday PREP 2.keepers 7.house
 ‘The thieves were caught/arrested yesterday by the watchmen.’
- b. -sas- ‘rub’ -sas-bá ‘rub oneself’
 maangé a- bí- sas-bá móó
 1.child 1.SM-PST2-rub-RM 6.oil
 ‘The child rubbed himself with oil.’

One striking issue concerning the distribution of the derivative verbal morphemes in Basàá is that as compared to (28) where vowel assimilation between the vowel of the applicative and that of the original verb base is complete, in (29-30) on the contrary, vowel assimilation is not complete in all cases. In (29b) and (30b), vowel assimilation is complete. In the remaining cases, it is shown that the derivative verbal morpheme is the central vowel /a/ (cf. table n° 1 above) while the vowel of the verbal base is either /e/ or /ɛ/ as in (29a-30a). This state of matters simply shows that vowel assimilation is not always predicted. However, previous works have shown that vowel harmony is constrained i.e.; collocation is possible between certain vowels and impossible between others. According to Mbom (1990:143), ‘these restrictions specifically relate to the co-occurrence of high-mid and low-mid vowels. In other words, vowels /e/ and /o/ cannot collocate with vowels /ɛ/ and /ɔ/.’ She further argues that ‘sequences such as *eɛ, *eo, *oe, and *oo are thus not to be found in the language.’ On the contrary, only the sequences made up of mid and low vowels i.e.; ɛɛ, ɛɔ, ɔɔ, and the ones made up of high and mid vowels such as ee, eo, oo, and oe are ruled in. To the licit sequences predicted by Mbom (1990), one can also add the mid-high and low sequence ea as attested in (30a). For further details on verbal extensions of the language, the reader is referred to the cited references. The following section briefly focuses on tense, aspect and mood.

2.1.4.2.2 Tense, aspect and mood

This section provides an overview of the grammatical categories of tense, aspect and mood in order to familiarize the reader with the inflectional system of the Basàá verb. A fine-grained

analysis of these grammatical categories is found in various works including (Bitja'a Kody 1990 & Mbom 1990). The following taxonomy delineates the tense system of the language. Globally, it is shown that Basàá tenses can be morphological or phonological i.e.; tense can be marked by specific morphemes or by tone assignment.

2.1.4.2.2.2.1 Tense

This section discusses four tense types in terms of structural distribution and semantic interpretation.

2.1.4.2.2.2.1.1 The past tense (PST)

In general, there are four forms of past tenses in the language depending on the event time as discussed below.

First of all, there is a recent past tense which can be interpreted either as the English past tense or present perfect tense. The recent past tense denotes today's events i.e.; events that have just taken place or, which have taken place earlier in the same day. The reference time is very closer to the moment of speaking. Morphologically, it is marked by the homorganic nasal -N which copies the phonological features of the following sound and which is followed by the verb base. It is glossed as PST1- as in (31) below (note that when the verb base starts with a vowel sound, the present marker is the velar η-). Note also that events denoting today's past may be followed by time adverbials such as *bikékla* ‘in the morning’, *náanɔ* ‘now’ etc.

(31)

- a. baúdú bá- m- bómá málêt (bikékla) í njel
 2.students 2.SM-PST1-meet 1.teacher 8.morning Loc 7.way/road
 ‘The students (have) met the teacher in the morning on the road.’
- b). Mudaá a- η- áŋ bíkaat bí bón bée
 1.woman 1.SM-PST1-read 8.books 8.GEN 2.children 2.her
 ‘The woman (has) read the books of her children.’
- c. bodaá bá- η- ké (náanó) í bom
 2.women 2.SM-PST1-go 1.now Loc 7.market
 ‘The women (have) (just) gone/went to the market.’

Secondly, there is a medial past tense which denotes events starting from yesterday up to a few days, weeks, months or even years (Mbom 1990:236). It relates to situations that have taken place much farther back in the past than today's events. Morphologically, it is marked as *bí-*, glossed as PST2- and is followed by the verb base and may be followed by a time adverbial as can be seen in (32) below.

(32)

- a. baúdú bá- bí- bómá málêt (yaaní) í njel
 2.students 2.SM-PST2-meet 1.teacher 1.yesterday LOC 8.way
 ‘The students met the teacher (yesterday) on the road.’

b. sóYol wêm a- bí- gwéé-né í mwií hikóó ni bóYol
 1.grandfather 1.my 1.SM-PST2-born-APPL Loc 14.year 19.thousand PREP 7.hundred
 boo ni jóm
 nine PREP ten
 ‘My grandfather was born in 1910.’

Thirdly, there is another form of past tense which can denote remote and recent events and is glossed as PST3-. It is either marked by a high or middle tone on the verb root or by vowel lengthening of the final verbal vowel as illustrated below.

(33)

a. verb base: -bɔma- ‘meet’

baúdú bá- bɔmá malêt (yaaní) / (mwiímbɔY)
 2.students 2.SM-meet.PST3 1.teacher 1.yesterday 14.last year
 ‘The students met the teacher (yesterday) / (last year.)’

b. verb base: -tɛmb- ‘return’

baúdú bá-tɛmb (yaaní) (mwiímbɔY)
 2.students 2.SM-return.PST3 1.yesterday 14.last year
 ‘The students returned (yesterday) / (last year).’

c. verb base: -lɔ- ‘come/arrive’

baken bá- lɔ- ɔ / lɔ (yaaní) (nɔɔmáa) í ñgand
 2.guests 2.SM-come-PST3 /come.PST3 1.yesterday 1.two days ago Loc 7.party
 ‘The guests came (yesterday)/ (two days ago.)’

The landmark of the remote/recent past tense (33) is that when used in the context, there is no Immediately After Verb position prosodic effects as it is the case with most verb tenses. In other words, it is generally observed that every constituent occurring immediately after the verb in a tensed clause bears a high tone on its first syllable (cf. 31-32 above). What happens in (33) above is that the constituents *malêt* ‘teacher’ (33a) and *yaaní* ‘yesterday’ (33-c) which are right adjacent to the main verbs *bɔmá* ‘met’, *tɛmb* ‘returned’ *lɔ-ɔ/lɔ* ‘came’ do not bear a high tone. They conserve their lexical low tone.

The last form of past tense examined in this section is the narrative past tense. This form of past tense is used to denote consecutive events in narrative discourse situations. According to Mbom (1990:244), this tense is used in the discourse when ‘the speaker relates to a series of real or fictive events in the order they are supposed to have taken place.’ In such contexts, since events are consecutive, the first one can be used in either of the above mentioned past tenses namely, today’s past, medial past or remote past while the second event, used in the narrative past, is affected by a high tone in a pro-drop construction that is, whereby the subject of the sentence is dropped altogether but can still be identified /recovered semantically by the subject marker as in the following example below where the narrative past tense is glossed as (PST4). The verbs in

the narrative past tense in (34b) have their basic forms in (34a) with a low tone and one can realize that when used in the narrative past, these verbs undergo high tone bearing (for other possible past tense forms, cf. Bitja'a Kody 1990 & Mbom 1990).

(34)

- a. *Verb bases*: -jòb-nà ‘come along with’; -sèβèl- ‘call’; *kéβèl* ‘serve’
- b. Mudaá a- n- l᷑ / bí- l᷑/ l᷑-᷑ pro_i a_i- jòb-ná bíjék,
1.woman 1.SM-PST1-come/PST2-come /come-PST3 pro 1.SM-enter-COM.PST4 8.food
pro_i a_i- séβèl bóŋgé, pro_i a_i-kéβèl bó
pro 1.SM-call.PST4 2.chiildren pro 1.SM-serve.PST4 2.them
'The woman came (has come), entered with the food, called the children and served them.'

2.1.4.2.2.2.1.2 The present tense (PRS)

This tense has two main forms depending on the semantics and the nature of the verb under construction (other forms can be found in Bitja'a Kody 1990 & Mbom 1990). In this section, we discuss two forms of present tenses namely, the stative present and the inceptive present.

The stative present tense expresses an action at the moment of speaking. It is generally used for stative verbs and some situational verbs like *tE≡lE₄p* ‘to stand’, *≡andap* ‘to bend’ etc. (cf Bitja'a Kody 1990:423). Stative verbs are in fact irregular as their form is not predictable as other regular verbs. For instance, one cannot predict the inflected form from the base one. Some examples include the following examples whereby the formation of the stative present tense is arbitrary.

- (35) a. maangé a- téé verb base: -*télēp-* ‘stand’
 1.child 1.SM-stand.PRS
 ‘The child is standing.’
- b. maangé a- bendí verb base: -*bandap-* ‘bend’
 1.child 1.SM-bend.PRS
 ‘The child is bending.’

The habitual present tense expresses an action which usually takes place in the present (general truth) or which takes place at the moment of speaking. In the latter case, the present tense overlaps with the progressive aspect. Morphologically, it is marked by the homorganic nasal N- followed by the verb. Phonologically, the present tense marker bears a high tone.

- (36) a. Tɔnyé a- m̩- pót básaá
 1.T. 1.SM-PRS-speak 2.Basaá
 ‘Tonye speaks Basáá (general truth because he is a native speaker).’
- b. Tɔnyé a- ñ- kε í süklu
 1.T 1.SM-PRS-go Loc 7.school
 ‘Tonye (habitually)goes to school.’

2.1.4.2.2.2.1.3 The future tense (FUT)

In the following lines, we discuss three types of future tenses namely, the immediate future, the near future and the distance or remote future.

To begin with, the immediate future tense, also referred to as hodiernal future (Mbom 1990:263), is the counterpart of today's past tense (PST1). It denotes actions that are expected to take place in the immediate future (which stretches from the moment of speaking up to a week, a month and even a year) subsequent to the moment of speaking. Like the habitual present tense, the immediate future is morphologically marked by the homorganic nasal N- with a high tone and it is glossed as (FUT1) followed by the verb base as in the following example in (37). The difference between the immediate future and the habitual present tense is at the level of the use of temporal expression or adverbials, or the distinction simply depends on the context.

(37)

- a. baúdú bá- ñ- temb náanó í süklu
2.students 2.SM-FUT1-return now Loc 7.school
'The students are returning right now (are about to return) to school.'
- b. baúdú bá- ñ- bém máwandá máp í mbús kɔɔsi
2.students 2.SM-FUT1-wait 6.friends 6.their Loc 7.back 7.midday
'The students are waiting for their friends in the afternoon.'
- c. mawándá máp má- ñ- bodól süklu mwiímbâk
6.friends 6.their 6.SM-FUT1-start 7.school 14.year next
'Their friends will start school next year.'

The near future tense, also called medial future, glossed as (FUT2), is morphologically marked as *gá/Yá-* followed by the verb base. It denotes events that may stretch from a few hours, a few days, a few months, up to a few years subsequent to the moment of speaking as illustrated below in (38).

(38)

- a. baúdu bá- **gá-** bodól nsón bikokówá
2.students 2.SM-FUT2-start 3.work 8.evening
'The students will start work in the evening.'
- b. Liwándá jêm lí- **gá-** lo- ná mé makebla yaani
5.friend 5.my 5.SM-FUT2-bring-BEN me 6.presents 1.tomorrow
'My friend will bring me the presents tomorrow.'
- c. baúdu bá- **gá-** bodól süklu mwií mbók
2.students 2.SM-FUT2-start 7.school 14.year next
'The students will start school next year.'

It should be borne in mind that the future marker *gá-* can be reduced to *á-* after the dropping of the velar /g/ and the dropping of the vowel of the subject marker for economy purposes so that the sentences in (38) above can be realized as (39) below.

(39)

- a. baúdu b- á- bodól nsón bikokówá
 2.students 2.SM-FUT2-start 3.work 8.evening
 ‘The students will start work in the evening.’
- b. Liwándá jêm l- á- lɔ- ná mé makebla yaani
 5.friend 5.my 5.SM-FUT2-bring-BEN me 6.presents 1.tomorrow
 ‘My friend will bring me the presents tomorrow.’
- c. baúdu b- á- bodól süklu mwií mbók
 2.students 2.SM-FUT2-start 7.school 14.year next
 ‘The students will start school next year.’

Some researchers including Bitja'a Kody (1990) & Mbom (1990) consider cases such as (38) and (39) above as involving two different future tenses. According to them, sentences in (39) are instances of remote future tense. However, we consider that (39) is simply a reduced form of (38) and that both of them can be used interchangeably to express the remote future tense.

Finally, besides the two types of future tenses exhibited above, there is also the narrative future tense which is the symmetrical counterpart of the narrative past tense. It is used to express events that are expected to occur in a consecutive way. For instance, in a series of events, the first event sequence is expressed in either form of the future tenses (FUT1, FUT2) while the second verb sequence in the narrative future is bare morphologically, but undergoes high tone bearing which distinguishes it from other forms of future tenses (FUT1, FUT2) as in the following examples.

(40)

- a. *Verb bases*: -jòb-nà ‘come along with’; -sèβèl- ‘call’; kèβèl ‘serve’
 b.

Mudaá a- ní- lɔ / gá- lɔ-́ pro_i ái- jòb- ná bíjék,
 1.woman 1.SM-FUT1-come/ FUT2-come.IMPF pro 1.SM-enter-COM.FUT2 8.food
 pro_i ái- séβèl bóŋgé, pro_i ái- kéβèl bó
 pro 1.SM-call.PST4 2.chiildren pro 1.SM-serve.PST4 2.them

‘The woman will arrive, enter with the food, call the children and serve them.’

As shown in (40), the first sequence of the sentence may either be in the immediate future (FUT1) or the medial future (FUT2) while the following sequences with pro-drop constructions contain verbs in the narrative future which lacks morphological marking, but which makes use of high tone bearing on the verbs (compare the verb bases in (40a) with their inflected forms in (40b)). In addition, the italicized subject marker -á following the null subject pro bears a high tone in the narrative future tense as opposed to its counterparts in the immediate and medial future tenses in the first clause (41b).

2.1.4.2.2.2 Aspect

In terms of Dubois et Al (1982:53), the grammatical category of aspect can be defined as in in the following terms:

« *L'aspect est une catégorie grammaticale qui exprime la représentation que se fait le sujet parlant du processus exprimé par le verbe, c'est-à-dire de son déroulement ou de son achèvement... »*

Talking of aspect, one really refers to different ways of viewing the internal temporal constituency of a situation/event/action i.e.; whether this latter is accomplished or not at the moment of speaking. This section briefly discusses some aspectual categories with reference to their distribution and interpretation (for more details, cf. Bitja'a Kody 1990 & Mbom 1990).

2.1.4.2.2.2.1 The perfective aspect (PERF)

The perfective aspect in Basàá overlaps with some tenses such as the different past tenses previously discussed, the pluperfect and other temporal categories denoting perfectivity etc. Semantically, an event is said to be perfect or perfective if it is accomplished at the moment of speaking. Below, we discuss the recent past tense, the medial past tense as well as the distant/remote past tenses as encoding perfective interpretation. We assume that aspect is ‘swallowed up’ by tense. Although not morphologically marked, the perfective aspect is going to be materialized as PERF as in the following sentences.

(41)

- a. Mudaá a- **n-** lámb péé *recent past*
1.woman 1.SM-PST1-cook-PERF 7.viper
‘The woman has cooked a viper.’
- b. Mudaá a- **bí-** jowá mámbót *medial past*
1.woman 1.SM-PST2-wash-PERF 6.clothes
‘The woman washed the clothes.’
- c. Mudaá a- jowá mámbót *remote past*
1.woman 1.SM-PST3-wash-IMPF 6.clothes
‘The woman washed the clothes (e.g. a long time ago).’

Furthermore, the marker *ma-*, which is always left attached to the verb base, also encodes perfective aspect. It conveys the meaning according to which an action has already taken place, although it may repeat after the moment of speaking. In Cinque’s (1999:94) terminology, this morpheme acts as an anterior aspectual marker by virtue of encoding anteriority. So, this morpheme only collocates with verbs encoding repeatable facts/events. Verbs denoting non-repeatable events such as the verb *-nij-* ‘live (exist)’ do not collocate with the perfective marker *ma-* ‘already’ under the idea that someone cannot ‘live’ (exists) more than once as illustrated in the illicit sentence in (42c) below.

(42)

- a. Mudàá a- **má-** lámb péé (*ŋgele ísámal*)
1.woman 1.SM-PERF-cook 7.viper 10.times 10.six
‘The woman has already cooked a viper (six times).’

- b. mbómbok a- **má-** jê péé (ŋgandak ŋgéle)
 1.patriarch 1.SM-PERF-eat 7.viper many 10.times
 ‘The patriarch has already eaten the viper (many times).’
- c. * Mudàá a- **má-** wâ (ŋgele ísámal)
 1.woman 1.SM-PERF-die 10.time 10.six
 Literally: ‘The woman has already lived six times.’

2.1.4.2.2.2.2 The imperfective aspect (IMPF)

It denotes unaccomplished events at the moment of speaking. Some verb tenses such as the present tense and the future tense overlap with the imperfective aspect. In other words, since present and future actions are in fact unaccomplished, they encode imperfectivity. And since the marker of imperfectivity is implicit, one can deduce once more that tense overrides or ‘swallows up’ aspect. On the contrary, there are some specific morphemes which encode imperfectivity in the language. These are the progressive/continuative, the durative and many other imperfective markers (cf. Bitja'a Kody 1990 & Mbom 1990). The following examples in (43) denote the imperfective aspect in relation to the present and future tenses.

(43)

- a. Mudàá a- n- lámb péé (híkií kél)
 1.woman 1.SM-PRS-cook.IMPF 7.viper each 7.day
 ‘The woman (usually) cooks the viper every day/is cooking the viper.’
- b. Mudàá a- n- lámb péé yaaní
 1.woman 1.SM-FUT1-cook.IMPF 7.viper 1.tomorrow
 ‘The woman will cook the viper tomorrow/ is cooking the viper tomorrow.’
- c. Mudàá a- gá- lámb péé
 1.woman 1.SM-FUT2-cook.IMPF 7.viper
 ‘The woman will cook a viper.’

Another property of the imperfective aspect is that it can be morphologically marked either by attaching the ‘imperfectivizing’ suffix /-vk/ to the verb base (Mbom 1990:275) or its variant counterpart /-ga/ as in (44), or by making use of the continuative/non terminative marker *ŋgi* ‘still’ to the left of the verb, followed by the suffix –vk as illustrated in (45) below.

(44)

- a. Mudaá a- lámb- áY péé *Past progressive*
 1.woman 1.SM-cook-PROG 7.viper
 ‘Then woman was cooking the viper.’
- b. munlóm a- til- gá bíkaat *Past progressive*
 1.woman 1.SM-write-PROG 8.book
 ‘The man was writing letters.’

(45)

- a. Mudaá a- **ŋgi**-lámb- áY mboŋ *present progressive durative*
 1.woman 1.SM-still-cook-PROG 1.cassava
 ‘The woman is still cooking cassava.’
- b. munlóm a- **ŋgi**- til- gá bíkaat *present progressive*

- 1.woman 1.SM-still-write-PROG 8.book
 ‘The man is still writing letters.’

Note that the morphemes in (44–45) denote what is referred to as hodiernal imperfective past and present (Mbom 1990: 275). In contrast, the medial and remote imperfective pasts are marked peripherastically. They consist of the past form of the auxiliary *bá* ‘be’ which are realized either *bē* or *bá* ‘was/were’ as shown below.

(46)

- a. Mudaá a- **bé** lámb- **áY** mboŋ *Medial past progressive/iterative*
 1.woman 1.SM-be.PST2-cook-PROG 1.cassava
 ‘The woman used to/had a habit of cook (ing) cassava.’
- b. munlóm a- **bá** til- **ga** bíkaat *Remote past progressive/iterative*
 1.woman 1.SM-be.PST3 write-PROG 8.book
 ‘The man used to write /had a habit of writing letters.’

2.1.4.2.2.2.3 Mood

After this overview of the aspectual system, emphasis is now going to be laid on the mood system in a very sketchy fashion as discussed by (Bitja'a Kody 1990 & Mbom 1990). Below, only the conditional, the subjunctive and the imperative are discussed.

The conditional is not quite the same as in French. In Basàá, the conditional denotes a verbal form which expresses a condition owing to the realisation of a given action. Both actions are sometimes separated by a phonological pause (generally a comma) as shown in (47a) below. Another way of expressing condition consists in using the form *i bá'lé* ‘if’ which requires a tensed verb in any indicative tense.

- (47) a. pro_i a_i yōj, mε mí- ≡ádâ
 pro 1.SM neglect.COND I FUT1-take/pick up
 Intended: ‘If he neglects I will take.’
- b. í≡a#IE# u n̄s-sâl, ú ka ll mE
 If you PST1-work, you tell me
 Lit: ‘If you have worked, let me know.’

The subjunctive mood is generally used to express wishes, orders and is introduced by verbs such as *-bat-* ‘ask’, *hóŋôl* ‘think’, etc. as illustrated in (48) below where the subject of the subjunctive clause bears a high tone.

- (48) a. mE mí- bat lé ú lí-á
 I PRS-ask that you come.SUBJ
 ‘I ask that you should come/I wish you came.’
- b. pro_i a- n̄- somból lé m̄é jé
 pro 1.SM-PRS-want that I eat.SUBJ
 ‘He wants me to eat/he wishes I ate.’

Lastly, the imperative is used to express orders, commands or strong obligations. The imperative is expressed in the second person singular, the first person plural and the second person plural counterpart. It is only used for present actions whereby the verbal element may be marked phonologically and morphologically as shown below.

- | | |
|--|---|
| (49) a. jé ñgandak | b. jé- n- á ñgandak |
| eat. _{IMP.2sg} a lot
‘Eat (2sg) a lot!’ | eat- _{EPTH-IMP.2pl} a lot
‘Eat (2pl) a lot!’ |
| c. sómb bikaat | d. sómb-á bikaat |
| buy. _{IMP.2sg} 8.books
‘Buy (2sg) books!’ | buy- _{IMP.2pl} 8.books
‘Buy (2pl) books.’ |
| e. Dí jé- k
we eat- _{IMP}
‘Let us eat!’ | f. Dí sómb- ák
we buy- _{IMP}
‘Let us buy!’ |

2.1.4.3 Word order and clause structure

Basàá is basically an SVO language whereby subject verb agreement is compulsory in finite clauses. Subject verb agreement is rendered possible via the use of an agreeing subject marker which displays class, gender and number agreement with the subject NP of the clause. A simple declarative clause can be made up of a bunch of agglutinating morphemes encoding agreement, tense, aspect, negation information and other elements of verb morphology. The following sentences exhibit the internal structure of the clause. Note that (50b) is an instance of a pro-drop serial verb construction in which the subject of the sentence *bɔɔŋgɛ* ‘children’ must be dropped altogether. In this case, the semantics of the missing subject is recoverable from the semantic content of the subject marker *bá* which bears class, number and gender features of the dropped subject. So, in a serial verb construction such as (50b), the subject of the sentence must only occur once, and at the beginning of the sentence.

(50)

- a. Mudaá *_(a)- bí- sómb-ól bé bón bée bijék yaaní
1.woman 1.SM-PST2-buy-BEN NEG 2.children 2.her 8.food 1.tomorrow
‘The woman did not buy the food for her children.’
- b. bɔɔŋgɛ *_(bá)- bê bé (*bɔɔŋgɛ) pro_i bá-i- ñgí- sál-áY
2.children 2.SM-be.PST3 NEG 2.children pro 2.SM-PERF-work-PROG
‘The children were not used to work.’

Note that one of the major characteristics of Bantu languages in general and Basàá in particular is that agreement is not restricted to the sole nominal and clausal arrays. Agreement morphology is also attested at the left periphery of the clause i.e.; in sentence initial position before the subject of the sentence. This occurs in the presence of scope-discourse properties such as focus, topic, evidentiality and the like. This is simply an indication that information structure affects the

canonical word order of the language. The following examples show that a left peripheral focalized constituent as well as topicalized constituents (constituents that do not occupy their canonical position) agree in class and number with a gender-specific morpheme. In this case, the agreeing morpheme is left attached to the focus marker *-n* in a focus construction (51a) while in topic constructions, only the additive topic marker *-k* is overt (51b) as opposed to other topic markers which are implicit/null (they are glossed here as the null morpheme *-Ø*) as shown in (51c-d). In these latter cases, only the class agreeing morpheme is overt.

(51)

- a. malanj **mó-n** mudaá a- bí- sómb yáání í bom *ex-situ object focus*
6.onions 6-FOC 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-buy 1.yesterday LOC 7.market
'The woman bought THE ONIONS yesterday in the market.'
- b. malanj **mô-k**, mudaá a- bí- sómb **mô** yaaní *additive topic*
6.onions 6-TOP 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-buy 6.them 1.yesterday
'As for the *onions*, the woman bought *them too* in the market (e.g she bought the onions in addition to rice.)'
- c. malanj **mô-Ø**, mudaá a- bí- sómb **mô** yaaní *aboutness topic*
6.onions 6-TOP 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-buy 6.them 1.yesterday
'As for the *onions* (talking about them), the woman bought *them* in the market.'
- d. malanj **mô-Ø**, mudaá a- bí- sómb **mô** yaaní *contrastive topic*
6.onions 6-TOP 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-buy 6.them 1.yesterday
'As for the *onions* (e.g. as opposed to the mangoes), the woman bought *them* in the market.'

As the reader can see, the fronted focus in (51a) does not resume sentence internally as opposed to fronted topics which do (51b-d). What is striking about the above data is the fact that fronted foci and topics exhibit agreement morphology with gender-specific morphemes which left attach to an overt or a covert marker conveying focus and topic interpretations. The distribution and interpretation of focus and topic constructions are profoundly discussed in subsequent chapters. There are also two information structure-related constructions that affect word order in Basàá. These are wh-questions and evidential questions in sluicing constructions. While a fronted argument wh-phrase may exhibit morphological marking, such marking is compulsory in sluicing construction when the sluiced (the wh-phrase) is an argument or a referential adjunct as illustrated in the following examples in (52-53).

(52)

- a. **njéé** (**nyé-**) (***n**) a- ñ- sómb-ól báúdú makebla *subject wh-question*
1.who 1- FOC 1.SM-PST1-buy-BEN 2.students 6.presents
'Who bought the presents for the students?'
- b. **Malêt** *(**nyé-n**) a- ñ- sómb-ól bô makebla *subject focus*
1.teacher 1-FOC 1.SM-PST1-buy-BEN 2.them 6.presents
'The TEACHER bought them the presents.'

(53)

Mε n-nó Y lé **ŋgim** mut i- n- tagbé háná, mε n- téhé
 I PST-hear that 9.INDEF 1.man 9.SM-PST1-pass here I PST1-see
 bé mé **yɔ** ndí mε m- batbá lé tɔ́ njé nû
 NEG I.EMPH 9.him but I PRS-wonder that whether/if 1.who 1.EVID
 'I heard that someone passed here, I did not see him/her. But I wonder who.'
 Intended: 'I heard that someone passed here, I did not see him. But I wonder who it was.'

As the above examples show, a wh-word may be morphologically marked for agreement, but not for focus. So, in a case such as (51a), only the agreement class marker *nyé* 'noun class 1' is licensed while the focus marker is ruled out. This simply shows that in Basàá, contrary to what is attested in some languages like Tuki and Gungbe (Biloa 1992, 1995, 1997 2013; Aboh 2004, 2007, 2010), wh-items are not focus marked. This state of affairs in Basàá is not surprising under the assumption that wh-phrases are focused by inheritance. So, focus marking the wh-phrase *njéé* 'who' in (51a) will lead to a clash of focus features, and therefore, the sequence will crash. So, in a case such as (51a), we assume that the focus marker is implicit, and since the wh-item *njéé* 'who' bears in fact nominal features of noun class one in the Basàá noun class system, agreement morphology may be attested. Conversely, morpho-syntactic focus marking of the subject is compulsory in (51b). In this latter case, the focused subject *malêt* 'teacher' leaves its canonical position namely, the position before the subject marker *-a* and raises to a higher position behind the complex made up of the agreement marker *nyé-* and the subject marker *-n*. Finally, the construction in (53) denotes another instance of wh-fronting well known under the label sluicing since (Ross 1969) and subsequent works. In this construction, the wh-item *njé* 'who' in the indirect question *mε m-batbá lé tɔ́ njé nû* 'I wonder who' correlates with the bold-printed indefinite antecedent noun phrase *ŋgim mut* 'someone'. That the wh-item *njé* 'who' has been subject to movement behind the agreeing evidential morpheme *nû* is supported by the fact that in (54b) below, an in-situ wh-item does not license any evidential morpheme. A wh-item can rather co-occur only when the wh-item has been subject to movement as attested in (54b). This is taken into account below with (54a) as the baseline sentence.

(54)

a.

malêt a- m- bék **ŋúdú** íketé ndâp
 1.teacher 1.SM-PRS-beat 1.student inside 9.house
 'The teacher beats/is beating the/a student in the house.'

b.

Mé n- yí béké, tɔ́ malêt a- m- bék **njéé** (*nû) íketé ndâp
 I PRS-know NEG whether/if 1.teacher 1.SM-PRS-beat 1.who 1.EVID inside 9.house
 'I don't know who the teacher is beating in the house.'

c.

Mé n- yí bée, tɔ́ njéé nû malêt a- m- bék iketé ndâp
 I PRS-know NEG whether/if 1.who 1.EVID 1.teacher 1.SM-PRS-beat inside 9.house
 'I don't know who the teacher is beating in the house.'
 Lit: 'I don't know who is it that the teacher is beating in the house.'

Note that constructions such as (53) and (54c) above will be termed evidential questions by virtue of being uttered in the contexts whereby the speaker asking the question can witness the event that is going on visually or physically. For the specific case of (54c) for instance, it is true that the speaker can see the teacher beating someone, but s/he does not really know who.

Conclusion

The goal of this chapter was to provide the reader with background information on the genetic, geographical and grammatical aspects of Basàá. The discussion revealed that Basàá is a tone and noun class Bantu language with an SVO basic word order. Basàá is endowed with rich nominal and verbal systems. The nominal system exhibits a very rich agreement morphology while the verbal system is very complex as the language exhibits agglutinating morphemes that take place in the formation of the verbal frame. In addition to extensive verbal morphemes, tense, aspect and mood are in most cases also realized overtly and enrich the verbal system of the language. Tone is also significant in the language in that it participates in distinguishing whether a given tone is lexical, grammatical or syntactic. The clause structure of the language is very prolific as it can be made up of several functional elements including tense, aspect, negation, mood, agreement, focus, topic, evidentiality etc. All these notions shall be systematically handled in subsequent chapters as the work proceeds.

CHAPTER III
FOCUS REALIZATION AND INTERPRETATION

Introduction

The core issue of this chapter is to provide an overview of focus realization and interpretation in Basàá as a focus-drop, noun class, and tone language from a descriptive perspective, in order to familiarize the reader with data, the theoretical analysis of which will be provided in subsequent chapters. In this vein, some points discussed in the present chapter will be recalled later on in one way or another for an in-depth reflection on theoretical issues. This simply alerts the reader so that s/he should be prepared to face some points that would seem repetitive. Throughout the chapter, focus will be considered from a tripartite dimension. First of all, it will be considered as new, unfamiliar, non-presupposed (Basàá and intonation languages) or accented (intonation languages) information in the discourse setting, with a comment (Halliday 1967; Vallduví & Engdahl 1996 *inter alia*). Secondly, it will be considered as an expression which introduces alternatives, with other sentence constituents constituting background information (Rooth 1985; 1992; 1996). Thirdly, focus can be realized in scene-setting or existential contexts which are independent of question-answer pairs.

It is demonstrated that, like in many languages, information structure considerably affects word order in many respects in Basàá (Bassong 2010) and enables the language to share a good number of similarities with some African languages like Aghem (Hyman & Polinsky 2010), Bakóko (Bessala 2010), Gungbe (Aboh 2004a, 2007, 2011), Hausa (Hartmann & Zimmermann 2007), Kinande (Baker 2008), Mèdàmbà (Keupdjio (2011), Tuki (Biloa 1992, 1995, 1997, to appear), and some intonation languages like Hungarian (É .Kiss 1995, 1998, 2010), Czech and German (Fanselow & Lenertová 2011) in terms of word order changing. There are three main structural positions for focus in the language, namely the sentence initial position (known as the left periphery) which is the domain of agreement between the focused element and a gender-specific morphological marker. The canonical postverbal position (only in-situ non-subject foci occupy their canonical word order) which is associated with no grammatical marking at all. To the two positions cited is added the Immediately After Verb (IAV) position which is the landing site of some wh-questions, but does not license displaced foci. Subject focus i.e. a direct answer to a subject wh-question on the one hand is always marked morphologically and syntactically and is associated with an exhaustive presupposition. On the other hand, non-exhaustive subject focus in the sense of Abels & Muriungi (2008) does not undergo any grammatical marking at all. I make use of this test because it seems reliable although it is not widely known in the literature. Non-subject focus (here objects and adjuncts) can be realized in-

situ. At this position it can be associated with a non-exhaustive interpretation like its non-exhaustive subject focus counterpart. However, an in-situ non-subject constituent can also convey a contrastive reading in the presence of relevant alternatives in the discourse. Besides, non-subject focus can be realized in sentence initial position like its exhaustive subject focus counterpart. At this position, it is also obligatorily marked morphosyntactically. In this case, non-subject fronting may be associated with exhaustivity depending on the context. More concretely, ex-situ non-subject foci can be exhaustive in the presence of alternatives in the sense of Rooth (1985, 1992, & 1996). In the absence of relevant alternatives in the discourse, a non-exhaustive interpretation is obtained. V(P) focus can be realised in-situ or ex-situ and can convey either an exhaustive or a non-exhaustive interpretation. This simply means that contrastiveness and exhaustivity are not associated with a specific position in the Basáá (*contra* Bassong 2010, 2012a-b) clause structure like it is the case in Hungarian (É. Kiss 1998), rather, these notions are context-dependent

The chapter is structured as follows: §3.1 investigates subject focus in its exhaustive and non-exhaustive dimensions. Attention is also paid to the morpho-syntactic properties as well as some exhaustivity and non-exhaustivity tests which characterize subject focus as used in the literature. Also of interest is the fact that in Basáá, information focus, like its identificational counterpart, is also subject to movement in the pre-subject position (contrary to E.Kiss 1998's predictions on English, Hungarian and other languages). This follows from the fact that in subject focus (a direct answer to a wh-question) situations, the subject does not occupy its canonical position i.e. the position just before the subject marker. Furthermore, it is shown that the subject can be focus marked in all-focus (all-new) and narrative utterances. § 3.1.1 examines exhaustive subject and shows that it always carries exhaustive presupposition. § 3.1.2 examines non-exhaustive subject focus and shows that a non-exhaustive focus subject is felicitously interpreted in the context of a non-exhaustive subject question (Abels & Muriungi 2008). § 3.2 explores non-subject focus (NSF) and shows that NSF can be realised in-situ or ex-situ and is associated with a wide range of interpretations. In § 3.3, emphasis is laid on the Immediately After Verb (IAV) position; a very well-known position in the literature on information structure. The analysis reveals that the IAV in Basáá has two main properties namely; a prosodic property with no information structure effects and an information structure-related property. Prosodically, the immediate element on the right of the verb in Basáá in most cases bears a high tone on its first syllable. As for information structure-related properties, it is shown that some wh-phrases in

question formation must occur either at the IAV or in sentence initial position, but never in-situ. § 3.4 is concerned with focus particles namely the exclusive *ndígí* ‘only’, the negative particle *béé* ‘not’. Both particles always occur in the IAV. The account reveals that at the IAV, although both particles can have wide scope over an entire VP as well as a narrow scope over each of its internal VP constituents, only negation can scope over a preceding subject. Furthermore, they (focus particles) can associate with focus in sentence initial position with obligatory morphological focus marking. Sentential negation, which is always immediate to the verb, has no existential presupposition, it simply expresses denial of a previous discourse whereas constituent negation which always gives rise to a copula⁶ construction, carries an existential presupposition. It is shown that root clauses and in the IAV, a postverbal exclusive particle *ndígí* ‘only’ can associate with extracted non-subject elements but not with the subject. This state of affairs simply demonstrates that fronted non-subject elements reconstruct as opposed to the subject. This further runs counter to the *Principle of Lexical Association* (PLA) which requires that focus-sensitive particles be associated with their focus in their c-command domain (Aoun & Li 1993, Beaver & Clark 2008, Jackendoff 1972, Kayne 1998, Krifka 1992a, and Tancredi 1990). However, it is shown that, in embedded contexts, a fronted subject can successfully reconstruct in the presence of a low *ndígí* ‘only’, giving rise to a root/embedded asymmetry in the interaction between subject fronting and the exclusive *ndígí* ‘only’.

The section wraps up with a presentation of another focus-sensitive particle, namely the particle *-támá* which displays morphological agreement with its focus and functions sometimes like an adjective. This particle is called a ‘disambiguator’ by virtue of the disambiguating role it plays in relation to negative operator *béé* ‘not’ and the exclusive *ndígí* ‘only’. In other words, giving that sentences with the negative operator *béé* ‘not’ and the exclusive *ndígí* ‘only’ are always ambiguously interpreted, the presence of the particle *-támá* cancels ambiguity. Besides, there appears to be an animate/non-animate asymmetry in the distribution of the particle *-támá*. When associated with a focus with animate properties in a sentence, that sentence is

⁶From chapter four and as highlighted in chapter one, I will show that focus fronting in the language is triggered by syntactic requirements such as the focus-criterion and the EPP. In fact, focus fronting in Basaa involves a a copula non-cleft construction headed by a null verb element.

ambiguously interpreted while no resulting ambiguity arises when it is associated with a focus with non-animate properties.

In § 3.5, focus-drop and NP-shift are discussed. Focus-drop is attested in Basáá due to the rich agreement morphology that is attested in focus marking and the salience of a discourse referent, while NP-shift is attested in D-linked contexts. It is shown that NP-shift is sensitive to cardinality, displays a direct/indirect object asymmetry in double object constructions and conveys an exhaustive focus interpretation. Clearly put, in a double object construction, only a direct object NP with a cardinal modifier can undergo shifting. However, NP-shift is also attested in monotransitive construction if the head noun is modified by a numeral. § 3.6 deals with predicate focus (verb focus). It is shown that predicate focus can be realized in-situ or ex-situ and that the verb often undergoes doubling effects in some cases. In addition, verb fronting with doubling can be associated with (non) exhaustivity depending on whether alternatives are given or not. This is also due to the fact that predicate fronting with doubling is attested in all-focus contexts. Finally, parallelism is established between subject, object and predicate fronting by showing that all of them can front in all-focus utterances whereas adjunct fronting is not licensed in such contexts. A parallel between focus fronting in all-new contexts in Basáá and in German and Czech is established. It is indicated that focus fronting in all-new contexts is not a phenomenon which is specific to a given language as it is attested crosslinguistically. In conclusion, it is argued that focus fronting or what seems to be a subpart of focus fronting in all-new contexts in Basáá can be descriptively triggered by two factors, namely a pragmatic factor and a morpho-syntactic factor. It is the reason why it is provisionally⁷ claimed that even if focus fronting is an instance of subpart of focus fronting, this just boils down not only to pragmatical factors but also to syntactic ones. Pragmatically, only arguments and the predicate itself are allowed to front in ‘all-new’ contexts and related constructions because the most important in such cases is the event and not its time or location. As a result, only participants (arguments) and the verb are allowed to front. Syntactically, it will be briefly announced that focus fronting in ‘all-new’ contexts is a normal focus fronting mechanism which is triggered by the EPP(to be discussed at length in chapter four). The last section is the conclusion.

⁷ I will show later on in chapter four that what seems to be a subpart of focus fronting does not in fact occupy the focus field. I will demonstrate that the so-called subpart of focus fronting is simply superficial as the construction involves much more structure which pertains to the EPP and Focus-criterion.

3.1 Subject focus (SF)

In this section, I examine exhaustive and non-exhaustive subject focus marking. It will be shown that while the former is realized morphosyntactically, the latter, on the contrary, has no grammatical marking. Following Li & Thompson (1976), Fiedler et al (2010), it is assumed that focus marking of the subject is a strategy that helps one distinguish between the subject as the topic of the sentence and the focused subject in its non-canonical position. So in order to avoid a mismatch between the sentential topic and the focus, the subject has to occupy another position with a special marking that distinguishes it from a sentence topic. As for the non-exhaustive subject focus, I will make use of Abels & Muriungi's (2008) test to assess the Basaá data. To close off the section on subject focus it will be shown that the subject can be focus marked in all-focus and scene-setting contexts in Basaá. This state of affairs establishes a parallel between accented subjects in English, and German and clefted subjects in French all-focus situations as discussed in Sasse (1987). In addition, the account will show that from a descriptive and pragmatic point of view, the tendency of focus marking the subject on the one hand is due to the speaker's intention to make the subject salient. On the other hand, this is due to the fact that focus fronting seems to be the mostly preferred strategy in the language for morpho-syntactic reasons in such a way that focus is highly inclined to showing up overtly by morphological agreement marking. Below, I discuss exhaustive subject focus and later on, emphasis will be laid on non-exhaustive subject focus.

3.1.1 Exhaustive Subject focus

Subject focus in Basaá conveys an exhaustive presupposition even if the context does not seem to require it. The first evidence comes from the morphology of question words. The morphology of the latter signals exhaustivity of the question. In the question under discussion (QUD) below, the speaker makes use of a specific morphology to indicate the kind of presupposition s/he has in mind.

- (1) Q: Njéé a- bí- sómb bíkaat yaaní
 1.who 1.SM-PST2-buy 8.books 1.yesterday
 ‘Who bought the books yesterday?’
- A1: **maangé nyé-n** a- bí- sómb bíkaat yààní
 1.child 1-FOC 1.SM- PST2-buy 8.books yesterday
 ‘The CHILD bought books yesterday.’
- A2: #**maangé** a- bí- sómb bíkaat yààní
 1.child 1.SM-PST2- buy 8.books yesterday
 ‘The child bought books yesterday.’

One can realize from the morphology of the question word that the answer to the question should be singular and that is why *njéé* ‘who’, which is marked for class 1, a noun class that encodes singularity in Basaá, must match with an answer having a singular subject. By so doing, (1A1) is felicitously interpreted. Sentence (1A2), on the contrary, can never be felicitous as an answer to a subject wh-question because it is not marked. All the same, if the question word is marked for plurality, then the focused subject may be plural.

(2) Q: **bɔ-njéé** bá- bí- sómb bíkaat yaaní

2-who 2.SM-PST2-buy 8.books 1.yesterday

‘Who bought the books yesterday?’ Lit: ‘The who (plural) bought the books yesterday?’

A1: **bɔ-Ewas** **bɔ-n** bá- bí- sómb bíkaat yaaní

2-Ewas 2-FOC 2.SM- PST2-buy 8.books 1.yesterday

‘EWAS and the OTHERS (literally: *the EWAS) bought books yesterday.’

A2: #**bɔ.Ewas** bá- bí- sómb bíkaat yàaní

2.Ewas 2.SM- PST2-buy 8.books yesterday

Intended: ‘Ewas and someone else/the others bought the books yesterday.’ Literally: The Ewas (i.e; Ewas and someone else/other people) bought the books yesterday.’

So far, the presupposition is that ‘someone bought the books yesterday’ (1A1) or ‘some people bought the books yesterday’ (2A1) and for this reason, both answers (1A2 and 2A2) are unacceptable because they cannot be appropriate in the context of subject-questions. However, it is important to note that there is no one-to-one relationship between the morphology of question words and the subject focus. Put differently, it is not always the case that the question in (1) must only have as an appropriate answer (1A1) or that the question in (2) must only have an appropriate answer (2A1). For instance, the question in (1) can be felicitously answered by (2A1) and (2Q) can be felicitously answered by (1A1). The only condition is that the exhaustive interpretation must be maintained. Still in relation to the question in (2) above, one can observe that sentence (3A3) below with a conjoined subject namely *Ewas ni Hiol* ‘Ewas and Hiol’ and sentence (3A4) with a conjoined subject including ‘*Ewas, Hiol and the others*’ are felicitously interpreted. The plurality marker *bɔ*⁸- (class 2) can literally be translated as ‘the’ in English or ‘les’ in French to show that the element it is associated with is plural. This is clearly shown on the question word *bɔ-njéé* ‘who’ *the who’ in English and ‘Qui’ ‘les qui’ in French.

⁸ Note that this is functional morpheme which has no independent meaning. It simply encodes plurality when associated with a singular noun or singular nouns which form a group

- (3) A3: **Ewas ni Hiol bɔ́-n** bá- bí- sómb bíkaat yààní
 1. Ewas and 1.Hiol 2-FOC 2.SM- PST2-buy 8.books yesterday
 'EWAS and HIOL bought the books yesterday.'

- A4: **Ewas ni bɔ́-Hiol bɔ́-n** bá- bí- sómb bíkaat yààní
 1.Ewas and 2-Hiol 2-FOC 2.SM- PST2-buy 8.books yesterday
 'EWAS and HIOL / Hiol including other people bought the books yesterday'

The morphem *bɔ́-* has no other meaning than expressing plurality and more precisely plurality of noun class 2. Recall also that it is not an article at all (Basaá has no articles). The idea behind subject focus here is that by asking a question the hearer expects an exhaustive answer and nothing else because s/he presupposes that 'someone X bought the books'. The illicit answers in both (1A2 & 2A2) without focus marking on the subject can only be felicitous in all-focus/all-new contexts, in VP-focus or in topic list (continuation topics) situations for instance. As it has been shown that subject focus must be marked, evidence in support of the exhaustivity of subject focus in Basaá are provided. To this end, I shall resort to some well-known tests used in the literature about focus realization and interpretation, namely those provided in (E. Kiss 1998; Szabolcsi 1981; among others).

In a context like (4) below, the speaker is looking for information about 'the person/s who received the presents'. Note that (4A1) provides an answer in which the conjoined subject 'Tonye and Ntogue' perform the action denoted by the verb *kosna* 'receive'. As predicted, the whole conjoined subject is marked for class and number (in this case class 2/plural) because it is a direct answer to a question that indicates subject focus.

That the utterance with a conjoined marked subject *Tonyé ni Ntɔ́ge bɔ́-n bá-bí-kosná mákebla nɔ́máa* 'TONYE and NTOGUE received the presents yesterday' in (4A1) is exhaustive is shown by the fact that it can be felicitously denied by a statement such as '*tɔ*, *Tonyé nyé-n a-bí-kosná mákebla nɔ́máa* 'No, TONYE (not both *Tonye* and *Ntogue*) received the presents'. All the same, one can see that (4A2) with the marked subject *Tonyé nyé-n a-bí-kosná mákebla nɔ́máa* 'TONYE received the presents two days ago', because of its exhaustive interpretation, cannot be felicitously followed by *jyj! yak Ntɔ́ge a- bí-kosná mákebla nɔ́máa* 'yes! *Ntogue* also received the presents two days ago'. Again, one can see in (4A2) that when a conjunct is

dropped, agreement morphology on the focus marker must automatically change from *bá-* (class2) to *nyé-* (class1).

- (4) a. Q: njéé a- bí- kosná mákebla nɔɔmáa
 1.who 1.SM-PST2-receive 6.presents 1. two days ago
 ‘Who received the presents two days ago?’

- A1: **Tonyé ni Ntóoge *(bá-n)** bá- bí- kosná mákebla nɔɔmáa
 1.T and 1.N. 2-FOC 2.SM-PST2-receive 6.presents 1.two days ago
 ‘TONYE and NTOGUE received the presents two days ago.’
 ...tɔ, **Tonyé nyé-n** a- bí- kosná mákebla nɔɔmáa
 no 1.T 1-FOC 1.SM-PST2-receive 6.presents 1.two days ago
 ‘...No! TONYE (not both of them) received the presents two days ago.’
- A2: **Tonyé *(nyé-n)** a- bí- kosná mákebla nɔɔmáa
 1.T 1-FOC 1.SM-PST2-receive 6.presents 1.two days ago
 ‘(Only) TONYE received the presents two days ago.’
 *íŋŋ! yak **Ntóoge a- bí- kosná mákebla nɔɔmáa**
 yes also 1.N. 1.SM-PST2-receive 6.presents 1.two days ago
 ‘Yes! Ntogue also received the presents two days ago’
- A3: * **Tonyé *bá-n** a- bí- kosná mákebla nɔɔmáa
 1.T 2-FOC 1.SM-PST2-receive 6.presents 1.two days ago

It becomes clear from agreement morphology that one conjunct cannot fulfil the function of a conjoined subject. Consequently, (4A3) is ruled out because the focused subject *Tonyé* is marked as class 1 whereas agreement morphology on the focus marker is class 2. A major point to make here is that both (4A1 &A2) cannot be true at the same time, that is, if one of them is true, the other one must be false and vice versa. So sentence (4A2) cannot be among the logical consequences of (4A1). Rather, both contradict each other. One can thus realize that from a statement like (4A1), sentence (4A2) cannot be inferred, and as a result, this indicates exhaustivity. In concrete terms, (4A1) is true if and only if the only persons that bought the presents are *Tonye* and *Ntogue* neither less nor more than both of them. All the same, (4A2) is true if the only person who bought the presents is *Tonye* and nobody else. In the same vein, a contrastive focus subject is always marked, as can be seen below.

(5)

- Q: **Njéé a- bí- sómb bíkaat yààní, malêt, hingonda tolé maangé**
 1.who 1.SM-PST2-buy 8.books 1.yesterday 1.teacher 19.girl or 1.child
 ‘Who bought the books yesterday, the teacher, the girl or the child?’
- A1: **maangé nyé-n a- bí- sómb bíkaat yààní**
 1.child 1-FOC 1.SM- PST2-buy 8.books yesterday
 ‘THE CHILD bought the books yesterdays.’

A2: #maangé a- bí sómb bíkaat yààní
 1.child 1.SM-PST2- buy 8.books yesterday
 ‘The child bought the books yesterday.’

The context in (5) is an instance of contrastive focus or alternative focus in Rooth's (1985, 1992, 1996) terms (see also Rochemont 1986). Here the relevant alternatives include *malêt* ‘the teacher’, *hingonda* ‘the girl’ and *maangé* ‘the child’. The only answer for which the proposition is true is (5A1) as opposed to (5A2) which can only be felicitous in other contexts such as all-focus, VP-focus , object focus etc. but not in contrastive focus situations. So, one can see that the truth condition of (5A1) is such that focus is associated with contrastive information. This state of affairs shows that focus is not necessarily associated with new information as defended by a number of authors including Halliday (1967), Jackendoff (1972), Sgall & al. (1987) etc. It is true that the context appears to be a reliable factor in determining what is really under focus and what is not. The question under discussion in (5) highlights three possible choices that are shared by both the speaker and hearer i.e.; either ‘the teacher, the girl or the child bought the books’. So the information in this context is shared, but only the proposition or subset ‘*the CHILD* (as opposed to any other possible member of the set) *bought the books*’ is more specific by conveying an exhaustive interpretation à la É. Kiss (1998). By so doing, the subset ‘*the CHILD*’ is contrasted with all other possible subsets listed, namely ‘*the teacher and the girl*’. We can assume that the maximal set here includes all the three values namely [*teacher, girl* and *child*]. This maximal set can in turn be divided into different subsets notably [*teacher, girl*], [*teacher, child*], [*girl, child*], [*teacher*], [*girl*] and [*child*]. The identification of a relevant subset among the seven ones entails the exclusion of the others in such a way that no additional subset can be selected for the truth condition of the proposition. Therefore, the only answer for which the proposition holds true is that ‘*the CHILD (and nobody else) bought the books*’.

Another interesting issue about subject marking is that it can occur in all-new contexts, i.e. even if the subject is not the information peak (Sasse 1987) of the question under discussion or even if the subject is not at issue. So, it can happen that for some reasons, the speaker makes the subject of predication salient as in the following context.

(6) **Context:** *Tonye chases his lady-friend away from the class room because she disturbs him. His lady friend goes and complains to the headmaster who asks her in turn to go back to the class room.*

Q: Tonye: What's the problem?

A1: malêt nyé-n a- ñ- kâl lé mé l5
 1.teacher 1-FOC 1.SM-PST1-say that 1.SG. SUBJ.come

‘The TEACHER asked me to come’

- A2: malêt a- ïj- kâl lé mé lâ
 1.teacher 1.SM-PST1-say that 1.SG. SUBJ.come
 ‘THE TEACHER ASKED ME TO COME.’

The context clearly reveals that the first answer in (6A1) is all-new information as the related question under discussion does not mention any additional information (e.g. a set of alternatives). There are no alternatives into play that enable one to make a choice between possible subsets. In addition, the speaker’s intention does not extend to any other possible choice except for the information looked for, notably ‘*What is the problem?*’. Captured that way, it becomes obvious that the receiver’s answer does not involve any contrast and remains a mere information focus with subject fronting. Sentence (6A2) is also felicitous as an answer that indicates all-new focus. Indeed, (6A2) is the most expected answer in this context with focus on the whole sentence. So it is a mere information focus whose target is the whole clause. What is interesting is that both (6A1-A2) can be uttered when the speaker wants to make the subject more salient for different purposes, for instance s/he may want to convince the hearer about the authority of the teacher so that his/her statement/answer should not be defied. So, under this perception, both sentences have the same pragmatic effects. For instance whether (6A1) or (6A2) is uttered, the speaker (here the subject *Tonye*) may not easily defy it by ‘chasing his lady-friend away once more’.

Focus fronting is also attested in narrative or scene-setting contexts and when the speaker wants to express existential information. These are taken in turn below:

- (7) nló wem nyé-n a- bí- lôy mæ. booy bës dí kë-n-êy
 1.husband 1.my 1-FOC 1.SM-PST2-deceive me let go.SUBJ us we go-EPTH.SUBJ
 í simmá. Kikií pro a- m- pâm, pro a-kóþá mímbøy më,
 LOC 9.movie as pro 1.SM-ASP-arrive pro 1.SM-find 4.girlfriends 4.his
 pro a- tñó më, pro a- kähá-kë
 pro 1.SM-abandon me pro 1.SM-ASP-go

Lit: ‘My HUSBAND deceived me. Let go to the movie. As he arrived and found his girlfriends, he abandoned me and left’. Intended: ‘My HUSBAND took me to the movie, and when he met with his girlfriends, he abandoned me and joined them’

- (8) A1: A lögá, mam má yé láâ
 VOC 1.guy 6.things 6.SM-be.PRS how
 Lit: “Ma/guy, how are things?”

- B: Më kâl láá wé a mut wem, ñwa wêm a ke-é
 I tell.SUBJ 9.what/how you.2SG VOC 1.man 1.my 1.wife 1.my 1.SM-leave-PST
 yaaní
 1.yesterday
 Lit; ‘What can I tell you guy? My wife left yesterday.’

A2: A mût wem, u ledek, **ŋgim mut jɔ́-n** i- kăl
 VOC 1.man 1.my you.2SG strengthen.SUBJ 9.INDF 1.person 9-FOC 1.SM-tell.PST
 lé íbálé, u ní- jép, bot bó-básó bá- ij- ke wé ŋgwéé
 that if you.2.SG PRS-be poor 2.people 2.PRN-all 2.SM-PRS-go you.2SG 3.race
 Lit: ‘My man, you should be strong, SOMEONE say that if you are a poor man,
 everybody abandons you.’

The above contexts are instances of narrative stories without any question-answer pair. The first one is in fact an excerpt of one of the most popular Basaá songs known under the label Assiko. It shows that focus fronting in Basaá is not always associated with semantic factors such as exhaustivity or contrastiveness. The same phenomenon is attested in (8) which is an instance of narrative story. In this case, the subject of the sentence *ŋgim-mut* ‘somebody’ is morphosyntactically focus marked. These two contexts seem to indicate that focus fronting is in fact part of the Basaá grammar and is encoded in the *CHL* system of the native speaker in such a way that it does only depend on the sole semantic criteria.

At this juncture, it can be provisionally argued that subject fronting in new utterances can be dependent on pragmatic factors, i.e. drawing the hearer’s intention on the subject by making it more salient. But it is also plausible to think that subject fronting is constrained by morpho-syntactic that is, subject fronting takes place in order to satisfy agreement morphology and focus requirements (to be discussed at length in chapters four, five & six and nine). We will further discuss fronting in all-focus contexts as the discussion unfolds.

That the subject can be focus marked in all-new contexts is not specific to Basaá as this is also attested in Kîtharaka (Abels & Muriungi 2008). The authors argue that ‘subjects may also bear FOC. FOC-marked subjects are appropriate in answers to wh-questions and in all-new contexts’, as illustrated by the following data from Kîtharaka:

(9) Q1: **N-ûú** a gûr- ir- e ì-buku
 FOC-who 1.SM-buy-PERF-FV 5-book
 ‘Who bought the book?’

Q2: **I-mbi** ì-rî na thîna
 FOC-what 9-be with 9.problem
 ‘What’s the problem?’

A: **I- Maria** a gûr- ir- e ì-buku
 FOC- 1.Maria 1.SM-buy-PERF-FV 5-book
 ‘Maria bought a book’

The contexts in (9) clearly show that the subject can be appropriately marked in all-focus situations and that is why both Q1 (subject focus) and Q2 (all-new) can be answered by (A) where the subject *Maria* is focus marked. It has been shown in other languages that accentuation

of the subject is possible in all-new contexts. For example, Sasse (1987), by establishing the difference between *thetic* and *categorical* statements, shows that for discourse-pragmatic reasons a subject can be accented as exemplified in the English examples below.

- (10) a. MAry is SINGing
 b. THE SHIP SANK
 c. The BRItish are coming

Quoting Chafe (1974), Sasse shows that different intonation patterns are possible for statements consisting of a grammatical subject and a grammatical predicate in all-new contexts. In (10), one can see that either the subject and the predicate can be accented as in (10b) (accentuation is shown by CAPITALS), the whole sentence as in (10b), or only the subject (10c). One can establish a parallel between the Basaá sentence in (6A1) above, the Kîtharaka case in (9A) above and the English ones in (10c) where the subject is marked in all-focus sentences. The Basaá sentence in (6A2) and the English sentence (10b) are the same in the sense that the most expected answer is the one in which the whole sentence is focused. The same phenomenon is attested in all-focus in French where the subject can be made salient in a form of a cleft as indicated in Sasse (1987:538) and repeated in (11).

- (11) a. Q: Qu'est-ce qu'il ya? A : C'est maman qui me bat.
 Q': 'What's the matter?' A': Mum's hitting me.'
 b. Q: ça ne va pas? A : ... C'est ma mère qui est morte.
 Q': Isn't that all right? A: ... My mother has died.'

Note that the answers provided in the French statements above behave exactly like cleft constructions. For instance, the answer '*C'est maman qui me bat*' can be translated as 'it is Mum who is hitting me' and '*C'est ma mère qui est morte*' can be translated as 'It is my mother who has died' although English clefting cannot be appropriate in all-new contexts (in fact, English uses accentuation on the subject instead of a cleft in all-new context). Following Sasse's analysis of *thetic* and *categorical* statements, it is assumed that sentences with marked or accented subjects lack predication (in all-new utterances). Such sentences contain no background information to which a given entity can be associated. Such sentences are not accommodated in the sense that they are devoid of any background information. Everything is new, and the speaker simply gives an account of a situation or an event. For one reason or another, part of new information can be marked morphosyntactically (Basaá) prosodically (English) or syntactically (French). Recall that in (6) above, the subject does not occupy its canonical position, namely the position behind the subject marker. It is moved from its canonical position to the focus position

where it directly precedes the focus marker (see also Aboh & al 2007; Fiedler & al. 2010 for subject focus in African languages). So far, we can say that subject marking is due for salience considerations: the speaker's intention to draw the addressee's attention on the subject. Another point which seems to be relevant and widely shared in the literature is that the category of focus is a grammatical device as it can be acknowledged. This category can be manifested in one way or another cross-linguistically, on the condition that it fits a given context. Subject fronting in Basaá and clefting in French simply attest how far a given language can express focus. Last but not least, it comes out that Basaá focus displays a high tendency to being 'externalized' i.e. being visibly marked by moving out of the 'shell' (out of its canonical position) for morpho-syntactic requirements, namely agreement and focus requirements as it will be developed in chapter four. By 'moving out of the shell' I simply mean extracting the subject from a whole sentential focus to a position out of the main clause.

The fact that subject focus must be marked is not only a Basaá-related property as already shown in (9) for Kîtharaka. A good number of African languages have been claimed to exhibit the same properties. The following examples from Fiedler & al (2010:245-246) show the behaviour of subject focus in other African languages. First of all, as the data in (12) show, focus marking of the subject is obligatory and the focus marker is right adjacent to the focused subject in Fɔn as it is in Basàá. As argued by the authors, where FOC is not realized the construction simply denotes a simple sentential focus reading or a 'neutral' sentence. The grammatical marking seems to be the common denominator among all languages in (12-14) although it depends on whether one has to do with a morphological or a syntactic realization of the focused constituent.

(12) Fɔn (Kwa, Gbe).

Q: Who ate the beans?	SF:
A: nyònú ɔ * (wè) dù àyìkún woman DEF FM eat beans 'The WOMAN ate the beans.'	obligatory FM wè

(13) Buli (Gur, Oti-Volta, Buli-Kɔnni) SF: optional FM ká,

Q: Who ate the beans?	
A: (ká) Mary àlē ñòbí. (FM) Mary LE ¹² EAT.Ass 'MARY ate them'.	morpheme lē, verb ₁

- (14) Bole (West Chadic) SF: inversion+particle *yé*

Q: Who is planting the millet?
 A: (An) jìi kàppà mòrdó *(yé) Léngì
 (one) IPF planting millet PRT Lengi
 ‘LENGI is planting the millet’

- (15) Basaá

Q: njéé a- bí- nôl ñgwó
 1.who 1.SM-PST2-kill 9.dog
 ‘Who killed the dog?’
 A: hilógá hyó-n hí- bí- nôl ñgwó
 19.boy 19-FOC 19.SM-PST2-kill 9.dog
 ‘The BOY killed the snake.’

Morphologically, Føn, Buli, Bole and Basaá pattern alike in that they exhibit a morphological marking: *wé* for Føn (10), *ká* (optional) and *àlē* for Buli (13), *yé* for Bole (14) and *hyó-n* for Basàá (15). Again, it can be realized that all these languages undergo syntactic focus marking, in the sense that the subject in each case does not occupy its canonical position. This syntactic marking can take place to pre-subject position (the left periphery) (Føn, Buli and Bassá) or to the right (apparently) by subject inversion (Bole). In Basàá the focus marker cannot precede the focused constituent as it is the case in Buli (16A1). The Basaá language rules out any placement of FOC at the end of the sentence as illustrated in the ungrammatical sentence in (16A2) below.

- (16) Q: njéé a- bí- tí wé màkúbé
 1.who 1.SM-PST2-give you 6.bananas
 ‘Who gave you the bananas?’

A1: *jó-n liwanda jém lí- bí- tí mé màkúbé
 5-FOC 5.friend 1.SG.POSS 5.SM-PST2- give- me 6.bananas
 A2: *liwanda jém lí- bí- tí mé màkúbé *jó-n
 5. friend 1.SG.POSS 5.SM-PST2-give- me 6.bananas 5-FOC

Summarizing, the outcomes show that a direct answer to a content subject question in Basàá is always associated with an exhaustive reading and is morpho-syntactically marked. In all-new contexts, when the speaker wants to highlight the subject, this latter can also be morpho-syntactically marked. In the following section, we show that a direct answer to a non-exhaustive subject question is not morpho-syntactically marked.

3.1.2 Non-exhaustive subject focus

Hitherto, we have shown that subject focus (SF) is syntactically and morphologically marked and that it carries an exhaustive presupposition. This is due to the fact that a wh-question

indicating focus on the subject in Basaá can morphologically signals that the expected answer should be exhaustive and that the presupposition behind the focused subject is such that ‘some person X at a given moment did something Y’. In this section, it will be shown that SF focus can also be realized in-situ where it correlates with non-exhaustivity. In this case, subject focus is not a direct answer to a wh-question. Our analysis is couched in Abels & Muriungi (2008:706). In their analysis of Kñítharaka, the authors provide the following example in (17) with a preverbal focus marking. They claim that this sentence conveys a wide range of interpretations, namely sentence focus, VP-focus, non-exhaustive object focus and non-exhaustive subject focus. In addition, they argue that it may also convey a verum focus reading (focus based on the truth value of an event). Furthermore, they argue that (17) is not a felicitous answer to a subject wh-question (cf. Abels & Muriungi 2008:706 for further illustrations on the different interpretations associated with (17)). As can be seen below, only (18Q1) is an appropriate question to (17) while (18Q2) is infelicitous.

- (17) Maria n- a- gûr- ir- e î-buku
 1.Maria FOC 1.SM-buy-PERF-FV 5-book
 ‘Maria bought a book’
- (18) Q1: Kû-rî mu- ntû a- gûr- ir- e î-buku
 17-be 1-person 1.SM-buy-PERF-FV 5-book
 ‘Is there anybody who bought a book?’
- Q2: * N-ûû a gûr- ir- e î-buku
 FOC-who 1.SM-buy-PERF-FV 5-book
 ‘Who bought the book?’

In fact, as it is demonstrated by Abels & Muriungi, when the subject is marked exhaustively it is preceded by the focus marker like in (19) below (see also ex. 10).

- (19) Q: N-ûû a gûr- ir- e î-buku
 FOC-who 1.SM-buy-PERF-FV 5-book
 ‘Who bought the book?’
- A: I- **Maria** a gûr- ir- e î-buku
 FOC- 1.Maria 1.SM-buy-PERF-FV 5-book
 ‘Maria bought a book’

It is true that a question like (18Q1) provided by Abels & Muriungi is a yes-no question, but in addition to that, the speaker, by answering such a question, can make use of a statement like ‘yes, Maria bought a book’ with a non-exhaustive interpretation as it is the case in (17) without focus marking on the subject, or certainly by ‘no! nobody bought a book’ with an exhaustive interpretation. As the authors themselves argue, a question such as ‘Did anybody buy sweets?’ may give rise to the answer ‘Yes, Maria bought sweets.’ with a preverbal FOC that indicates

non-exhaustivity in Kîîtharaka. They even establish a parallel between Kîîtharaka and English by mentioning that even in the latter language, such a situation is possible. Either way, they argue that as an answer to ‘Did anybody buy sweets?’, the subject is stressed in English, and that is an indication of focus on the subject and not on the whole sentence i.e. in all-new contexts’. Following Abels & Muriungi’s footsteps, I will examine non-exhaustive subject focus in in the context of yes-no questions⁹ Basáá and show that like in Kîîtharaka, a non-exhaustive subject focus has no marking at all.

First of all, it is important to note that a non-exhaustive subject focus is only compatible with a question that carries a non-exhaustive presupposition. For instance, in (20) below, it is shown that a polar question with a non-exhaustive presupposition is felicitously answered without focus marking on the subject. In light of (20), an answer with a non-exhaustive interpretation on the subject can be felicitously followed up by a ‘what else’ question which in turn can be followed by an additive statement introduced by the additive focus-sensitive particle *yak* ‘also/too’.

- (20) Q: *ŋgim mut i ñ- jówá bíseyá a*
 9.INDEF 1.person 9.SM- PTS1-wash 8.plates Pol
 ‘Did anybody wash the plates?’

- A1: *ŋjí maanjé a- n- jówá bíseyá*
 yes 1.child 1.SM- PTS1-wash 8.plates
 ‘Yes the CHILD washed the plates’
...ndí yak Ntɔ̄ge a- ñ- jówá gw̄
 ...but also 1.Ntogue 1.SM-PST1-wash 8.them
 ‘But **Ntogue** washed them (plates) **too**.’

The fact that the answer *ŋjí maanjé a-n-jówá bíseyá* ‘yes the CHILD washed the plates’ in (20A1) can be felicitously followed by an additive statement or additional information such as *ndí yak Ntɔ̄ge a-ñ-jówá gw̄* ‘but Ntogue washed them too’ clearly shows that the former is non-exhaustive since it does not provide maximal information on the people who washed the plates. In other words, (20A1) does not exhaust ‘all the persons who washed the plates’. Until now, it has been shown that a subject wh-question is morphosyntactically marked and it carries an exhaustive presupposition while a non-exhaustive subject focus has no marking at all and is felicitously interpreted in non-exhaustive subject contexts.

Another interesting thing to mention is that under certain circumstances, a non-exhaustive subject question can be answered exhaustively, i.e. by being morpho-syntactically marked. This is possible if and only if relevant alternatives are presupposed in the speaker’s or addressee’s

⁹ Polar questions/yes-no questions are glossed as Pol in the whole thesis

mind. In this case, it is assumed that the speaker/addressee knows everything about the event/situation and as a result, s/he provides an exhaustive answer to which further information cannot be added. The context in (21) is a case in point. The context shows that the question under discussion can be answered non-exhaustively i.e. without any marking on the subject. The answer in (A2) shows that a polar question with a non-exhaustive presupposition such as (21Q) can be felicitously answered exhaustively but without a polarity item (here *ŋjy* ‘yes’). So, the answer in (A2) simply shows that the speaker knows everything about ‘the person who can read the letter’. In this vein, s/he provides an exhaustive answer by making it explicit that ‘nobody else can read the letter’.

(21) *Context: People are watching TV and then a neighbour comes with a letter. The letter is written in English and the neighbour is not good at English.*

Q: sohnáná a bósóŋgé, ngim mut i n̄- la éŋ-él m̄é
 please.2PL VOC 2.children 9.INDEF 1.person 9.SM-PRS-can read-BEN me
 í kaat iní i
 DEF 7.book DEM.PROX Pol
 ‘Please my children, can anybody read this letter for me?’

A1: *ŋjy Ewas a- n̄- la éŋ-él wé yo, yak Hisl a- n̄- la*
 yes 1.Ewas 1.SM-PRS-can read-BEN you 1.it also 1.Hiol 1.SM-PRS-can
 ‘Yes, EWAS can read it for you, HIOL can read it too’

A2:(**ŋjy*) **Ewas nyé-n** a- n̄- la éŋ-él wé yo,
 yes 1.Ewas 1-FOC 1.SM-PRS-can read-BEN you 7.it
 mut númpé a- n̄-la béeé éŋ-él wé yo
 1.person 1.another 1.SM-PRS-can NEG read-BEN you 7.it
 Lit: ‘Yes, EWAS can read it for you, nobody else can read it’

The only way (21A2) can be rescued is by making explicit the exhaustivity in the question under discussion question. Put differently, one can appropriately interpret (21A2) with the polarity item if and only if the subject is exhaustively stated in the content question by morpho-syntactic marking as illustrated in (22) below.

(22) Q: **Ewas nyé-n** a- n̄- la éŋ-él m̄é kaat ε
 1.Ewas 1-FOC 1.SM-PRS-can read-BEN me 7.letter Pol
 ‘Can EWAS read the letter for me/ Is it EWAS who can read the letter for me?’

A: **(ŋjy) Ewas *(nyé-n)* a- n̄- lá éŋ-él wé yo
 yes 1.Ewas 1-FOC 1.SM-PRS-can read-BEN you 7.it
 ‘Yes, EWAS can read it for you.’

As can be seen in (22), when a polar question contains an exhaustive subject focus, the matching answer must also be exhaustive. This can be explained by the fact that exhaustive focus marking on the subject is obligatory. Similarly, a polar question always requires a polar answer, so that if

the polarity item *ŋj* ‘yes’ is dropped, the sentence becomes illicit. Summarizing, we postulate that (22) can be better accounted for in terms of Zubizaretta’s (1998) ordered Assertion Structure (AS) quoted in Aboh (2010:17) in the following terms:

‘In the case of question-answer pairs, the presupposition provided by the context question is part of the AS [...] The focus-presupposition structure of such statements is represented in terms of two ordered assertions. The first assertion (A1) is the existential presupposition provided by the context question. The second assertion (A2) is an equative relation between a definite variable (the restriction of which is the presupposition provided by the context question and a value).’

With the (AS) in mind, it is straightforwardly understood why in (22) the only appropriate answer is the one in which both the polarity item and the focus marker occur in the sentence. In the spirit of Zubizaretta’s assertion structure, if the polarity item is dropped, the answer will not match the question insofar as the answer will be rather appropriate with a subject wh-question (e.g. who can read the letter for me?’), giving rise to a question-answer mismatch or incongruence. In the same vein, if the focus marker is dropped, the answer will be infelicitous because it will not match the question under discussion which basically contains an exhaustive subject focus. With these predictions in mind, it becomes obvious that AS is on the one hand respected in (22), but violated in (21A2) on the other hand because the answer provided in the latter case is exhaustive and does not match the question under discussion which conversely carries no exhaustive presupposition.

3.2 Non-subject focus

In Basàá, like in many languages, non-subject focus (NSF) can be realized either in-situ i.e. postverbally where it can correlate with non-exhaustivity and/or contrastiness, or ex-situ where it is syntactically and morphologically marked. In its preverbal position, NSF may correlate with an exhaustive¹⁰ interpretation in the presence of relevant alternatives in the discourse. Like subject focus, NSF has no prosodic effects in Basaá. In the following examples, the sentences in A indicate in-situ foci whereas those in B show that a follow-up of A is possible. Conversely, the sentences in A’ (A-prime) indicate ex-situ foci with a contrastive reading and the B’ (B-prime) ones show that a follow-up of A’ is not possible. In (23), we have instances of indirect object foci while (24) is an instance of adjunct foci.

¹⁰ cf. Abels & Muriungi 2008 for preverbal focus and non-exhaustivity in Kîtharaka and E. Kiss 1998, 2009 *inter alia* for the preverbal focus and exhaustivity in Hungarian

- (23) Q: **Njéé** baken bá- bí- lɔ- ná mákebla yaaní
 1.who 2.guests 2.SM-PST2-come-BEN 6.presents 1.yesterday
 ‘To whom did the guests bring the presents yesterday?’

- A: baken bá- bí- lɔ- ná **mááŋgé** makebla
 2.guests 2.SM-PST2-come-BEN 1.child 6.presents
 ‘The guests brought the presents to the CHILD.’
- B: hálá a- ye malíYá, ndí yak **nsánj** bá- bí- lɔ- ná
 1.that 1.SM-be 6.truth but also 1.father.3.SG.POSS 2.SM-PST2.come-BEN
nyé makebla
 1.him 6.presents
 ‘That’s right, but they also brought the presents to his FATHER.’
- A': **mááŋgé nyé-n** baken bá- bí- lɔ- ná mákebla
 1.child 1-FOC 2.guests 2.SM-PST2-come-BEN 6.presents
 ‘The guests brought the presents to the CHILD (not to his father).’
- B': *hálá a ye malígá, ndi yak **nsánj** bá- bí- lɔ- ná
 1.that 1.SM-be 6.truth but also 1.father.3.SG.POSS 2.SM-PST2-come-BEN
nyé makebla
 1.him 6.presents
 ‘That’s right, but they also brought the presents to his FATHER.’

- (24) Q: **Kélkíi** baken bá- bí- lɔ- ná **mááŋgé** makebla
 1.when 2.guests 2.SM-PST2- come-BEN 1.child 6.presents
 ‘**When** did the guests bring the presents to the child?’
- A: baken bá- bí- lɔ- ná **mááŋgé** makebla **yaaní**
 2.guests 2.SM-PST2- come-BEN 1.child 6.presents 1.yesterday
 ‘The guests brought the presents to the child YESTERDAY’
- B: hálá a ye malígá, ndi yak **nɔɔmáa** bá- bí- lɔ- ná nyé...
 1.that 1.SM-be 6.truth but also 1.two days ago 2.SM-PST2-come-BEN 1.him
 ‘That’s true, but they also brought him the presents TWO DAYS AGO’
- A': **yaaní nyé-n** baken bá- bí- lɔ- ná **mááŋgé** makebla
 1.yesterday 1-FOC 2.guests 2.SM-PST2-come-BEN 1.child 6.presents
 ‘The guests brought the presents to the child YESTERDAY (not today for instance).’
- B': *hálá a ye malígá, ndi yak **nɔɔmáa** bá- bí- lɔ- ná nyé...
 1.that 1.SM-be 6.truth but also 1.two days ago 2.SM-PST2.come-BEN 1.him
 ‘That’s true, but they also brought them to him TWO DAYS AGO’

To begin with, we realize that an in-situ focus in Basaá has no marking at all. The focalized elements occupy their canonical position inside the clause without any marking. In (23) for instance, the Basaá native speakers will share the same intuition concerning the truth conditions contained in all (A) and (A'). The intuition is such that the answer in (A) is true in every context where ‘*the guests brought the presents to a set of people yesterday*’ including ‘*the CHILD*’. This is further explained by the fact that (A) can be appropriately followed up by the statement in (B)

where it is true that ‘*the guests also brought the presents to the FATHER yesterday*’. Conversely, the answer provided in (A’) is only true in every situation where ‘the set of people to which the guests brought the presents yesterday’ consists only of ‘*the CHILD*’ and *nobody else*. Here (A’) cannot license a follow-up sentence such as (B’) in which it is true that ‘*the guests also brought the presents to the FATHER*.’ In the same vein, the interpretations obtained from (24) are such that sentence (A) is true in every situation where ‘*the guests brought the presents to the child*’ in a set of days including ‘*YESTERDAY*’. This can be further illustrated by the follow-up sentence in (B). On the contrary, sentence (A’) is true if and only if ‘*the guests brought the presents to the child YESTERDAY*’ and no other day (two days ago for example). So far, it is shown that NSF (objects and adjuncts) in Basáá has two structural positions namely the in-situ position without any marking and the ex-situ position with both syntactic and morphological markings. The former is associated with non-exhaustivity and the latter is associated with exhaustivity. However, as already mentioned, NSF can be realized in the pre-subject position without any exhaustive interpretation. This is the case with all-focus situations as in (25) below.

(25) Context: *Somebody has just arrived in the village.*

Q: Kíí í yé ɳken njɔnɔ
9.what 9.SM-be new here
‘What’s new here?’

A: **Litowá jɔ-n** me sómb yaaní, yak ni lé me bí-sómb ndáp ipé
5.car 5-FOC I buy.PST2 1.yesterday also and that I PST2-buy 7.house 7.another
‘I bought a CAR yesterday, and in addition, I bought a HOUSE.’

(26) Context: *Somebody’s looking sad.*

Q: A lágá, kíí í ɳ- ke bée?
VOC guy 9.what 9.SM PRS-go NEG
‘What’s wrong guy?’

A: A lágá, **man wém nyé-n** bá ɳ-kân lén bíkékela
VOC guy 1.child my 1-FOC INDF PST1-operate 1.today 8.morning
‘Guy, they operated upon my CHILD this morning / MY CHILD was operated upon this morning’
... bá ɳ- kân yak mwaá wém
INDF PST1-operate also 1.wife my
‘Also, they operated my wife upon’

One can observe that all utterances in the answers above are new information. They are not predicated, or better still, they have no background information. What is obvious in each case is that an entity is named, and then a given property is ascribed to it. In more concrete terms, the direct object *litowá* ‘car’ in (25) is named first, and then, a comment is made about it; namely the

unpredicated proposition *me sómb yaaní* ‘I bought yesterday’. Similarly, the focused direct object *man wém* ‘my child’ is part of an all-new structure in which it receives the property of ‘being operated upon’. In both cases, a follow up sentence is possible, namely *me bí-sómb ndáp ipé* ‘I also bought a house’ for (25) and *bá ñ-kân yak mwaá wém* ‘they also operated my wife upon’ for (26) respectively. Both the focused objects and the comments made are selected simultaneously. One can establish a difference between such contexts and object wh-questions where one has an à priori background in which the focused element is contained. In all-new contexts, on the contrary, as it is the case in (25-26), the whole sentences represent events in which the objects are involved as being more salient by being extracted from their base. All these facts show somehow that object fronting, as it is the case with subject fronting, is not always conditioned by semantic factors such as exhaustivity or contrastivity, but can also be triggered by pragmatic¹¹ and morpho-syntactic factors such as salience, awareness, agreement and focus requirements.

As mentioned in the preceding lines, NSF can also convey a contrastive interpretation depending on the context. The following examples show that a focus with a contrastive interpretation can be in-situ (27A1 & 28A1) or ex-situ (27A2 & 28A2) in the presence of relevant alternatives or in corrective statements.

- (27) Q: Mudaá a- bí- sómb-ôl bóóŋgé **mambót** tólé **bitámb** Alternatives
 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-buy-BEN 2.children 6.clothes or 8.shoes
 ‘Did the woman bought **clothes** or **shoes** for the children?’

- A1: pro a- bí- sómb-ôl bó **mambót** *contrastive in-stu focus*
 pro 1.SM-PST2-buy-BEN 2.them 6.clothes
 ‘She bought the CLOTHES (as opposed to shoes) for them’
 A2: **mambót** **mó-n** pro a- bí- sómb-ôl bó *contrastive ex-situ focus*
 6.clothes 6-FOC pro 1.SM-PST2-buy-BEN 2.them
 ‘She bought the CLOTHES (as opposed to shoes) for them’

- (28) Q: Me n- nñy lé mudaá a- bí- sómb-ôl bóóŋgé bitámb **nɔɔmáâ**
 I PST1-hear that 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-buy-BEN 2.children 8.shoes 1.two days ago
 ‘I heard that the woman bought the shoes for the children two days ago.’
 A1: tó, pro a- bí- sómb-ôl bó gwó **yaaní** *contrastive in-situ focus*
 no pro 1.SM-PST2-buy-BEN 2.them 8.them 1.yesterday
 ‘No she bought them for them YESTERDAY (as opposed to tow days ago)’
 A2: tó, **yaaní** **nyé-n** pro a- bí- sómb-ôl bó gwó *contrastive ex-situ f..*
 no 1.yesterday 1-FOC pro 1.SM-PST2-buy-BEN 2.them 8.them
 ‘No she bought them for them YESTERDAY (as opposed to tow days ago)’

¹¹ As stated previously, I will show later on in the chapters concern with theoretical considerations that focus fronting is morphology-driven in the sense of Chomsky (1995) i.e. movement is motivated by the need to satisfy morphosyntactic requirements.

Based on (27-28), one can realise that contrastive focus is not linked to a specific structural position in clause structure as proposed in previous works (Bassong 2010, 2012a-b). Rather, it depends on the contexts and can be realised either in-situ or ex-situ. In this way, focus fronting cannot be attributed to contrastiveness as the latter can be attested even in case the focused constituent has remained at its canonical position.

That ex-situ NSF focus is obligatorily marked morphologically and syntactically is not limited to Basàá. Similar cases are attested in many African languages such as Bakóko (Bantu), Búlu (Bantu) Etón (Bantu), Gungbe (Kwa), Mèdumbá (Grassfields Bantu), Kinande (Bantu) and Tuki (Bantu). In the following examples, the translation from French into English is ours whereas the French versions are the author's.

- (29) Bakóko (Bessala 2010:67).

Sènè **né** Songue à g lè lídí *Object focus*
 manioc Foc^o Songue P.A P0. être manger

‘C'est le manioc que Songue mange» / ‘It is CASSAVA that Songue is eating’

- (30) Búlu (Ondoua Engon 2011 : 210).

Object focus

mboŋ **éŋwɔ** Edima a- ké- yám
 manioc Foc Edima MS-P2- préparer

« C'est le manioc que Edima a préparé» / ‘It is CASSAVA that Edima cooked’

- (31) Etón (Georges Parfait Eloundou p.c.).

Kírí **jə** məmá ε yə kə ε pāén *Adjunct focus*
 tomorrow FOC mummy SM F1 go to farm
 ‘It is tomorrow that mummy will go to the farm.’

- (32) Gungbe (Aboh 2004a:255).

Yòvótòmè **wè** Séná nò *Adjunct focus*
 Europe Foc Sena stay-Perf
 ‘Sena lived IN EUROPE.’

- (33) Kinande (Baker 2008: 181).

Object focus

Eritunda ry-o n- a-h-a omukali
 fruit.5 5.FOC 1Ss-T-give-FV woman.1
 ‘It's a fruit that I gave to a woman.’

- (34) Mèdumbá (Keupdjio 2011:93)

Á **bò** zè nñs fě zún mén ni lá *Object focus*
 Foc sac Rel. Nana P4 acheter fils son Rel.
 Foc bag Rel. Nana PST4- buy son his Rel

‘C'est un sac que Nana a acheté à son fils/It is a bag that Nana bought for his son.’

(35) Tuki (Biloa 1995:51)

- Idzo** **owu** Abongo a-ma-kos-en- a agee waa yendze *Adjunct focus*
yesterday Foc Abongo SM-P2-buy-*Appl-Fv* wife his house
‘It is yesterday that Abongo bought a house for his wife.’

The data delineated in the seven languages above share the same syntactic and morphological properties in the sense that all focalized constituents undergo leftward fronting and are adjacent to a phonetically-realized focus marker. Recall that in all these languages, the authors mention that the focus marker is not optional. However, whereas the focus marker is right adjacent to the focused constituent in Bakóko (29), Búlu (30), Etón (31), Gungbe (32) Kinande (33) and Tuki (35), in the Mèdumbá case in (34), it is left adjacent to it. More interesting is that in Mèdumbá (34) it is possible to have two relative markers in the same clause. Without any judgment of Keupdjio ‘s (2011) analysis, I think, based also on Keupdjio (p.c.) and on my own judgement on Bantu linguistics, that what is termed focus marker Á in sentence initial position might be a copula or an expletive and that the focus/relative marker might rather be the particle which follows the focused direct object *bò* ‘bag’ . We will not discuss this issue here, but our point of view is based on Keupdjio (2011 and p.c.) and on the following cleft-constructions in Shupamem, a Grassfield Bantu language spoken in Cameroon previously analysed by Nchare (2012: 474) and closely related to Mèdumbá in some sense.

(36) Q: à wó júó ì fi ndáp mé ?
Es who that 3sg sell house QM
‘Who is it that sold the house?’

A: à móñ júó ì fi ndáp mé
Es child that 3sg sell house COMP
‘It is the child who sold the house’

The data in (36) are similar to the ones in (34), and as Keupdjio (2011) demonstrates, the particle preceding the focused element in (34) is also used in clefts and the element following focused constituents is encountered in relative clauses as well. These facts suggest that both Mèdumbá and Shupamem are similar to some extent and that the particle in sentence initial position might not be truly speaking a focus marker, but something like a copula or an expletive.

Kinande is much closer to Basaá than the others in the sense that the element following the focused constituent is bimorphemic that is, it is made up of the class marker *ry-* to which is attached the focus marker *-o*. In Gungbe the focus marker carries no other information than focus (Aboh 2004a and related work). In Bakokó, Búlu, Etón, and Tuki the focus marker also agrees in

class and number with the focus but it is not easy to dissociate the agreement from the focus markers as it is the case in Basaá and Kinande (cf. the authors quoted above for further illustrations).

In the following section, another information-related position that is encountered in some African languages is discussed. This has to do with the well-known Immediately After Verb position (IAV).

3.3 The Immediately After Verb position (IAV) and the prosody-information structure interface

In this section, I introduce the reader to some salient aspects of the IAV position in Basa'a. More details will be provided in chapter six where an in-depth analysis of the IAV position will be provided from a theoretical point of view, and if need be indeed, a descriptive insight will be provided too. The IAV space is well known in the literature of a number of Bantu languages as a dedicated position for focus constituents. Some very well-known works include Aboh (2007) on Aghem, Buell (2009) on Zulu, Hyman (1979a), Hyman & Polinsky (2010), Watters (1979), *inter alia* on Aghem. A similar focus position is attested in Italian as shown in Belletti (2004).

This section shows that the IAV in Basaá has two main properties namely, a prosody-related property and an information structure-related one. To begin with, the following examples from Zulu (Buell 2009) and Aghem (Hyman & Polinsky 2010) show that wh-phrases and focused elements occupy the IAV position and any misplacement of these constituents yields illicit utterances.

(37) Zulu (Buell 2009: 166)

- a. U-theng-e ingubo entsha izolo.
2S-buy-PERF 9.dress 9.new yesterday
'You bought a new dress yesterday.' (out-of-the-blue context)
- b. *U-theng-e ingubo entsha **nini**] VP
2S-buy-PERF 9.dress 9.new when
- c. U-yi-theng-e **nini**] VP ingubo enstsha?
2S-9-buy-PERF when 9.dress 9.new
'When did you buy a new dress?'
- d. Ngi-yi-theng-e **izolo.**] VP
1S-9-buy-PERF yesterday

Buell (2009) argues that in out-of-the-blue contexts, the canonical order is SVOA (where A stands adjunct/adverb) and that the adjunct wh-phrase *nini* 'when' must occupy the IAV. This is simply understood under the view that wh-phrases are generally said to be inherently focused in some languages. Furthermore, Buell argues that in cases like (37d), in order to focus the time

adverbial, the object must extrapose with concomitant obligatory object marking on the verb (here **yí**- class 9) in order to give way to the focused element to the IAV position. For more understanding of the different focal contexts in Zulu the reader can consult Buell (2009). The IAV effects are also attested in Aghem as shown in (38) below.

(38) Aghem (Hyman & Polinsky 2010: 206-7)

- a. tí bvú tì-bìghà mâ zì kibé ↓né *Baseline sentence*
dogs two P1 eat D-fufu today
'The two dogs ate the fufu today'
- b. à mò zì tí bvú tì-bìghà bé ↓kó né *Subject IAV*
Es P1 eat dogs two fufu D.OBL today
'The two DOGS ate fufu today'
- c. tí bvú tì-bìghà mâ zì né ↓bé ↓kó *Adjunct IAV*
dogs two P1 eat today fufu D.OBL
'The two dogs ate fufu TODAY'

The above data provide further support that focus marking is subject to cross-linguistic variations given the fact that its realization varies depending on language internal considerations. In Aghem, focus marking has always been an unexpected phenomenon as acknowledged by many researchers. Hyman & Polinsky argue that the IAV position correlates with exhaustive identificational focus. The exhaustive identificational focus in postverbal position is generally unexpected in the investigation of focus realization because in most cases, it is rather the preverbal position which is said to correlate with exhaustivity. The authors argue that every focused element, whether it is a subject, or a non-subject (including question-words) must always be attracted towards the verb.

As mentioned previously, the IAV in Basáá exhibits two main properties. The following sentences show that in the canonical word order, namely Subject-Verb-Indirect Object-Direct-Object as shown in (39a-b), the element that occurs in the IAV position must bear a high tone on its first syllable which can be a nasal prefix (39a) or a prefix of the CV (consonant-vowel) form (39b). As can be seen in (39a) the closest element on the right of the verb is the beneficiary object *ŋkil* 'father-in-law' must bear a high tone on its first syllable. The ungrammaticality of (39b) is due to failure to assign a high tone on the first syllable *ba* (class 2) of the indirect object *baúdú* 'students'. Note the noun *ŋkil* 'father-in-law' has a lexical low tone¹² on its first syllable which is the nasal prefix *ŋ* as shown in (39c-d). This simply shows when this item is not close

¹² Note that the low tone is not marked in this work except in some specific contexts. Syllables without tone marking actually bear a low tone.

to the verb, it cannot undergo high tone assignment on its first syllable. As a result, one can realize that high tone assignment on this item in (39a) is related to its syntactic position, namely the IAV position.

- (39) a. baken bá- bí- lɔ- ná ñkil wêm makebla yaaní
 2.guests 2.SM- PST2-come-BEN 1.father-in-law my 6.presents yesterday
 ‘The guests brought the presents to my father-in-law yesterday’
- b. *malet a- bí- tí ñaúdú makebla
 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-give 2.students 6.presents
 ‘The teacher gave the presents to the students’
- c. ñkil wêm a- bí- sómb lítowa jaaní
 1.father-in-law 1.my 1.SM-PST2-buy 5.car 1.yesterday
 ‘My father-in-law bought a car yesterday.’
- d. Më bí- undá málêt ñkil wêm jaaní
 I PST2-show/introduce 1.teacher 1.father-in-law 1.my 1.yesterday
 ‘I introduced my father-in-law to the teacher yesterday.’

Note that high tone bearing in the IAV position is also mood/tense-sensitive that is, some tenses/moods license it whereas others do not. There are some cases in which the element in the IAV position does not bear a high tone. The following examples show that in one of the past tense forms (40a), tone bearing does not apply. This is also true of the imperative/subjunctive (40b) where the immediately postverbal element does not undergo high tone assignment.

- (40) a. baken bá- lɔ-ná ñaúdú makebla yaaní
 2.guests 2.SM-come.PST1-BEN 2.students 6.presents yesterday
 ‘The guests brought the presents to the students yesterday’
- b. ñɔɔŋé bá-pót mahóp máp
 2.children 2.SM-speak.IMP 6.languages 6.their
 ‘The children must speak their languages!’ Or ‘Let the students speak their languages.’

With cases like (40) at hand, one can see that the tone bearing rule in the IAV cannot be subject to generalization as the constituents *ñaúdú* ‘students’ and *mahóp* ‘languages’ in (40a) and (40b) respectively do not bear a high tone on their first syllables namely *ba* (noun class 2) and *ma* (noun class 6).

Now, in focus constructions, a focused constituent may bear a high tone accidentally if and only if it is closer to the verb (i.e. in its canonical position), otherwise, there is no attraction towards the verb like in Zulu (37) and Aghem (38). In (41a) below, the indirect object represented here by the question item *bɔnjéé* ‘whom’ is questioned, but since the direct object *mákebla* ‘presents’ occurs in the IAV position, it must bear a high tone. In (41b), the focused indirect object *báúdú* ‘students’ is in-situ i.e in its canonical position, but must bear a high tone because of its

proximity to the verb. One can also see that focus in (41a) is not on the direct object *makebla* ‘presents’, but it must bear a high tone because no overt material intervenes between it and the lexical verb *tí* ‘give’.

- (41) a. *bɔnjéé_i* malet a- bí- tí (*t_i*) **mákebla**
 2.who 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-give 6.presents
 ‘To whom did the teacher give the presents?’
- b. malet a- bí- tí **ńáúdú** makebla
 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-give 2.students 6.presents
 ‘The teacher gave the presents to the STUDENTS’
- c. *baúdú* *bɔ-n* malet a- bí- tí (*t*) **mákebla**
 2.students 2-FOC 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-give 6.presents
 ‘The teacher gave the presents to the STUDENTS (not to the parents)

In (41c), focus falls on the extracted indirect object *ńáúdú* ‘students’ but here again, since the immediate constituent to the verb is the direct object *makebla* ‘presents’, this latter must bear a high tone. In addition, note that items that have their lexical tone on the first syllable as low (recall that the low tone is not marked in this work unless it is prominent) always change their low tone into a high one in the vicinity of the verb. If they are far away from the verb, they conserve their lexical tone (compare the in-situ focus in (41b) and its ex-situ counterpart in (41c)). Items that have their lexical tone (natural tone) as high on the first syllable do not undergo tone changing whether they occur in the IAV position or not. What all these facts suggest is that the elements in the IAV most often bear a grammatical tone that has nothing to do with information structure.

As compared to Zulu and Aghem, focus constituents in Basaá are not attracted towards the verb as shown in the ungrammatical answers in (42-43) below.

- (42) a. malet a- bí- tí **ńáúdú** makebla yaaní *Baseline sentence*
 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-give 2.students 6.presents yesterday
 ‘The teacher gave the presents to the students yesterday’
- Q: **Kélkíí** malet a- bí- tí **ńáúdú** makebla
 1.when 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-give 2.students 6.presents
 ‘When did the teacher give the presents to the students?’
- A: *malet a- bí- tí **yáání** **ńáúdú** makebla *Adjunct focus*
 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-give yesterday 2.students 6.presents
 ‘Intended: The teacher gave the presents to the students YESTERDAY.’
- (43) Q: **Kíí** malet a- bí- tí **ńáúdú** yaaní
 9.what 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-give 2.students yesterday
 ‘What did the teacher give to the students yesterday?’

A: * malet a- bí- tí **mákebla** báúdú yaaní *Direct object focus*

1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-give 6.presents 2.students yesterday

‘Intended: The teacher gave the PRESENTS to the students yesterday’

The facts we have discussed so far significantly demonstrate that the IAV is not associated with information structure to some extent in Basaá as focalized non-wh constituents cannot be attracted there. However, it should be noted that in question formation, some wh-phrases must move either to the IAV or to the sentence initial position (an in-depth account of question formation will be provided in a subsequent chapter). In double object constructions the direct object wh-phrase can be attracted either towards the IAV or to sentence initial position, but can never occur in-situ i.e. in its canonical position.

(44) a. malêt a- bí- tí báúdú makebla yaaní *Baseline sentence*

1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-give 2.students 6.presents 1.yesterday

‘The teacher gave the presents to the students yesterday’

b. **Kíí** malêt a- bí- tí báúdú yaaní *Direct Object wh-question*

9.what 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-give 2.students 1.yesterday

‘What did the teacher give to the students yesterday?’

c. malêt a- bí- tí **kíí** báúdú yaaní *Direct object wh-phrase*

1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-give 9.what 2.students 1.yesterday

‘What did the teacher give to the students yesterday?’

d. * malet a- bí- tí báúdú **kíí** yaaní

1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-give 2.students 9.what 1.yesterday

‘What did the teacher give to the students yesterday?’

In (44a) above, the baseline sentence in double object constructions is Subject-Indirect object-Direct object-Adjunct. If the direct object is questioned, it can occur in sentence initial position (44b) or can move past over the indirect object NP/DP *báúdú* ‘students’ and occupies the IAV as in (44c). The ungrammaticality of (44d) is an indication that in double-object constructions, the indirect wh-phrase cannot stay in its canonical position. One may also wonder why the indirect object *báúdú* ‘students’ still bears a high tone in (44c) although it is not adjacent to the verb as predicted. Such an issue has a theoretical explanation in syntax¹³ and cannot receive a good illustration here (cf. the chapter on question formation for more details). From a descriptive point of view, one can postulate that the wh-phrase *kíí* ‘what’ spreads its high tone on the following indirect object *báúdú* ‘students’. However, although tone spreading can be postulated, it seems not to be the relevant explanation. At this juncture, it can be retained that high tone bearing on

¹³ It will be demonstrated that in a case like (44c) while the verb assigns a high tone on the indirect object prior to movement in the TAM , the wh-phrase raises into a lowe FocP position.

the indirect object *báúdú* ‘students’ is assigned by the verb prior to verb movement to the IP-domain and that this is not due to a high tone spreading triggered by the question-word *kíí* ‘what’ as it seems to be on the surface.

Note that the scrambling effect observed in (44c) is only attested if the indirect object is an NP/DP and the direct object a wh-phrase. A direct object NP/DP cannot scramble over its indirect object NP/DP counterpart (45a). In like manner, a direct object wh-phrase cannot scramble over its indirect counterpart (45b). In addition, note that in (46b-c), time and manner adjuncts must front either to the IAV position or to sentence initial position. Never can these wh-phrases stay in-situ in this context. Due to theoretical considerations, we avoid discussing more on such issues here. However, note that in chapter six, it will be shown that the wh-item in the IAV position raises to a lower focus phrase in the vicinity of VP.

- (45) a. *malet a- bí- tí **makebla** **báúdú** yaaní
1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-give 6.presents 2.students 1.yesterday
- b. *c. malet a- bí- tí **kíí** **njéé** yaaní
1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-give 9.what 1.who yesterday
- (46) a. malet a- gá- níigá **báúdú** ni masée í ↓ndáp *Baseline*
1.teacher 1.SM-FUT2-teach 2.students with 6.happiness LOC 9.house
‘The teacher will happily teach the students at home’
- b. (**léláá**) malet a- gá- níigá (**léláá**) **báúdú** ***léláá** í ↓ndáp
how 1.teacher 1.SM-FUT2-teach how 2.students how LOC 9.house
‘How will the teacher teach the students at home?’
- c. (**héé**) malet a- gá- níigá-ná (**héé**) **báúdú** ni masée ***héé**
1.where 1.teacher 1.SM-FUT2-teach-APPL 1.where 2.students with 6.happiness 1.where
‘Where will the teacher happily teach the students?’

Note also that both the time adjunct and the manner one can interchange in the above sentences without any resulting illicitness. So, the overall picture is that, except for transitive and intransitive cases, time and manner adjuncts must move either to the IAV position or to sentence initial position.

3.4 Association with focus

This section discusses focus in association with three focus-sensitive particles that affect meaning in Basáá utterances. A theoretical account of these particles will be provided in the chapter dedicated to question formation for further understanding of their distribution and the semantic mechanisms that govern them. The focus-sensitive particles under scrutiny here include the negative particle *béé* ‘not’, the exclusive *ndígí* ‘only’ and the particle *támá* which functions

either like a focus particle or like an adjective due to the agreement morphology it displays in relation to the focalized nominal it associates with.

3.4.1 The negative operator *béé* ‘not’, the exclusive *ndígí* ‘only’ and the particle *-támá*
Negation and *only* are very well known in the literature as focus-sensitive particles (cf. Beaver & Clark 2008, Krifka 2008 a.o) cross-linguistically. In sentence internal position both the negative *béé* ‘not’ and its exclusive counterpart *ndígí* ‘only’ occur in the IAV position. At this position, they are able to project, that is they can have wide scope over the verb phrase, the narrow verb as well as over the complements of the verb as can be seen below (note that Basàá does not have discontinuous negation à la French, the only negative particle in sentential and constituent negation is the particle *béé*). However, the semantic asymmetry between these two focus operators is that only the negative particle *béé* ‘not’ can scope over a preceding subject. Clearly put, apart from the scope domains mentioned, the negative operator *béé* ‘not’ can also assign scope over the subject, and as a result, over the whole sentence. Such a semantic interpretation is not attested with the exclusive operator *ndígí* ‘only’.

3.4.1.1 Negation and focus

In this section I discuss the distribution and interpretation of the negative focus operator *béé* ‘not’ in relation to focus. To begin with, let us consider the following sentences.

- (47) a. Maangé a- ní- **tí** **béé** málêt bikaat *sentential negation*

1.child 1.SM-PRS-give NEG 1.teacher 8.books

‘The child does not give the books to the teacher.’: **Paraphrase:** It is not the case that ‘the child gives/is giving the books to the teacher.’ Not > TP

- b.* Maangé a- ní- **béé** **tí** málêt bikaat

1.child 1.SM-PRS-NEG give 1.teacher 8.books

- c.* Maangé a- **béé-** ní- **tí** málêt bikaat

1.child 1.SM NEG-PRS-give 1.teacher 8.books

A sentence like (47a) is considered as a denial of a previous statement, for instance the statement ‘the child gives the books to the teacher’ and contains no existential presupposition. In Krifka (2008)’s terms, (47a) can be subsumed under correction and can belong to the *Common Ground Management* of focus. It is also important to recall that there is no other position sentence internally which the negative particle *béé* can occupy, and that is why (47b-c) are ruled out.

What is important is the fact that , taken out-of-the-blue, sentence (47a) is ambiguous in the sense that it can yield a wide range of interpretations, namely a sentential interpretation such that ‘It is not the case that [THE CHILD IS GIVING/GIVES THE BOOKS TO THE

TEACHER]_{FOCUS} (NEG >TPAgrS-P). With this reading in mind, it becomes obvious that negation scopes over the whole sentence and as a result, assigns scope over each constituent of this sentence taken individually. In this vein, a VP interpretation is also possible that is, the interpretation according to which negation scope over the VP (NEG>VP) with the reading ‘the child does NOT > [GIVE THE BOOKS TO THE STUDENTS]_{FOCUS}’ with focus on the whole verb phrase *tí málêt bikaat* ‘give the teacher the books. A narrow verb interpretation is also possible (NEG >V), with the reading ‘the child does not [GIVE]_{FOCUS} the books to the teacher’, where focus falls on the sole verb *tí* ‘give’. A narrow indirect object interpretation is obtained with the reading, ‘the child does not give the books to the [TEACHER]_{FOCUS} (NEG> teacher) with focus on *málêt* ‘teacher’. Similarly, a focus reading on the direct object is also possible such that ‘the child does not give the [BOOKS]_{FOCUS} to the teacher’ (NEG >books) whereby focus is on the direct object *bikaat* ‘books’. The last focus reading is that negation scopes over the subject of the sentence with the reading ‘The CHILD (as opposed to the parent) does not give the books to the teacher’ (NEG > CHILD).

All these readings can be summarized in the following tree where negation c-commands all the sentence constituents including the subject and the verb prior to movement.

- (48) [AgrS-P **maangé₁** [AgrS a- [TP [T bí [AspP [Asp *tí₂* -ø [NegP **béé** [Neg *t₂* [VP **t₁** [V *t₂*]]]]]]
- | | | | | |
|---------|-------|-------|-------|-----|
| 1.child | 1.SM- | PST2- | V+Asp | NEG |
|---------|-------|-------|-------|-----|

This tree shows that negation c-commands the whole VP. In this vein, it assigns scope relations over the whole VP. The fact that negation can scope over a preceding subject or a preceding verb boils down to movement. Assuming that the subject of the sentence is base-generated within the VP, the operator *béé* ‘not’ c-commands both the subject *maangé* ‘child’ and the verb *tí*- ‘give’ prior to their movement into Spec-AgrS-P and Asp respectively. I assume that the perfective aspect marker is implicit (represented as a the null morpheme ø) and that the verb raises via an empty Neg position on its way to Asp (further details will be provided in chapters four and six).

For disambiguation purposes, the negated element should associate with the negative particle *béé* ‘not’ in sentence initial position. In this case, both the negated constituent and the negative particle occur in sentence initial position. In this context, one obtains constituent negation which obligatorily triggers syntactic and morphological focus marking. In the following context in (49), ‘speaker B’s’ statement is denied by ‘speaker C’. The ungrammaticality in D’s utterance simply shows that the focus marker cannot precede negation, that is, the negated constituent must be left adjacent to the negated particle.

- (49) A: Njéé maanjé a- ní- tí bíkaat
 1.who 1.child 1.SM-PRS-give 8.books
 ‘To whom does the child give the books?’

- B: Maanjé a- ní- tí málêt bikaat
 1.child 1.SM-PRS-give 1.teacher 8.books
 ‘The child gives the books to the TEACHER’

- C: tɔ, málêt bée *(nyé-n) maanjé a- ní- tí bikaat
 no 1.teacher NEG 1-FOC 1.child 1.SM-PST-give 8.books
 ‘No, the child does not give the books to the TEACHER (s/he gives them to somebody else)
- D: *Tɔ, málêt nyé-n bée maanjé a- ní- tí bikaat
 no 1.teacher 1-FOC NEG 1.child 1.SM-PST-give 8.books

The fact that negation can scope over a preceding negated subject is understood if we assume that negation c-commands the fronted subject prior to movement as briefly depicted in (50)¹⁴.

(50)

[XP málêt [NegP bée [Neg t₃ [VP [COMP [AgrS-P....t₁...]]]]]

The structure in (50) shows that negation assigns scope over the subject prior to the movement of the latter in a pre-negation position. As a result, surface c-command is not necessary for scope relations because the extracted material can reconstruction.

It is clear that the utterance in C is a denial of B’s utterance so much so that the former (utterance C) is true in every situation where ‘the child gives the books to someone else’ but not to the ‘TEACHER.’ So far, one can retain that a sentence such as (47a) above with sentential negation has no existential presupposition, rather it simply denies a previous assertion in the discourse setting whereas the one in C with constituent negation carries an existential presupposition according to which ‘the child gives/is giving the books to some person X.’

3.4.1.2 The exclusive *ndígí* ‘only’ and focus

Just like it is the case with negation, the exclusive focus-sensitive particle *ndígí* ‘only’ occupies the IAV position where it is subject to ambiguity. This is of course due to the different interpretations it conveys at this position. These various interpretations are possible under the assumption that this operator is merged in a c-commanding position where it assigns scope over the whole VP as depicted in (51c). However, as opposed to negation, the exclusive focus-sensitive particle *ndígí* ‘only’ cannot assign scope over preceding subject in root clauses, but can assign scope over the subject in long distance subject movement. The sentence in (51a) below conveys a VP focus reading, a narrow verb focus reading, and a narrow direct object focus

¹⁴ The whole picture of sentences like (49AC) will be discussed in subsequent chapters.

reading as attested by the paraphrase. Put differently, the exclusive focus particle *ndígí* ‘only’ can associate with the verb phrase *sómb makúbé* ‘buy bananas’, the lexical verb *sómb* ‘buy’ and the direct object *makúbé* ‘bananas’. That the exclusive *ndígí* ‘only’ cannot assign scope over a preceding subject is explained by the unacceptability of paraphrase 2 and by (51b). More precisely, paraphrase 2 cannot be felicitous to (51a) just as (51b) cannot be a felicitous follow up to (51a) with focus on the subject of the sentence. However, if a specific context is not predefined, there appears to be a troublesome case in the language whereby a fronted subject focus seems to be successfully reconstructed in the presence of a postverbal *ndígí* ‘only’ as in sentence (51c) represented in (51f). Sentence (51d) which is an infelicitous follow-up to (51c) clearly shows that a fronted subject cannot reconstruct in the presence of a postverbal exclusive operator *ndígí* ‘only’. In other words, (51d) cannot contradict (51c).

- (51) a. hilágá hí- gá- sómb **ndígí** makúbé
 19.boy 19.SM-FUT2-buy._{IMPF} only 6.bananas
 ‘The boy shall only buy bananas tomorrow.’

Paraphrase: ‘It is the case that the boy will only buy bananas.’ : ONLY > VP

It is (only) the case that (only) JOHN (nobody else) will buy bananas.’

- b. # njí **mudaá bée nyé-n** a- gá- sómb makúbé
 yes 1.woman NEG 1-FOC 1.SM-FUT2-buy 6.bananas
 ‘Yes, the WOMAN will not buy bananas.’

- c. **hilágá hyó-n** hí- gá- sómb **ndígí** makúbé Only > VP
 19.boy 19-FOC 19.SM-FUT2-buy._{IMPF} only 6.bananas

‘The BOY shall only buy bananas tomorrow.’ : ‘It is the case that the BOY will only buy bananas.’

#Only the BOY will buy bananas.’ #It is the case that only the BOY will buy bananas’

- d. #tó, **yay mudaá** a- gá- sómb mó
 no also 1.woman 1.SM-FUT2-buy 6.them
 ‘No, the woman will buy them too.’

Paraphrase: ‘It is the case that only the BOY will buy bananas.’ : ONLY > subject

It is only the case that JOHN (nobody else) will buy bananas.’

- e. [AgrS-P **hilágá**₂ [AgrS hí-[TP[T gá-[AspP[Asp^[+IMPF]]sómb-[VP **ndígí** [VP **t**₂ [V **t**₁ [DP makúbé]]]]]]

- f. [XP **hilágá**₁ [X...[COMP **t**₁ [COMP **hyó-n** [AgrS-P [...[VP **ndígí** [VP **t**₁ [V...]]]]]

The representations in (51e) and (51f) show that the exclusive operator *ndígí* ‘only’ occupies the same structural position. However, in the presence of a pre-established context, one would have

the impression of having scope relations between the fronted subject and the focus operator in postverbal position. In both structures, the subject is first merged within the VP where it is c-commanded by *ndígí* ‘only’. The fact that this operator cannot associate with the trace of the subject in both cases simply lend partial support to the *Principle of Lexical Association*. If it were the case that the fronted focus and the *ndígí* ‘only’ were related, then one would get the same scope reading for (51a-e) such as to obtain the unacceptable paraphrases provided above. If this is true along the lines, then the operator *ndígí* ‘only’ in (51c-) is simply a troublesome¹⁵ operator which creates a shade of meaning if taken out-of-the-blue. Partially summarizing, a postverbal *ndígí* ‘only’ cannot associated with the trace of an extracted subject (in conformity with the *PLA*).

On the other hand, in the representation in (51e) the lexical verb ‘buy’ is first merged within VP in a position where it falls under the scope of the exclusive operator *ndígí* ‘only’. The reading according to which the exclusive operator *ndígí* ‘only’ can assign a narrow focus reading on a preceding verb (i.e. *sómb* ‘buy’) is true under the assumption that scope relations take place prior to verb movement into the aspectual domain and that the extracted verb reconstructs in the presence of the following exclusive operator *ndígí* ‘only’, contra Beaver & Clark’s (2008) *Principle of Lexical Association*, the prediction that a focus operator cannot associate with the trace of an extracted constituent.

In addition, the following data in (52) falsify the *PLA* by showing that in embedded contexts, extracted elements including the subject of the sentence successfully reconstruct in the presence of the operator *ndígí* ‘only’.

- (52) A: mε n- nôy lé **mudaá** ni **munlôm** bá- bí- tí bôóŋgé makebla
 I PST1-hear that 1.woman and 1.man 2.SM-PST2-buy 2.children 6.presents
 ‘I heard that the man and the woman gave the presents to the children.’
- B: hálá a- ta bée mbále, **mudaá** **ndígí nyé-n t₁** a- bí- tí bó mó
 1.Expl 1.SM-be._{PRS} NEG 9.truth 1.woman only 1-FOC 1.SM-PST2-give 2.them 6.them
 ‘That’s not right. Only the WOMAN gave them (presents) to them (students)’.

Recall that canonical word order in Basáá is SVIODO... such that the subject of the sentence immediately precedes the subject marker (SM). (52B) is an instance of focus fronting in which

¹⁵ Note that (51c) with a the focus operator within the VP cannot be a direct contradiction to ‘The WOMAN will buy bananas’. Rather, in such a context, the operator *ndígí* ‘only’ should associate with the fronted subject in sentence initial position just like in (53) below.

the subject *mudaá* ‘woman’ has been extracted from its base as shown by the presence of a co-indexed trace and sketchily depicted in (53) below where XP is an hypothetical¹⁶ landing site for the extracted subject.

- (53) [XP mudaá [X[... [YP ndígí [FocP t₁ [Foc njéz-n [AgrCP [AgrC t₂ [AgrS-P t₁...]]]]]]]

In (53), the subject *mudaá* ‘woman’ takes root in the embedded clause i.e. lower in the structure than the exclusive *ndígí* ‘only’. The reading in (52B) is possible iff the extracted subject reconstructs i.e. it can be linked to its traces in the ‘post-*ndígí*’ (post-only) position. Based on this reading, it can be concluded that subject reconstruction in Basáá is subject to root/embedded asymmetry given that reconstruction is impossible in root clauses and possible in embedded contexts in the presence of the exclusive *ndígí* ‘only’.

Conversely, just as the exclusive *ndígí* ‘only’ can associate with the trace of an extracted element in main clauses (51), so can it associate with the trace of an extracted material in embedded contexts like in (54B) and (54C), in contradiction once more with Beaver & Clark’s (2008) predictions.

The representation in (55) shows that either the focus operator is merged within the embedded VP projection or in some higher projection in the root clause, reconstruction of the extracted object constituent is still possible.

Under the *PLA*, a focus-sensitive particle should scope over a right adjacent focus and not over the trace of an extracted focalized element. However, this prediction fails not only in Basáá (53–

55) but also in German as illustrated in the following examples from Büring & Hartmann (2001) and Krifka (1999) cited by Beaver & Clark (2008:175) respectively. In (56a) the exclusive focus-sensitive operator *nur* ‘only’ associates with the focused verb *kuýsst* ‘kissed’ on its left whereas

¹⁶ I will unveil this position in the next chapter

in (56b) the focus operators *nur* ‘only’ *auch* ‘also’ and *sogar* ‘even’ can associate with the extracted NP subject *Peter* on their left (focused materials are capitalized).

- (56) a. Peter **KÜSSTE_i** Maria *nur t_i*

Peter kissed Maria only

‘Peter kissed and did nothing else to Maria.’

- b. **PETER_i** hat *nur/sogar/auch t_i* die Ausstellung besucht

Peter has only/even/also the exhibition visited

‘Peter has only/also/even visited the exhibition’

Although Beaver & Clark show that cases like (56) are only licensed in main clauses, and ruled out in the German wh-interrogatives for instance, it is obvious that the PLA is counter exemplified cross-linguistically. The difference between German and Basaá at this level is on the ability of focus operators to associate with the extracted subject in root clauses. In German like in (56b) above, the focus operator *nur* ‘only’ successfully associates with the trace of the extracted subject constituent *Peter* whereas such association is impossible in Basaá root clauses as shown in (51). We can assume on the basis the German example in (56b) that in root clauses, some focus operators may raise at LF whereas in Basaá such LF raising is not possible.

The last structural position of the exclusive focus operator *ndígí* ‘only’ is the one in which it occupies the sentence initial position. Both sentences in (58) and (59) are similar in meaning and are appropriate in a context that requires an exhaustive/contrastive focus reading on the object.

- (58) me n̄- yí l̄é u m̄- b̄at m̄ámbót ni bitámb

I PRS-know that you PRS-ask 6.clothes and 8.shoes

ndí **ndígí** **bitámb** **gwó-n** me n̄- la tí wé ↓

but only 8.shoes 8-FOC I PRS-can give you

‘I know that you are asking for the clothes and shoes, but I can only give you the SHOES.’

Paraphrase 1: ...It is the case that I can give you only the SHOES : only > SHOES

‘I know that you are asking for the clothes, but I CAN ONLY GIVE YOU SHOES

Paraphrase 2: ‘It is only the case that I can give you the shoes: only > TP

- (59) me n̄- yí l̄é u m̄- b̄at m̄ámbót ni bitámb

I PRS-know that you PRS-ask 6.clothes and 8.shoes

ndí **bitámb** **ndígí** **gwó-n** me n̄- la tí wé ↓

but 8.shoes only 8-FOC I PRS-can give you

‘I know that you are asking for the clothes and shoes, but I can only give you the SHOES.’

Paraphrase 1: ...It is the case that I can give you only the SHOES : only > SHOES

‘I know that you are asking for the clothes, but I CAN ONLY GIVE YOU SHOES

Paraphrase 2: ‘It is only the case that I can give you the shoes: only > TP...

The above sentences indicate that when the operator *ndígí* ‘only’ occurs in the root clause, it can have a wide scope reading on the whole sentence (main and embedded clauses) or the whole event. In this case, it can occupy the sentence initial position (58) or the second position in the main clause (59) as illustrated in the following simplified schema.

- (60) [XP[(**ndígí**) **bitámb**₁ [X[... [YP (**ndígí**) [FocP **t**₁ [Foc **gwó**₂-**n** [AgrCP [AgrC **t**₂ [AgrS-P
only 8.shoes only 8-FOC
[VP...**t**₁...]]]]]]]

In addition to reconstruction effects already discussed, the template in (60) shows that the operator *ndígí* ‘only’ can even adjoin to a higher maximal projection where it can assign a wide scope reading over the whole sentence.

The illicitness of (61) below results from the fact that the focus marker can never be left-adjacent to the exclusive *ndígí* ‘only’ or better still, cannot intervene between the embedded subject (here *me* ‘I’) and the focus field as shown by the presence of the focus marker. This indicates that there is a parallel with the illicit construction observed in (49D) where the negative focus particle *béé* ‘not’ is preceded by the focus marker. As a rule, note that when the negative focus particle *béé* ‘not’ or the exclusive *ndígí* ‘only’ appears in sentence initial position, it must always precede the focus marker. Whenever this structural relation is not respected, ungrammaticality arises.

- (61)* me n- yí lé u m- bat mámbót ni bitámb
I PRS-know that you PRS-ask 6.clothes and 8.shoes
ndí **bitámb** **gwó**-**n** *ndígí* me n- la tí wé ↓
but 8.shoes 8-FOC only I PRS-can give you

In partial conclusion, it is worth mentioning that some predictions have been made on the basis of intonation languages with respect to focus-sensitive particles. For instance, Aoun & Li (1993:206), Beaver & Clark (2008:160-181), Krifka (1992a) among others, demonstrate that exclusive focus-sensitive particles like *only* in English, *nur* ‘only’ in German, *alleen maar* ‘only’ in Dutch etc. cannot associate with extracted foci. Quoting Aoun & Li (1993:206), Beaver & Clark (2008:160) show that in an English topic construction, such as ‘*Mary_i, he only likes t_i’ the exclusive ‘only’ cannot associate with the topicalised NP *Mary*. In other words, the meaning according to which ‘He likes nobody else but Mary’ is not possible, and therefore, the NP ‘Mary’ cannot reconstruct. Similarly, quoting Krifka (1992a:234), Beaver & Clark (2008:163) show that the English wh-relative ‘we should thank the man_i whom Mary only took (t_i) to the movies’ cannot have the reading according to which the exclusive particle ‘only’ associates with the relative NP ‘the man’ that is, ‘*we should thank the man_i such that Mary took HIM_i to the movies’. The Basaa data have shown that a focus operator can associate with the trace of an

extracted constituent' without any resulting illicitness, which is an indication that reconstruction of a fronted constituent is possible in the presence of a following focus operator and that surface c-command is not necessary for scope relations in Basaa.

3.4.1.3 The particle *-támá*

The last aspect to be addressed in this section deals with the particle *-támá*. It is discussed as a focus-sensitive particle due to the fact that it affects meaning and has a direct relation with information structure. This particle is polysemic in that it conveys both an adjectival reading and an adverbial/adjunct interpretation like *ndígí* 'only'. It always agrees in class and number with the nominal element it modifies and can be said to be anaphoric. However, as compared to the negative particle *béé* 'not', and the exclusive *ndígí* 'only', the particle *-támá* cannot appear in the IAV position. It must always be right adjacent to the element under its scope. As opposed to the negative *béé* 'not', and the exclusive *ndígí* 'only' the particle *-támá* can associate unambiguously with an in-situ focus (62B) or an ex-situ one (62C) and can never precede its focus (62D). It also conveys an exhaustive/contrastive interpretation as the exclusive *ndígí* 'only'.

- (62) A: mε n- nŷ́ lé ni n- jé kón ni nsúyí
 I PST1-hear that you PST1-eat 10.rice and 3.sauce
 'I heard that you ate rice and sauce (here rice and sauce as two separate food).'
- B: Tɔ, di n- jé **nsúyí** wó↓-támá *in-situ object focus*
 no we PST1-eat 3.sauce 3.támá
 'No, we ate only SAUCE.'
- C: **nsúyí** wó↓-támá wó-n di n- jé *ex-situ object focus*
 3.sauce 3-támá 3-FOC we PST1-eat
 'No, we ate only SAUCE.'
- D: *Tɔ, di n- jé wó↓-támá **nsúyí**
 no we PST1-eat 3.támá 3.sauce
 'Intended: No, we ate only SAUCE.'

First and foremost, it is important to note that the particle *-támá* is a desambiguator or better still an anti-ambiguity particle in the sense sense that every time it co-occurs with the exclusive *ndígí* 'only' or with negation, ambiguity disappears.

In sentence internal position, the exclusive *ndígí* 'only' should occur at the IAV position and precedes the NP that contains the particle *-támá* (63a) whereas in sentence initial position *ndígí*

‘only’ can follow or precede that NP (63b-c). This is due to the fact that the particle *-támá* and the noun it modifies form a constituent and that like in other cases, a postverbal *ndígí* ‘only’ always occurs directly after the verb while in sentence initial position it can follow or precede its focus as can be seen in (63b-c) respectively.

(63)

Q: Kíí maaŋgé a- ñ- téhē, ɳgwó tólé sín̄gâ

9.what 1.child 1.SM-PST1-see 9.dog or 9.cat

‘What did the child see, a dog or a cat?’

- a. Maaŋgé a- ñ- téhē *ndígí* ɳgwó yo-támá (**ndígí*)
1.child 1.SM-PST1-see only 9.dog 9-támá only
‘The child saw only a DOG.’
- b. ɳgwó jo-támá *ndígí* y᷑-n maaŋgé a- ñ- téhē
9.dog 9-támá only 9-FOC 1.child 1.SM-PST1-see
‘The child saw only a DOG.’
- c. *ndígí* ɳgwó jo-támá y᷑-n maaŋgé a- ñ- téhē
only 9.dog 9.támá 9-FOC 1.child 1.SM-PST1-see
‘The child saw only a DOG.’

The same results are obtained from the interaction between negation and the particle *-támá* as attested in the following sentences where the particle *-támá* conveys an exclusive focus interpretation (I will use the English ‘only’ for convenience) unambiguously.

(64)

maaŋgé a- ñ- téhē ɳgwó

1.child 1.SM-PST1-see 9.dog

‘The child saw a dog’

- a. t᷑, pro a- ñ- téhē bée ɳgwó yo-támá, pro a- n- téhē yak mintómbá
no pro 1.SM-PST1-see NEG 9.dog 9-támá pro 1.SM-PST1-see also 6.sheep
‘No, s/he did not see **only** a DOG, s/he saw the **sheep** too.’
- b. t᷑, ɳgwó jo-támá bée y᷑-n pro a- ñ- téhē, pro a- n- téhē yak mintómbá
no 9.dog 9-támá NEG 9-FOC pro 1.SM-PST1-see pro 1.SM-PST1-see also 6.sheep
‘No, s/he did not see only a DOG, s/he saw the **sheep** too.’

An additional word is needed about the other side of its interpretation. In an out-of-the-blue context, sentences in (65) is ambiguously interpreted in that it conveys both a focus interpretation and a non-focal interpretation. In the latter case, it has an adjectival meaning, namely ‘lonely/alone’.

(65) a. malêt a- bí- ńomá báúdú bótámá yaaní

1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-meet 2.students 2.támá 1.tomorrow

Reading 1: ‘The teacher met only the STUDENTS (as opposed to the parents) yesterday’

Reading 2: ‘The teacher met the (lonely) students (alone) (they were not accompanied by their parents) yesterday.’

- b. **ɓáúdú ɓótámá** malêt a- bí- ɓɔmá yaaní
2.students 2.támá 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-meet 1.tomorrow

Reading 1: ‘The teacher met only the STUDENTS (as opposed to the parents) yesterday’

Reading 2: ‘The teacher met the (lonely) students (alone) (they were not accompanied by their parents) yesterday.’

The above sentences indicate that the particle *-támá* in an out-of-the-blue context can be ambiguously interpreted. The first interpretation obtained is such that ‘the teacher met the STUDENTS and nobody else.’ In the second interpretation, the particle *-támá* simply means *alone/lonely* and the sentence will be true in every context where ‘the teacher met the lonely students (i.e. without their parents for instance).

However, note that such ambiguity obtained with the particle *-támá* is only possible if the nominal associate is animate. If the associate is devoid of animacy properties, then only a focus reading is possible. In this vein, sentences like (66a-b) are true if and only ‘the child saw only the BOOKS and nothing else’ whereas if (67a-b), are used out of context, they convey an ambiguous reading.

- (66) a. Maanjé a- ñ- téhé **bíkaat gwó↓-támá** [-animate, -ambiguous]

1.child 1.SM-PST1-see 8.books 8-támá

‘The child saw only the BOOKS (and nothing else).’: ONLY > Books

- b. **bíkaat gwó↓-támá gwó-n** maanjé a- ñ- téhé [-animate, -ambiguous]

8.books 8-támá 8-FOC 1.child 1.SM-PST1-see

‘The child saw only the BOOKS (and nothing else)’: ONLY > Books

- (67) a. Maanjé a- ñ- téhé **ŋgwó jótámá** [+animate, -ambiguous]

1.child 1.SM-PST1- see 9.dog 9.támá

‘The child saw only a DOG’ OR ‘The child saw a lonely dog.’

- b. **ŋgwó jótámá yó-n** maanjé a- ñ- téhé [+animate, -ambiguous]

9.dog 9.támá 1-FOC 1.child 1.SM-PST1-see

‘The child saw only a DOG’ OR ‘The child saw a lonely dog.’

What we can retain from the interpretation of the particle *-támá* is it is ambiguously interpreted when associated with animate entities while when modifying non-animate entities, it is unambiguously interpreted.

3.5 Focus-drop and D-linked foci

This section is concerned with two salient aspects in the analysis of focus in Basaá, namely, focus-drop constructions and discourse-linked foci. By focus-drop, it is meant constructions in which a focus can be omitted or dropped altogether without affecting the meaning of the utterance. ‘X¹⁷-drop-constructions’ are very well known in the literature. For instance, Huang (1984) distinguishes subject drop (pro drop or null subjects) from topic-drop constructions. For him, subject drop depends on the rich inflectional agreement morphology and topic-drop is discourse-dependent i.e. the topic is recoverable from the discourse. Most Bantu languages are also well known as ‘X-drop-languages’ due to their very rich morphological agreement (see Baker 2008, Biloa 1992, 1997, Kinyalolo 1991, Schneider-Zioga 2007 a.o). In Basàá, focus-drop constructions (69) are possible due to agreement morphology as it is the case with pro-drop construction in (68). Below are some cases of pro-drop and focus-drop constructions’.

- (68) a. *bɔɔŋgé* bá- bí- sómb bítámb
2.children 2.SM-PST2-buy 8.shoes
‘The children bought the shoes.’
- b. *pro_i**(*bá_i*-) bí- sómb bítámb *pro-drop/null subject*
pro 2.SM-PST2-buy 8.shoes
‘They bought the shoes.’
- (69) a. *bɔɔŋgé* *b5-n* bá- bí- sómb bítámb *subject focus*
2.children 2-FOC 2.SM-PST2-buy 8.shoes
‘The CHILDREN bought the shoes.’
- b. *pro_i **(*b5_i-n*) bá- bí- sómb bítámb *focus-drop*
pro 2-FOC 2.SM-PST2-buy 8.shoes
‘THEY bought the shoes.’

Sentence (68a) is an instantiation of a simple sentence with an overt subject. In (68b) the subject NP *bɔɔŋgé* is dropped but is recovered by the subject marker *bá-* which encodes morphological class and number agreement with the omitted subject. Similarly, (69a) is a case of subject focus with an overt focused NP *bɔɔŋgé* ‘children’ which agrees in class and number with the complex morpheme *b5-n*, made up of the agreeing class morpheme *b5-* (noun class two) and the focus marker *-n*. In (69b), we have an instance of focus-drop construction in which the missing focused subject *bɔɔŋgé* ‘children’ is easily recovered thanks to the presence of agreement morphology of the complex *b5-n*.

¹⁷ X is a variable which can be a pro, focus, a topic or a wh-phrase crosslinguistically

Just like pro-drop, focus-drop is also attested in other closed related Bantu languages such as Búlu (Cyrille Crystal Ondoua Engon, p.c) and Etón (Georges Parfait Eloundou, p.c) as can be illustrated in the following examples.

- (70) a. **Ndi** á- luk miŋgá *Baseline sentence (Búlu)*

1.Ndi 1.SM_{PRS}-marry 1.woman
‘Ndi marries a woman.’

- b. **pro_i** á- luk miŋgá *pro-drop*

pro 1.SM_{PRS}-marry 1.woman
‘He marries a woman’

- c. **Ndi** éŋə á- luk miŋgá *subject focus*

1.Ndi 1.FOC 1.SM_{PRS}-marry 1.woman
‘NDI marries a woman’

- d. **pro_i** *(éŋə_i) á- luk miŋgá *focus-drop*

pro 1.FOC 1.SM_{PRS}-marry 1.woman
‘HE marries a woman.’

- (71) a. Tówá a- kós mətsuá *Baseline sentence (Etón)*

1.Towa 1.SM-buy_{-PST1} 1.car
‘Towa has bought a car’

- b. **pro_i** a- kós mətsuá *pro-drop*

pro 1.SM-buy_{-PST1} 1.car
‘He has bought a car’

- c. **mətsuá** jnə Tówá a- kós *object focus*

1.car 1.FOC 1.Towa 1.SM-buy_{-PST1}
‘Towa has bought a CAR.’

- d. *(jnə) Tówá a- kós *focus-drop*

1.FOC 1.Towa 1.SM-buy-PST1
‘HE has bought IT/ a CAR.’

As can be seen in (70) and (71), pro-drop and focus-drop are possible due to the rich agreement morphology. The focus maker (FOC) carries relevant morphological agreement information needed to recover the missing focalised NP just as the subject marker (SM) carries enough morphological agreement information that are needed to recover the dropped subject. We can thus say that like the subject markers, focus markers are also gender-specific or gender-sensitive morphemes that spell out agreement morphology that is necessary for the licensing of drop-structures.

Another interesting issue to be discussed in this section has to do with d-linked foci. D-linked foci undergo NP-shift, are sensitive to cardinality and exhibit a direct object/indirect object asymmetry I double object constructions. In other words, in a double object construction, only a direct object NP modified by numerals can be shifted out of their canonical order. As can be seen from the question under discussion in (72) is about ‘the NUMBER of the books’ (non-

presupposed or unfamiliar) to the speaker. Taken this way, the question is not about ‘the books’ themselves but about their cardinality or number.

(72) Context: *The father knows that the teacher gave the books to the students yesterday. But he does not really know how many books the students received.*

Q: **bikaat gwáñén** malêt a- bí- tí báúdú yaaní
 8.books 8.how many 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-give 2.students yesterday
 ‘How many books did the teacher give to the students yesterday?’

A1: Malet a- bí- tí báúdú yaaní **bikaat bísámal**
 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-give 2.students yesterday 8.books 6.six
 ‘The teacher gave SIX BOOKS to the students yesterday.’

A2: **bikaat bísámal gwá-n** malêt a- bí- tí báúdú yaaní
 8.books 8.six 8-FOC 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-give 2.students yesterday
 ‘The teacher gave SIX BOOKS to the students yesterday.’

A3: # Malet a- bí- tí báúdú **bikaat bísámal** yaaní
 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-give 2.students 8.books 6.six yesterday
 ‘The teacher gave SIX BOOKS to the students yesterday.’

In a context like (72), only the answer provided in (72A1) with the shifted direct object NP *bikaat bísámal* ‘six books’ is felicitous. A sentence like (72A3) on the contrary, is not felicitous as an answer to a d-linked question. Rather, it can be appropriate with a question that indicates wide focus (all-new utterances) or VP-focus situations. In this vein, (72A3) is felicitous as an answer to ‘what’s new?’ or ‘what did the teacher do yesterday?’. The answer in (72A2) with fronting is also felicitous to the question under discussion and it conveys the same interpretation as its counterpart in (72A1). There is no doubt that in (72A1) and (72A2), one can only obtain an exhaustive focus reading in the sense that the cardinal number *bísámal* ‘six’ can be opposed to any other cardinal number say *nine*, *ten*, or *eleven* etc.) in the discourse setting. In this case the numeral *bísámal* ‘six’ comes out as an element that conveys an identificational focus interpretation in Kiss’s (1998) terms. Since it cannot be shifted or fronted alone, it pied-pipes the head noun *bikaat* ‘books’.

Another interesting issue concerning Basáá NP-shift is that in a double object construction, this mechanism is subject to a direct object/indirect object asymmetry in the sense that only a direct object can undergo NP-shift. An indirect object cannot be shifted as illustrated by the ungrammaticality of (73A2). Recall that the canonical word order in Basáá is such that in a double object construction, the indirect object precedes the direct object which in turn precedes the adjunct.

(73) Context: *The father knows that the teacher gave the books to a number of students yesterday. But he does not really know how many of them received the books.*

- Q: **baúdú bájén** malêt a- bí- tí bíkaat yaaní
 2.students 2.how many 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-give 8.books yesterday
 ‘**How many students** did the teacher give the books to yesterday?’
- A1: *Malet a- bí- tí bíkaat (**baúdú básámal**) yaaní (**baúdú básámal**)
 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-give 8.books 2.students 2.six 1.yesterday 2.students 2.six
- A2: **baúdú básámal bís-n** malêt a- bí- tí bíkaat yaaní
 2.students 2.six 2-FOC 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-give 8.books 1.yesterday
 ‘The teacher gave the books to SIX students yesterday.’
- A3: Malet a- bí- tí **baúdú básámal bikaat** yaaní
 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-give 2.students 2.six 8.books 1.yesterday
 ‘The teacher gave the books to SIX students yesterday.’

The above sentences show that a indirect object cannot undergo shifting i.e. it can occur neither in a post-direct object position nor in sentence final position.

Assuming that the numbers (cardinals in this context) occur in a sort of scale or in a set ranging from ‘one’ up to ‘a hundred’ for instance, the answer according to which ‘the teacher gave SIX books to the students’ is true if and only if ‘the teacher did not give them TEN books’ for instance. In this case, we can infer that the cardinal ‘SIX’ exhausts among many other cardinal numbers. Furthermore, the above context (72) is an indication that the speaker is aware about ‘the books’ but unaware about their number. This leads us to agree with previous authors like Comorowski (1989), Cinque (1990), Rizzi (2001c, 2004a) that some wh-elements like ‘how many/ much’ have interpretative discourse properties. It is also important to note that shifting is sensitive to cardinality and objecthood. Highlighting once more on cardinality, in (74) for instance, there are two nominal modifiers, namely an adjective of quality *bilâm ‘nice’* and a numeral *bísámal ‘six’*, shifting or fronting must apply in d-linked contexts (74A1-A2).

(74)

- Q: bikaat bilâm gwâjén malet a- bí- tí baúdú yaaní
 8.books 8.nice 8.how many 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-give 2.students 1.yesterday
 ‘**How many nice books** did the teacher give to the students yesterday?’
- A1: Malet a- bí- tí baúdú yaaní **bikaat bilâm bísámal**
 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-give 2.students yesterday 8.books 8.nice 6.six
 ‘The teacher gave SIX nice books to the students yesterday’
- A2: **bikaat bilâm bísámal gwís-n** malet a- bí- tí baúdú
 8.books 8.nice 6.six 8-FOC 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-give 2.students
 yaaní
 1.yesterday
 ‘The teacher gave SIX nice books to the students yesterday.’

A3:# Malet a- bí- tí báúdú **bikaat bilâm bísámal** yaaní
 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-give 2.students 8.books 8.nice 6.six 1.yesterday
 ‘The teacher gave SIX nice books to the students yesterday’

In the absence of a cardinal number in the discourse setting, the NP, even when combined with an adjectival modifier should either stay in-situ (75A1) or front to sentence initial position (75A2), but never can such an NP be shifted as shown in (75A3).

(75)

Q: mímbéé míntén mí bikaat malet a- bí- tí báúdú yaaní
 8.which 8.kinds 8.GEN 8.books 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-give 2.students 1.yesterday
 ‘What kinds of books did the teacher give to the students yesterday?’

A1: Malet a- bí- tí báúdú **bikaat bilâm** yaaní
 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-give 2.students 8.books 8.nice 1.yesterday
 ‘The teacher gave NICE BOOKS to the students yesterday.’

A2: **bikaat bilâm gwó-n** malet a- bí- tí báúdú yaaní
 8.books 8.nice 8-FOC 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-give 2.students yesterday
 ‘The teacher gave NICE BOOKS to the students yesterday.’

A3: * Malet a- bí- tí báúdú yaaní **bikaat bilâm**
 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-give 2.students yesterday 8.books 8.nice

Note that in a transitive construction (77), a direct object modified by a numeral can also undergo NP-shift. As can be seen in the baseline sentence in (76), an adjunct cannot intervene in-between the direct object and the verb. The only position occupied by the direct object is the immediate postverbal position (IAV). However, in special discourse contexts, i.e. in the presence of a D-linked construction with focus on a numeral (77), NP-shift is successfully realized and the focused NP is not allowed to occur immediately after the verb (77A2). Sentence A2 is only felicitous in all-new, VP focus or in a direct object focus (i.e. what did the woman buy yesterday in the market?) contexts, but not as a direct answer to a D-linked question.

(76) mudaá a- bi- sómb **mámbót malâm** yaaní (***mámbót malâm**) í bom
 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-buy 6.clothes 6.nice 1.yesterday 6.clothes 6.nice LOC 10.market
 (***mámbót malâm**)
 6.clothes 6.nice
 ‘The woman bought nice clothes yesterday in the market.’

(77) Q: **Mambót malâm máñén** mudaá a- bí- sómb í bom yaaní
 6.clothes 6.nice 6.how many 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-buy LOC 10.market 1.yesterday

A1: **pro_i** a- bí- sómb yaaní í bom **mámbót malâm mátân**
 pro 1.SM-PST2-buy 1.yesterday LOC 10.market 6.clothes 6.nice 6.five

Lit: ‘She bought yesterday in the market FIVE nice clothes.’

A2:# **pro_i** a- bí- sómb **mámbót malâm mátân** yaaní í bom
 pro 1.SM-PST2-buy 6.clothes 6.nice 6.five 1.yesterday LOC 10.market

Lit: ‘She bought five nice clothes yesterday in the market.’

One can retain from the NP-shift constructions that they are d-linked, are sensitive to cardinality and exhibit an indirect object/direct object asymmetry in double object constructions. In addition, if we consider focus as new information in a narrow sense, then what is new in a shifted NP in Basáá is the cardinal number because it is the only new information needed, while the head noun (combined with any qualifying adjective) it modifies is presupposed or known in the discourse. Due to the inability to front or shift the sole numeral, one ends up with an instance of focus shift/pied-piping (cf. chapter three for theoretical assumptions of NP-shift). Partially summarizing, NP-shift is sensitive to cardinality and objecthood and occurs in d-linked contexts. The semantic interpretation conveyed by a shifted NP is the one of exhaustivity given that the cardinal number contained in the answer is inherently exhaustive.

3.6 Predicate focus

The last section to discuss in this chapter is concerned with predicate focus. Here, focus is on one instance of predicate focus and its different interpretations. The kind of predicate that is examined is the verb. No attention will be paid to adjective focus as another instance of predicate focus. Note also that a theoretical analysis of verbal focus will be provided in a subsequent chapter (chapter five). This chapter discusses predicate focus from the point of view of its realization and interpretation. Verb focusing can be realized in-situ or ex-situ. This can be realized as verb or verb phrase focus. Like in many languages, predicate focus differs from non-predicate focus in many respects. Sentence (78A), is an instance of VP-focus with a non-exhaustive interpretation. In other words, the statement in (78) is true in every situation where ‘the boy did something else’ in addition to ‘learning mathematics’. This can be shown by the fact that such an answer can be followed by ‘for example/ among others’.

- (78) Q: Kíí hilógá hí- bí- bəŋ
 9.what 19.boy 19-SM-PST2-do
 ‘What did the boy do?’

A: Hilógá hí- bí- nígíl mínsɔŋgí kií ka hega
 19.boy 19.SM-PST2-learn 4.mathematics as such 19.example/among others
 ‘The boy LEARNED MATHEMATICS for example/ among others’

In contrastive VP-focus contexts, one ends up with three different strategies, namely, an in-situ strategy (79A1) a verb fronting with doubling on the right (78A2), or on the left (65A3). In case the QUD is well defined as in (79Q), the verb can stay in-situ (79A1), can undergo fronting with doubling on the right (79A2) or on the left (A3). So the three answers in (79) are appropriate in contrastive focus situations if and only if the context is pre-established. Note that when doubling takes place, the verb is nominalized and if doubling occurs in sentence initial position, there must be a morpho-syntactic realization of focus (79A3) given that the foccalized predicate gets fronted

and is followed by a morphological agreeing focus marker. The nominalized verb behaves like a real noun and acquires noun class features (here class 3). Nominalization is obtained through affixation in verb doubling i.e. a noun class prefix marker (a homorganic nasal of class 3) and a suffix¹⁸ attach to the verb root. The illicitness of (79A4) indicates that the nominalized verb cannot front along with the object of the verb.

(79)

Q: Did the **boy**_i LEARN MATHEMATICS or PLAYED FOOTBALL? *Contrastive VP*

A1: **pro**_i hí- bí- [**nígíl mínsɔngí**]

pro 19.SM-PST2-learn 4.mathematics

'He LEARNED MATHEMATICS (he did not play football).'

*kií ka hega

as such 19.example/among others

'For example.'

A2: **pro**_i hí- bí- [**nígíl mínsɔngí n-** **nígíl-ak**]_{VP}

pro 19.SM-PST2-learn 4.mathematics NMLZ-learn-NMLZ

'He LEARNED MATHEMATICS (he did not play football).'

*kií ka hega

as such 19.example/among others

'For example.'

A3: **n-** **nígíl-ak** **wó-n** **pro**_i hí- bí- **nígíl mínsɔngí**

3.NMLZ-learn-NMLZ 3-FOC **pro** 19.SM-PST2-learn 4.mathematics

'The boy LEARNED MATHEMATICS (he did not play football).'

*kií ka hega

as such 19.example/ among others

'for example'

A4: A1: **n-** **nígíl-ak** **mínsɔngí** **wó-n** **pro**_i hí- bí- **nígíl**

3.NMLZ-learn-NMLZ 4.mathematics 3-FOC **pro** 19.SM-PST2-learn

Note furthermore that both (79A1-A3) can be appropriate in the context of a contrastive narrow verb focus situation. For example, in a context that requires contrastive focus on the verb like in 'Did the boy LEARN or TEACH mathematics?' the three answers are appropriately interpreted. In this case, each of these sentences will be true in every context where 'the boy only LEARNED mathematics' and did not TEACH them.'

Similarly, the three answers (79A1-A3) can convey an exhaustive reading if the QUD clearly indicates it. This is further supported by the fact that they cannot be followed up by utterances such as 'for example/among others.' This means that the answer provided in each case is sufficient and disqualifies any other additional information likely to be provided. This state of

¹⁸ This suffix always exhibits a vk/vg/vy form where V can be a vowel of any form while k, g and y are overlapping consonant.

affairs is expected because relevant alternatives in the sense of Rooth (1985, 1992 & 1996) are already provided in the discourse setting.

3.6.1. TP-fronting in infinitive structures

In some control and infinitive constructions, one can have TP-fronting where the verb fronts along with its internal argument(s). In (80A1) below for instance, one obtains a non-exhaustive focus interpretation. As can be seen in (80A2), a fronted TP can be felicitously followed by complementary information, something which helps establish a parallel with (80A1) with in-situ TP.

- (80) Q: Kíí hilógá hí- ñ- gwêš bôŋ
 9.what 19.boy 19.SM-PRS-want do
 'What does the boy want to do?'

- A1: Hilógá hí- ñ- gwêš **nígíl mínsɔngí** kií ka hega
 19.boy 19.SM-PRS-want learn 4.mathematics as such 19.example
 'The boy wants to LEARN MATHEMATICS for example.'
 ndí íbálê yak **lijowa bipân lí yê, pro_i hí- gá- bôŋ hála**
 but if also 5.INF-wash 8.plates 5.SM be pro 19.SM-FUT2-do so
 'But if washing the plates is also required, he will do that'
 A2: **li- nígíl mínsɔngí jí-n** hilógá hí- ñ- gwêš kií ka hega
 3.INF-learn 4.mathematics 5-FOC 19.boy 19.SM-PRS-want as such 19.example
 'The boy wants to STUDY MATHEMATICS for example.'
 ndí íbálê yak **lijowa bipân lí yê, pro hí- gá- bôŋ hála**
 but if also 5.INF-wash 8.plates 5.SM be pro 19.SM-FUT2-do so
 'But if washing the plates is also required, he will do that.'
 A3: **li- nígíl mínsɔngí jí-n** hilógá hí- ñ- gwêš,
 3.INF-learn 4.mathematics 5-FOC 19.boy 19.SM-PRS-want
 'The boy wants to LEARN MATHEMATICS.'
pro_i hí- ñ-gwêš béeé sál
 pro 19.SM-PRS-want NEG work
 'He does not want to work.'
 'The boy wants to STUDY MATHEMATICS (he does not want *to work*).'

At this stage, the idea is that 'the boy does not only want *to learn mathematics*', but can also '*wash the plates*'. Therefore, this provides further support that fronting is not only triggered by semantic factors such as contrastivity or exhaustivity but for morpho-syntactic reasons such as agreement morphology or focus and probably for pragmatic reasons such as salience. Morphological factors comply with agreement and focus morphology while pragmatic ones rely on the speaker's intention to make the TP salient by drawing the hearer's attention. In (80A3), a contrastive reading is obtained in the presence of relevant alternatives and under correction or contradiction. As it is shown by the parenthetical English translation, the TP 'to teach mathematics' can be contrasted with 'buying the books', and in this case a contrastive reading is

obtained. In addition, note that (80A3) can be subsumed under correction or contradiction of a preceding assertion, such as the ‘boy wants *to buy the books*’. One can realize that in Basáá, an answer to a TP-question can involve a TP-fronting, or an in-situ TP and both strategies can also be interpreted contrastively if relevant alternatives are known in the discourse.

It should also be borne in mind that TP-fronting involves nominalization of the TP, or better still, its ‘infinitivization’. This is explained by the fact that the infinitival particle *li-*¹⁹ is also a class marker in Basáá, and when attached to a verbal root it enables the verb to behave like a noun by acquiring noun class morphology (here class 5). This is the reason why there appears to be gender-specific agreement between the fronted TP and the focus marker.

3.6.2. Fronting all-new V(P)/TP

Just like it is the case with object and subject fronting, it is also important to note that nominalized V-fronting and TP-fronting are possible in all-new contexts. This helps establish a salient asymmetry between argument and verb fronting versus adjunct fronting. In a context like (81) below for instance, it is shown that the verb, the object and the subject can front in all-new contexts (81A1-A3) whereas fronting of the adjunct is ruled out as in (81A4). Note that subject and non-subject (arguments and adjunct) and subject fronting is repeated here for convenience.

(81) Context: **A** travelled two weeks ago and is talking with **B** on the phone.

A: Kíí í yé ñken

9.what 9.SM-be new
‘What’s new?’

B1: **m-** bááb-ak wó-n ñgwende a- bábáá me yaaní

3.NMLZ-wound-NMLZ 3-FOC 1.knife 1.SM-wound-PST2 me 1.yesterday
‘The/A knife WOUNDED me yesterday.’

...ni lé yak báájgé bá-kosná nøy yaaní
and that also/too 2.children 2.SM-receive.PST 7.holiday 1.yesterday
‘Also, the children went on holidays yesterday.’

B2: [li- tila báájgé mōj í súklu]_{VP_i} j̄-n t_i lí- yé nyonó

5.INF-register/write 2.children 6.names LOC 9.school 5-FOC 5.SM-be._{PRS} here
Lit: ‘ENROLLING THE STUDENTS AT SCHOOL IS GOING ON HERE’

B3: ñgwende nyé-n a- bábáá me yaaní

1.knife 1-FOC 1.SM-wound.PST2 me yesterday
‘The/A KNIFE wounded me yesterday.’

... ni lé yak báájgé bá-kosná nøy yaaní
and that also/too 2.children 2.SM-receive 7.holiday 1.yesterday
‘Also, the children went on holidays yesterday.’

¹⁹ Note that the infinitival particle *li-* used in VP-fronting cannot overlap/intechange with the homorganic nominalizing prefix which is used in nominalized V-fronting in (77).

- B4: **mé nyé-n** ñgwende a- bábáá yaaní
 I 1-FOC 1.knife 1.SM-wound.PST2 1.yesterday
 ‘The/A knife wounded ME yesterday.’
- ... ni lé yak bɔɔŋgé bá-kosná nøy yaaní
 and that also/too 2.children 2.SM-receive 7.holiday 1. yesterday
 ‘Also, the children went on holidays yesterday.’
- B5: #yaaní nyé-n hingwende hí- bábáá **mé**
 1. yesterday 1-FOC 19.knife 19.SM-wound.PST2 me
 ‘The/A knife wounded me YESTERDAY.’

From the above, it can be observed that the answers in (81A1-A3) are all-new²⁰ and correlate with non-exhaustivity as they can appropriately be followed up by additional information. This is also tantamount to saying that information focus is not always realized in-situ and that preverbal or left peripheral focus is not always associated with contrastivity or exhaustivity as shown by E. Kiss (1998), López (2010) a.o. (81B1) is an instance of nominalized V-fronting while its counterpart in (81B2) involves TP-fronting whereby the nominalized infinitive verb *litila* ‘to write’ has been fronted along with all its complements (object and adjunct) from the canonical subject position (i.e. immediately before the subject marker) to sentence initial position just before the focus marker. Sentences (81B3-B4) are instances of object and subject fronting respectively. I can assume so far that the reason why adjunct fronting (81A5) is not allowed in all-focus sentences is due to a theoretical reason, namely a locality²¹ requirement that fronting in all-new context targets the closest elements to sentence initial position. Given that adjuncts are very far from the sentence initial position (the left peripheral focus domain), it cannot be an eligible candidate for fronting (cf. chapter four for a theoretical discussion). The predicate and its arguments can be fronted in all-new sentences because they appear to be very closer to the sentence initial position as opposed to adjuncts. The data so far have demonstrated that there exists a distributional asymmetry between argument focus, predicate focus (including VP-fronting) and adjunct focus in the sense that while the former (arguments, predicate or VP) can be fronted in all-new contexts, the latter is excluded in the same context.

3.6.3 Focus association with the predicate

Like non-predicate focus, predicate focus in Basáá can also associate with focus-sensitive operators to the exclusion of the particle *-támá*. The sentences in (82) show that scope relations

²⁰ Focus fronting in all-new utterances is often said to be an instance of subpart of focus fronting which induces a syntax-semantics mismatch. I will provide evidence in the next chapter that cases like (79) exhibit no such mismatch as conceived by certain scholars (cf. Lopez 2010, Fanselow & Leertová 2011 etc.) who discuss similar cases in Indo-european languages.

²¹ This shall be discussed thoroughly in the next chapter

between the verb and negation are subject to a locality constraint i.e. negation only scopes over a verb in the same clause (82a). In case of nominalized verb fronting, reconstruction is not possible in the presence of the negation (83b-c)

- (82) a. mudaá a- bí- **sómb** bée bítâmb **n-** **sómb-ŷ**
 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-buy._{IMPF} NEG 8.shoes 3.NMLZ-buy-NMLZ
 ‘The woman did not BUY the shoes’: ‘It is not the case that the woman bought the shoes’
- b. ???**n-** **sómb-ŷ** bée **wó-n** mudaá a- bí- **sómb** bítâmb
 3.NMLZ-buy-NMLZ NEG 3-FOC 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-buy._{IMPF} 8.shoes
 Intended: ‘The woman did not BUY the shoes’: ‘It is not the case that the woman bought the shoes.’
- c. ***n-** **sómb-ŷ** **wó-n** mudaá a- bí- **sómb** bée bítâmb
 3.NMLZ-buy-NMLZ 3-FOC 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-buy._{IMPF} NEG 8.shoes
 Intended: ‘The woman did not BUY the shoes’: ‘It is not the case that the woman bought the shoes.’

According my predictions that focus fronting involves a biclausal²² structure as depicted in (83), it is clear that negation is merged higher in the structure so that it can assign scope on the focused verb prior to verb movement. Giving that the nominalized verbal form *n-sómb-ŷ* and the lexical verb *sómb* ‘buy’ itself are c-commanded by negation (prior to verb movement), in the same clause as shown in (83a) the sentence is grammatical. Conversely, in (84b-c) the fronted nominalized verb *n-sómb-ŷ* is not locally associated with negation, therefore, the sentences becomes illicit.

- (83)
- a. [AgrS-P mudaá [AgrS a-[TP[T bí-[AspP [Asp^[IMPF] **sómb**_i [NegP bée [Neg **t_i** [VP[V **t_i** ..bítâmb
 1.woman 1.SM- PST2- buy NEG 8.shoes
 n- **sómb-ŷ**]]]]]]]
 3.NMLZ-buy-NMLZ
- b. *[XP **n-** **sómb-ŷ**_i [X...[COMP **t_i** **wó-n** [[AgrS-P ...[NegP bée [Neg...[VP ...**t_i**...]]]]
 3.NMLZ-buy-NMLZ 3-FOC NEG
- c. *[XP **n-** **sómb-ŷ**_i [X... [NegP bée [...[COMP **t_i** **wó-n** [[AgrS-P ...**t_i**...]]]]
 3.NMLZ-buy-NMLZ NEG

In (84b-c), the traces of the fronted nominalized verb are contained within the embedded clause and scope assignment cannot go beyond clause boundaries given that the extracted material and its traces are not bound locally. This is surprising giving that fronted non-verbal elements have been said to reconstruct in the presence of an embedded negation. Here again, one can assume that scope assignment with negation exhibit a verb/non-verb asymmetry in root and embedded contexts.

²² To be discussed in subsequent chapters

Contrary to negation, the exclusive operator *ndígí* ‘only’ is not subject to locality requirements. In other words, reconstruction is possible in the presence of the exclusive operator *ndígí* ‘only’ i.e. whether the focused verb is local to the latter or not. This is illustrated below.

- (83) a. mudaá a- bí- **sómb** **ndígí** bítâmb **n-** **sómb-ŷy**
 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-buy._{IMPF} only 8.shoes 3.NMLZ-buy-NMLZ
 ‘The woman only bought the shoes’: ‘It is only the case that the woman bought the shoes’
- b. **n-** **sómb-ŷy** **ndígí wó-n** mudaá a- bí- **sómb** bítâmb
 3.NMLZ-buy-NMLZ only 3-FOC 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-buy._{IMPF} 8.shoes
 Intended: ‘The woman only bought the shoes’: ‘It is only the case that the woman bought the shoes.’
- c. **n-** **sómb-ŷy** **wó-n** mudaá a- bí- **sómb** **ndígí** bítâmb
 3.NMLZ-buy-NMLZ 3-FOC 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-buy._{IMPF} only 8.shoes
 Intended: ‘The woman only bought the shoes’: ‘It is only the case that the woman bought the shoes.’

The above sentences indicate that the exclusive operator *ndígí* ‘only’ can associate with the trace of a fronted verbal element, just as it is the case with fronted non-subject foci.

- (84)
- a. [AgrS-P mudaá [AgrS a- [TP [T bí- [AspP [Asp^[IMPF] **sómb**_i [VP **ndígí** [VP[V **t_i** ..bítâmb
 1.woman 1.SM- PST2- buy only 8.shoes
 n- **sómb-ŷy**]]]]]]]
 3.NMLZ-buy-NMLZ
- b. [XP **n-** **sómb-ŷy**_i [X...[COMP **t_i** **wó-n** [[AgrS-P...[VP **ndígí** [VP ...**t_i**...]]]]
 3.NMLZ-buy-NMLZ 3-FOC only
- c. [XP **n-** **sómb-ŷy**_i [X... [**ndígí** [...[COMP **t_i** **wó-n** [AgrS-P [VP ...**t_i**...]]]]
 3.NMLZ-buy-NMLZ only 3-FOC

3.7. Fronting in ‘all-new’ contexts and related constructions crosslinguistically

The phenomenon of focus fronting in all-new contexts and related constructions is not specific to Basáá, as it has been proved to be attested crosslinguistically: Czech, French, German and many other languages allows this phenomenon. In their analysis of focus fronting in all-new utterances in Czech and German, Fanselow & Lenertová (2011) discuss what they call subpart of focus fronting (SFF) among other aspects to show that focus and topic are not syntactically encoded. However, this chapter does not have any pretention to discuss such theoretical issues as the burden of this phenomenon will be addressed in chapter four. However, it is important to show that focus fronting in all-focus contexts is not limited to Basáá because it is also encountered in other languages from different family groups. The following examples from Fanselow and Lenertová (2011) provide further support to our analysis and attest that subpart focus fronting in all-new contexts is attested in Germanic (German) and Slavic (Czech) languages. In (85-86) we

have an instance of fronting with subject accentuation while in (87-88) we have cases of fronting with object accentuation. Overall, the authors show that what fronts in each case below is not the whole semantic focus but a subpart of it (here accentuation is indicated by CAPITALS).

- (85) Q: Why did you do that?

A: **MATka_i** mi to **t_i** porucâila Czech
 mother.nom me.dat it ordered.sg.fm
 ‘Mother ordered it to me.’

- (86) Q: What happened?

A:[**Eine KRANKENschwester**]_i hat **t_i** einen PaTIENTen getötet German
 a nurse has a.acc patient killed
 ‘A nurse killed a patient.’

- (87) Q: What happened?

A: [**Im GRAben**]_i ist er **t_i** gelandet! German
 in ditch has he landed
 ‘He drove into the ditch!’

- (88) Q: What’s new?

A: **GULásâ_i** jsem uvarâila **t_i** Czech
 goulash aux.1sg cooked. Sg.fm
 ‘I cooked goulash.’

As argued by the authors, since the above contexts are normally expected with sentential foci i.e cases where all the sentences are focused, consequently, it is not the whole sentence which is focused in each case, but a subpart of it. In addition, it is argued by the authors that fronting in this case is prosody-driven without any syntactic effects, because it is not the whole semantic focus that is fronted. In this perspective, one obtains a syntax-semantics mismatching because the constituents which front are not the ones which are targeted by the focus. A look at (84) above allows one to draw a parallel between Basáá German and Czech. This goes without saying that there appears to be a significant similarity between the three languages. However, although Basáá is a tone language, there is no prosodic effect on focus as already mentioned, and therefore fronting in all-new contexts in Basáá cannot pertain to any prosodic account.

What is important in my opinion is that focus fronting in all-focus sentences is attested cross-linguistically, and for the specific case of Basáá, let us make it clear to the reader from now that focus fronting in all-new utterances boils down do a normal focus fronting mechanism that depends on two syntactic requirements, namely the *Extended Projection Principle* (EPP) and the *Focus-Criterion*. Fronting in Basáá tends to be the most preferred strategy and that is why even in all-new cases fronting is resorted to. I will propose that focus realization has a high tendency to be expressed overtly by constituents’ rearrangement and morphological marking and will show that what seems to be just a subpart of focus is simply a superficial phenomenon which

derives mainly from two successive movement operations namely, focus pied-piping into the embedded focus field and EPP movement into the root clause.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter was a contribution from a descriptive perspective to the domain of information structure with special emphasis on focus realization and interpretation in Basáá as a focus-drop language. The analysis has demonstrated that the grammatical category of focus in this language has no prosodic effects and that focus can be realized in-situ without any grammatical marking or ex-situ by constituent reordering and morphological marking. The morphological marking is gender-specific i.e. a fronted focus in sentence initial position must agree in class and number with a morphological focus marker. The language also distinguishes the Immediately After Verb (IAV) position as a position dedicated to fronted wh-phrases. Some wh-phrases which are not licensed in-situ can move either to sentence initial position or to the IAV position. However, focused non-wh constituents are banned from moving to the IAV position. A subsequent chapter (chapter six), shall offer a profound study of the IAV position not only from a descriptive point of view, but also from a theoretical perspective. It was observed that there is no one-to-one relationship between the structural position of focus and its semantic interpretation. A focused element is associated with either an exhaustive/contrastive interpretation or with a non-exhaustive interpretation depending on the context and against (Bassong 2010, 2012a-b). Just as an in-situ focus can convey both a non-exhaustive and an exhaustive/contrastive reading, so can its ex-situ counterpart. Overall, the study revealed that subject focus carries an exhaustive presupposition when it is a direct answer to a subject wh-question and a contrastive interpretation in the presence of relevant alternatives in the sense of Rooth (1985, 1992, 1996), Krifka (2008) *inter alia*. Subject focus can also be non-exhaustive if it is a direct answer to a question that requires a non-exhaustive interpretation, namely a polar question in the sense of Abels & Muriungi (2008). Object focus can be realized either in-situ or ex-situ and can correlate with any interpretation depending on the context. An accent was put on the distribution of three focus-sensitive particles, namely the exclusives *ndígí* ‘only’ and *-támá* and the negative particle *béé*. Both *ndígí* ‘only’ and the negative particle *béé* are said to convey a wide range of meaning but only negation can scope over a preceding subject in root clauses. It was indicated that reconstruction is possible under the negative *béé* ‘not’ and the operator *ndígí* ‘only’; contra the *Principle of Lexical Association (PLA)* which was proved to be inadequate crosslinguistically. It was argued that in Basáá extracted non-subject elements reconstruct. An

extracted subject can never reconstruct in the presence of a postverbal *ndígí* ‘only’ although the latter appears to be a troublesome operator in subject extraction. As for the particle exclusive - *támá*, it is always right adjacent to its focus and can convey an adjectival meaning in out-of-the-blue contexts. This particle was said to be a disambiguator given that it cancels an ambiguous reading which is attested in the presence of negation and the exclusive particle *ndígí* ‘only’. It was shown that Basaá, alongside other closely related Bantu languages such as Búlu and Etón is a focus-drop language due to its rich morphological agreement. This agreement morphology helps recover the meaning of a dropped focus in the discourse. NP-shift is realized in d-linked contexts, is sensitive to cardinality and exhibits a direct/indirect object asymmetry in double object constructions. In a double object structure, only direct objects modified by a numeral can undergo NP shift. Shifted NPs convey an exhaustive focus reading. The analysis of verbal focus showed that Basaá makes use of different strategies for verb focusing. The first consists in focusing the verb in-situ, the second requires nominalization of the verb or the VP with the doubling of the verb on the right or the left. Whether it occurs in-situ or ex-situ, predicate focus can convey both an exhaustive and a non-exhaustive interpretation. The distribution of the focus-sensitive operators *béé* ‘not’ and *ndígí* ‘only’ in relation to the focus verb has shown that verb reconstruction is subject to locality constraints with negation while a fronted focus can reconstruct in the presence of the exclusive *ndígí* ‘only’ independently of the distance. The discussion showed that all-new sentences seem²³ to be instances of subpart of focus fronting of a semantic focus and that in Basaá, any constituent to the exclusion of adjuncts can front in all-new contexts. By so doing, the derivation of focus will be discussed in the next chapter by providing evidence that focus fronting in Basaa, is uniform and is independent of the context. It is triggered by morphosyntactic requirements, namely the focus-criterion and the EPP. The ban on adjunct fronting in ‘all-new’ sentences and related constructions is linked to the prominence of the event over its place and time. In other words, only the predicate and 1st arguments are allowed to front in such contexts because what matters a lot is the event as a whole and not its place and/or its location.

²³ This is just superficial. I will show in the next chapter that there is no syntax-semantics mismatching in all-new foci

Conclusion of the part

In this first part of the dissertation, it was shown that Basàá is a noun class and tone language of the Bantu language family with an SVO basic word order. The SVO order can be altered in some contexts such as question formation, focus, topic, evidential constructions etc. Basàá is endowed with a complex verb and noun morphologies and a tone system made up of two main tones, namely the low and the high tones, which, when combined in some contexts, give rise to contour tones, namely a low-high tone [˘] and a high-low one [^]. In the study of some discourse-related properties, special attention was paid to the notions of presupposition, background, focus, topic, evidentiality etc. The notions of theme and rheme were also discussed as two discourse properties which, over time, coincide with focus and topic respectively depending on the schools of thoughts. Focus as a grammatical category in Basàá can be realized in-situ, i.e. when the constituent occupies its canonical position. At this level, there is no focus marking at all. Focus can also be marked morpho-syntactically, i.e. the focalized item can be fronted in sentence initial position and followed by a complex morpheme which is made up of an agreeing gender morpheme and a focus marker. Focus interpretation depends on the context of communication and not on a specific syntactic position (*contra* Bassong 2010, 2012a-b). For instance, as opposed to previous studies which claim on the basis of intonation languages such as English and Hungarian, that contrastive focus is associated with the displacement of the focalized constituent and that information focus is always realized in-situ (É. Kiss 1998), the data discussed have shown that such a generalization does not hold in Basàá given that a constituent with an information focus interpretation can be felicitously fronted in sentence initial position. Focus can also be expressed through the use of focus-sensitive particles/operators such as negation and only-like particles. It was proven that the *Principle of Lexical Association* (PLA), according to which a focus operator cannot be associated with the trace of a focused item, is not applicable in every context. In other terms, in Basàá, it is possible to extract an element within the scope of a focus-sensitive operator with successful reconstruction of the extracted material, an operation which, under Beaver & Clark's (2008) predictions, is not acceptable. In addition, the study revealed that the Immediately After Verb position in Basàá is the locus of focal information. Verb focusing was addressed and the outcomes showed that there is a considerable difference between non-verbal and verbal focus in the language as the latter exhibits doubling effects, i.e. the focalized verb occurs twice in the sentence i.e. it can appear in a nominalized form and in an inflected form, but with exactly the same semantic reading(s).

PART II**THE DERIVATION OF FOCUS AND QUESTIONS**

Introduction

This part consists of three main chapters, with special emphasis on the derivation of focus and questions in Basaá. It is shown that focus is derived in core syntax as a grammatical feature just like other types of formal features such as tense, aspect, negation etc. The study reveals that, contrary to Bassong ‘s (2010) analysis according to which the derivation of focus involves only a single functional head in the left periphery, the focus field contains much more structure. In this vein, focus fronting in Basaá henceforth is said to involve a bi-clausal non-cleft strcuture made up of a matrix TP projection and an embedded focus phrase. The matrix clause contains a null verbal copula while Spec-TP of the matrix clause is occupied by the raised DP which previously satisfies the focus requirements in the embedded focus phrase. The focus field is made up of not only a focus phrase projection, but also another fucntional projection called Agreement Compementizer Phrase (AgrCP), the head of which is occupied by an agreeing gender morpheme and the head of which is null. Above AgrCP is the Focus Phrase (FocP), the head of which is occupied by the focus morpheme and the specifier of which is occupied by the trace/silent copy of the focused item. More precisely, in this chapter in particular and this thesis at large, I proposed a new approach to focus movement in Basaá. I show that focus fronting in Basaá involves a bi-clausal structure made up of a main clause headed by a null verbal copula and an embedded focus phrase. I provide semantic and morphosyntactic arguments in favour of a non-cleft structure in Basaá focus constructions. To this end, I show that focus fronting in this Bantu language depends on two major requirements, namely the Extended Projection Principle, a classical/traditional syntactic requirement that every clause should have a subject (Chomsky 1981/2, 1995, Grimshaw 1991 etc), and the Focus-Criterion, a syntactic requirement that, at a certain stage of the derivation, the specifier of a focus phrase should be filled by an XP category with focus-features. By so doing, I will show that given the unavailability of expletive subjects to satisfy the EPP in the matrix clause in Basaá focus constructions, the focalized constituent is compelled to move stepwise in the derivation i.e. focus movement into the embedded focus field and EPP movement in the root clause. Overall, I will argue against any attempt to assimilate Basaá focus fronting to a cleft construction in the manner of English or/and French. I also extend the analysis cross-linguistically by comparing the Basaá language to other natural languages from various language families. Globally, I will demonstrate that Basaá should be considered as a mixed language, i.e. a language in-between languages with overt functional heads and the ones with covert heads in the expression of focus as a grammatical category. The same analysis is extended to the derivation of predicate fronting, that is, the discussion will reveal that predicate fronting in Basaá is triggered by the same morphosyntactic factors as non-predicate elements.

The discussion of predicate focus in terms of syntax is also conducted under the Parallel Chains approach (Aboh & Dyakonova 2009) according to which predicate fronting with doubling involves two independent parallel chains, namely an A-chain between the verb in the I-domain and its copy in the VP/vP and an A-bar chain between the focalized verb in the focus domain and its copy in the VP/vP layer. However, the analysis of Basaá shows that the focalized element can raise higher in the structure than the focus field, notably the matrix TP position.

The discussion of question formation shows that there is a lower focus phrase projection in the VP periphery in Basaá and that this focus position, due to minimality effects, only attracts some wh-phrases. In addition, it is demonstrated that wh-phrases differ in terms of interpretation. They can convey an echo-question reading for pragmatic reasons, they can convey a focal interpretation or an interrogative reading if they are non-referential. In other words, depending on the context, non-referential wh-phrases convey a semantic interpretation which associate them with a specific syntactic position called the Wh-Phrase whereas other wh-item are said to occupy the focus field. In discussing yes-no and indirect questions, it is revealed that by virtue of expressing polar question readings and by being expressed by specific morphemes, they are hosted by functional Polar(ity) Phrases (PolP). Each of these phrases is projected in the syntax by a specific morpheme which encodes yes/no meaning or simply an interrogative interpretation.

CHAPTER IV
THE SYNTAX OF FOCUS

Introduction

That focus functions as a grammatical feature triggering movement is not new in the literature. The issue has been the subject matter for a good number of linguists including (e.g. Aboh 2004a, 2007; 2010; Biloa 1992, Biloa 1995, 1997, 2013; Brody 1990; Horvath 1981, 1986, 1995, E. Kiss 1995; Rizzi 1997; Miyagawa 2010 a.o). Basaá is not an exception to the rule as already discussed in Bassong (2010). In Basaá, a focus-drop language, focus fronting works in tandem with morphological agreement with phonologically realized gender-specific morphemes encoding not only class, and number, but also focus information. Such agreement morphology is not obtained in in-situ cases as already discussed in the previous chapters. The Basaá empirical data nicely go in line with Schneider-Zioga's (2007), Baker's (2008) among other analyses which clearly show that Bantu languages in most cases are left edge agreement languages. This state of affairs is explained insofar as fronted categories enter into an agreement relation with overtly realized functional heads that encode not only \emptyset -features agreement, but also information structure-related devices such as focus, topic, evidentiality and the like.

In this chapter I propose a null copula approach to the derivation of focus fronting by arguing that the syntax of focus constructions in Basaá is well accounted for if one takes into account two morphosyntactic criteria, namely the *Focus-Criterion* as proposed in the current cartographic approach to syntactic structures (Aboh 2004a, 2007, 2010; Benincà 2001, 2006; Benincà and Poletto 2004; Benincà & Munaro 2010; Rizzi 1997, 2001, 2004b *inter alia*) and the *Extended Projection Principle* (EPP) (Chomsky 1981 and subsequent work). By adopting a cartography-based approach according to which information structure-related devices such as focus and topic enter core syntax in the form of discourse-features, I provide an additional novel approach which combines the focus-criterion with the EPP. By so doing, I demonstrate based on morphosyntactic and semantic evidence that, although focus fronting in Basaá involves a copula clause headed by a null verbal element and that this couple structure must not be assimilated to English and/or French clefts. I argue that the focus feature in Basaá is not quite different from other formal features such as Case, Tense, Aspect, Negation etc. In line with Chomsky's (2001:2) *Uniformity Principle* according to which all languages are uniform to some extent, and as always claimed by syntactic cartographers, this chapter does not only handle Basaá-related issues, but it also explores other languages from different family groups to feed comparative syntax . Overall, I

defend the idea that focus is a lexical item that is attested cross-linguistically. Although sometimes covert in certain languages, and overt in others, focus displays a good number of structural properties that provide *prima facie* evidence that it projects in the syntax and that failure to include it in the syntactic derivation would lead to a violation of some principles of Universal Grammar (UG) such as the *Inclusiviness Condition* (Chomsky 1995:225).

The chapter is organized as follows. § 4.1 provides a brief introduction to the left peripheral focus. § 4.1.1 deals with left peripheral focus and agreement morphology in Basaá. It is shown that left peripheral focus fronting in Basaá works in tandem with obligatory agreement morphology. § 4.1.1.1 provides arguments in support of a non-cleft structure for Basaá focus fronting. § 4.2 discusses complementizer agreement from a cross-linguistic perspective in order to extend the analytical paradigm by demonstrating that the phenomenon is attested in other languages although sometimes differently. § 4.3 to 4.3.2 handle some A-bar properties of focus fronting such as island and reconstruction effects, weak crossover, resumption, parasitic gaps etc. § 4.4 to 4.4.1 deals with theoretical assumptions. In concrete terms, I profoundly recast Bassong's (2010) focus fronting analysis and propose what I will refer to as split-FOC and null copula hypotheses and an EPP-based approach. It is shown that what was previously considered as a single functional focus head in Basaá is in fact a manifestation of two different functional heads namely a focus head which hosts an invariable nasal focus morpheme *-N* and an agreeing gender-specific morpheme which projects an agreement complementizer projection (AgrCP). This latter functional projection hosts a gender-specific morpheme which always agrees in class and number with the focused constituent. We follow Pollock's (1989) and Belletti's (1990) footsteps by arguing that there should be an agreement projection in the syntactic derivation and that, in the case of focus fronting in Basaá, this functional projection is below the focus phrase, or in more technical terms, is c-commanded by the focus phrase, so much so head movement from AgrC⁰ to Foc for incorporation purposes (Baker 1988). After head movement has taken place, the focused element is probed over by two different heads, namely the embedded Foc head and T the head of the matrix TP projection. Movement of the focalized constituents into the focus field is said to be triggered by focus requirements while the second movement step is motivated by EPP purposes. In § 4.4.2 and 4.4.2.1, I extend the paradigm and postulate that the split-FOC hypothesis may be applied cross-linguistically. § 4.4.2.2 is concerned with focus in Italian and Hungarian as previously discussed in the literature with the intention to show from these analyses that although focus can be implicitly or covertly expressed in these languages, it

does exist in the form of a formal feature that projects in core syntax. It is eventually concluded from these observations that all languages are in to some extend uniform in the sense of Chomsky's (2001) *Uniformity Principle*. §4.6 to 4.5.2.2 deals with relative clauses in the spirit of Rizzi & Shlonsky's (2007) and Rizzi (2010a)'s *Criterial Freezing Principle*. Grosso modo, the discussion demonstrates that extracting an element from a relative clause is blocked for criterial freezing reasons. In this vein, it is proposed that relative clause formation in Basáá is an instance of A-bar movement and that if a category inside a relative clause is probed over by the higher Foc and T heads, that category must pied-pipe the whole complex NP/DP chunk to the focus field then to the matrix TP layer. It is shown that heavy pied-piping in such cases is conditioned by the *feature-percolation principle*. § 4.6 is concerned with NP-Shift (NPS). It is shown that NP-Shift is an instance of leftward movement of the shifted constituent into Spec-FocP followed by remnant movement of the remnant clause to specifier position of the Ground Phrase (GP); a functional projection dedicated to presupposed, or background information known in the discourse (Pollock 2004). At the final stage of the derivation, the ground phrase c-commands FocP; a position occupied by the shifted NP. The proposals made for such movement operation are based on Kayne's (1994) antisymmetry approach. Finally, § 4.7 addresses the derivation of focus fronting in all-new contexts as already mentioned in the preceding chapter. The proposal in this section is that fronting in all-new contexts is derived almost in the same manner as other foci although the former induces a sort of second position effects which consist in fronting the focus head into some functional Force head position. The fact that only the predicate or its arguments (subject, object) are allowed to front in 'all-new' contexts is claimed to be linked to the prominence of the event over its place and time. In other words, given that in 'all-new' contexts, only the predicate and/or its arguments can be fronted, it is argued that this is due to the fact that what matters in such contexts is the event as a whole and not its place or/and time. Syntactically, what seems to be a subpart of the semantic focus on the surface is simply deceptive. This is due to the fact that in all-new contexts, the whole sentence first moves into the focus domain in the syntax. However, since Basáá lacks expletive subjects that would fulfil the EPP in the matrix TP in such cases, there is subsequent fronting of either the subject, the object or the predicate into the matrix TP for EPP considerations while Foc-to-Force movement takes place for the sake of well-formedness and the need to comply with the LCA (Linear Correspondence Axiom). In other words, in the spirit of the LCA, the prediction is that a focus head/morpheme in Basáá should always c-command/precede its AgrS-P/TP complement so much so that the focus head cannot be stranded at spellout. This head needs to be supported by a

phonetically realized AgrS-P complement. This gives rise to what I refer to as second position effects which require that the focus morpheme should occupy the second position at the final stage of the derivation. Adjunct fronting in all-new utterances is banned because of minimalist effects i.e. because it is very far away from matrix clause as opposed to the predicate and its arguments which are closer to it.

4.1 Left peripheral focus

This specific section is concerned with focus fronting to sentence initial position known under the label the left peripheral focus. As already discussed in the previous chapter, focus fronting in Basaá is morpho-syntactic in the sense that it gives rise to constituents reordering and morphological marking. This is attested for non-subject and subject foci.

4.1.1 Left peripheral focus and agreement morphology in Basaá

Before discussing theoretical issues related to focus fronting, it seems necessary to briefly recall some aspects already discussed in the previous chapter for convenience. As our previous discussion revealed, the constituent that enters into agreement with a fronted focus is bimorphemic. It is made up of a variant class agreement marker which is homophonous with a pronominal element of the objective form to which is attached an invariant nasal focus marker ‘-N’. Taking (1a) as the baseline sentence, the following examples exhibit focus fronting with the subject (1b), the indirect object (1c), the direct object (1d) and the time adjunct (1e).

(1)

- a. Mudaá a- bí- kebél bákén mboŋgóó yaaní *Baseline sentence*
1.woman 1.SM-PST2-serve 2.guests 9. mboŋgóó 1.yesterday
‘The woman served the guests mbóngóó (a special Basaá sauce) yesterday.’
- b. **Mudaá nyé-n** a- bí- kebél bákén mboŋgóó yaaní *Subject focus*
1.woman 1-FOC 1.SM-PST2-serve 2.guests 9. mboŋgóó 1.yesterday
‘The WOMAN served the guests mboŋgóó (a special Basaá sauce) yesterday.’
- c. **báken bó-n** mudaá a- bí- kebél mboŋgóó yaaní *Indirect object focus*
2.guests 2-FOC 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-serve 9. mboŋgóó 1.yesterday
‘The woman served mbóngóó (a special Basaá sauce) to the GUESTS yesterday.’
- d. **mboŋgóó yé-n** mudaá a- bí- kebél bákén yaaní *Direct object focus*
9. mboŋgóó 9-FOC 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-serve 2.guests 1.yesterday
‘The woman served MBONGÓÓ (a special Basaá sauce) to the guests yesterday.’

e. **yaaní nyé-n** mudaá a- bí- kebél bákén mbóngóó *Adjunct focus*

1.yesterday 1-FOC 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-serve 2.guests 9. mboŋgóó

‘The woman served mbóngóó (a special Basaá sauce) to the guests YESTERDAY.’

As illustrated in the data above, morphological agreement between the focalized constituent and the focus morpheme varies with respect to the noun class. This simply shows that agreement is gender-specific, that is, a fronted focus must always agree in class and number with a matching agreement item. The ungrammaticality of sentences (2a-b) testifies that a focused constituent from class 1 for instance cannot agree with a a focus marker which displays agreement from class 9 and vice versa.

(2)

a.* **Mudaá yš-n** a- bí- kebél bákén mbóngóó yaaní

1.woman 9-FOC 1.SM-PST2-serve 2.guests 9. mboŋgóó 1.yesterday

b.* **mboŋgóó nyé-n** mudaá a- bí- kebél bákén yaaní

9. mboŋgóó 1-FOC 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-serve 2.guests 1.yesterday

That the fronted constituents in (1b-e) are focused is supported by the fact that they are felicitously interpreted as answers to the question that indicate subject focus, indirect object focus, direct object focus and adjunct focus as illustrated in (3a-d) respectively.

(3)

a. **Njéé a- bí- kebél báken mboŋgóó yaaní** *Subject question*

1.who 1.SM-PST2-serve 2.guests 9. mboŋgóó 1.yesterday

‘Who served mboŋgóó to the guests yesterday?’

b. **ɓonjéé mudaá a- bí- kebél mbóngóó yaaní** *Indirect object question*

2.who 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-serve 9. mboŋgóó 1.yesterday

‘To whom did the woman serve mboŋgóó yesterday?’

c. **Kíí mudaá a bí- kebél báken yaaní** *Direct object question*

9.what 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-serve 2.guests 1.yesterday

‘What did the woman serve the guests yesterday?’

d. **Kélkíí mudaá a- bí- kebél báken mboŋgóó** *Adjunct question*

1.when 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-serve 2.guests 9. mboŋgóó

‘When did the woman serve the guests mboŋgóó ?’

From the observations so far, and all things being equal, the matching between the answers in (1) and the question in (3) is a clear indication that what we are dealing with is focus and nothing else and that the sentences in (1-b-e) above can never be used in other discourse contexts in Basaá apart from the focus situations. This state of matters simply shows that discourse participants interact in a collaborative way by respecting a number of rules such as discourse felicity. Either way, apart from other side effects (absent-mindedness, tiredness etc.), the speaker

should always provide a felicitous answer to the hearer in order to obtain a successful dialogue. In this vein, by providing a matching answer to the question, this simply goes in line with the ordered *Assertion Structure* (AS) proposed in the literature by Zubizaretta (1998:4) in the following terms in (4).

(4) **Assertion Structure** (Zubizaretta: 1998:4, quoted by Aboh 2010:17).

'In the case of question-answer pairs, the presupposition provided by the context question is part of the AS [...] The focus-presupposition structure of such statements is represented in terms of two ordered assertions. The first assertion (A1) is the existential presupposition provided by the context question. The second assertion (A2) is an equative relation between a definite variable (the restriction of which is the presupposition provided by the context question and a value).'

Grosso modo, taking (4) into account, and considering that the answers in (1) are felicitously interpreted in the contexts in (3), we can argue at this stage that question-answer pairs are ordered in such a way that the content of an answer should match with a corresponding question. As a result, since question-answer-pairs come out as one of the diagnostic tests for focus constructions, each answer provided in (1b-e) carries the same focus presupposition as the corresponding content question. The data at hand so far indicate that focus in Basaá is realized morpho-syntactically.

4.1.1.1 Basaá foci are not clefts

From the early 80's up to quite recently, many scholars have associated focus fronting (verbal as well as non-verbal) in African languages with cleft constructions. Some works include Koopman (1984, 2000), Lumsden & Lefebvre (1990), Manfredi (1993), Kobele & Torrence (2006), Kandybowicz (2008, 2004), Torrence (2013) etc. Based on these previous works, one may be tempted to assimilate focus fronting in Basaá to a cleft²⁴ construction, which is not true under close scrutiny.

Morphosyntactically, Basaá does not exhibit cleft properties such as *be*-type inflected copulas in the manner of English (6a &8a) and/or French (6b & 8b). Besides, these two Indo-european languages make use of expletive subjects which are never attested in Basaá focus. English and French clefts require a relative clause complement (6 &8), the use of lexical complementizers (6a-b) and relative pronouns (8a-b). Basaá focus does not license relative clause complements, whether they are introduced by a lexical complementizer (5d) or by a

²⁴ Aboh (2006) provides strong evidence against a cleft analysis of predicate fronting in Gungbe. Most of the arguments here are inspired from him.

relativizer (7b) as compared to English and French. As a result, focus fronting in Basaá is incompatible with relative clauses i.e. under no circumstances, can a focus construction select for a relative clause complement (5d & 7b). Recall that Basaá relative clauses²⁵ are completely different from focus constructions as shown in (5c). The optionality of the definiteness marker²⁶ preceding the relativized constituent cannot change the the (il)licitness of the sentence.

(5)

- a. me n- yí **lé** mudaá a- bí- sómb-ôl bóóŋgé mambót
I PRS-know that 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-buy-BEN 2.children 6.clothes
'I know that the woman bought the clothes for the children'
- b. **mambót mó-n** mudaá a- bí- sómb-ôl bóóŋgé
6.clothes 6-FOC 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-buy-BEN 2.children
'The woman bought the CLOTHES for the children.'
- c. í **mambót (má)** mudaá a- bí- sómb-ôl bóóŋgé má n- héé díyê
DEF 6.clothes 6.REL 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-buy-BEN 2.chldren 6.SM-PRS-cost expensive
- d.* **mambót mó-n lé** mudaá a- bí- sómb-ôl bóóŋgé
6.clothes 6-FOC that 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-buy-BEN 2.children

(6)

- a. **It is** the clothes [COMP **that**] the woman bought for the children **English cleft**
- b. **Ce sont** les habits [COMP **que**] la femme a achetés aux enfants **French cleft**
- (7) a. **mudaá nyé-n** a- n- sómb-ôl bóóŋgé mambót
1.woman 1-FOC 1.SM-PRS-buy-BEN 2.children 6.clothes
'The WOMAN buys/is buying the clothes for the children.'
- b. * (í) **mambót mó-n má** mudaá a- bí- sómb-ôl bóóŋgé
DEF 6.clothes 6-FOC 6.Rel 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-buy-BEN 2.children

(8)

- a. **It was** the woman [COMP **who**] bought the clothes for the children **English cleft**
- b. **C'est** la femme [COMP **qui**] a avait acheté les habits aux enfants **French cleft**

The above examples have demonstrate that focus fronting in Basaá and English/French are diametrically opposed from a morphosyntactic angle. Any analysis that might attempt to assimilate Basaá foci to clefts should be able to provide strong empirical and theoretical arguments.

From a semantics/pragmatics perspective, focus fronting in Basaá displays semantic and pragmatic effects which militate at the disadvantage of a cleaving approach. In the following all-new contexts where Basaa allows for focus fronting (9A2-A3), the corresponding English²⁷ and French²⁸ clefts are disallowed (10-A2-A3) and (11A2-A3).

- (9) Q: kíí í yé ñken
9.what 9.SM-be._{PRS} new
'What's new?'

²⁵ For an extensive study of Basaá relatives, (cf. Ngo Ndjeyiha 2006, Bassong 2010, Jenks et al. 2012)

²⁶ This marker is the so-called augment widely attested in the Bantu language family

²⁷ Judgements from Michael Rochemenont

²⁸ Judgements from Rose-Marie Dechaine

- A1: malêt a sómb litówá yaaní
 1.teacher 1.SM-buy.PST 5.car 1.yesterday
 ‘The teacher bought a car yesterday.’

A2: **malêt nyé-n** a sómb litówá yaaní
 1.teacher 1-FOC 1.SM-buy.PST 5.car 1.yesterday
 ‘The TEACHER bought a car yesterday.’

A3: **litówá jó-n** malêt a sómb yaaní
 5.car 5-FOC 1.teacher 1.SM-buy.PST 1.yesterday

(10) Q: What's new English
 A1: THE TEACHER BOUGHT A CAR YESTERDAY
 A2: #It was the teacher who bought a car yesterday
 A3: #It was a car that the teacher bought yesterday

(11) Q: Quoi de neuf? French
 what of new
 ‘What's new?’
 A1: Jean a acheté une voiture hier soir
 A2: #C'est Jean qui a acheté une voiture hier soir
 A3: #C'est une voiture que Jean a acheté hier soir

Borrowing from É. Kiss (1998), cleft sentences are semantically associated with a exhaustive interpretation. In the spirit of É.Kiss (1998:249), the French and English clefts above can only be felicitous in the context of identificational focus i.e., ‘a subset of the set of contextually or situationally given elements for which the predicate phrase can potentially hold; it is identified as the exhaustive subset of this set for which the predicate phrase actually holds’. It is true that all the QUDs delineated from (9-11) are instance of information focus without any pre-defined set of contextually given elements. The corresponding answers convey information that is merely new or non-presupposed in the discourse, and in the case of English and French, only (A1) answers are felicitous while Basáá licences both in-situ and ex-situ strategies.

Besides, these languages significantly differ on the distribution of quantifier phrases. In the following examples, where Basáá (12) can front or leave an NPI in-situ, English²⁹ and French rule out cleaving.

- (12) QUD: Mε n- nôg lé u n- sómb ñgándak gwôm
 I PST1-hear that you._{2SG} PST1-buy INDF 10.things
 'I heard that you bought many things.'

A1: tɔ, me n- sómb bée **tɔ-yɔm** A1: tɔ, **tɔ-yɔm** bée yó-n me n-sómb
 no I PST1-buy NEG no.-9.thing no no.-9.thing NEG 9-FOC I PST1-buy
 'No, I bought **nothing**.' 'No, I bought **NOTHING**.'

(13) QUD: I heard that you bought many things
 A1: No, I didn't buy **anything** A1: *No, It is **nothing/anything** that I bought

(14) QUD: J'ai appris que tu as acheté beaucoup de choses
 A1: Non, je n'ai **rien** acheté A2: *Non, ce n'est pas **rien** que j'ai acheté

²⁹ Grammaticality judgements from Chris Collins and Ken Safir.

On semantic grounds, the NPIs such as '*tɔ-yɔm* ‘nothing’ in Basaá and its English and French counterparts ‘nothing/anything’ and *rien* ‘nothing’ in the contexts above convey an exhaustive interpretation, and in the case of English and French, they don’t need to be cleared given that they are semantically/inherently exhaustive given that they convey maximal information to the hearer. If this is true, therefore, NPI fronting in Basaá (12A2) cannot be a cleft construction given that it is inherently exhaustive. Such a construction is simply a focus fronting operation.

The last argument which shows that focus fronting is not a cleft construction is that it can be attested in narrative and scene-setting contexts³⁰ like in (15-16) which have nothing to do with any identificationally or contextually given sets/subsets in the discourse.

(15)

A1: A lógá mam má yé láâ
VOC 1.boy/guy 6.things 6.SM-be.PRS how
Lit: ‘Man/guy, how are things’

B: Mε kâl láá wé a mut wem, mñwa wem a ke-é yaaní
I tell what/how you._{2SG} VOC 1.man my 1.wife my 1.SM-go/leave-PST 1.yesterday
Lit: ‘What should I tell you my man? My wife left yesterday.’

A2: A mut wem u lëdek, njim-mut jɔ-n i kâl më
VOC 1.man 1.my you._{2SG} strengthen._{PROG} 9.INDF-1.person 9-FOC 9.SM-tell._{PST} that
lê íbálê u n- jêp bot bó-básó bá ñ- ke wé ñgwéé
that if you._{2SG} PRS-be poor 2.people 2.PRN-2.all 2.SM-PRS-go you._{2SG} 3.race
Lit: ‘My man, you should be strong, SOMEONE told me that if you are poor everybody abandons you.’

(16) Papá nyé-n a- bí- kâl më lé wá gwës ndigí nlôm é...
1.dad 1-FOC 1.SM-PST2-tell me that you.CL.FUT-love only 1.husband PART
Lit: ‘*My FATHER told me that you will only love your husband’
‘Intended: ‘My father told me: ‘you will only love your husband’

From the above morphosyntactic and semantics/pragmatics evidence, there is no doubt that there is no link between Basaá focus and English and French or cleft constructions of any kind.

4.2. Complementizer agreement from a cross-linguistic perspective

Basaá is not an isolated case in the literature of focus constructions in terms of agreement morphology. The phenomenon of the left edge agreement (pre-subject) is widely attested among the Bantu language family as already mentioned in chapter 3 and this is further illustrated in (17) below. The languages below are all Bantu and the focused or the *wh*-element in each case agrees in class and number with the functional item following it. Agreement is fundamentally sensitive to noun class as it is the case with Basaá.

³⁰ The context in (16) is an excerpt from Assiko, one of the most popular Cameroonian musics

(17)

- a. Bakóko (Bessala 2010:67).

Sènè né Songue à g lè lídí *Object focus*
 manioc Foc^o Songue P.A P0. être manger

‘C'est le manioc que Songue mange» / ‘It is CASSAVA that Songue is eating.’

- b. Búlu (Ondoua Engon 2011 :210).

Object focus

míboŋ éŋwɔ Edima a- ké- yám
 manioc Foc Edima MS-P2- préparer

« C'est le manioc que Edima a préparé» / ‘It is CASSAVA that Edima cooked.’

- c. Etón (Eloundou p.c.).

Kírí jnə məmá ε yə kə ε pæn *Adjunct focus*
 tomorrow FOC mummy SM F1 go to farm
 ‘Mummy will go to the farm TOMORROW.’

- d. Ewondo (Moussa Loumpata p.c.).

miníŋgá nyó bóŋgá bé- a- diŋ *Object focus*
 1.woman 1.FOC 2.children 2.SM-PRS-love
 ‘The children love the WOMAN.’

- e. Kinande (Baker 2008: 181)

Object focus

Eritunda ry-o n- a-h-a omukali
 fruit.5 5.FOC 1Ss-T-give-FV woman.1

‘It's a fruit that I gave to a woman.’

- f. Kilega (Carsten 2005: 248)

Biki bi- á- kás- íl- é bábo bíkulu mwámí
 8.what 8.CA-A-give-PERF-FV 2that 2woman 1chief
 ‘What did those women give the chief in the village?’

- g. Kiswahili (Torrence 2010: ex.58).

Kitabu amb-cho a-li-(ki)- soma shule- ni
 CL7.book COMP-CL7 CL1.SUBJ-PAST-read CL.7 school-LOC
 ‘The book that he read in school.’

- h. Tuki (Biloa 1995:53).

Dima odzu Puta a- nu-banam *Subject focus*
 Dima FOC Puta SM-f1-marry
 ‘It is Dima that Puta will wed.’

As the reader can observe, Kilega and Kinande behave exactly the same as Basáá in that the item that follows the focus or wh-phrase is bimorphemic, that is, it is made up of a gender-specific morpheme and a focus marker. Note that the Kilega construction in (17f) can be assumed to involve a focus construction on the assumption that wh-phrases in many languages are focused by inheritance. In addition, Carstens herself does not gloss the morpheme **á** as FOC but simply as -á-. Only the gender-specific morpheme **bi-** encoding complementizer agreement (here CA) is glossed as one can see. It is considered that Kilega displays the same morphology as Kinande (both languages belong to the same family and are closely related). Kiswahili also exhibits

agreement morphology at the COMP-domain although the order of the morphemes that make up the complex particle ‘*amb-cho*’ seems to be the mirror image of the one attested in Basaá, Kilega and Kinande. In other words, while the agreement marker precedes the focus particle in Basaá, Kilega and Kinande, in Kiswahili, it rather follows COMP. Other languages, namely, Bakoko, Bulú, Etón, Ewondo and Tuki do not have bimorphemic morphemes in fronted focus constructions. The item that encodes focus and agreement seems to be inseparable, i.e. it is not possible to separate the agreement and the focus markers. An attempt to provide a unifying analysis for all these languages will be made in subsequent sections. What seems interesting at this stage is that focus fronting and agreement morphology work in tandem in an inseparable fashion. The following sentences are a testimony that where there is focus fronting in Basaá, there must be agreement (18A1). Nor the noun class morpheme nor the focus marker can stand independently (18A2-A3).

(18)

Q: Who bought a car?

A1: **Malêt nyé-n** a- n- s5mb lítówa

1.teacher 1-FOC 1.SM-PST1-buy 5.car

‘The TEACHER bought a car.’

A2: #**Malêt nyé** a- n- s5mb lítówa

Topic reading

1.teacher 1.AGR 1.SM-PST1-buy 5.car

‘As for the teacher he bought a book’

A3: ***Malêt n** a- n- s5mb lítówa

1.teacher FOC 1.SM-PST1-buy 5.car

As the reader can see, agreement and focus fronting are inextricably linked in such a way that they cannot be separated if a given structure is to be licit. The phenomenon is not restricted to Bantu. More recently, Torrence (2010, 2012) discussed similar morpho-syntactic facts in Wolof, a noun class Atlantic language spoken in Senegal (West Africa). Torrence’s analysis shows that overt wh-expressions as well as their null counterparts exhibit agreement morphology in the C-layer when movement takes place in the syntax. The researcher also shows that there exists in Wolof a special construction termed the *u*-construction; a construction occurs not only in the syntax of wh-expressions, but also in relative clauses as can be seen below (19a-b).

(19) Torrence (2010: ex.13-14, 23)

a. (u-m) poon **m-u** ñu tóx *u*-relative

indef-CM tobacco CM-u 3pl smoke

‘Some tobacco that they smoke.’

b. **K-u** ñu dóór? *u*-interrogative

CM-u 3pl hit

‘Who did they hit?’

Among other complex constructions discussed, Torrence provides evidence in support of a movement analysis of relatives and wh-constructions. For example, he shows that such constructions are sensitive to island constraints. What is also interesting with Wolof is that it shares similar morpho-syntactic properties that are attested in Basaá and other Bantu languages.

He argues that the complexes *m-u* and *k-u* above are hosted in the C-layer in Wolof, more precisely in C^0 and that the relativized constituent *poon* ‘tobacco’ and the silent wh-operator in (19b) agree in noun class with the complexes in C^0 . Either way, as one can see from the glosses, the *u*-morpheme is preceded by a class marker (CM) in each case. Class markers vary depending on the noun class. According to the author, there exists a silent wh-operator which is first selected by the lexical verb *dóór* ‘hit’ before moving to the specifier of CP where it stands in a Spec-Head relation with the agreeing head in C^0 . The same analysis holds for the syntax of relatives and overt wh-expressions but with a slight difference that the latter two have overt lexical materials that precede the complex in C^0 .

In his analysis of agreement among world languages, Baker (2008) sets up a good number of insightful parameters cross-linguistically. As regards the issue of agreement in COMP, Baker’s analysis reveals that agreement in Indo-European languages contrasts with the one encountered in Bantu languages. In this vein, he proposes a parameter, the denomination of which is the ‘*Direction of Agreement Parameter*’ (Baker 2008:215) defined in the following terms in (8i-iii) below:

(20) *The Direction of Agreement Parameter*

- (i) F agrees with DP/NP only if DP/NP asymmetrically c-commands F, or
- (ii) F agrees with DP/NP only if F c-commands DP/NP, or
- (iii) F agrees with DP/NP only if F c-commands DP/NP or vice versa.

Baker’s predictions work in such a way that (20i) holds for the Bantu setting, (20ii) for Burushaski, and finally, (20iii) with Indo-European languages. For instance, in Bantu languages, agreement operates ‘upwards’, that is, functional heads are c-commanded by their agreeing DP/NP on the surface as it is the case for Basaá, Bakoko, Búlu, Eton etc. As one can see, and as pointed out by Torrence, Wolof patterns prettily well with Bantu in terms of the left edge agreement. Baker shows that in West Germanic languages for instance, complementizers agree with nominative subjects contained in the embedded clause and not directly with operators in

Spec-CP. The following examples illustrate that the complementizers agree with the embedded subject in West Germanic languages.

(21) Baker (2008:199) quoting Carstens (2003:393 & 397).

- a. Kvinden **dan** **die boeken** te diere zyn. West Flemish
I.find that.PL the books too expensive are
'I find that those books are too expensive.'
- b. **datt-e wiej** noar 't park loop-t (Hellendoorn)
that-PL we to the park walk-1Ps
'That we are walking to the park.'

The sentences in (21) show that the complementizers *dan* and *datt* are inflected for number and person and agree with the lower subjects *die boeken* 'those books' and *wiej* 'we' respectively. From the foregone, we realize that agreement is attested cross-linguistically with parametric variations. In the following section, evidence in favour of a syntactic approach to the syntax of focus in Basaá are provided.

4.3. Some A-bar characteristics of focus fronting

This section discusses some characteristics of focus fronting which provide evidence in support of a movement analysis. Put differently, some properties of A-bar constructions, or what is also known in the literature as long distance dependencies are discussed in the following section.

4.3.1 Island effects

Focus fronting in Basaá is sensitive to island effects. Taking (22a) as the basic sentence, one can realize that focus fronting in Basaá exhibits properties of A-bar dependencies such as clause unboundedness (22b). Since Ross's (1967) seminal work, a good number of syntactic configurations have been said to be opaque to extraction mechanisms. In Basaá, like in other languages, a gap inside an island cannot be filled by an antecedent outside that island. As a result of this, Basaá does not license focus extraction inside a complex NP/DP (22c), a sentential subject (22d), an adjunct clause (22e), and a coordinate structure (22f). Similarly, focus fronting is sensitive to the Left Branch Condition (22g) and exhibits reconstruction effects (22h).

(22) a. *Basic sentence*

- Mε n- n̄y l̄é báúdú bá- bí- s̄mb bíkaat yaaní
I PST1-hear that 2.students 2.SM-PST2-buy 8.books 1.yesterday
'I heard that the students bought the books yesterday.'

b. *Clause unboundedness*

- bíkaat gw̄-n mε n- n̄y l̄é báúdú bá- bí- s̄mb yáání
8.books 8-FOC I PST1-hear that 2.students 2.SM-PST2-buy 1.yesterday
'I heard that the students bought the BOOKS yesterday'

c. *Complex Noun Phrase Constraint (CPNC)*

- *bikaat_i gwó-n mē ní- yí báúdú bá- bí- sómb (t_i) yáání
 8.books 8-FOC I PRS-know 2.students 2.SM-PST2-buy 1.yesterday
 *The BOOKS I know the students who bought.'

d. *Sentential Subject Constraint (SSC)*

- *bikaat_i gwó-n lé báúdú bá- bí- sómb (t_i) (hála) a ye lóngé
 8.books 8-FOC that 2.students 2.SM-PST2-buy (that) 1.SM be good
 *The BOOKS that the students bought is a good thing.'

e. *Adjunct island*

- *bikaat_i gwó-n mē ye maséé ínyuúlé báúdú bá- bí- sómb (t_i)
 8.books 8-FOC I be 6.happiness because 2.students 2.SM-PST2-buy
 *The BOOKS YESTERDAY the students bought.'

f. *Coordinate Structure Constraint (CSC)*

- * bikaat_i gwó-n báúdú bá- bí- sómb (t_i) ni bisáo
 8.books 8-FOC 2.students 2.SM-PST-buy and 8.pens
 *The BOOKS the students bought with the pens.'

g. *Left Branch Condition*

- bikaat_i gwó-n báúdú bá- bí- sómb (t_i) bí mínsɔŋgí
 8.books 8-FOC 2.students 2.SM-PST2-buy 8.GEN 4.mathematics
 *The BOOKS the students bought of mathematics.'

- h. [bikaat gwâp bó-médé]_i gwó-n báúdú_i bá- bí- sómb t_i
 8.books 8.their PRN.cl2-RFM 8-FOC 2.students 2.SM-PST2-buy
 *BOOKS OF THEMSELVES, the students bought.'

The properties illustrated above provide evidence that focus fronting in Basáá is derived by movement given that the focalized constituent can reconstruct successfully. This shows that a base-generation approach to focus fronting is not valid. In other words, the above examples show that focus fronting in Basáá is sensitive to locality effects, namely syntactic islands which are instances of conditions on A-bar movement. Below are additional diagnosis tests that further support our point of view.

4.3.2 Other properties

The following examples show that focus fronting licenses parasitic gaps (pg) as in (23a), does not license resumptive pronouns (23b), exhibits reconstruction effects in matrix and embedded clauses (23c-d). Unexpectedly, it does not give rise to Weak Cross Over (WCO) effects(23e) and finally is incompatible with a wh-movement (23f). As for the latter property, it will be shown (and this was already mentioned in chapter 1) that only non-referential wh-expressions can co-occur with focus (cf chapter5). This will be analyzed in another chapter.

(23)

- a. minsowá_i mó-n baken bá- bí- jé (ti) ngi nccde (Pg)
 4.ripe plantains 8-FOC 2.guests 2.SM-PST2-eat without taste
 'The students ate RIPE PLANTAINS without tasting.'
- b. minsowá_i mó-n baken bá- bí- jé (*mó)

- 4.ripe plantains 8-FOC 2.guests 2.SM-PST2-eat 4.them
 ‘The students ate RIPE PLANTAINS.’

c. **mawándá méé_{i/j} mó-n híkií njúdú_i** a- íj-↓ gwés
 6.books 6. his/her 6-FOC every 1.student 1.SM-PRS-love
 ‘His/her FRIENDS_i every student_i loves.’

d. **mawándá méé_{i/j} mó-n me íj- hójól lé híkií njúdú_i** a- íj-↓ gwés
 6.books 6. his/her 6-FOC I PRS-think that every 1.student 1.SM-PRS-love
 Lit: ‘His/her FRIENDS_i I think that every student_i loves.’

e. **Ewas_i nyé-n liwándá jéé_{i/j} lí- bí- sómb-ól bítámb**
 1.Ewas 1-FOC 6.friend 1.his 1.SM-PST2-buy-BEN 8.shoes
 ‘EWAS_i his_i friend bought a car.’

f. ***baúdú bó-n kíí malet a- bí- níiga**
 2.students 2-FOC 9.what 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-teach
 ‘*The STUDENTS what did the teacher teach?’

A reading of (23c-d) clearly demonstrates that focus fronting exhibits reconstruction effects in both matrix and embedded clauses. In more concrete terms, both sentences in (23c-d) are an indication that the quantified subject *híkií ñúdú* ‘every student’ can bind the c-commanding pronoun *méé* ‘his/her’ not only in the matrix clause, but also in an embedded context. This provides us with interesting results from a cross-linguistic perspective because connectivity effects vary cross-linguistically. For instance, Torrence (2010: ex. 60-61) shows that connectivity effects are attested in both matrix and embedded contexts in Wolof wh-movement as can be seen from the following examples in (24a-b) show.

(24)

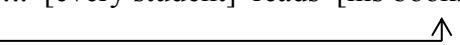
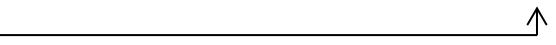
- a. **L-u** [xale b-u nekk] begg ?
 CM-u child CM-u exist love Wh_x > ✗
 ‘Who does every child love?’ ✗ > Wh_x

b. **K-u** a foog [CP **k-u** [xale b-u nekk] begg ?
 CM-u 2sg think CM-u child CM-u exist love Wh_x > ✗
 ‘Who do you think that every child loves?’ ✗ > Wh_x

It is important to note that the cases in (24) involve null wh-expressions according to Torrence's analysis. He argues that in (24), there is wh-movement of a null operator from the theta domain (VP) to the specifier position of CP where the null operator agrees in noun class with the class marker (CM). Of much interest at this level is Torrence's claim according to which the null wh-expressions can be interpreted in the scope of the universally quantified subject. For instance, he argues that (22a) 'can be used to ask for the single answer ('which x is the x such that every child loves x ?'), with wide scope of the null wh-expression'. In addition, he proposes that (24a) 'may

also call for a pair-list answer namely ('for every child, which x is such that the child loves x ?'), with wide scope of the universal quantifier. All the same, (24b) can have the reading according to which the null wh-expression scopes over the quantified subject, and ultimately, a reading according to which the universal quantifier scopes over the null wh-expression. For the latter case, the author argues that such a reading will result from 'the wh-expression being interpreted as if it were c-commanded by the universal quantifier in the embedded clause'. Our account of Basàá focus fronting in (23c-d) patterns with Torrence's in the sense that reconstruction is available in both matrix and embedded contexts. However, as already hinted above, reconstruction effects are subject to cross-linguistic variations. For instance, quoting Schneider-Zioga (2007a,b & c), Torrence shows that there is a contrast between local and long-distance A-bar constructions in Kinande. As opposed to Basaá and Wolof where reconstruction is available in both root and embedded contexts, Kinande displays reconstruction effects only in matrix clauses because such effects are unavailable in embedded contexts as exemplified in (25a-b) below:

(25) Schneider-Zioga (2007a, b, & c) cited by Torrence (2010: ex. 67-68).

- a. **ekitabu kiwe_{j/k}** ky' obuli mukolo_j a- ka- **ki-soma** kangikangi
book his wh-agr each student agr-tense-cl-read regularly
'(It is) His_j book that [every student]_{j/k} reads regularly.'
- a'. [..... [every student] reads [his books] regularly].'

- b. **ekitabu kiwe_{k/*j}**, kyo ngalengekanaya [CP nga. kyo [obuli mukolo]_j]
book his wh-agr I. think that.wh-agr every student
a-ka-**ki-soma** kangikangi].
agr-tense-cl-read regularly
'(It is) his_{k/*j} book that I think [every student]_j reads regularly.'
- b. *[.....] [I think [[every student] reads [his books] regularly]].'


The data in (25) indicate that the quantified focused subject *obuli mukolo* 'every student' can felicitously bind the pronominal possessor *kiwe* 'his' in the root context in (25a) whereas the same quantified focused subject in an embedded clause cannot bind the same pronoun (25b).

In all, binding is only possible in local A-bar extractions in Kinande as opposed to Basaá and Wolof that license binding in both local and long-distance A-bar extractions.

Hitherto, it has been demonstrated that the manifestation of the left edge agreement is attested cross-linguistically and that in the case of Bantu languages, such agreement is obtained when movement has taken place in the syntax. The diagnosis for movement has proved that focus

fronting in Basáá does not involve a base-generation mechanism, but rather a derived mechanism via which a focused constituent moves to the C-domain (the pre-subject position) where it enters in an agreement relation with morphologically-realized functional items. Morphological agreement is therefore dependent on fronting because in-situ foci do not exhibit agreement morphology as can be seen in (26).

- (26) Q: Kélkíí u gá- sómb bíkaat
 1.when you FUT2-buy 8.books
 ‘When will you buy the books?’

- a. Mé gá-sómb bíkaat **yaaní** *In-situ focus*
 I FUT2-buy 8.books 1.yaaní
 ‘I will buy the books TOMORROW.’
- b. **yaaní** *(nyé-n) mé ga-sómb bíkaat *Ex-situ focus*
 1.tomorrow 1-FOC I FUT2-buy 8.books
 ‘I will buy the books TOMORROW.’
- c. *Mé ga-sómb bíkaat (nyé-n) **yaaní** (nyé-n) *No *in-situ marking*
 I FUT2-buy 8.books 1-FOC 1.yaaní 1-FOC
 d. *nyé-n mé ga-sómb bíkaat **yaaní** *No *long-distance agreement*
 1-FOC I FUT2-buy 8.books 1.yesterday

As the reader can see in (26), in-situ focus has no marking as opposed to its ex-situ counterpart that has to be marked. In-situ focus marking is completely ruled out (26c) as well as long-distance focus agreement (26d). Here again, the ungrammatical sentence in (26d) provides us with interesting results cross-linguistically. Previous works in Standard Arabic (henceforth SA) by Ouhalla (1993 :279) have proved that focus may be checked under long distance Agree. Ouhalla argues that SA licenses in-situ focus which expresses new information (27a) and ex-situ focus which expresses contrastive information as in (27b) below.

- (27)
- a. ?allaf-at Zaynab-u **qasiidat-an**
 write.PERF-3SG.F Zaynab-NOM poem-ACC
 ‘Zaynab has written a POEM.’
 - b. **qasiidat-an** ?allaf-at Zaynab-u
 poem-ACC write.PERF-3SG.F Zaynab-NOM
 ‘It is a poem Zaynab has written.’
 - c. ?inna Zaynab-a (**la**)-shaa’irat-un (laa riwaaiyyat-un
 FOC Zaynab-ACC FM poet-NOM not novelist-NOM
 ‘Zanab is a POET (not a novelist).’

As reported by the author, contrastive focus can be licensed in-situ in the presence of the focus markers *?inna* and *la* (27c). As argued by Ouhalla, the particle *?inna* is the head of a focus

phrase while the marker *la* behaves like ‘a tonic accent (focus stress)’. This latter helps identify the focused constituent as contrastive and can be considered as a focus marker. Under the Minimalist approach, Ouhalla’s analysis can be conceived of as a long-distance probe-goal relation between the particles *?inna* and *la*.

The Basaá and SA data in (26d) and (27c) respectively simply provide us with a cross-linguistic manifestation of agreement. In the first case (Basaá), agreement in focus fronting must be local while in the latter case (SA), it can apply at a distance.

After discussing some properties that characterize focus fronting, the following section is going to discuss the theoretical implications that accounts for the syntax of focus in Basaá.

4.4 Theoretical assumptions

The above discussions revealed that the pre-subject area known as the C-domain is a complex one in Basaá. This provides a theoretical hint that the C-layer cannot be restricted to a single functional projection. One can agree that the C-layer in this language can be decomposed in a fine-grained fashion both empirically and theoretically. Up to now, it can be assumed that the clausal left periphery in Basaá can host focused elements which are in turn followed by functional morphemes encoding agreement and focus information. These functional morphemes should be considered as different heads that are made up of a variant agreeing noun class morpheme and an invariant explicit focus marker. This can be achieved in case the focused constituent is extracted from its canonical position to the pre-subject position. In lines with the current cartographic approach to syntactic structures, I argue that the clausal make-up in Basaá is a composite of different functional heads. The main motivation for such an approach is that the agreeing noun class morphemes that precede the focus marker behave like \emptyset -features that project in the syntax. This is explained by the fact that these features encode class and number information. The focus marker itself is a manifestation of a discourse-related device, namely, that of focus. It is argued that the functional noun class morpheme heads/projects a functional projection termed Agreement Complementizer Phrase (henceforth AgrCP) following Shlonsky (1994). It is so called because, it encodes agreement in the C-area (pre-subject position) and is quite different from the subject agreement morpheme which occurs in sentence internal position. Due to the affixal nature of the focus marker, it is proposed that there should be head movement of the agreement morpheme from AgrC^0 to Foc^0 the head of the focus phrase for incorporation and spell out purposes. After head movement has applied, there is a phrasal movement to the of

the focalized constituent into the Specifier position of FocP (henceforth FocP). This line of reasoning is quite different from Bassong (2010), who, following (Aboh (2004a, 2007; Biloa 1992, 1995; Brody 1990; Horvath 1986; Rizzi 1997 a.o.) proposes that there is only one functional head in focus constructions in Basaá, namely Foc, and that focalised elements move into the specifier position of the focus phrase for focus requirements. Besides, another major change in terms of theoretical implications in this thesis is that focalized items should move stepwise during the derivation, i.e. the focalized constituent does not only raise into the focus field, but it should also raise upwards into a matrix TP to fulfil EPP requirements. This indicates that focus fronting in Basaá involves a bi-clausal structure made up of a matrix TP and an embedded FocP. In the following lines, I will briefly discuss Bassong's (2010) original analysis, and then propose a new approach to focus fronting for the Basaá.

4.4.1 The split-FOC hypothesis: revisiting Bassong (2010).

The split-FOC hypothesis adopted for the Basaá empirical material and the mirror effects obtained are reminiscent of Pollock (1989)'s split-IP hypothesis. A step back to the history of generative syntax enables us to remember a good number of interesting facts about clause structure both empirically and theoretically from a crosslinguistic perspective. In the spirit of Chomsky (1986) and the X-bar schema (Chomsky 1970; Kayne 1984; Jackendoff 1977 etc.), every phrase is said to be endocentric, that is the projection of a head category. In this vein, the sentence, which was initially the projection of a single node called INFL(*inflection*) in the early days of generative grammar later on entered the X-bar template. While the node INFL became IP projected by a functional I(*nflectional*) head in Chomsky (1986), the node COMP (cf. Bresnan 1970) became CP, which in turn became the projection of a functional C head. With the advent of Emonds (1978) and Pollock (1989), novel proposals were advanced and it became widely known that the node I (*NFL*) contained a number of distinct features that fulfilled different functions. On the basis of the richness of the inflectional node and verb movement in Romance for instance, the inflectional node exploded and gave rise to two different functional projections, namely Agreement Phrase (AgrP) and Tense Phrase (TP). According to Pollock's analysis, the two inflectional heads that made up INFL(*ection*) are hierarchically ordered such that T(ense) c-commands Agr(eement). Belletti (1990) took the opposite side of Pollock's proposal and postulated that Agr(eement) is higher than T(ense). Ouhalla (1991) came with an insightful proposal and made the suggestion according to which the order of Tense and Agreement does not matter and that this ordering is simply subject to parametric variation. In the same year, Chomsky (1991) followed Belletti's (1990) proposal, but argued that there was another

Agr(eement) projection below T(ense) but above VP. By so doing, he proposed two different agreement projections, namely AgrS(ubject) hosting the subject of the clause and AgrO(bject) hosting the thematic object of the verb. Chomsky (1993, 1995) reviewed his early proposal made in (1991) and proposed a reductionist framework that ruled out agreement projections from clause structure because in his opinion, agreement projections had no interpretative content. As a result, he claimed that agreement could not survive the interface-driven economy conditions advocated by Minimalism. Chomsky's view was guided by the idea that only 'substantive' heads, that is those with interpretative content survive in syntactic representations. In all, only formal features such as Case, Tense/Asp etc drive syntactic computations. In my opinion, and as attested in some works, Pollock (1989), Belletti (1990) and Chomsky (1991) are still valid nowadays and that is proved true from a cross-linguistic perspective. As illustrations to this, Belletti (2001: 487 & 492) demonstrates on the basis of Romance that the imperfective indicative forms of the verb 'to speak' in third person plural in French and Italian are respectively *parl-ai-ent* and *parla-va-no* 'they spoke' as in (28a-b) below. As for the morphemes *-ent* and *-no* in French and Italian respectively, she proposes that they encode subject agreement verb and are higher than the others, namely *ai* (French) and *-va* (Italian). These latter encode temporal/tense information, so that the well-formedness of *parl-ai-ent* and *parla-va-no* 'they spoke' results from successive cyclic verb movement to Agr^0 via T^0 . The mirror image *parl-ai-ent* and *parla-va-no* 'they spoke' before the derivation are *-ent-ai-parl-* (French) and *-no-va-parla-* (Italian) respectively.

(28)

-
- a. [AgrS-P **ils** [AgrS *parl-ai-ent* [TP [T <*parl-ai-*>[VP <**ils**> [V <*parl-*> [...]]]]]]] **French**
 'They spoke (imperfective)'
- b. [AgrSP pro [AgrS *parla-va-no* [TP [T <*parla-va-*> [VP [V <*parla*> [...]]]]]] **Italian**
 'They spoke(imperfective)'

With this ordering of morphemes in mind, one can understand the final derivations in (28) and can draw a parallel by explaining the orders $\text{Foc}^0\text{-}\text{AgrC}^0$ and their mirror image $\text{AgrC}^0\text{-}\text{Foc}^0$ attested in Basáá.

Bassong (2010) proposes that focus fronting in a sentence like (29a) is derived as in (29b) following Chomsky (1995)'s Checking Theory and Rizzi (1991, 1997)'s wh-criterion and focus criteria (see also Aboh 2004, 2010 and Aboh & Dyakonova 2009; etc.). The focus criterion can be formulated in terms of a local relation between an interpretable focused XP that moves into Spec-FocP and an explicit or implicit focus head depending on language internal structure. In languages like English, French, German and Italian for instance, the focus head is implicit while

it is explicitly marked in languages like Basaá, Tuki (Biloa 1992, 1997, 2013), Duala (Sabel 2000), and Gungbe (Aboh 2010) etc. This means that the focus head is endowed with a strong feature [+f] that lures the focalized constituent into Spec-FocP at PF in a context like (29).

(29)

- a. **malêt_i** **nyéñ** (**t_i**) a- bí-níigá bés gwɔm gwóbísónâ
1.teacher 1.FOC 1.SM-PST2-teach us 8.things 8.every
‘The TEACHER taught us everything.’
- b. [FocP **malêt_i** [Foc **nyéñ** [AgrS (**t_i**) [AgrS a-] [TP [T bí-][VP[V-níigá][DP...]]]]]
↑1. teacher 1.FOC 1.SM- PST2- teach

One can straightforwardly see that compositionally, the focus marker *nyéñ* in (29) constitutes only one building block, that is, it is not broken up into two separate morphemes, and the glosses show it perfectly. Bassong (2010) considered the complex head (Foc) as one single syntactic block c-commanding a TP/AgrS-P complement, which is not true under close scrutiny. As it has been observed since the beginning, there are two separate morphemes that make up the complex (Foc): first of all, an agreeing noun class morpheme which is variable depending on the noun class of the focalized element, secondly, the invariant focus marker *-n*.

In this work, I would like to break the ice by arguing that the complex head *nyéñ*, as shown (29), which was previously considered as a single functional head, is in fact bicephal by virtue of endowing two distinct information, namely noun class agreement/information (phi-features in the minimalist terminology) encoded by the noun class agreement morpheme *nyé-* (class one), and focal information which is conveyed by the morpheme *-n*. In more concrete terms, since Basaá is a noun class language, the noun class agreement morpheme *nyé-* encodes class and number information or the traditional Φ -features while the affixal morpheme *-n* encodes focus information. Given that the agreeing morpheme *nyé-* only occurs in the pre-subject position (the left periphery or COMP field), I will call it agreement complementizer as opposed to the subject verb agreement encoded by the subject marker *a-* in (29). More simply, agreement subject refers to the subject verb agreement while COMP-agreement refers to agreement that is attested in the pre-subject field (left edge agreement in Schneider-Zioga (2007) terms).

The last major change is that instead of deriving focus fronting by a simple A-bar movement of the focalized constituent into Spec-FocP as shown in (29b), focus fronting will rather involve a bi-clausal structure and two phrasal movements motivated by two distinct

syntactic requirements, namely the focus-criterion and the EPP as discussed in the following lines.

4.4.2 Focus fronting, the EPP and the null copula hypothesis

That focus fronting in Basaá involves a copula structure headed by a null verbal element is supported not only by the minimality effects, but also by the licitness and illicitness of some constructions. The first evidence derives from the following negative constructions where any sentence constituent can be negated. Any time a constituent is negated, focus marking is obligatory.

- (30) a. m_e n- n̄y l̄é bodaá bá- bí- sómb mámbót yaaní *Neutral sentence*
 I PST1-hear that 2.women 2.SM-PST2-buy 6.clothes 1.yesterday
 ‘I heard that the women bought the clothes yesterday.’
- b. t̄o, **bodaá** b̄éé *(b̄ó-n) bá- bí- sómb mámbót yaaní
 no 2.women NEG 2-FOC 2.SM-PST2-buy 6.clothes 1.yesterday
 Lt: ‘No, not the WOMEN bought the clothes yesterday.’:
 Paraphrase: It is not the case that the WOMEN bought the clothes yesterday.’
- c. t̄o, **mambót** b̄éé *(m̄ó-n) bodaá bá- bí- sómb yááni
 no 6.clothes NEG 6-FOC 2.women 2.SM-PST2-buy 1.yesterday
 Lit: ‘No, not the CLOTHES did the women bought yesterday.’
 Paraphrase: ‘It is not the case that the women boought the CLOTHES yesterday.’
- d. **yaaní** b̄éé *(nyé-n) bodaá bá- bí- sómb mámbót
 1.yesterday NEG 1-FOC 2.women 2.SM-PST2-buy 6.clothes
 Lit: ‘No, not YESTERDAY did the women buy the clothes.’
 Paraphrase: ‘It is not the case that the women bought the clothes YESTERDAY’

These sentences show that in Basaá constituent negation, the negated constituent should precede the negative particle *béé* ‘not’ which in turn precedes the focus marker. Any other positioning of the negative particle or of the focus marker gives rise to ungrammaticality:

- (31)
- a. *t̄o, **béé** **bodaá** b̄ó-n bá- bí- sómb mámbót yaaní
 no NEG 2.women 2-FOC 2.SM-PST2-buy 6.clothes 1.yesterday
 - b. *t̄o, **mambót** m̄ó-n b̄éé bodaá bá- bí- sómb yááni
 no 6.clothes 6-FOC NEG 2.women 2.SM-PST2-buy 1.yesterday
 - c. *b̄éé nyé-n yaaní bodaá bá- bí- sómb mámbót
 NEG 1-FOC 1.yesterday 2.women 2.SM-PST2-buy 6.clothes

The illicitness of the above sentences shows that negation cannot precede the negated constituent (31a) just as it cannot be preceded by the focus marker (31b). In addition, negation and the focus marker cannot precede the focalized negated item (31c).

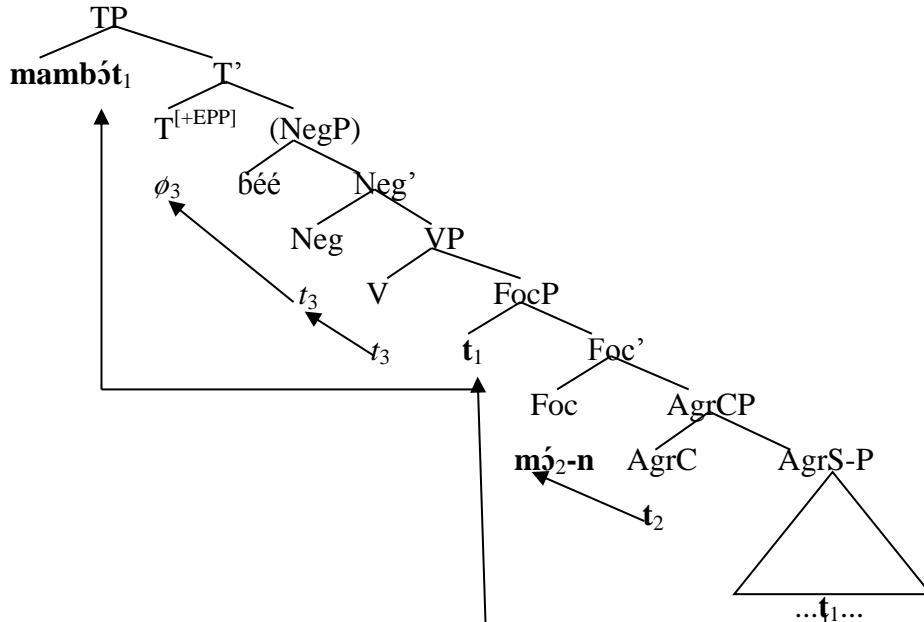
The grammatical sentences in (30) provide evidence in support of a copula structure in Basaá. They simply show that the absence of negation seems to hide the copula structure given that there is no overtly realized verbal element. In other words, focus fronting in the absence of

negation does not clearly show the real picture of the structure. Based on (30a), I postulate that focus fronting like, whether it involves negation or not, should be derived as in (32b) below.

(32)

- a. **mambót béeé *(mó-n)** bodaá bá- bí- sómb yáání
 6.clothes NEG 6-FOC 2.women 2.SM-PST2-buy 1.yesterday
 Lit: ‘Not the CLOTHES did the women bought yesterday.’
 Paraphrase: ‘It is not the case that the women boought the CLOTHES yesterday.’

b.



In light of (32b), focus fronting involves both head movement and phrasal movement. The first head movement takes place in the embedded clause and involves movement of the agreement morpheme *mó-* from AgrC to Foc (AgrC-to-Foc movement) where it incorporates into the focus marker *-n* to form the complex *mó-n*. The second head movement involves the null verbal copula *ø* from the matrix V to T via Neg the head of NegP. As for phrasal movement, I propose that the focalized item *mambót* ‘clothes’ first moves into the focus field to check the focus features before moving into the matrix TP where it satisfies the EPP. In the absence of negation, the null copula simply raises in one step into T. It is assumed that AgrC-to-Foc movement is necessary for spell out and well formedness, i.e. the agreement morpheme *mó-* needs to raise into Foc, to incorporate into the focus morpheme *-n* in order to obtain the right form *mó-n* at PF. Globally, focus fronting in Basáá depends on two morphosyntactic factors, namely the *Focus-Criterion*, the requirement that at S-Structure and LF, Spec-FocP must contain [+ foc]-phrase (since Brody 1990, cf. also Rizzi 1997) and the *Extended Projection Principle*, the condition that every clause (sentence) should have a subject (Chomsky 1981/2, 1995). More concretely, in the case of (32b) above, Spec-FocP must be filled at a certain stage of the derivation (probably in accordance with the traditional Spec-Head agreement hypothesis (Chomsky 1986; Kinyalolo 1991; Koopman

1992 etc), i.e. spellout. Once the focus requirements are satisfied, the focused item must raise into the matrix TP domain to comply with the EPP. This successive cyclic movement seems to be correct given that the moved item does not check the same features twice, which means that every movement is driven by a specific feature. As long as the moved item does check the same features twice, each of the displacements is allowed. As for the null verbal copula, it is considered as a light verb which is merged within the matrix VP but raises later on into the higher T head.

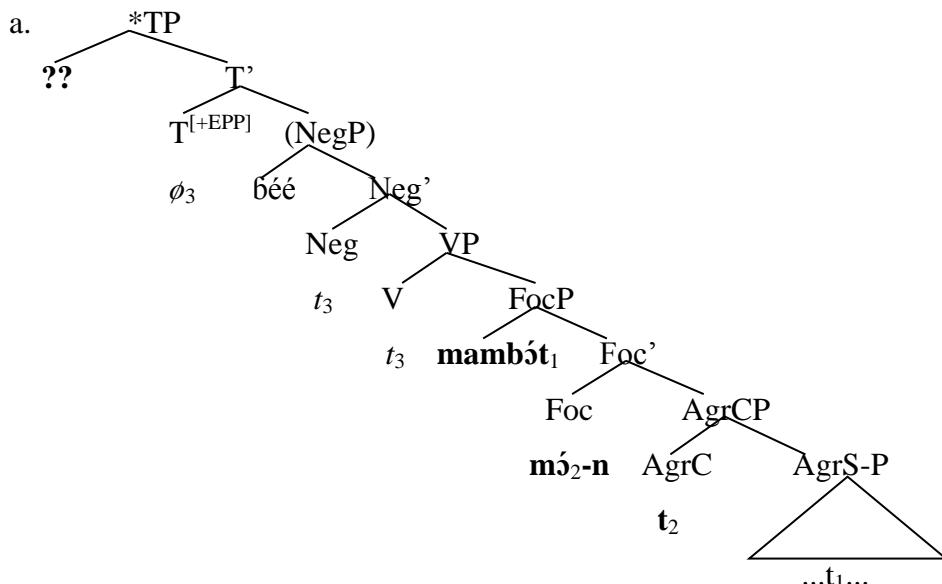
Note that these steps (head and phrasal) are not only necessary for the derivation to converge, but they also account for the illicitness of constructions such as (31a-b) repeated below as (33a-b) for convenience.

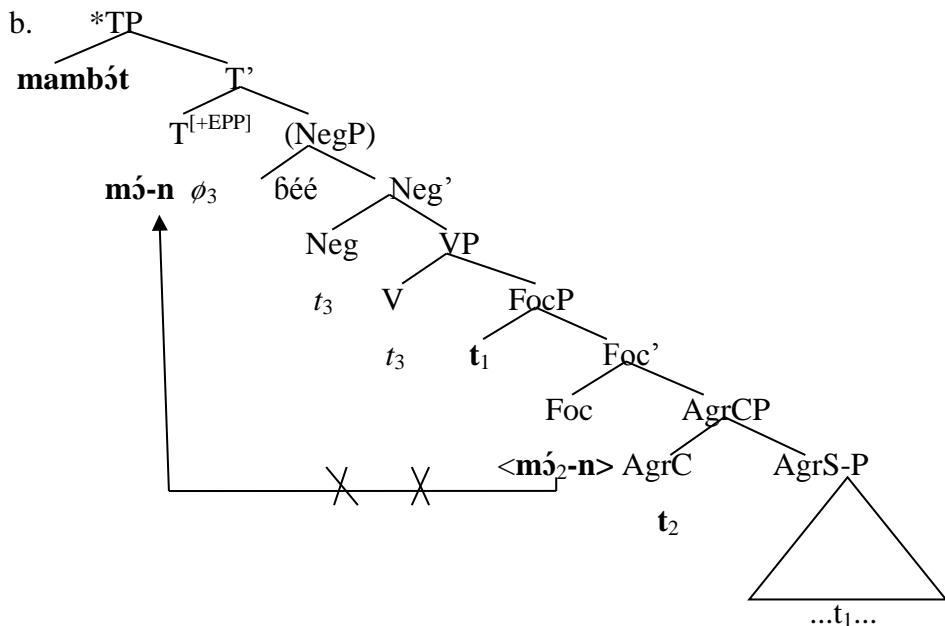
(33)

- a. *t₀ **béé bodaá bó-n** bá- bí- sómb mámbót yaaní
no NEG 2.women 2-FOC 2.SM-PST2-buy 6.clothes 1.yesterday
- b. *t₀, **mambót mó-n** béé bodaá bá- bí- sómb yáaní
no 6.clothes 6-FOC NEG 2.women 2.SM-PST2-buy 1.yesterday

The illicitness of sentence (33a) is linked to a violation of the EPP, that is, the matrix TP remains subjectless because the NP/DP has moved and remained into the focus domain without any further raising as depicted in (34a). Although the focus-criterion is satisfied given that its specifier is occupied, the derivation crashes because the matrix clause lacks an overt subject. The ungrammaticality of (33b) supports the idea that there exists in the matrix clause, a verbal copula, although it is covertly realized. More precisely, the presence of the null copula in the matrix clause induces minimality effects as it blocks head movement of the complex *mó-n* from the embedded Foc head to the matrix clause as shown in (34b)

(34)



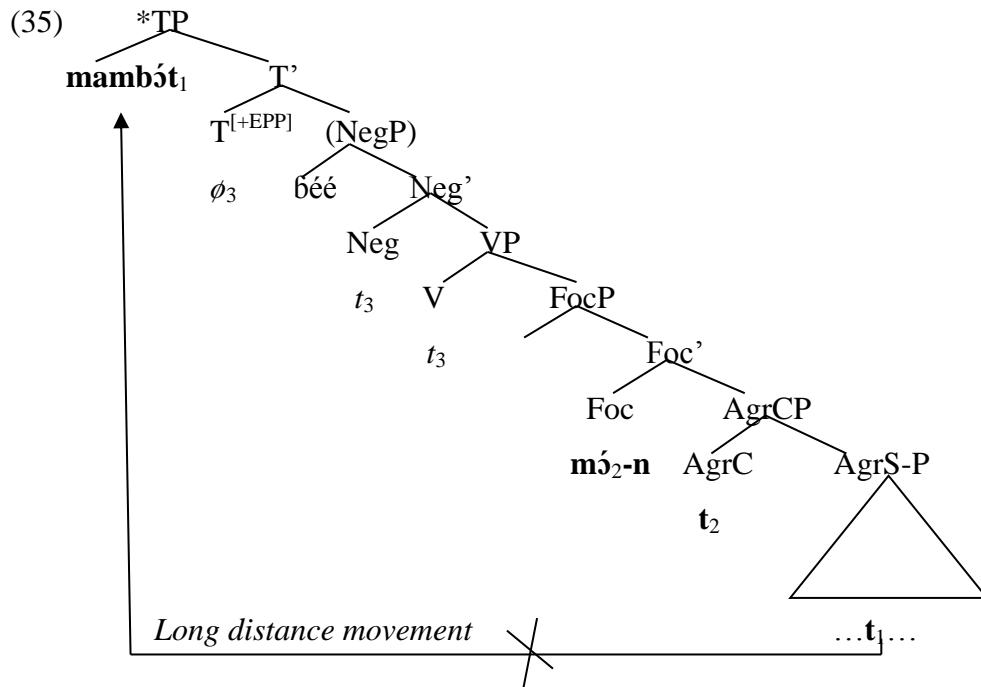


The illicitness of derivation (34b) is understood under minimality conditions. Given that head movement is a strictly local operation as opposed to phrasal movement, it (head movement) is highly restricted. More precisely, Foc-to-T movement applies across a clause boundary, given that the complex *mó-n* moves from the embedded Foc to the matrix T, by-passing other intermediate head positions (V and Neg) and violating the Head Movement Constraint (Travis 1984). However, even if the complex *mó-n* were to land into the intermediate V and Neg positions, the derivation would still become illicit, as the traces (or silent copies) of the null verbal copula would be erased and therefore destroying the T-Neg-V chain. This state of affairs is tantamount to saying that the null verbal copula induces minimality effects.

The EPP in focus fronting cases like (32) can be related to Chomsky (1995) Checking-theory if we assume that the functional T head of the matrix TP bears an uninterpretable strong categorial D-feature which needs to be checked off before LF. In this case, Spec-FocP-to-Spec-TP is motivated and complies with the *Principle of Full Interpretation* (PFI), which requires that only interpretable features must be present at LF, prior to *Spellout*. Given that Basáá lacks expletive/pleonastic subjects that would be base-generated under Spec-TP to satisfy the EPP, the focalized constituent is compelled to raise further into the matrix TP.

A possible question to be asked at this juncture is whether the focalized constituent necessarily needs to pass via Spec-FocP. All the same, why is Spec-FocP not occupied by the focalized element at the end of the derivation in (32b)? To the question why the focused element needs to move via FocP on its way to the matrix TP, I argue that such a movement is motivated by locality requirements, i.e. the extracted material should move stepwise to comply with the

Minimal Link Condition (MLC) or Shortest Move (Chomsky 1995). By moving the focalized into the intermediate focus phrase, one minimizes the *Move* operation as opposed to a derivation such as (35) below with long distance movement.



The derivation in (32b), as opposed to (35) shows that Spec-FocP should be occupied at a certain stage of the derivation by the focalized constituent in order to satisfy the focus-criterion, prior to movement into the matrix TP.

The reason why Spec-FocP is not occupied by an overt constituent is simply linked to the fact that if it stays in Spec-FocP, the EPP will not be satisfied and the derivation will crash. In addition, that Spec-FocP can be empty is linked to the focus-drop phenomenon. It was shown in the previous chapter that Basáá licenses focus-drop and that the latter is dependent on agreement morphology of the focus maker. In this vein, a sentence like (36a) can be obtained under focus-drop in (36b).

(36)

- a. **mambót mó-n** bodaá bá- bí- sómb yáaní
6.clothes 6-FOC 2.women 2.SM-PST2-buy 1.yesterday
'The woman bought the CLOTHES yesterday.'
- b. **mó-n** bodaá bá- bí- sómb yáaní
6-FOC 2.women 2.SM-PST2-buy 1.yesterday
'The woman bought THEM yesterday.'

However, the focus-drop case in (36b) raises a striking question about the approach adopted in this work, namely, the null copula hypothesis. In other words, how would this hypothesis predict/account for focus-drop and the ungrammatical structure in (37c) below?

- (37) a. **mambót béé mó-n** bodaá bá- bí- sómb yáání
 6.clothes NEG 6-FOC 2.women 2.SM-PST2-buy 1.yesterday

b. **mó báé mó-n** bodaá bá- bí- sómb yáání
 6.them NEG 6-FOC 2.women 2.SM-PST2-buy 1.yesterday
 ‘The woman did not buy THEM yesterday.’
 ‘It is not the case that the women bought THEM yesterday.’

c. * **béé mó-n** bodaá bá- bí- sómb yáání
 NEG 6-FOC 2.women 2.SM-PST2-buy 1.yesterday

The prediction is that a focus-drop sentence like (36b) does not involve a copula structure or a biclausal construction. I propose that in this case, Spec-FocP is occupied by a null operator related to the dropped focus and there is no matrix TP (37a). In this vein, there will be no EPP requirement to be satisfied and the structure would lack a subject in the matrix TP. On the contrary, in a construction like (36b), the focalized pronominal, *mó* ‘them’ undergoes a normal focus fronting mechanism i.e. it moves into the matrix TP via the embedded FocP (38b). The ungrammaticality of (37c) supports the idea that in focus-drop (35b), no matrix TP is needed. In other words, given that in the matrix TP, there is neither an overt subject, nor an overt verbal element (38c), the sentence becomes illicit because of a violation of not only the EPP, but also the Principle of Projection Activation (Koopman 1996, Koopman & Szabolcsi 2000), a UG principle on well-formedness defined in (39). This state of affairs simply indicates that there is no overt material in the matrix T that would license a pro-drop construction and pro-drop constructions are licensed by overtly realized information in the verbal system (or TAM system). The absence of overt verbal information and an overt subject in (38a) and (38c) explains not only the licitness of (38a), but also the illicitness of sentence (37c).

(39) **Principle of Projection Activation (PPA)** (Koopman & Szabolcsi 2000:4):

A projection is interpretable iff it has lexical material at some stage in the derivation.

The PPA requires that for interpretation purposes, a projection should have overtly realized material at a given stage of the derivation either in the specifier or in the head position. In this case, (38c) is ruled out by the PPA because TP is associated with neither an overt specifier, nor an overt head. Globally, for the null copula structure to be possible, there must be an overt

nominal subject in the matrix TP, and in accordance with principle (39). Besides, the *PPA* prettily supports and (accounts for) (38a) in the sense that there is neither an overt subject nor an overt verbal material that would license a matrix TP above the focus phrase. So, focus-drop cannot license a null copula structure which would otherwise yield illicitness due to a *PPA* violation.

What appears to be interesting in Basàá focus fronting is that the data can be successfully accounted in light of minimalist assumptions and specifically in terms of a probe-goal relationship whereby the focalized constituent can be probed over by both the embedded focus head and the matrix tense head. In this case, I postulate that checking takes place between an uninterpretable probe category (focus head) and a goal (an interpretable focused XP category inside the embedded clause). In Chomsky's (1995) terms, uninterpretable features are associated with targets of movement. The functional Foc and T heads are uninterpretable and trigger movement of the DP/NP constituent into their respective specifier positions. While the matrix T head bears strong uninterpretable D-features, Foc rather bears strong uninterpretable Foc-features. Each of them needs to be checked by an appropriate goal, the focused item with matching interpretable features. In addition, focus fronting in this Bantu language gives rise to a complex clausal left periphery which can be decomposed into two distinct functional FocP and AgrCP projections which are associated with specific semantic interpretations, namely focus and agreement.

From the preceding discussions, it can be concluded that focus fronting in Basaá is morphology-driven and depends on two criteria: (i) the focus-criterion which requires the presence of a focalized constituent endowed with focus features in Spec-FocP prior to Spellout, (ii) the EPP, the requirement that every clause should have a subject. Given the unavailability of expletive subjects in Basaá focus fronting, the focalized element needs to raise stepwise in order to comply with both the focus-criterion in the embedded focus field and the EPP in the matrix TP.

4.4.3 The syntax of focus crosslinguistically

This section focus on the syntax of focus crosslinguistically in order to bring out some similarities and dissimilarities between Basaá and other natural languages. This would certainly feed up comparative syntax from a crosslinguistic perspective.

It should also be recalled that the idea according to which the C-domain is the locus of agreement and/or other discourse-related features such as focus and topic is not new in the literature. A good number of authors including Biloa (1992, 1997, 2013, Biloa & Bassong in progress), Schneider-Zioga (2007), Miyagawa (2010) *inter alia* have explored different world languages to this end. In the preceding sections descriptive facts have shown that the

phenomenon is well attested cross-linguistically. The aim of the following sections is to demonstrate how far approach defended here, notably the Split-FOC hypothesis may be extended to other languages in light of African languages and Indo-European languages.

4.4.3.1 The case of African languages

In what follows, I attempt to provide a crosslinguistic characterization of the syntax of focus as analysed in the literature. The languages under scrutiny, can be classified in different paradigms, depending on their morphosyntax. Some languages noun class Bantu languages make use of the sole noun class-sensitive agreeing morpheme (Group I). These include Bakóko, Búlu, Etón and Tuki:

(40) **Group I** *Languages with monomorphemic focus marking*

- a. **Bakóko** (Bantu) (Bessala 2010: 123).

Nola nè Tang à ŋgà dìN *Subject focus*

Nola Foc Tang P.A ? aimer

‘C'est Nola que Tang aime.’ ‘It is Nola that Tang loves.’

- b. **Búlu** (Bantu) (Ondoua Engon 2011:136).

élé éndʒə Ela a- ká-be *Object focus*

arbre Foc Ela MS-P2-planter

‘C'est l'arbre que Ela a planté’/ Lit : ‘It is a tree that Ela planted yesterday.’

- c. **Etón** (Bantu) (Georges Parfait Eloundou p.c.)

Kírí jə məma ε yə kə ε pæn *Adjunct focus*

tomorrow FOC mummy SM F1 go to farm

‘Mummy will go to the farm TOMORROW.’

- d. **Tuki** (Bantu) (Biloa 1995:53).

Dima odzu Puta a- nu-banam *Subject focus*

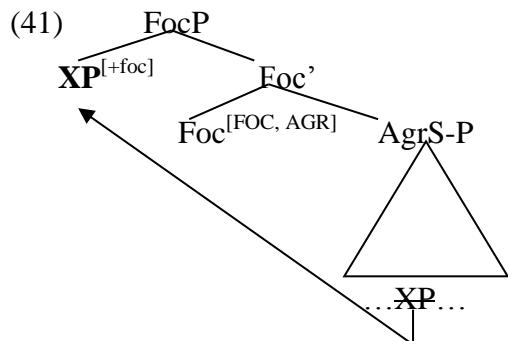
Dima FOC Puta SM-f1-marry

‘It is Dima that Puta will wed.’

As reported by their respective authors, these languages require a obligatory focus marking through the use of an agreeing noun class morpheme in focus constructions, that is, the focalized material must agree in class and number with the focus morpheme, just as it is the case with Basaá. However, Basaá differs from these closely related languages at the level of the internal make-up of the focus morpheme. Basaá focus morpheme is bi-morphemic while it is monomorphemic in these languages. The respectively authors (Bessala, Ondoua and Biloa) argue that focus fronting is syntax-driven based on a good number of syntactic diagnostics (cf. Biloa 1992, 1997, 2013, Baker 2008, Bessala 2010, Ondoua 2012 etc) and propose and analysis based on the classical Spec-head³¹ agreement relationship between the focalized material and the

³¹ The same analysis is adopted by Bassong (2010) to account for the syntax of focus in Basaá

focused marker as depicted in (41). The Etón focus fronting in (40c) prettily fits into such a system.



The above template derives focus under a Spec-Head agreement configuration, whereby a focalized constituent in Spec-FocP shares the same features as the focus morpheme in Foc.

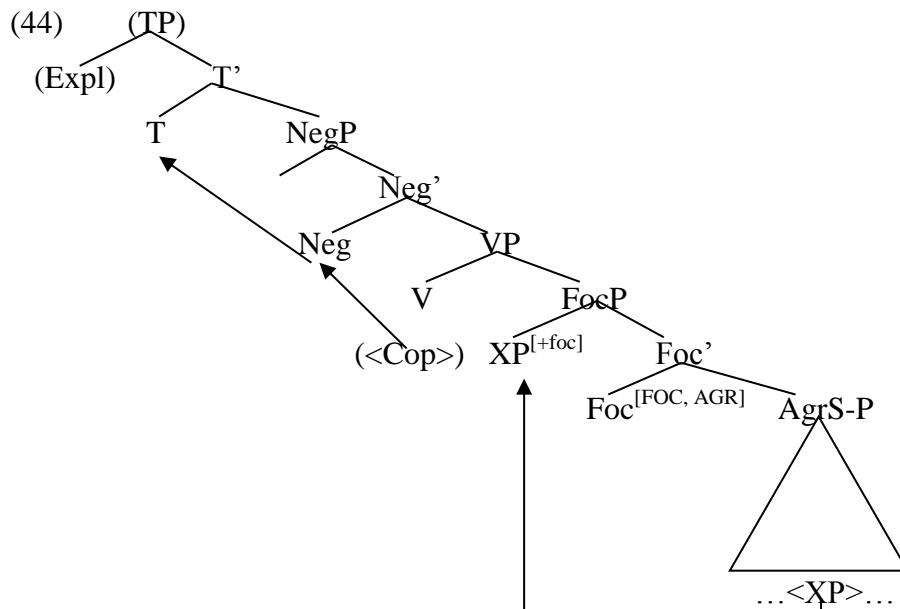
What is interesting in Bulu, Etón and Tuki is that in addition to the structure in (41), focus fronting in these languages can be realized via an optional copula structure with overtly realized material in both affirmative and negative sentences as shown below:

- (42) a. **(a-nə) mətwá₁ áŋə** Evina a- ké-kus **t₁** Búlu³² (Ondoua, 2012: 135)
 c'est voiture que Evina MS-P2-acheter
 ‘C'est la voiture que Evina a achetée’
- b. **(é nə) kwas₁ y᷑** míñgá á- kùsge ààngògé **t₁** Etón (Lucas Moise Obidi, p.c)
 it be fish FOC woman SM-buy.PST yesterday
 ‘It is FISH that the woman bought yesterday’
- c. **(i-mu) okutu odzu** Puta a- ma- en-a **t₁** Tuki (Biloa, p.c, see also Biloa 1995)
 it-be woman FOC Puta SM-PST2-see-FV
 ‘It is the woman that Puta saw’
- (43) a. **sakə Oyono ənyə a-** a- kə- sikólo Búlu (Ondoua, 2013:5)
 Neg Oyono Foc SM-Pres-go school
 ‘It is not Oyono who goes to school’
- b. **lè sá míñgá ny᷑** à kùs újô ààngògé Etón (Moise, Lucas Obidi, p.c)
 Cop Neg woman FOC SM-buy.PST bananas yesterday
 ‘It is not the woman who bought the bananas yesterday’
- c. **i- ta- mu okutu odzu** Puta a- ma- en-a Tuki (Biloa, p.c)
 it-Neg-be woman FOC Puta SM-PST2-see-FV
 ‘It is not the woman that Puta saw’

Under the assumption that focus fronting in these Bantu languages can involve a copula structure, the salient disparity between Basaá and these languages lies at the level of the absence

³² The morpheme *áŋə*, glossed as *que* ‘that’ is a focus marker in Búlu but the author seems to use gloss it either as Foc (Ondoua 2012:193), or as *que* ‘that’. Note that in Búlu, the declarative lexical complementizer is *nâ* ‘that’ (Ondoua 2012:193). In my analysis I consider *áŋə* as a focus marker.

of expletive subjects and a verbal copula in the former versus their presence in the latter. As a result, the following template can account for Búlu, Etón and Tuki focus structure.



In light of (44), focus fronting may have a copula structure which accounts for structures such as (42-43). In this vein, given that Búlu and Tuki have overtly realized expletive subjects, the latter are merged in the matrix Spec-TP to fulfil the EPP, while the focalized constituent will simply raise into the embedded focus field to comply with the focus criterion. Etón seems to license a null expletive subject in negative constructions (43c). In this case, it is assumed that the verbal copula moves out of VP and raises higher in the TP domain to satisfy the Principle of Projection Activation (39) which requires that every projection needs overt material at the final stage of the derivation for Full Interpretation purposes. The movement of the verbal copula is explained if one assumes that it is first merged as a light verb within the lower VP c-commanded by NegP. To obtain the surface word order in (43c), the copula *lè* would have raised past (picked) up the negative marker *sá* on its way to the matrix T head. This provides us with comparative data from a crosslinguistic dimension in the same Bantu language family. In Basaá focus fronting lacks expletive subjects and the focalized constituent is compelled to raise cyclically into the matrix TP via the embedded focus field in order to comply with the focus-criterion, the EPP and the PPA respectively. However, such a successive cyclic movement in Basaá is attested only when the focalized constituent is overt realized. In case of focus-drop, no copula structure is possible as the derivation would otherwise violate the EPP and the PPA. In other words, the matrix TP will be devoid of overtly realized material to satisfy the EPP and the PPA.

Kinande seems to display the same agreement morphology in focus fronting given that the complex item which agrees in class and focus is bimorphemic:

(45) **Group II:** Kinande as a Basaá-like language

Kinande (Bantu) (Baker and Collins 2006: 317).

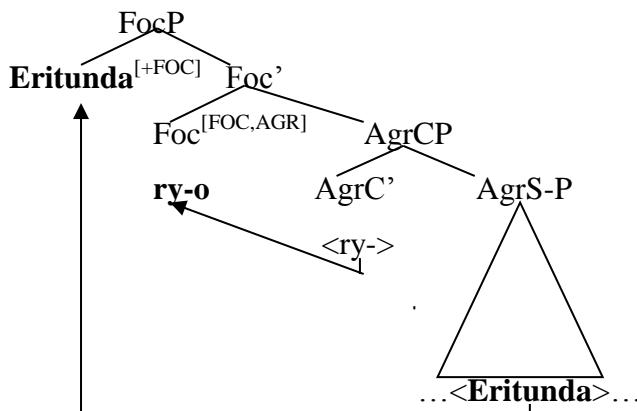
Eritunda ry-o n-a-h-a omukali *Object focus*

fruit.5 5.FOC 1Ss-T-give-FV woman.1

‘It is a fruit that I gave to a woman.’

Failure to have enough data on Kinande, I would attempt an analysis which derives the Kinande focus construction by postulating an agreement complementizer projection and a focus phrase like in (45) in the manner of Basaá. Whether Kinanda would license expletive subjects in case like (45) will certainly be the subject matter of future investigation.

(46)



The last group of African languages with left peripheral focus with morphological marking includes languages Duala, Gungbe and Masalit but no agreement (noun class) with the focalized item. As opposed to Gungbe and Masalit, Duala is a noun class language of the Bantu family like Basaá, Búlu, Etón and Tuki. Surprisingly, the focus marker in the Duala is invariable and exhibits no agreement alternation in terms of noun class.

(47) **Group III: Languages with the sole focus marker**

a. **Duala** (Bantu) (Epee 1976a:194, see also Epee 1976b).

Kalati nde Kuo a bodi no nu moto kiele *Object focus*

book focus Kuo he give that man yesterday

‘It’s a book Kuo gave to that man yesterday.’

b. **Gungbe** (Kwa) (Aboh 2004:242).

Xwé_i wè Rémí bgá (t_i) *Object focus*

house FOC Remi build-Perf

‘Remi built A HOUSE.’

c. **Masalit** (Nilo-Saharan, Maban), (Leffel 2011:11).

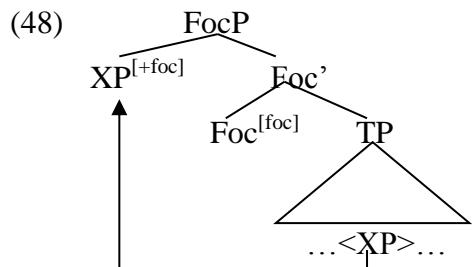
jaja lo su to- ron-a *Subject focus*

jaja FOC goat.ACC 3sg-buy-PST

‘YAHYA bought a goat.’

Gungbe and Masalit focus is derived in a cartography-based approach and through a feature-checking mechanism between a probing functional Foc head (occupied by the focus marker) endowed with uninterpretable focus-features a matching goal (the focused constituent) with

interpretable focus-features (cf. Aboh 2004, 2010, Leffel, 2010). The same approach would certainly derive the Duala focus construction in (47a).



As the reader can see, focus marking in all these African languages involves syntactic and morphological marking. Syntactic marking in the sense that one obtains word order alternation; even though it seems not obvious for subject focus (the reader can consult the references cited for further illustrations). Morphological marking is noticeable as well in the sense that the focused constituents are followed by morphologically realized functional items which encode either noun class agreement and focal information (Basaá, Búlu, Etón, Kinade, Tuki) or only focus (Gungbe and Masalit).

Recall that Epee (1976a) analyzes cases like (47a) as instances of topicalization. However, as the reader can see from the glosses³³ above, Epee translates the particle *nde* as a focus one. And as it was reported by Clédor Nseme³⁴ (p.c), this particle is used in focus constructions in Duala and not in topicalization. Topic constructions in Duala involve resumption of the topicalized element in sentence internal position (Nseme 1989:279).

The data discussed so far seem to be interesting to the extend that one can hopefully come up with comparative and typological results from a crosslinguistic perspective.

Basaá seems to be a mixed language as it is found in-between languages like Gungbe which always realize focus morphologically, and languages like Bakoko, Etón, Búlu, Kinande and Tuki which make use of noun class agreement marking. I assume that, just like tense, mood, aspect etc. agreement and focus should be considered as are formal syntactic features which can be overtly realized eventhough they can be implicit in other languages. If this line of analysis is on the right track, and under the assumption that all languages essentially have the same universal make-up or features to some extent, and as hinted by a number of cartographers (see e.g. Rizzi 1997, 2004, 2013a, 2013b; Cinque 1999; Aboh 2004, 2010) and others, the overall framework adopted here undoubtedly lies in Chomsky's *Uniformity Principle* (2001:2) defined in (24) below.

³³ I remain faithful to the authors glossing

³⁴ A native speaker of Duala and linguist

(49) *Uniformity Principle*

In the absence of compelling evidence to the contrary, assume languages to be uniform, with variety restricted to easily detectable properties of utterances.

Principle (49) provides us with a strong argument to assume that languages share the same grammatical features, although some of these features can be silent or overt depending on language internal organization. It is obvious that agreement and focus features, for instance, are embedded overtly or covertly in each natural language. In the context of focus and agreement realization, it appears that African languages at large and Basàá in particular displays rich agreement and focus morphology as opposed to other languages that partly or never exhibit these features.

The Basaá case study provides theoretical linguistics with further evidence that not only agreement, but also, focus, is undoubtedly part of core syntax i.e. visible to the C_{HL} as extensively demonstrated by several works (e.g. Belletti 1990; Brody 1990; Biloa 1992, 1997, 2013, Rizzi 1997; Aboh 2004, 2010, Miyagawa 2010 etc) and in conformity with Chomsky's (1995:228) *inclusiveness condition* which requires that ' C_{HL} computes until it forms a derivation that converges at PF and LF'. According to Chomsky, elements entering a syntactic derivation should be selected as lexical items that are necessary for convergence or better still for Full Interpretation. In this way, superfluous items or objects should not be part of the numeration if a given structure is to be fully interpretable. To illustrate this point of view, let us consider the following question-answer pairs in Basaá.

(50) *Subject focus*

Q: **Njéé** a- bí- tí báúdú makebla

1.who 1.SM-PST2-give 2.students 6.presents

'Who gave the presents to the students?'

A: **Malêt** *(nyé-n) a- bí- tí báúdú makebla

1.teacher 1-FOC 1.SM-PST2-give 2.students 6.presents

'The TEACHER gave the presents to the students.'

(51) *Direct Object focus*

Q: **Kíí** malêt a- bí- tí báúdú

9.what 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-give 2.students

'What did the teacher give to the students?'

A1: malêt a- bí- tí báúdú **makebla**

in-situ focus

1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-give 2.students 6.presents

'The teacher gave the PRESENTS to the students.'

A2: **makebla mó-n** malêt a- bí- tí báúdú

ex-situ focus

6.presents 6-FOC 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-give 2.students

'The Teacher gave the PRESENTS to the students.'

Remember that in chapter three, discusses focus realization and interpretation. It was argued that subject focus (as a direct answer to a wh-question) is always ex-situ as opposed to non-subject focus which can be realized in-situ or ex-situ. To begin with both in-situ and ex-situ foci as in (50) and (51), and under a widely accepted view that question-answer pairs is one of a diagnoses for focus realization, it becomes clear that all answers in (50-51) are focus constructions because they are direct answers to wh-questions which require new information. They only differ from a structural point of view, that is, (50A1) and (51A 2) involve morpho-syntactic marking which is not attested in the syntax of (51A1). In addition, it is generally accepted in the literature that wh-questions involve a wh-feature that is encoded in the syntax. In the case of English for instance, it is widely agreed that there exists in the C_{HL} a wh-feature that projects in the syntax and that such a feature is responsible for clause typing (e.g. Cheng 1991, Cheng & Rooryck 2000). In vein, wh-movement in English, for instance, would take place for clause-typing purposes, that is, to type a given clause as being interrogative. However, when exploring the so-called wh-movement in other world languages such as Gungbe (Aboh 2004, 2007, 2010, Aboh and Pfau 2011 etc), Tuki (Biloa 1992, 1995, 1997, 2013 etc), it is observed that question words that are equivalent to English wh-phrases are followed by specific markers that encode focal information. Besides these wh-expressions, other specific discourse particles exist that express interrogation. More interesting is that both wh-words and interrogative particles (or question markers) in these languages including Basaá can be simultaneous computed in the same sentence without any resulting illicitness. This led authors such as (Aboh 2010; Aboh & Pfau 2010; Bassong 2010; Biloa 2013; Nkemnji 1995 etc.) to postulate another functional projection called interrogative phrase (cf. also Rizzi 2001 for Italian) which host interrogative particles while question words themselves move to the specifier position of FocP for the focus-criterion requirements. In this vein, one can assume that wh-movement fulfils the focus-criterion while question particles contribute to clause-typing, although such particles may be overt or covert cross-linguistically. An illuminating example comes from Lele, a Chadic language previously analysed by Frajzyngier (2001: 278 & 286) and cited more recently by (Aboh 2010:24). In Lele, yes-no questions and wh-questions are expressed by different markers and can even co-occur in the same sentence as in (52) below.

- (52) a. Kiya hàb kùlbá ke-y **gà** ?
 Kiya find cow GEN-3SG.F INTER
 'Did Kiya find his cow?'

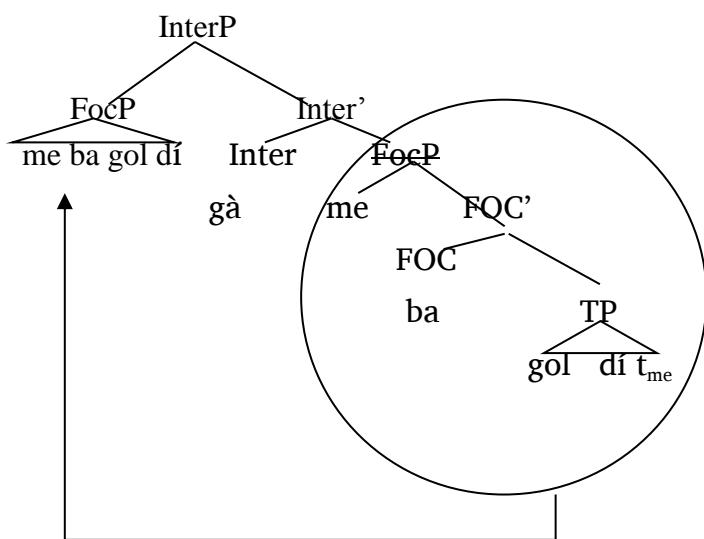
- b. Me **ba** gol dí **gà** ?
 what FOC see 3SG.M INTER
 'What did he see?'

As Aboh clearly demonstrates, the markers *gà* and *ba* (here I only consider the derivation of (52b) are syntactic heads that project in the syntax of Lele in the forms of formal features carrying focal information and interrogative information respectively as can be seen in (53a) below. According to Aboh, at a certain stage of the derivation (prior to Spellout), all these elements are computed in the C_{HL} as in (53a) before any transformational process.

- (53) a. [IntP [Inter [gà,] [FocP [Foc [ba], T, wh[me], dí, gol]] step 1
 INTER FOC what 3SG.M see

When the wh-phase *me* ‘what’ is probed over by the focus marker *ba* for focus requirements it moves into the specifier position of FocP as in (54b). After the movement of the wh-phrase *me* ‘what’ has taken place, the whole FocP structure pied-pipes to the specifier position of IntP where it can precede the interrogative marker *ga* in sentence final position at Spellout.

(54b)



The Lele case study, among others to be discussed in subsequent chapters, provides evidence that wh-phrases fulfil focus requirements whereas interrogative particles, although covert in other languages, participate in clause-typing. This analysis turns out to show that admitting the existence of a wh-feature in core syntax is simply admitting the existence of a focus-feature. This is even proved on empirical grounds in that wh-phrases in some natural languages are inherently focused and mutually exclusive with focused constituents because they compete for the same slot (cf. Biloa 1997, 2013; Rizzi 1997; Aboh 2004 for Tuki, Italian and Gungbe respectively).

In light Basáá and other related Bantu languages, one can admit that both focus and agreement are encoded in the C_{HL} of the language and that they form an integral part of the numeration. Therefore, failure to include them in the syntactic derivation would violate the *inclusiveness condition*. Cases like (51A1) with in-situ focus can be straightforwardly analyzed under Brody's (1990) *Focus-Criterion*, a UG principle defined in (55) below:

(55) *Focus-Criterion* (Brody 1990: 208)

- a. At S-structure and LF the Spec of an FP must contain a +f-phrase.
- b. At LF all +f-phrases must be in an FP.

What Brody terms FP (see also Biloa 1992, 1995, 1997 for the same terminology) is simply FocP (focus phrase) here. The focus criterion is simply an expression of the fact that any focused constituent should be in a Spec-Head configuration with a focus head either at PF or at LF. What is interesting is that such a rule applies universally either in overt syntax or at LF. In in-situ cases like (51A1), it is assumed that the focused constituent *makebla* 'presents' occupies the specifier position of FocP at LF. In Basáá and in other languages the focus criterion can be realized in overt syntax when fronting takes place in the syntax (51A2) or at LF, where movement is assumed to operate covertly (note that it will be shown in chapter seven that the so-called in-situ focus is redundant and can be averted in fragment answers). Languages such as Gungbe, Hungarian, Italian, Modern Greek etc. support this view on the basis of previous works (e.g. Aboh (2007; Brody 1990, 1995, E.Kiss 1998; Rizzi 1997; Agouraki 1990 etc.).

In the spirit of Chomsky's (1995) feature-based framework, overt movement is triggered by a strong feature, while covert movement is triggered by a weak feature. In the case of focus fronting in Basáá (e.g 51A2), it is assumed that that the complex $AgrC^0 + Foc^0$ bears strong class, number and focus features while the matrix T head bears an uninterpretable strong D-feature that attract the focused XP into the focus field and the matrix clause for checking purposes in overt syntax. Under Chomsky's (1993, 1995) Copy Theory of movement, a duplicated copy of the displaced focused category is merged in the matrix TP while the original and intermediate copies are left unpronounced at PF. The so-called in-situ focus as it is the case in (51A1) is an instance of covert focus movement. In this case, the focus head is said to be weak. In other words, under the weak versus strong features approach, it is assumed that feature-checking in the context of in-situ focus takes place at LF. In this perspective, copying the phrasal category in focus fronting (51A2) is necessary in overt syntax for phonological reasons, while LF movement can only move formal features of the attracted category, leaving the phonological category in the original position. However, as it is well known, covert movement is more

economical and is dictated by ‘procrastination’. As a result of this, a weak feature attracts only the formal features of the focused element at LF. English-like languages are usually said to have covert focus movement (except for clefts). Basaá will have both covert and overt focus and EPP movement while languages like Gungbe (Aboh 2004) or Tuki (Biloa 1995, 2013) with both in-situ and ex-situ focus will have both covert and overt focus movement. The overall picture for focus movement can be proposed below.

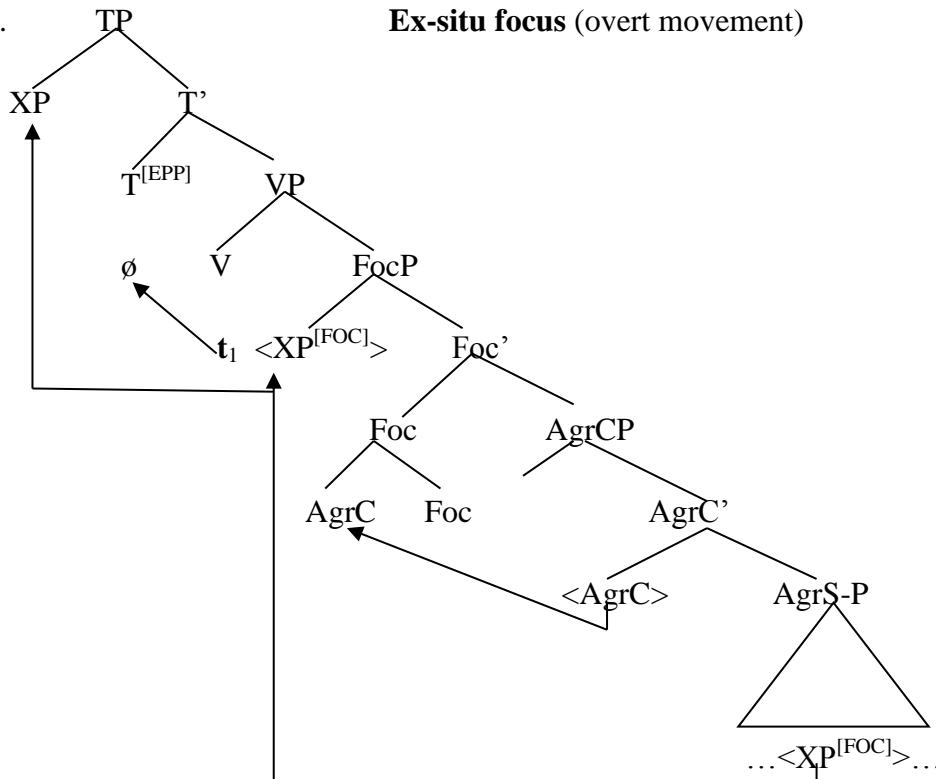
(56) *English-type languages*

- a. [FocP [Foc^[weak] [TP....XP[FOC]...]]]
- b. [FocP FF_{XP} Foc^[weak] [AgrSP/IP/TP ...XP[FOC]...]] *Formal features (FF) movement*

(57) *Basaá*

- a. [FocP Foc^[weak] [AgrSP/IP/TP...XP[FOC]...]] **in-situ focus** (covert movement)
- b. [FocP FF_{XP} Foc^[weak] [AgrSP/IP/TP...XP[FOC]...]] *Formal features (FF) movement*

c. **Ex-situ focus** (overt movement)



Overall, if Foc is weak, there is no categorical (phonological) movement or better still, there is no *Generalized Pied-piping*, only formal features move at LF and the focused constituent is pronounced in its original position. On the contrary, if Foc is strong, categorical movement takes place, and one obtains *Generalized pied-piping* (Chomsky 1995) of both formal and phonological feature movement.

4.4.3.2. Focus intonation languages: the case of Italian and Hungarian

In what follows I briefly provide an overview of the syntax of focus in Italian and Hungarian as discussed in previous works by Rizzi (1997) and E. Kiss (1998) to provide additional support for the view that the grammatical category of focus is syntactically encoded.

Rizzi's (1997) seminal paper paves a new way towards the understanding of the left periphery of the clause. In Rizzi's terms, the clausal left edge is associated with discourse features such as focus and topic and that these features are syntactically encoded. Accordingly, when activated in the discourse, focalized and topicalized elements move to dedicated specifier positions of functional heads, namely Foc(us) and TOP(ic) in order to fulfil focus and topic requirements. This is reminiscent of the Wh-criterion (Rizzi 1991) and Neg-criterion (Haegeman 1995) that determine the interpretation of the categories bearing Wh- and Neg-features. Under minimalist assumptions, Rizzi argues for a theory that provides the conceptual justification for postulating a fine-grained articulated structure of the left periphery. Borrowing from Kayne's(1994) antisymmetry approach, Rizzi claimed that neither adjunction nor free preposing mechanisms are permissible, all kinds of left peripheral movements must be motivated by the satisfaction of some criteria, hence the presence of discourse heads entering into the required Spec-head configuration with preposed phrases. The original frame proposed by Rizzi and repeated in (58) below was based on Italian. As the reader can see, the Italian left periphery is made up of a force phrase which is the highest projection, a recursive topic phrase, a focus phrase and a finiteness phrase. The force phrase determines the illocutionary force of the sentence, the topic phrase hosts displaced topics, the focus phrase hosts preposed foci and the finiteness phrase encodes information about the nature of the clause i.e. whether it is finite or infinite. Finiteness is therefore conceived of as the interface between the discourse space (left periphery) and the inflectional domain (TP/IP). I will thoroughly discuss the mapping of the left periphery cross-linguistically later on, but at this level note that (58) is the original composition of the Italian left periphery (Rizzi 1997).

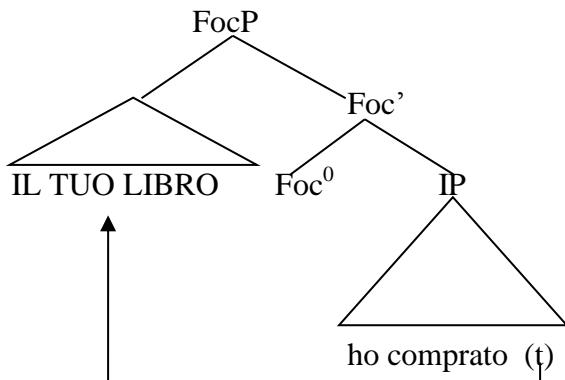
$$(58) \text{ [ForceP[Force}^0[\text{TopP[Top}^0[\text{FocP[Foc}^0[\text{TopP[Top}^0[\text{FinP[Fin}^0]]]]]]]]]$$

What is interesting is the fact that Italian has focus preposing which is associated with contrastive information. As opposed to languages endowed with morphological focus marking, Italian simply makes use of constituents preposing and the pitch accent placement to mark focus.

- (59) a. *A Gianni, QUESTO, domain, gli dovrete dire* (Rizzi:1997: 291).
 to Gianni, this tomorrow him should tell
 'To Gianni, THIS, tomorrow you should tell.'
- b. *IL TUO LIBRO ho comprato t (non il suo)* (Rizzi:1997: 291).
 'YOUR BOOK I bought (not his)'

The frame in (59a) shows that the focused constituent QUESTO ‘THIS’ is preceded by a topic *A Gianni* ‘to Gianni’ which is followed by another topic *domain* ‘tomorrow’ while in (59b) the contrastive focused constituent IL TUO LIBRO ‘YOUR BOOK’ which occurs in sentence initial position occupies a focus phrase position. Rizzi’s analysis shows that focus preposing in Italian is motivated by the focus requirements in a local configuration between the focused constituent and a functional implicit focus head as can be seen in (60) below.

(60)



Rizzi argues that the focus structure involves an X-bar movement in which the focalised element lands into the specifier position of FocP. IP, the complement of FocP is the presupposition i.e. the background or better still the comment. In light of (60) it comes out that in order to satisfy the focus criterion, the implicit focus head acting as a *probe* in minimalist terms bears uninterpretable focus features that need to be checked against the interpretable features of the maximal projection IL TUO LIBRO ‘YOUR BOOK’. By so doing, once focus is activated focus movement takes place in the syntax.

In her study of the distinction between information and identificational focus, É. Kiss argues that identificational focus, which is associated with exhaustive interpretation, has a dedicated FP (focus phrase) position, in the preverbal position, the head of which is an abstract category in the Hungarian clause structure. The functional head F (focus) may be endowed with strong verb features that trigger V-to-F movement in order to satisfy the focus criterion in Hungarian. In other words, É. Kiss claims that ‘the presence of an FP in a clause is constrained by the focus criterion, which requires that the specifier of FP should contain a +f phrase [an identificational focus], and that all +f phrases should be in the specifier of the projection of an F head.’ To illustrate this view, let us consider the following example adapted from É. Kiss (1998:256).

- (61) [VP Szeretném[CP ha [FP Péterre_i [Foc⁰ szavanátok_j][VP[V⁰ (t_j)][DP (t_i)]]]]
 I.would.like if Peter.on voted.you
 ‘I wish it was **Peter** on whom you voted.’

The schema in (61) shows that V-to-Foc movement ensures the adjacency between the identificational focus *Péterre* ‘Peter’ and the verb *szavanátok* ‘voted’ in Hungarian. É. Kiss argues that since the focus head Foc⁰ is endowed with strong V-features, V-to-Foc movement should take place in order to fulfil the focus criterion. Note also that in Hungarian, there exists a verbal particle that is apparently in complementary distribution with the identificational focus as reported by É. Kiss.

Following Chomsky’s *Uniformity Principle*, it can simply be assumed that languages are uniform but only display variation with regard to the different mechanisms they use to implement such or such linguistic operation. Variations at this level involve verb movement versus absence its absence, overtness versus silence of the focus head etc depending on the language. Partially summarizing, we have shown that focus is a grammatical feature that is part of core syntax and that its realization only differs not only cross-linguistically, but also within the same language.

4.5 Focus in relative clauses: Criterial freezing and focus pied-piping

In this section, it is shown that probing over a constituent within a relative clause for the sake of focusing triggers heavy pied-piping of the whole complex chunk containing the targeted constituent into the specifier position of FocP. Under the well-known assumption that relative clauses are islands, that is, they are opaque to extraction, extraction of an element contained in a relative clause for focus purposes provokes a massive pied-piping of the whole clause into Spec-FocP. Either way, in order to evade some UG constraints such as the *Criterial Freezing* (Rizzi 2006 & 2010; Rizzi and Shlonsky 2007) and Boškovic (2008) and island constraints, each time an XP category (goal) contained inside an island is probed over by a c-commanded focus head, that category must trigger the displacement of the whole island into the focus domain for the focus-criterion, then into the matrix TP for EPP requirements. Globally, I argue that, as focus fronting in Basáá works in tandem with the EPP, the focus position cannot be a criterial position given that it allows for further extraction of the focused element into the main Tense Phrase projection. Conversely, RelP will be said to be a criterial position as it is not transparent to further movement of the relativized constituent into some higher position, therefore requiring *Generalized Pied-Piping* of the whole relative clause.

4.5.1 On the Criterial Freezing Principle

Within the framework of Minimalism, the *Criterial Freezing Principle* (henceforth CFP) comes out as one of the most reliable and adequate theory of phrasal movement. By phrasal movement, it is meant movement affecting maximal projections, given that head movement has not yet been

subjected to a critical linguistic study involving freezing effects (at least to the best of my knowledge). In other words, in the literature, as opposed to phrasal movement, head movement is not subjected to freezing effects.

Following Chomsky's (2000, 2001, 2004 & 2005) works on *Agree* operations within the sentence, Rizzi's CFP reveals that extraction of a category X that has been previously extracted is impossible because once that element X is moved, it satisfies a number of requirements such as feature-checking and cannot be furthermore extracted to another position in clause structure to fulfil other grammatical requirements. To put it clearly, the CFP simply states that when an element X moves to a criterial position Y, the same element cannot be extracted from that criterial Y position to another position Z for the satisfaction of other morpho-syntactic requirements. To illustrate this, we will make use of two main paths as presented in Rizzi and Shlonsky (2007:2) in (62) below.

(62) a. *An element moved to a position dedicated to some scope-discourse interpretative properties, a criteria position, is frozen in place (Criterial Freezing).*

b. *Classical EPP, the requirements that clauses have subjects, can be restated as a criteria requirement, the Subject Criterion, formally akin to the Topic Criterion, the Focus Criterion, the Q or Wh Criterion, etc; (Rizzi 1996, 1997).*

Rizzi and Shlonsky (2007) demonstrate that subject extraction is highly constrained than object extraction because one has the Subject Criterion, but there is no Object Criterion because object extraction is not constrained. Let us consider the following examples from Rizzi and Shlonsky (2007:1).

(63) a. *Qui crois-tu que t_{qui} va gagner ?

‘Who do you believe that will win?’

b. Qui crois-tu que Paul va aider t_{qui} ?

‘Who do you believe that Paul will help?’

The authors argue that subject extraction across intermediate C positions hosted by lexical complementizers (*que*, *that*, *for* etc.) is banned while subject extraction from the thematic position namely the VP-internal position to the EPP position is licensed. In addition to showing from a government and binding perspective that some special lexical complementizers such as *que* ‘that’ in French and the \emptyset ‘null’ complementizer in English are proper governors, and others such as (*que*, *that*, *for* etc.) are not, the authors’ overall analysis accounts for the ungrammaticality of (63a) in terms of the Criterial Freezing. In other words, (63a) is ruled out because the structural subject of the sentence *qui* is first extracted from its thematic position, i.e.

in Spec-VP/vP (the VP-internal subject hypothesis (Koopman & Sportiche 1991; Kuroda 1988; Sportiche 1988 a.o.)) to an EPP position (here Spec-TP/IP etc.) as indicated by the trace t_{qui} . Once in this position, and after fulfilling the EPP requirements/Subject-Criterion, the subject is banned from moving because it is frozen in place (Spec-TP/IP). It is the reason why moving it once more to the C-domain gives rise an illicit structure which boils down to the EPP which requires that every clause should have a subject. By extracting the subject from the matrix TP position, the embedded clause would be devoid of a subject. Conversely, object extraction is not constrained and its movement is licensed in (63b) because there is no Object Criterion. Also, as opposed to the subject that moves twice, the object only moves once in one fell swoop.

Rizzi and Shlonsky further show that freezing effects are observable in A-bar positions. For instance, they argue that ‘a wh-phrase satisfying the Q-Criterion in an embedded question such as in the Italian case below cannot undergo focus movement to the main clause’ (compare (64a) with (64b)).

(64) a. Mi demando quale RAGAZZA avessero scelto, non quale ragazzo

‘I wonder which GIRL they had chosen, not which boy.’

b.*Quale RAGAZZA mi demando $t_{quale\ RAGAZZA}$ avessero scelto, non quale ragazzo

‘Which GIRL I wonder they had chosen, not which boy.’

In all, criteria cannot be satisfied ‘in passing’ as argued by the authors. For instance, the focused object *quale ragazza* ‘which girl’ cannot be pied-piped from the embedded position $t_{quale\ RAGAZZA}$ where it has been moved previously, to the matrix clause position. In (64a) the focus criterion is satisfied because the focused constituent *quale RAGAZZA* ‘which GIRL’ moves into the embedded focus phrase position and satisfies the Focus-Criterion. As a result, it becomes inert, or frozen in place. After these introductory notes on the *Criterial Freezing*, it can be observed that the subject position and the focus position are criterial in French (63b) and Italian (64b) respectively. In the following sections, it will be shown to what extent the *Criterial Freezing* can be implemented with regard to extraction cases in Basaá. The analysis will focus on focusing I the context of relative clauses.

4.5.2. Insight into Basa'a relatives

This section does not aim at providing an extensive³⁵ account of relative clauses in Basaá.

Actually, Basaá does not possess English or French-like relative pronouns. The formation of

³⁵ For an extensive study of Basaá relatives, the reader(s) should consult Ngo Ndjeyiha (1996, 2005), Bassong (2010), Makasso (2010), Jenks et al. (2012).

relative clauses in the language is subject to a kind of syncretism, i.e. the language makes use of special markers (they are glossed as Rel) which exhibit the same morphology as demonstratives and sometimes as subject markers. These markers can be accompanied by a definiteness marker, the so-called augment in Bantu linguistics. As opposed to some Bantu languages where the so-called augment varies depending on the noun class (cf. Halpert 2012 on Zulu), in Basáá the definiteness marker *í* (glossed as DEF) is invariable. The operator/relativizer that accompanies the relativized nominal is sensitive to class class i.e. it changes in relation to the noun class of the relativized constituent. Below is an overview of the various relative clause strategies attested in the language. Let us first consider (65) as the baseline sentence i.e. without any transformation.

- (65) *balêt bá- bí- sómb-ól báúdú bikaat...* *Basic sentence*
 2.teachers 2.SM-PST2-buy-BEN 2.students 8.books
 ‘The teachers bought the books for the students...’

a. **Strategy one:** *DEF-Head noun-Relativizer*

(ii)

- [í **balêt_i** **bá**] (**t_i**) *balêt bá- bí- sómb-ól báúdú bikaat...* *Relativized subject*
 DEF 2.teachers 2.Rel 2.SM-PST2-buy-BEN 2.students 8.books
 ‘The teachers who bought the books for the students...’

(ii)

- [í **baúdú_i** **bá**] *balêt bá- bí- sómb-ól (**t_i**) bikaat..* *Relativized IO*
 DEF 2.students 2.Rel 2.teachers 2.SM-PST2-buy-BEN 8.books
 ‘The students for whom the teachers bought the books...’

(iii)

- [í **bikaat_i** **bí**] *balêt bá- bí- sómb-ól báúdú (**t_i**)...* *Relativized DO*
 DEF 8.books 8.Rel 2.teachers 2.SM-PST2-buy-BEN 2.students
 ‘The books that the teachers bought to the students...’

b. **Strategy two:** *Head noun (with high tone on the first syllable)-Relativizer*

This strategy is used in the absence of the definiteness marker but the dropping of the latter does not go without consequences. For instance, since the invariant augment ‘í’ always bears a high tone, the head noun in an ‘augmentless’ structure must undergo high tone assignment which is the manifestation of the dropped augment (compare with strategy one). In other words, in the absence of the definiteness marker ‘í’, there is high tone spreading of the dropped augment on the head noun.

(i)

- [**balêt_i** **bá**] (**t_i**) *balêt bá- bí- sómb-ól báúdú bikaat...* *Relativized subject*
 2.teachers 2.Rel 2.SM-PST2-buy-BEN 2.students 8.books
 ‘The teachers who bought the books for the students...’

(ii)

- [bíkaat_i bí] balêt bá- bí- sómb-ól báúdú (t_i)... Relativized DO
 8.books 8.Rel 2.teachers 2.SM-PST2-buy-BEN 2.students
 'The books that the teachers bought for the students...'

(iii)

- [báúdú_i bá] balêt bá- bí- sómb-ól (t_i) bikaat... Relativized IO
 2.students 2.Rel 2.teachers 2.SM-PST2-buy-BEN 8.books
 'The students for whom the teachers bought the books...'

In addition, recall that every noun naturally has a lexical tone that is generally low with polysyllabic nouns and high in some monosyllabic ones. But in some contexts, a lexical tone that usually occurs on the first syllable of a given noun can become high, for instance due to its immediately postverbal position (e.g. (b) i, ii, iii above).

c. **Strategy three:** *Augment-head noun*

This strategy only differs from **strategy one** in that here the relativizer is omitted, but the relative clause reading remains the same.

- (i) [í bílêt_i] (t_i) bá- bí- sómb-ól báúdú bikaat... Relativized subject
 DEF 2.teachers 2.SM-PST2-buy-BEN 2.students 8.books
 'The teachers who bought the books for the students....'
 (ii) [í báúdú_i] balêt bá- bí- sómb-ól (t_i) bikaat... Relativized IO
 DEF 2.students 2.teachers 2.SM-PST2-buy-BEN 8.books
 'The students for whom the teachers bought the books...'
 (iii) [í bikaat_i] balêt bá- bí- sómb-ól báúdú (t_i)... Relativized DO
 DEF 8.books 2.teachers 2.SM-PST2-buy-BEN 2.students
 'The books that the teachers bought for the students...'

d. **Strategy four:** *Augmentless head noun without high tone on the first syllable - optional relativizer*

This strategy displays subject-object asymmetry in the sense that it cannot apply to the subject (di). Only objects can be relativized using this strategy (d ii, iii).

- (i)*[bá] (t_i) bá- bí- sómb-ól báúdú bikaat.. * Relativized subject
 2.teachers 2.Rel 2.SM-PST2-buy-BEN 2.students 8.book
 Intended: 'The teachers who bought the books for the students...'
 (ii) [báúdú_i] (bá) balêt bá- bí- sómb-ól (t_i) bikaat... Relativized IO
 2.students 2.Rel 2.teachers 2.SM-PST2-buy-BEN 8.book
 'The students for whom the teachers bought the books...'
 (iii) [bikaat_i] (bí) balêt bá- bí- sómb-ól báúdú... Relativized DO
 8.books 2.Rel 2.teachers 2.SM-PST2-buy-BEN 2.students
 'The books that the teachers bought for the students...'

4.5.2.1. Relative clauses and long distance dependencies

It has already been shown in the literature that relative clause formation in Basàá displays properties of A-bar dependencies (Bassong 2010; Hyman et al. 2012). The following examples show that relative clauses in Basáá license parasitic gaps (66a), do not involve weak crossover (66b); contra (Hyman et al. 2012:14) involve strong crossover effects (66c) and are sensitive to island constraints such as the Complex Island Constraint (66d) and the Adjunct Island Constraint (66e) (cf. Ross 1967).

(66)

- a. [í báúdú]_i malêt a- bí- sómb-ól (t_i) bíkaat ngi báat (**pg**) kúndε
DEF 2.students 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-buy-BEN 8.books without ask 9.permission
'The students to whom the teacher bought the books without asking permission.'
- b. í- maanjé₁ nū [li-wándá jéé_{1/2} lí jí-gwés_{1/2}] contra Hyman et al 2012:14
DEF 1.child 1.Rel 5-friend 5.POSS 5.SBJ PRES-like
'The child₁ that his^{*1/2} friend likes.'
- c. í- maanjé₁ nū [pro^{*1/2} a jí↓- gwés_{_1}] Hyman & al. 2012:14
DEF 1.child 1.Rel 1.SBJ PRES-like
'The child₁ that he^{*1/2} likes.'
- d. *Mε bí- bómá báúdú₁ bá- malêt a n- yí_{_1} bá- bí- néd
I PST2-meet 2.students 2.Rel 1.teacher 1.SM-PRS-know 2.SM-PST2-pass
mákeksε
6.exams
'*I met the students who the teacher knows they passed the exams.'
- e. *í báúdú₁ bá mε ye maséé ínyuúlē malêt a- n- tí (bó)₁
DEF 2.students 2.Rel I be 6.joy because 1.teacher 1.SM-PST1-give (2.them)
makebla
6.presents
'*The students whom I am happy because the teacher give (them) the presents.'

As can be seen in (66b), Hyman & al. (2012:14) show that the relativized noun *maanjé* 'child' cannot bind the embedded possessive *jéé* 'his/her', which is not true at all from my intuition. Many other interesting issues about relativization in Basáá which cannot be tackled here are encountered in Hyman & al. (2012). These issues, which the reader would certainly like to know about, include resumption and unselective binding, non complementarity, and head raising etc. What is important in this work is that relative clause formation involves movement, an issue which is going to be addressed against the backdrop of the *Criteria! Freezing*.

4.5.2.2. Focus fronting and heavy pied-piping

Since Ross (1967, 1986), it has become customary to consider pied-piping as an irregular phenomenon. Many proposals have been made in the literature (e.g. Brody 1995; Cable 2007, 2008, 2010; Cowper 1987; Grimshaw 1991, 2000; Heck 2008, 2009; Koster 2000; Lutz & Trissler 1997; Postal 1971; Sells 1985; Webelhuth 1992, Williams 1986 *inter alia*). Pied-piping is subject to cross-linguistic variations and is subject to a good number of constraints that unfortunately, are not the order of the day here. To begin with, let us consider the following characterization in (67) from Heck (2008:3).

- ### (67) Characterization of pied-piping

β pied-pipes dominating α iff a.-c. hold.

- a. Movement of β is contingent on the presence of [WH] on β .
 - b. [WH] is not marked on α .
 - c. Movement actually does not affect β but α .

To illustrate (67), let us consider two languages that do not license preposition stranding, namely French and German in (68) and (69) respectively.

- (68) French

 - a. A **qui₁** Marie a-t-elle donné des cadeaux **t₁**? *pied-piping*
to whom Marie has-EPTH-CL give.(Past participle) prep.Art presents
'To whom did Marie give the presents?'
 - b.***Qui₁** Marie a-t-elle donné des cadeaux **à t₁** *preposition stranding*
whom Marie has-EPTH-CL give.past participle Prep.ART presents to
Intended: 'To whom did Marie give the presents?'

(69) German: Adapted from Heck (2008:3-4).

 - a. Ich frage mich, [PP **mit wem₂**] du **t₃** gesprochen hast *pied-piping*
I ask REFL with whom you talked have
'I wonder who you talked to.'
 - b. *Ich frage mich, [DP **wem₂**] du [**mit t₂**] gesprochen *hast preposition stranding*
I ask REFL who you with talked have
Intended: 'I wonder who you talked to.'

As can be noticed in (78b) and (69b), preposition stranding is not allowed in French and German. Pied-piping must apply in order to obtain illicit constructions. With reference to (67), it can be realized that the pied-piped constituents are the prepositional phrases *à qui* ‘to whom’ in French and *mit wem* ‘with whom’ in German. These prepositional phrases act as an α category (cf 67) that is, the pied-piped material while the wh-words *qui* and *wem* ‘whom’ act as β , namely the pied-pipers. From a syntactic point of view, the pied-piped prepositional phrases do not bear [WH] features but rather they contain categories that bear these features. All things being equal, only the wh-words *qui* ‘whom’ and *wem* ‘whom’ contain morpho-syntactic [WH]-features. To understand the characterization in (67), it comes out that since wh-words are unable

to undergo movement alone in French and German, pied-piping (Ross 1967) affects the entire prepositional phrases. Although one can straightforwardly understand the pied-piping mechanism, one still wonder about its implication with regard to features checking. In the spirit of Chomsky (1995), the well-known criterion called WH-criterion (Aoun et al. 1981; Kayne 1983; Lasnik & Saito 1992; May 1985; Pesetsky 1982; Rizzi 1996 a.o.) is understood as a requirement on feature-matching or feature-checking which requires adjacency between the wh-phrase in Spec-CP and the head C⁰. Put another way, the wh-phrase must enter in a local Spec-Head configuration with the functional head C⁰ in order to satisfy the checking requirements or the Wh-Criterion. One of the intricacies raised by pied-piping in (68) and (69) for instance is that it is not the wh-phrases *qui* and *wem* ‘whom’ that enter in Spec-head agreement with the C⁰ head, but the whole PPs *à qui* and *mit wem* ‘to whom’. At this level, only the wh-expressions contained in the PPs bear [WH]-features. To iron out such intricacies, the standard assumption is to resort to an insightful hypothesis called the Wh-feature percolation Hypothesis (see; Chomsky 1973; Sells 1985; Cowper 1987; Grimshaw 1991, 2000; Webelhuth 1992; Heck 2008; etc) defined in (70) below.

(70) *Wh-feature percolation hypothesis* (Heck 2008:6)

There is a mechanism of wh-feature percolation that enables [WH] to spread across phrase boundaries.

It has been proposed in the literature that (70) is rendered possible via feature transmission or feature spreading. For instance, in case of pied-piping like in (68-69) above, the wh-phrases *qui* ‘who’ and *wem* ‘who’ transmit their features to the whole PPs dominating them respectively. In this vein, feature percolation will operate in the following way (adapted from Heck 2008:6).

- (71) a. [PP[WH] à [DP[WH] *qui*_[WH]]]
- b. [PP[WH] mit [DP[WH] *wem*_[WH]]]

Assuming that phrase structures build up in a bottom-top fashion, the DPs first project with both *qui* and *wem* ‘who’ being the D heads respectively. After the projections of the DPs have been built up, the wh-features of *qui* and *wem* ‘who’ spread over to the whole PPs such that the whole PPs embed wh-features. After the wh-features have been transmitted to the whole structure, pied-piping into Spec-CP takes place followed by feature-checking between the wh-phrases in Spec-CPs and their respective C⁰ heads.

After providing some empirical and theoretical assumptions related to the *Criterial Freezing Principle*, and *Pied-piping*, these principles are going to be implemented in relation to relative clause formation and focus movement in Basáá. Taking (72a) as the baseline sentence, (72b-c)

show that when an element contained within a relative clause is targeted for the sake of focus, this element drags along the entire relativized chunk (complex DP/NP). On the contrary, if the sole relativized constituent is extracted out of the relative clause through focus fronting, one ends up with ungrammaticality (72d-e).

(72)

- a. malêt a- bí- sómb-ól báúdú bikaat *Baseline sentence*
 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2- buy-BEN 2.students 8.books
 ‘The teacher bought the books for the students.’
- b. {málêt₁ (nú) [t₁ a- bí- sómb-ól báúdú bikaat]₂} nyé-n mé ñ-gwêš t₂
 1.teacher 1.Rel 1.SM-PST2-buy-OBL 2.students 8.books 1-FOC I PRS-like
 Intended: ‘I like THE TEACHER WHO BOUGHT THE BOOKS FOR THE STUDENTS.’
- c. báúdú₁ (bá) [malêt a- bí- sómb-ól t₁ bikaat] bá-n mε m-bóma t₂
 2.students 2.Rel 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-buy-BEN 8.books 2-FOC I PST1-meet
 Intended: ‘I met THE STUDENTS FOR WHOM THE TEACHER BOUGHT THE BOOKS.’
- d. *málêt nyé-n mé ñ-gwêš [t_{malet₂} (nú) [t_{malet₁} a- bí- sómb-ól báúdú bikaat]₂]₁
 1.teacher 1-FOC I PRS-love 1.Rel 1.SM-PST2-buy-BEN 2.students 8.books
- e.* báúdú bá-n mε m-bóma t_{baudú₂} (bá) [malêt a- bí- sómb-ól t_{baudú₁} bikaat]₂
 2.students 2-FOC I PST1-meet 2.Rel 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-buy-BEN 8.books

The well-formedness of (72b-c) as well as the ill-formedness of (72d-e) are accounted for under the *Criterion Freezing Principle*, the *Focus-features Percolation Principle*, and *Pied-piping* as defined above and repeated in (73-75) below for convenience.

(73) a. *An element moved to a position dedicated to some scope-discourse interpretative property, a criterial position, is frozen in place (Criterion Freezing)* (Rizzi 2003).

b. *Classical EPP, the requirements that clauses have subjects, can be restated as a criterial requirement, the Subject Criterion, formally akin to the Topic Criterion, the Focus Criterion, the Q or Wh-Criterion, etc.* (Rizzi 1996, 1997).

(74) *Characterization of pied-piping* (Heck 2008:3).

β pied-pipes dominating α iff α -c hold.

- a. Movement of β is contingent on the presence of [WH] on β .
- b. [WH] is not marked on α .
- c. Movement actually does not affect β but α .

(75) *Features- Percolation Principle*

- (a) If a head X probes over a c-commanded goal YP contained within an island ZP ,
- (b) YP -features must percolate across ZP
- (c) YP pied-pipes ZP to Spec-XP
- (d) Feature-checking takes place

Now, coming back to (72), and in the spirit of Minimalism, it can be realized that in (72b) the relativized subject *malêt* ‘teacher’ is a goal which is probed over by both the embedded Foc head

and the matrix T, for the sake of focusing the EPP simultaneously. However, since the probed subject is contained inside a complex NP, i.e. the relative clause notably [málêt_i (nú) [t_i a- bí-sómb-ól báúdú bikaat] ‘the teacher who bought the books for the students’, extraction of the sole subject *målêt* ‘teacher’ is blocked. In order to solve or circumvent a violation of the *Complex Noun Phrase Constraint* (CNPC), the probed subject should spread over its focus features across the entire relative clause. At this stage, it can be conjectured that the entire complex NP chunk is ‘contaminated’ because feature-percolation affects the whole complex. After focus-feature percolation has taken place, the whole relative clause can finally be pied-piped into the matrix TP via Spec-FocP.

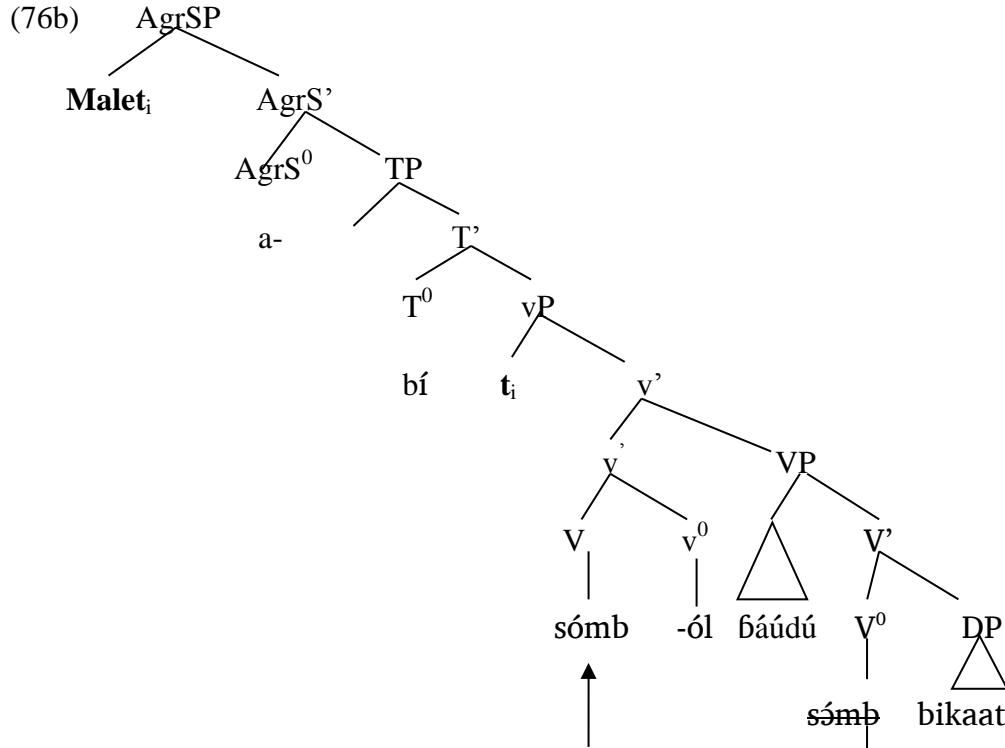
This analysis shows that feature-percolation is not subject to any asymmetry. In other words, feature-percolation is not restricted to the sole subject, and this is demonstrated in (72c) whereby the relativized object *báúdú* ‘students’ which is also probed over by the embedded Foc and T heads. Once it is probed over, the constituent *báúdú* ‘students’ percolates focus features across the whole relative chunk containing it prior to heavy pied-piping of into the matrix TP and via Spec-FocP. To illustrate our approach, we consider the derivation of (72c) as (76) below following the VP-shell hypothesis (Larson 1988, 1990; Hale and Keyser 1991, 1993, 2002; Chomsky 1995).

(76)

- a. [vP malêt_i [v⁰ sómb -ól [VP báúdú [sám̩b] [DP bikaat]]]]
 1.teacher buy-BEN 2.students buy 8.books

First of all, the lexical head verb *sómb* ‘buy’ merges with its thematic direct object *bikaat* ‘books’ and both form a V-bar/V’ category by external merge. Then, this V-bar category merges with the recipient *báúdú* DP ‘students’ to form the lower VP by external merge too. After VP is built up, the lexical verb *sómb* ‘buy’ moves and incorporates into the light affixal, namely the applicative morpheme *-ol*. Note that in the formation of verb complexes in Basaá like in (76) the vowel [o] of the affixal morpheme *-ol* generally assimilates the vowel of the root verb. It is the reason why the initial [ɔ] before spellout finally becomes [o] for assimilation purposes (cf. Bitja'a Kody 1990; Lemb & Gastine 1973; Mbom 1990 a.o. for an analysis of verbal extensions in Basaá). The outer vP shell headed by the verbal extension *-ol* merges with the thematic subject

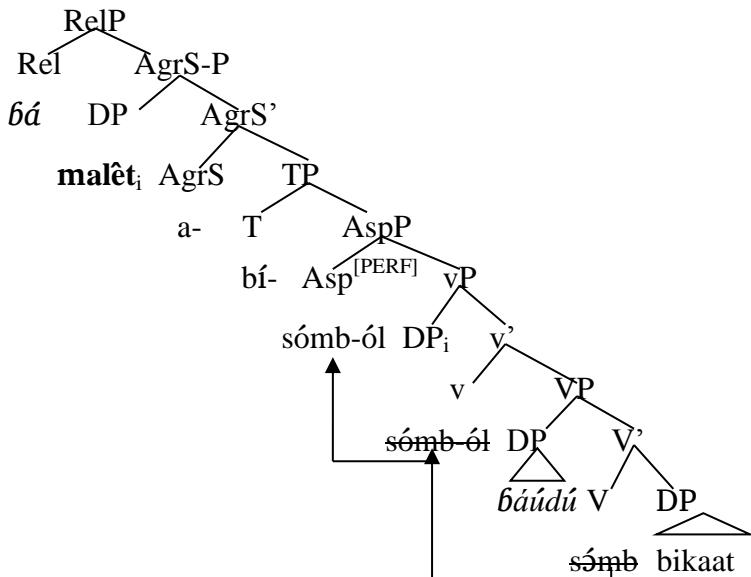
malêt ‘teacher’. The next step consists in merging the past tense morpheme *-bí* in order to form the TP which in turn merges with the subject agreement marker *a-* in AgrS, the specifier of which is occupied by the raised subject *malêt* ‘teacher’ to fulfil subject verb agreement with the subject marker *-a* as depicted below.



The derivation in (76b) allows us to get the word order of the basic sentence in (72a). Following the same structure building mechanism, AgrSP merges with another functional head namely, Rel, the projection of which gives a Relative Phrase (Biloa 2013). RelP is occupied by the agreeing relative marker *bá*.

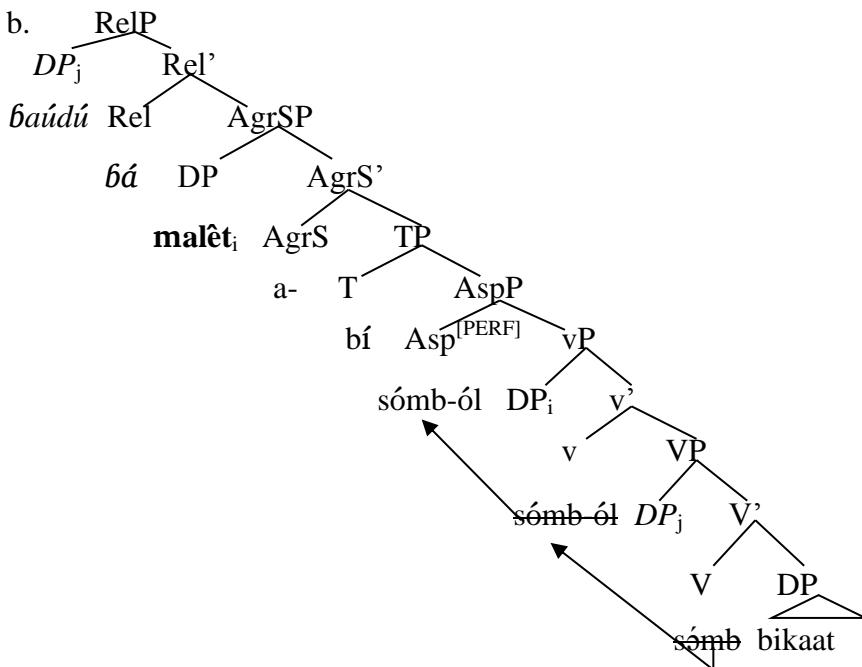
(77)

a.



In order to obtain the relative clause in (72c) whereby the relativized object *báúdú* ‘students’ is left adjacent to the relative marker *bá* (class 2), the latter probes over its goal *báúdú* ‘students’ which in turn moves into Spec-RelP.

(77) b.



At this stage, one obtains a relative clause whose specifier and head are *báúdú* ‘students’ and *bá* respectively. Now, if we assume that once an element moves from one position to another which is criterial in nature, then it is frozen in place, it comes out that moving the relativized object *báúdú* ‘students’ will not be possible. More specifically, such a movement will violate the

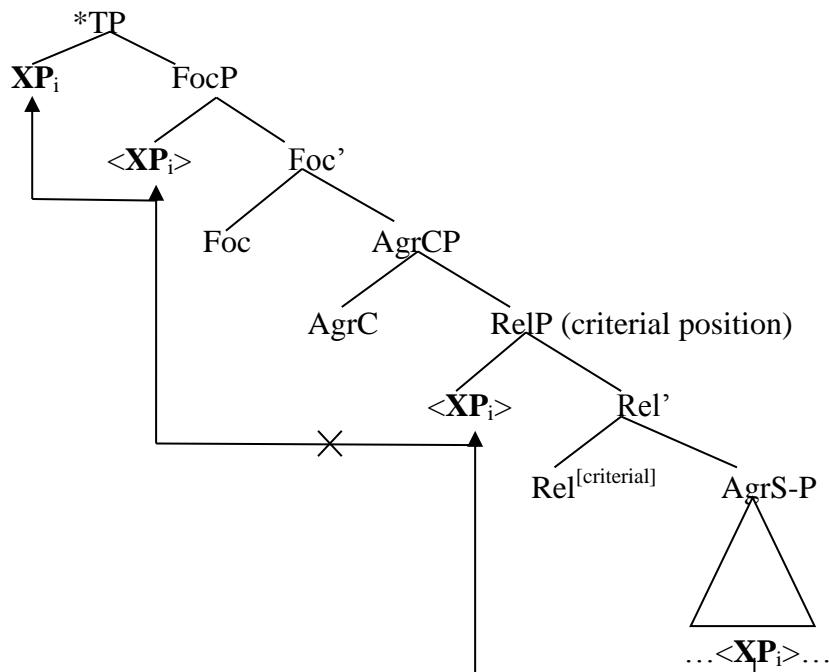
Criterial Freezing Principle and will yield ungrammatical sentences such as (72d-e). In order to solve the problem, we assume that Relative Phrase (RelP) is a Criterial position and that is why probing over a moved element contained inside the relative clause for the sake of focusing like in (72d-e), repeated below as (78a) and (78b) respectively gives rise to ungrammatical sentences.

(78)

- a. *málêt nyé-n mé íj-gwês [t_{malet₂} (nú) [t_{malet₁} a- bí- sómb-ól báúdú bikaat
1.teacher 1-FOC I PRS-love 1.Rel 1.SM-PST2-buy-BEN 2.students 8.books
- b.* báúdú bá-n mε m-bóma t_{baudua₂} (bá) [malêt a- bí- sómb-ól t_{baudua₁} bikaat]
2.students 2-FOC I PST1-meet 2.Rel 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-buy-BEN 8.books

In this vein, Rel is conceived of as a criterial head, given that it makes the relativized constituent *báúdú* ‘students’ inert and therefore blocks its movement as depicted in (79).

(79)



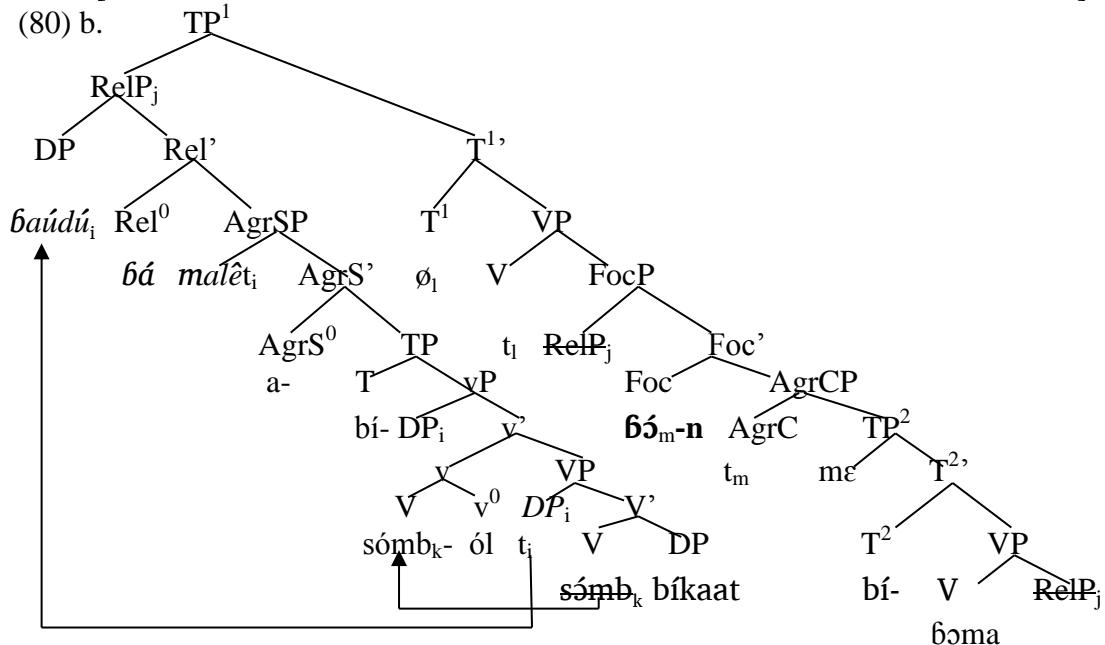
In order to evade freezing effects, only the whole RelP is allowed to move into the focus field, no constituent contained in RelP is allowed to move independently. Evading freezing effects is possible thanks to feature percolation. In accordance with the *Feature-Percolation Principle* in (75), we assume that there is a functional focus projection below the matrix clause but above RelP. So, Foc⁰ probes over the relativized object DP *báúdú* ‘students’ contained in an island namely RelP. Given the inability of the probed object *báúdú* ‘students’ to get extracted independently out of the complex DP/NP due to freezing effects, the probed category *báúdú* ‘students’ spreads/percolates its focus features across the whole clausal chunk prior to heavy-

piping into the matrix TP and via the embedeed Spec-FocP, just like in a regular focus fronting operation. This final step enables us to obtain (72c) repeated below as (80) for convenience.

(80) a.

[DP **baúdú₂** (**bá**) [malêt a- bí- sómb-ól t₂ bikaat]₁ **bó-n** mε m-bóma t₁
2.students 2.Rel 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-buy-BEN 8.books 2-FOC I PST1-meet
'I met [THE STUDENTS FOR WHOM THE TEACHER BOUGHT THE BOOKS].'

(80) b.



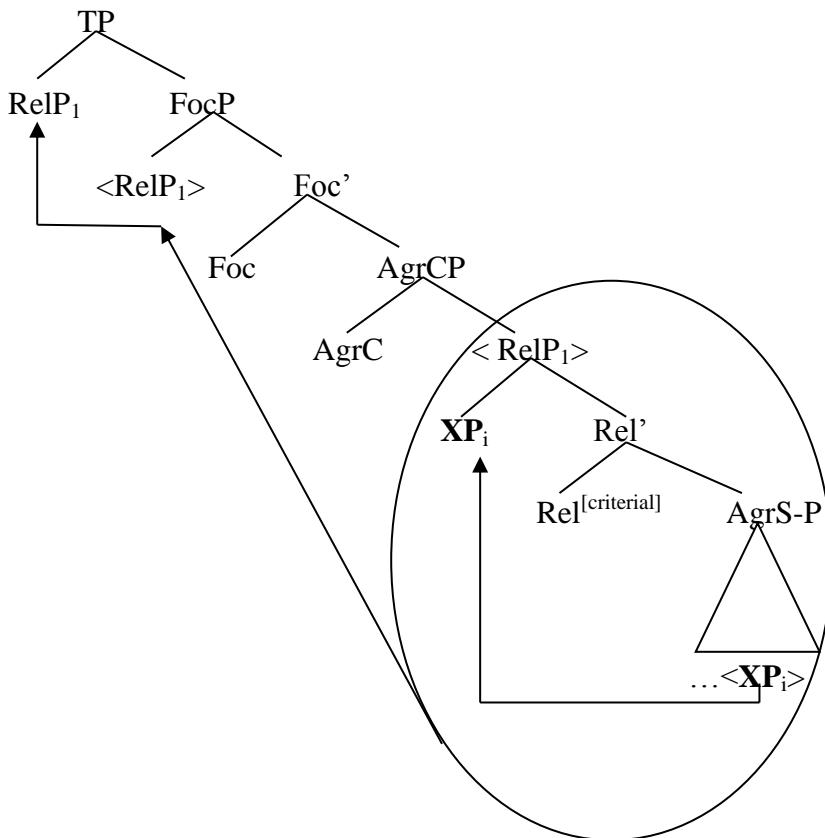
The above derivation shows that the whole complex ND/DP (RelP) moves stepwise (i.e. into Spec-TP via FocP) by satisfying focus requirements in the embedded FocP and the EPP in the matrix TP.

Another way of accounting for the grammaticality of (72b-c) is to assume that one obtains three different syntactic chains. The first chain is built up between the relativized constituent in Spec-RelP and its trace contained in the complex DP/NP, the second chain is built up between the trace of the intermediate trace of the RelP in Spec-RelP and its counterpart in Spec-FocP while the last trace is built up between the pronounced RelP in the matrix TP and silent copy in the embedded FocP. In the first chain, the Rel(ative)-criterion is satisfied, in the second one the focus-criterion is satisfied while, the EPP is satisfied in the matrix TP. This simply shows that while the focus-criterion can be satisfied by-passing, the Rel-criterion cannot given that it requires that the relativized constituent remains in place (Spec-RelP) unless the whole RelP gets pied-piped into a potential higher site.

The overall snapshot of chain formation is briefly provided in the schema below whereby the relativized XP_1 category first moves to Spec-RelP and leaves behind a trace \bar{XP}_1 then, pied-piping of the entire RelP₁ into Spec-TP via Spec-FocP takes place, leaving behind a silent copy in Spec-FocP. At the end of the derivation, one obtain three distinct syntactic chains namely

$\text{XP}_1\text{-}\cancel{\text{XP}}_1$ formed between the relativized constituent XP_1 in Spec-RelP and its silent tail $\cancel{\text{XP}}_4$, the chain $\text{RelP}_1\text{-}\text{RelP}_4$ formed between the pied-piped RelP₁ into Spec-FocP and its unpronounced tail RelP₁ and chain between Spec-FocP and Spec-TP of the matrix clause.

(81)



This analysis provides further evidence that pied-piping operates as a ‘last resort’ operation which helps evade some structures that would otherwise lead to illicitness. Rizzi’s Criterial Freezing can be considered as another version of the *Activation Condition* (AC) proposed by Chomsky (2000 & 2001) and outlined in (82) below.

(82) *Activation Condition*

Inactive elements (i.e. elements which are already checked) are inaccessible for further operations.

At first blush, as opposed to the ungrammatical derivation in (79), where movement is blocked by freezing effects, (82) rather circumvents such effects in the sense that it is not the sole relativized object that is fronted, but it pied-piped all the material containing it, i.e. the whole complex DP. Conversely, when pied-piping of the whole complex DP does not apply, therefore ungrammaticality emerges as a violation of the *Criterial Freezing* and the *Activation Principle*. This state of affairs is clearly supported by the illicitness of (72d-e), the derivation of which is sketched in (79).

4.6 NP-shift and Kayne's (1994) antisymmetry of syntax

This section deals with theoretical implications that uphold the phenomenon of NP-shift in Basaá, the description of which was done in the preceding chapter (chapter 3). In the preceding chapter, I discussed NP-shift constructions and showed that they are discourse-linked, exhibit a direct object/indirect object asymmetry in double object constructions and are sensitive to cardinality. I would like, as previously mentioned, to recall a number of things before discussing theoretical implications that account for the phenomenon of NP-shift. In other words, a direct object NP undergoes shifting if and only if it contains a numeral modifier. Semantically, the analysis revealed that a shifted NP conveys an exhaustive focus interpretation and is felicitous to questions that are discourse-related, that is, it (the shifted NP) is part of information already known in the discourse setting by both the speaker and hearer. As already discussed in a preceding chapter, it comes out that in a context like, (83) below, the content question is about the 'NUMBER of books' because it is known by the discourse participants that 'the books' were bought but only their number remains unknown, or non-presupposed of the speaker.

(83) Context: *Father knows that the teacher gave the books to the students yesterday. But he does not really know how many books the students received.*

Q: **Bikaat gwánén** malet a- bí- tí báúdú yaaní
 8.books 8.how many 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-give 2.students 1.yesterday
 'How many books did the teacher give to the students yesterday?'

A1: malet a- bí- tí báúdú yaaní **bikaat bísamal** *NP-shift*
 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-give 2.students 1.yesterday 8.books 8.six
 'The teacher gave SIX books to the students yesterday.'
 Lit: The teacher gave to the students yesterday SIX books'

A2:# malet a- bí- tí báúdú **bikaat bísamal** yaaní *NP-shift
 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-give 2.students 8.books 8.six 1.yesterday
 'The teacher gave SIX books to the students yesterday.'

As the reader can see, (83A2) is ruled out because the direct object *bikaat bísamal* 'six books' occupies its canonical position and therefore, has failed to shift to sentence final position as opposed to (83 A1) whereby shifting takes place. A sentence like (83 A2) is only felicitous as an answer to a question that indicates all-new focus or VP-focus as can be seen in (84) below.

(84)

- | | |
|--|--|
| Q: a. Kíí í yé ñken
9.what 9.SM-be new
'What's new?' | b. Kíí í- bí- tágþé yáání
9.what 9.SM-PST2-happen 1.yesterday
'What happened yesterday?' |
| c. Kíí malêt a- m-þðj
9.what 1.teacher 1.SM-PST1-do | |

‘What did the teacher do?’

- A1: malet a- bí- tí báúdú bikaat bísmal yaaní
 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-give 2.students 8.books 8.six 1.yesterday
 ‘The teacher gave six books to the students yesterday.’

A2: #malet a- bí- tí báúdú yaaní **bikaat bísmal** *NP-shift
 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-give 2.students 1.yesterday 8.books 8.six
 ‘The teacher gave SIX books to the students yesterday.’

As can be observed, an answer with a shifted NP cannot be felicitously interpreted in all-new and VP-focus contexts (84A2). This state of affairs amounts to saying that NP-shift constructions are discourse-linked in the sense that they require part of information to be presupposed by discourse participants. So, it is clear that a question such as ‘how many books?’ already entails that the speaker knows something about the ‘books’, but what it does not know is their number. If this line of reasoning is true along the lines, therefore, it comes out that what is focused here is the number. In this context, if focus is considered as denoting non-presupposed or new information (Halliday 1967; Vallduví & Engdahl 1996 *inter alia*), it can easily be inferred that SIX in the above context is new information which pied-pipes the whole head noun *bikaat* ‘books’ to sentence final position. As for the other part of information, it is considered as being part of the background i.e. known, familiar or shared knowledge by the discourse participants. That NP-shift is sensitive to cardinality is furthermore illustrated in the contexts (85) and (86) below.

(85)

- Q: **Bikaat bilâm gwáŋén** u n- há í keté mpêk
 8.books 8.nice 8.how many you PST1-put LOC inside 3.bag
 ‘How many nice books did you put in the bag?’

- A: Mε n- há í keté mpék bikaat bilâm bíſâmbók NP-shift
 I PST1-put LOC inside 3.bag 8.books 8.nice 8.seven
 ‘I put in the bag SEVEN nice books.’

The context in (85) shows that NP-shift occurs even in the presence of a quality adjective. But in a VP-focus or object-focus situation, there is no shifting as indicated in (86).

(86)

- Q: a. Kíí u- n- há í keté mpêk
 9.what you PST1-put LOC inside 4.bag
 ‘What did you put in the bag?’

b. Kíí u m-ñôj
 9.what you PST1-do
 ‘What did you do?’

- A: Mε n- há bikaat bilâm bíšâmbók í keté mpék
 I PST1-put 8.books 8.nice 8.seven LOC inside 3.bag
 'I put seven nice books in the bag.'

Finally, in the absence of a cardinal number in an NP, shifting is completely disallowed as illustrated in (87).

- (87) Q: Mím↓béé míntén mí bíkaat malêt a- n- tí báúdú len
 4.which 4.kinds 4.GEN 8.books 1.teacher 1.SM-PST1-give 2.students 1.today
 ‘Which kinds of books did the teacher give to the students today?’

A: *malêt a- n- tí báúdú len **bíkaat bikoybágá bilâm NP-shift**
 1.teacher 1.SM-PST1-give 2.students 1.today 8.books 8.red 8.nice

Lit: ‘*The teacher gave to the student today red nice books’

After it has been recalled how NP-shift is realized and interpreted, what will follow below is the theoretical implications associated with NP-Shift constructions.

The issue of Heavy NP-Shift (HNPS) probably goes back to Ross (1967). In a pre-Kaynean’s (1994) period, a good number of structures including Heavy NP-Shift such as the English example in (88) below were said to involve rightward movement of the bold-printed NP/DP ‘my rich uncle of the Detroit’ to a position right-adjoined to either VP or TP/IP/AgSP, with the final derivation being that the object follows the adjoined modifier ‘on the street’.

- (88) I met (t_1) on the street [**my rich uncle of the Detroit**]₁

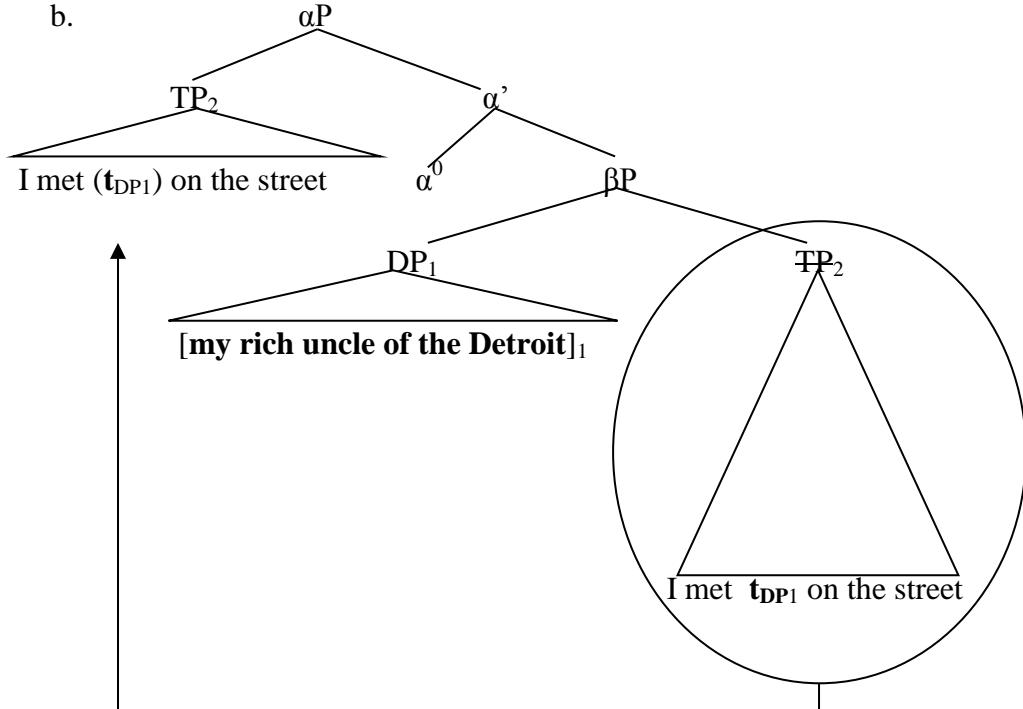
With the advent of Kayne’s (1994) *antisymmetry of syntax*, new insights were provided into such structures by proposing an adequate theoretical syntactic analysis. One of the core issues of Kayne’s influential theory is the breaking away from any right adjunction approach to syntactic structures to the advantage of leftward movement. More specifically, with Kayne’s antisymmetry approach, no rightward movement is permitted; every movement operation is to the left. As a direct consequence of this, a good number of phenomena such as rightward adjuncts extraposition, HNPS, postverbal subject and postverbal objects in OV languages are henceforth analyzed within the framework of Kayne (1994). Although some researchers still argue against Kayne’s proposal till nowadays, it goes without saying that such a proposal has far reaching outcomes both empirically and theoretically. I will not be concerned here about theories that argue against Kayne’s proposals, rather, I will show how relevant is the antisymmetry framework for the understanding of NP-Shift constructions in Basaá. This will probably bring new insights into our understanding of linguistic theory crosslinguistically. Similarly, it is relevant to recall that there exist two main tenets of the antisymmetry approach to HNPS namely Kayne himself and Williams (2003). As for Kayne, HNPS can be accounted for without any rightward movement at all. The shifted object undergoes no movement operation; rather it is stranded by the movement of some constituent(s) to its left. Kayne adopts the same line of analysis concerning other kinds of constructions that were previously analyzed as involving rightward movement. Later on, Williams (2003) and Wallenberg (2009) proposed a similar approach, but not exactly the same analysis as Kayne’s. To the difference of his predecessor, the

former authors propose an analysis of HNPS which involves leftward fronting of the shifted object to some specifier position above TP/IP/AgrSP followed by remnant movement of the entire clause above the landing site of the shifted object. Williams's proposal comes out as the one which helps better account for NP-Shift in Basáá. In the light of Williams (2003) and Wallenberg (2009), a English sentence like (88) and repeated below as (89a) is derived as in (89b). For convenience, I will call the landing site of the shifted NP αP (alpha phrase) and the landing site of the remnant TP/IP βP (beta phrase), both the functional heads α^0 and β^0 are implicit (unpronounced).

(89)

- a. I met (t_1) on the street, [my rich uncle of the Detroit]₁

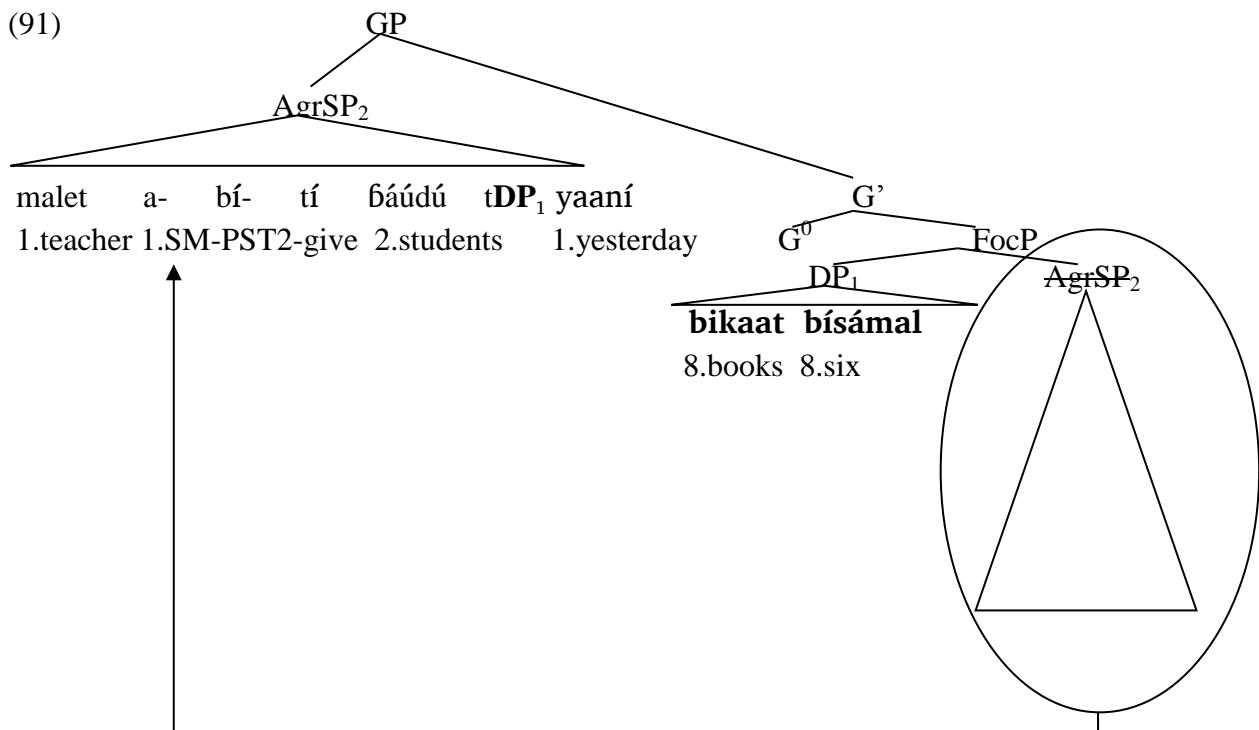
b.



The above derivation allows to avoid considerable problems related to syntactic structures building mechanisms that are encountered in a right-adjunction analysis. All the same, the present analysis helps derive seemingly complex structures in a more adequate fashion. I follow the same analysis by arguing that NP-Shift constructions in Basáá are derived in a pair-wise fashion: first of all, the shifted NP moves into the specifier position of FocP, then the remnant AgrSP/IP moves into the specifier position of GroundP (GP). Taking parasitic gaps as an instantiation of A-bar movement, the following sentences provide further support that the shifted NP undergoes leftward movement and not the opposite that is, rightward movement.

- (90) a. hilgá hí- bí- mǐl (t₁) yáání ñgi námbâ **makala** máâ₁
 19.boy 19.SM-PST2-swallow 1.yesterday without chewing 6.donuts 6.three
 Intended: 'The boy swallowed three doughnuts without chewing them.'
- b. maarjé a- n- téédá (t₁) í keté ñkû ñgi jowa **bilñj** ↓bíbáâ₁
 1.child 1.SM-PST1-keep LOC inside 3.suitcase without wash 8.trousers 8.two
 'Intended: The child kept two trousers in the suitcase without washing them.'

The derivation proposed in (91) below holds for all cases of NP-shift examined above. The analysis shows that the shifted DP/NP *bikaat bísamal* 'six books' under focus fronting to the left periphery of the sentence, namely into Spec-FocP followed by remnant movement of the AgrSP into the specifier position of the Ground Phrase (Pollock & Poletto 2004) position. Every movement leaves behind a co-indexed³⁶ unpronounced copy.



At this stage, it can be said that NP/DP-shift in Basaá contributes to phrase structure building in that it allows to postulate that there exist in this context two available specifier positions in the left periphery of the sentence. These are a focus phrase position which is the locus of the shifted DP/NP and a ground phrase position that hosts the remnant moved clause. I consider the phrase in Spec-GP as representing familiar, presupposed or better still background information known by discourse participants while the shifted constituent provides new or non-presupposed information. Normally, what is new in the shifted NP/DP is not the whole NP/DP itself, but its subpart. In this case, it is the cardinal number *bísamal* 'six' which is unknown in the discourse.

³⁶ Co-indexation is simply used for explanatory purposes

In this perspective, it is assumed that the cardinal number pied-pipes the whole DP/NP to Spec-FocP as a result of feature-percolation. In other words, since the sole cardinal number cannot be shifted in case of NP-shift (92A2), it needs to percolate/spread its focus features over the whole noun phrase/determiner phrase containing the adjective. After focus-feature percolation is effective, the cardinal modifier *bísámal* ‘six’ pied-pipes all the NP containing it into Spec-FocP. The shifted DP/NP can consist of other nominal modifiers such as adjectives, possessives etc. However, as already mentioned, it is the presence of a numeral that triggers shifting. Each time the cardinal modifier is absent in the nominal structure, no NP-shift results.

- (92) Q: **Bikaat gwáŋén** malêt a- bí- tí báúdú yaaní
 8.books 8.how many 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-give 2.students 1.yesterday
 ‘How many books did the teacher give the students yesterday?’

- A1: pro a- bí- tí bó yaaní **bikaat bísámal**
 pro 1.SM-PST2-give 2.them 1.yesterday 8.books 8.six
 ‘He gave them SIX books.’
- A1: *pro a- bí- tí bó **bikaat** yaaní **bísámal**
 pro 1.SM-PST2-give 2.them 8.books 1.yesterday 8.six

Semantically, and as previously mentioned, NP-shift in Basáá conveys an exhaustive focus reading or even a narrow focus interpretation. In other words, since NP-shift in Basáá is sensitive to cardinality, it is assumed that in a context like (92A1), the cardinal number *bísámal* SIX in *bikaat bísámal* ‘SIX books’ expresses exhaustive interpretation but not in the sense of É Kiss (1998). The cardinal number *bísámal* ‘SIX’ is inherently exhaustive and does not require relevant alternatives in the discourse or contextually given alternatives among which it can be selected. It is considered as new, non-presupposed or unfamiliar information to the hearer. So, it can be inferred that the cardinal number *bísámal* ‘SIX’ stands as being a specific entity in the clause that the speaker wants to present to the hearer as being new information.

Against the backdrop of cartography, the Basáá empirical data provide further support for a fine-grained characterisation of the clausal left edge as proposed by Rizzi (1997 and subsequent work). This analysis gains further evidence in the spirit of Rooth’s (1985, 1992, 1997) account of focus. According to these previous analyses, focused constituents in Heavy NP-shift have a formal syntactic feature [+foc]. This helps understand in Minimalist terms the theory of movement. In other terms, movement in the framework of Minimalism is driven for checking purposes. So it comes out that the analysis of NP-shift is motivated in that there exist in the phrase structure two functional heads namely Foc^0 and G^0 that need to be checked appropriately. Under this assumption, the movement of the shifted NP into Spec-FocP as well as remnant movement of the clause into Spec-GP are warranted in that they fulfil a probe-goal (PG)

relationship. More precisely, the head Foc^0 probes over the shifted NP while the head G^0 probes over the remnant clausal chunk in order to satisfy the focus and other discourse-related features which can be associated with a ‘topic-like’ reading in the sense of Rizzi (1997, Polletto & Pollock 2004 and related works).

4.7 Deriving focus fronting in all-new contexts: EPP, the focus-criterion, second position effects and the LCA

It was mentioned in the preceding chapter and in previous sections of this chapter that in Basáá, just like in Czech, German and even French, focus fronting is felicitously attested in all-new contexts. I argued that in Basáá, focus fronting is driven by morpho-syntactic requirements, namely the EPP and focus-criterion. That is, focus fronting in all-new and related contexts involves the same syntactic derivation to a large extent and induces no syntax-semantic mismatching. It is true and undoubted that a speaker may decide to front a given constituent for pragmatic or phonological considerations in other languages³⁷. I propose that focus fronting in ‘all-new’ and related contexts differs from other regular focus fronting cases simply at the level of second position effects attested in the former and absent in the latter. Globally, I propose that what seems to be a subpart of the semantic focus is simply an apparent phenomenon, which under close scrutiny boils down to the Linear Correspondence Axiom (Kayne 1994).

(93) *Subject and object fronting*

a. What’s new?

Man wém nyé-n a- neéd makeksé yaaní ni lé yak mwaá
 1.child 1.my 1-FOC 1.SM-PST2.pass 6.exams 1.yesterday and that also 1.wife
 wém a- bí- kέ yáání líke
 1.my 1.SM-PST2-go 1.yesterday 5.trip
 ‘My child passed the exam yesterday. Also, my wife travelled yesterday.’

b. **makeksé mó-n** man wém a- neéd yaaní ni lé yak mwaá
 6.exams 6-FOC 1.child 1.my 1.SM-PST2-pass 1.yesterday and that also 1.wife
 wém a- bí- kέ yáání líke
 1.my 1.SM-PST2-go 1.yesterday 5.trip
 ‘My child passed the exam yesterday, also, my wife travelled yesterday’

Examples like these abound in the world languages and cannot be exhausted here. But remember all the same that French, Czech, German and probably many world languages can front the subject or the object in all-new sentences (cf. Sasse 1987; Fanselow & Lenertová 2011).

Although fronting is licensed in all-new sentences, note that not every constituent of the sentence is allowed to be fronted in such contexts in Basáá. As stated in chapter three, only the predicate

³⁷ See Sasse (1989), Fanselow & Lenertová (2011) for pragmatic and/or phonological approaches to focus fronting

and arguments (internal and external) are allowed to get fronted in all-new sentences while adjunct fronting is not allowed as can be illustrated in (94) below.

(94) Context

What's new?

- a. **Man wêm nyé-n** a- néd makekse yaaní ni lé yak mwaá
1.child 1.my 1-FOC 1.SM-PST2.pass 6.exams 1.yesterday and that also 1.wife
wém a- bí- ké yáání like
1.my 1.SM-PST2-go 1.yesterday 5.trip
'My child passed the exam yesterday. Also, my wife travelled yesterday.'
- b. **makekse mɔ̄-n** man wêm a- néd yaaní ni lé yak mwaá
6.exams 6-FOC 1.child 1.my 1.SM-PST2-pass 1.yesterday and that also 1.wife
'My child passed the exam yesterday.'
- c. Man wêm a- ned makekse yaaní
1.child 1.my 1.SM-pass 6.exams 1.yesterday
'My child passed the exam yesterday.'
- d. **m- bɔ̄ŋ-ɔ̄k wó-n** maŋgé a- bí- bɔ̄ŋ nsáŋ yaaní
3.NMLZ-do-NMLZ 3-FOC 1.child 1.SM-PST2-do 1.father.3sg 1.yesterday
Lit: 'The child did to his father yesterday.'
- e. # **yaaní nyé-n** man wêm a- bí- ned makekse
1.yesterday 1-FOC 1.child 1.my 1.SM-PST2-pass 6.exams
Lit: 'My child passed the exam yesterday/It is yesterday that my child passed the exam.'

We have termed constructions such as (94a-d) selfish foci i.e. foci which have no background information or no presupposition. In this vein, they do not obey the classical focus/background distinction which consists in partitioning information into two separate parts, namely the focus part and the presupposition/background. In a context such as (94), everything is new and there is no background information/presupposition available in the context. The information obtained in (94a-d) is all-new, unfamiliar or non-presupposed. Sentence (94c) is the most expected answer in all-new contexts. However, as previously, fronting what is apparently a supart of the semantic focus as in (94a-d) is felicitously interpreted.

It is also important to stress that the grammatical category of focus is not always dependent on question/answer pairs. In other words, question/answer pairs are not the sole diagnostics for focus realization. The following sentences show that focus fronting can be attested in presentational/existential or scene setting contexts.

(95)

- A: **Maŋgé w-ádâ njé-n** mudaá a- bí- óm í bóm ni dikóó díbáa...
1.child 1-one 1-FOC 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-send LOC 10.market with 12.thousand 12.two
Intended: 'The woman sent a CHILD to the market with two thousand.'
'Once upon a time, there was a CHILD whom the woman sent to the market with two thousand...'

B: **mut** **ndʒey** **njé-n** a käl kémþê lé dʒam lí íj- kíd-ná bée
 1.person 9.madness 1-FOC 1.SM-tell.PST 9.goat that 9.thing 9.SM-PRS-last-APPL NEG
 ínyuú mut
 PREP 1.person
 ‘A mad man told the goat that nothing is eternal.’

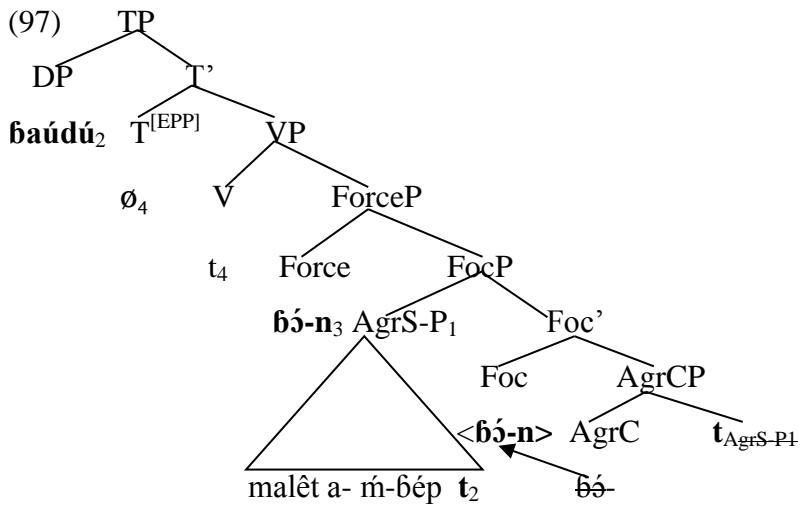
The sentences in (95) show that focus can be realized in narrative stories or in presentational context without any link to question/answer pairs. This is an indication that the grammatical category of focus is encoded in the *CHL* of native speakers of Basaá and does not necessarily require question/answer contexts. Sentence (95A) is an example of object fronting while (95B) involves subject fronting.

In the context of (94) for instance, even sentence (94c) with no focus fronting has the same semantic interpretation as its counterparts which involve focus fronting. All the same, (95A-B) would convey the same semantic readings as cases without focus fronting. In other words, even though the fronted constituents in (95) were to occur in-situ, i.e. in their canonical positions, one would obtain the same interpretations.

In addition, I propose adjunct fronting is ruled out in (94d) because it is not the time of the event that is important in ‘all-new’ and related contexts, but the vent as a whole. In this vein, only the verb or one of its predicates are allowed to front because they are the most important elements for the realization of a given event. So, in terms of event structure, place and time are less important than the predicate and/or its arguments.

The approach to the derivation of focus in all-new sentences (96A2) only differs from other regular focus fronting cases in one point and proceeds as in (97):

- (96) Q: Kíí í- íj- ke bée háná
 9.what 9.SM-PRS-go NEG here
 A1: malêt a- mí- báp báúdú
 1.teacher 1.SM-PRS-beat 2.students
 ‘The teacher is beating the students.’
 A2: **báúdú** **bó-n** malêt a- mí- báp
 2.students 2-FOC 1.teacher 1.SM-PRS-beat
 ‘The teacher is beating the students.’
 A3: * **báúdú** malêt a- mí- báp **bó-n**
 2.students 1.teacher 1.SM-PRS-beat 2-FOC
 A4: * malêt a- mí- báp báúdú **bó-n**
 1.teacher 1.SM-PRS-beat 2.students 2-FOC



The above derivation shows that what occupies the focus field in all-new and related contexts (e.g. what happened?) is the whole clause, a subpart of which is later on extracted in order to satisfy the EPP in the matrix TP clause. The derivation of (97) proceeds as follows:

First of all, the whole semantic focus, namely AgrS-P moves into Spec-FocP to fulfil the focus-criterion while the noun class agreement morpheme *bó-* moves by head movement and incorporates into the focus morpheme *-n* in Foc, the head of the focus phrase. Given the inability of the focus marker to be stranded in sentence final position (96A3-A4), this morpheme should move further into Force the head of the Force Phrase where it can c-command its AgrS-P at Spellout. Given that focus fronting works in tandem with the EPP that needs to be satisfied in the matrix clause, subpart of a previously moved AgrS-P is extracted out and moves into the matrix TP clause. The postulation of a Force Phrase in-between the matrix TP and the embedded one is explained by the fact that focus fronting is bi-clausal. If this is true, then, one assumes that there is a higher functional Force field (CP/COMP in pre-cartographic approaches) which separates the root clause from its embedded counterpart. In the case of Basaá sentence above, Force (C in the minimalist framework) has a null spell out and can be successfully occupied by the complex head *bó-n* coming from the lower Foc position. Besides, given that in Basaá the focus morpheme should always c-command or precede its AgrS-P/TP complement, that is, it should occupy the second position in focus fronting constructions, Foc-to-Force movement seems to be compulsory and motivated by the *Linear Correspondence Axiom*, i.e. the requirement that a head should c-command its complement either underlyingly or at spellout. In the case of the Basaá derivation in (97), the complex head in Foc should raise higher across its AgrS-P complement in order to comply with the LCA. Concluding, it is clear that Foc-to-Force movement here is dictated by the LCA and second position effects, that is, the requirement that the focus morpheme should occupy the second position whereby it can c-command its complement at spellout. The only

fundamental difference between ‘regular’ focus fronting and ‘all-new’ foci is that there is no second position effects in the former due to the fact that it is the focused element and not the whole AgrS-P that gets moves into the matrix TP via Spec-FocP as illustrated below for convenience.

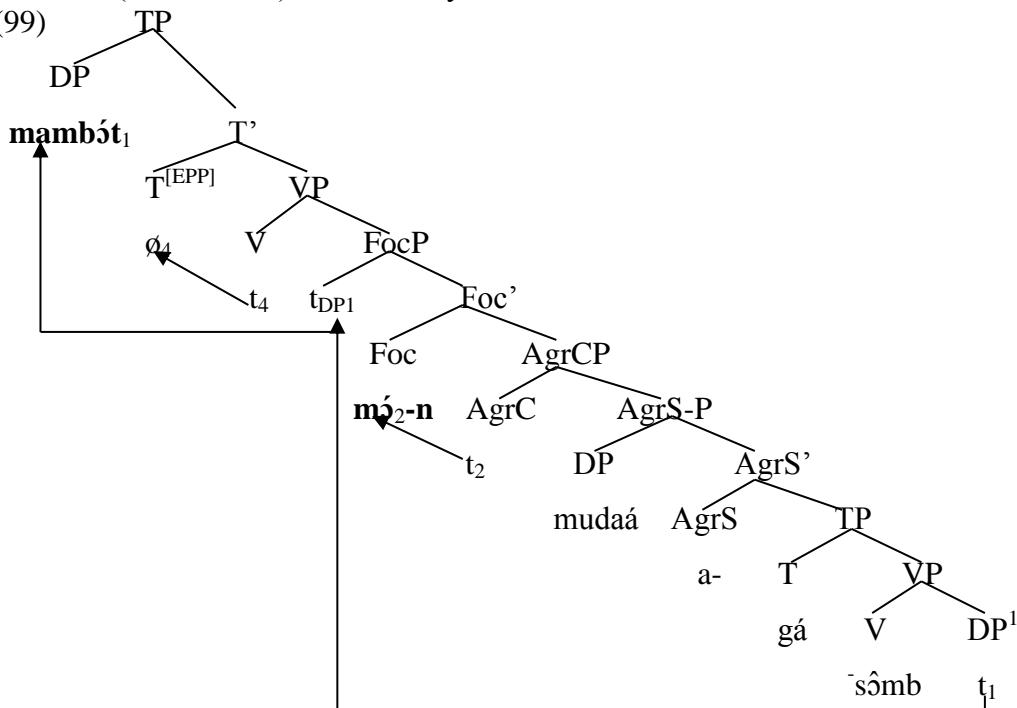
- (98) Q: **Kíí** mudaá a- gá- sômb

9.what 1.woman 1.SM-FUT2-buy

‘What will the woman buy?’

- A: **mambót mó-n** (mudaá) a- gá-sômb
6.clothes 6-FOC 1.woman 1.SM-FUT2-buy
(The woman) /she will buy the clothes.’

(99)



The derivation in (99) is a case of regular object fronting, whereby the element fronted into the focus field is the focalized object *mambót* ‘clothes’. After satisfying the focus requirements in the embedded focus field, it raises into the matrix TP to comply with the EPP. This derivation clearly shows that the focus head is occupied by the complex *mó-n* which occupies the second position in clause structure and c-commands the AgrS-P complement, in conformity with the LCA. This simply suggests that in case the complex *bó-n* is left under Foc in (97), one would get an illicit construction such as (96A3). In order to obtain a convergent derivation in (98), and comply with the LCA, there should be Foc-to-Force movement so much so that the complex *bó-n* c-commands its AgrS-P complement.

Conclusion

This chapter dealt with the syntax of focus in Basaá. It was shown that the grammatical category of focus is syntactically encoded either overtly or covertly depending on whether one has to do

with focus fronting or not. Focus fronting works in tandem with obligatory agreement morphology and the EPP in such a way that a fine-grained characterisation of the left periphery in terms of the cartographic approach to syntactic structures is furthermore supported and unavoidable for the building up of the Basàá clause. I have proposed that what was formerly analysed as a unique focus head projection in Bassong's (2010) work should be revisited and given a new mapping. In this vein, the previously called focus head is now decomposed into two different functional heads namely an agreement head and a focus one. Besides, instead of deriving focus fronting by a simply A-bar movement of the focalized constituent into Spec-FocP, I have proposed a null copula approach which derives focus fronting based on two main successive phrasal movements, namely focus movement of the focalized element into the focus field for the focus-criterion and EPP movement of the same constituent into the main TP for EPP purposes. In all, I have provide an analysis in light of semantic/pragmatic and syntactic evidence that focus fronting in Basàá should not be assimilated to English and/or French clefts. More precisely, eventhough focus fronting in this Bantu language involves a bi-clausal structure, such a structure is very far from being a cleft construction. The analysis attempted to be extended to other languages in one way or another. Basàá therefore appears to belong to the so-called left edge agreement languages in that left peripheral fronting always appeals to overt agreement morphology. Under Chomsky's (2001) *Uniformity Principle* it was said that all languages are assumed to be uniform and that variations are simply superficial. The analysis of relative clauses offered interesting results in the sense that it helped understand some conditions on extraction such as the *Criterial Freezing*, the *Activation Condition*, *feature percolation* and *pied-piping*. In all, the outcomes revealed that focusing within an island provokes heavy pied-piping of the entire island by the targeted category to the matrix TP via an embedded left peripheral focus position and this is possible via a feature percolation mechanism. Heavy pied-piping comes out as a last resort strategy that helps evade syntactic principles such as the *Activation Principle* and *Criterial Freezing*. The study of NP-Shift revealed that NP-Shift involves a leftward movement operation that is better accounted for by the antisymmetry approach. It has been shown that NP-shift in Basàá is not an extraposition process i.e. a rightward movement. Rather, it is derived through a series of two movement processes, namely, focus fronting of the shifted NP into Spec-FocP, followed by movement of the remnant clause into Spec-GroundP; a position dedicated to background or presupposed information in the discourse. Finally, it has been proposed that what seems to be an instance of subpart of focus fronting in all-new contexts is simply superficial and that there is no syntax-semantics mismatching as it would seem to be. Focus fronting in 'all-new'

contexts and related contexts is simply due to the LCA purposes, that is, the requirement that a focus morpheme must always c-command its AgrS-P/TP complement at Spellout. The element that seems to be focalized on the surface is not the real semantic but a subpart part of the whole clausal chunk which has been previously moved into the focus area in the syntax. The real focus is indeed the whole clause itself which occupies the focus position at spellout while the topmost constituent simply fulfills the EPP and has nothing to do with focus as it would seem at first blush. Given the inability of the focus morpheme to be stranded and to be c-commanded by its TP/AgrSP complement at spellout, there should be some second position effects which consists in fronting the focus morpheme into the force domain i.e. higher than its AgrS-P complement in order to get a convergent derivation.

CHAPTER V**PREDICATE FOCUS**

Phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics

Introduction

This chapter explores verb focusing as an instance of predicate focus in Basaá from a theoretical perspective and in its various facets, i.e. its phonological, morphological, semantic and syntactic dimensions. No attention will be paid to adjective focus which is also an instance of predicate focus as already mentioned in chapter two. As it is well known in the literature, verb focusing or what some scholar refer to as ‘predicate cleft’ seems to be an usual phenomenon which constitutes a major challenge to linguistic theory and more specifically to the Copy Theory of Movement (CTM). This boils down to the fact that, as compared to arguments and adjuncts focusing, verb focusing in most natural languages gives rise to a double realization of two (un)identical verbal copies such that one is inclined to say that both verbal copies are part of a single movement syntactic chain. The backbone of this chapter is to provide an answer to the following question: why is it that in certain contexts verb focusing produces two non-identical copies while in other contexts the same mechanism (verb focusing) produces only a single copy? Our theoretical apparatus will be based on a recent insightful proposal made by Aboh & Dyakonova (2009) who proposed that the multiple realization of two verbal copies is simply apparent, that is the two verbal copies are in fact unrelated because they belong to two diametrically opposed syntactic chains namely an A-chain and an A-bar chain. Each verbal copy is in fact a head of a specific chain, the tail of which is naturally unpronounced as expected from chains formation. While the highest verbal copy in the focus area fulfils the *focus-criterion* (Rizzi 1997) and subsequent work, the lowest one fulfils *Agree* or *aspect licensing* (Aboh & Dyakonova 2009 a.o.). However, by adopting the parallel chain approach, I will add novel data from Basaá by showing that in this language the highest verbal copy, as opposed to Gungbe and Russian, ends up in the matrix Spec-TP as in non-verbal focus fronting. In other words, although the focused verb raises into the focus field to satisfy the focus-criterion as in Gungbe and Russian, in Basaá, predicate fronting involves a bi-clausal non-cleft structure in which the focused predicate raises further in the matrix TP for EPP purposes, but via the embedded FocP for the focus-criterion. Another striking issue about verb focusing in Basaá is that instead of being only sentence initial, the focused verb can sometimes realize sentence finally on the surface. At this stage, it is argued that the fact that the verbal copy can sometimes occur in sentence final position simply pertains to a series of two successive movement operations, namely leftward predicate fronting into the focus field and massive/ heavy pied-piping (Nkemnji 1995; Ross 1969) of the remnant sentence to the specifier position of a functional projection, I name the Ground Phrase, a position that hosts information that is presupposed, shared or which

constitutes background information known of the speaker and hearer (Bianchi 2004; Poletto & Pollock 2004). This line of analysis does justice not only to the antisymmetric approach (Kayne 1994), but it also provides a fine-grained characterization of the clausal left architecture, the hallmark of the cartographic approach (Rizzi 1997 and subsequent work). The chapter is structured as follows: In § 5.1 a brief crosslinguistic survey of verb focusing is given. § 5.2 provides a verb movement sketch in Basaá. § 5.3 scrutinizes predicate doubling in Basaá in relation to other languages and addresses some predictions that uphold predicate doubling i.e. The contexts in which predicate doubling is (dis)allowed. § 5.4 addresses the competing proposals vis-à-vis the phenomenon of predicate fronting. More specifically, the section looks at the base-generation approach, the movement analysis as well as the combined analysis, that is a framework which gives credit to both a base-generation and a movement analysis. § 5.5 deals with other characteristics of predicate fronting with/without doubling in Basaá. This section also shows that predicate fronting in Basaá involves a movement operation as opposed to a base-generation analysis. § 5.6 on the whole (i.e. from § 5.6.1 to § 5.6.7) focus is on theoretical assumptions ranging from Koopman (1984) to Aboh & Dyakonova (2009). § 5.7 tackles predicate fronting in Basaá from a parallel chains approach as proposed by Aboh & Dyakonova (2009) and in light of the EPP approach. In other words, I propose a derivation of predicate fronting with doubling not only in light of Aboh & Dyakonova (2009), but also based on an approach which derives focus fronting as involving a biclausal non-cleft structure in which the final landing position of the highest verbal copy is Spec-TP of the topmost matrix clause. § 5.7.1 discusses nominalization as a last resort strategy to predicate fronting. § 5.7.2 deals with predicate fronting under a remnant movement perspective. More concretely, this section discusses one instance of predicate fronting in which the verbal copy occurs in sentence final position and shows that this final position in predicate focusing is a consequence of verb fronting to the left periphery followed by remnant movement of the entire clause above the focus field hosting the focused verb. § 5.7.3 discusses Inherent Complement Verbs (ICVs) and their relation with focus. Predicate focusing in the case of inherent complement verbs provides additional evidence that predicate fronting requires prior verb movement into the aspectual domain for aspect licensing. As a result, only the sole predicate or its inherent complement in isolation is allowed to undergo focus fronting. The verb and its inherent complement are not allowed to raise at the same time, given that the presence of the inherent complement prevents V/v from incorporating into the aspect head for aspect licensing. The last section is the conclusion.

5.1 A cross-linguistic survey

Predicate focus is undoubtedly one of the major domains of linguistic inquiries from a cross-linguistic perspective. It is certainly the reason why a lot of insightful proposals have been made at various language components, such as phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics and pragmatics. This section simply provides an insight into predicate focus or verb focus which has been sometimes referred to as ‘predicate cleft³⁸’ since Koopman’s (1984) influential work on Vata, a West African language. There exists a significant asymmetry between predicate focus and argument/ adjunct focus in most languages in that the former always/often involves doubling as can be seen in the following examples from different world languages whereas the latter does not involve doubling.

One of the common characteristics attested cross-linguistically is that the fronted verb and its copy inside the sentence are sometimes (un)identical. In some languages, the fronted verbal predicate and its inflected copy in sentence-internal position are identical as in (1) below.

(1) Verb fronting in languages with identical verbal copies

- a. Gungbe (Aboh & Dyakonova 2009:1050)

Xíá Séná nò **xíá** wémà lì ná Kofí.
read Sena HAB read book DET PREP Kofi
'Sena habitually READS the book to Kofi.'

- b. Haitian (Glaude & Zribi-Hertz 2012: 85).

Pati yo di/*soufle [Pòl **pati** a], Elsi tris.
leave 3PL say/whisper Paul leave DET Elsi sad
'Because Paul is said/whispered to have LEFT, Elsi is sad.'

(2) Languages with non-identical verbal copies

In this language group, we find languages in which the fronted verb or VP category is in the infinitive while the sentence-internal copy is inflected for tense. This is the case of Asanti Twi, Hebrew, Tuki and Spanish in (a, b, c, and d) below.

- a. Asanti Twi (Kobele & Torrence 2006: 165).

(ε ye) **bo** na Kofi **bɔɔ** Ama
 it is hit na Kofi hit.past Ama
 'Hit is what Kofi did to Ama.'

Verb fronting

- b. Hebrew (Landau 2006:37).

VP fronting

Liknot et ha-praxim, hi **kanta**
to-buy ACC the-flowers she bought

³⁸ Many works on predicate focusing have always analysed this operation as a cleft construction, sometimes without providing more semantic/pragmatic and syntactic evidence. Predicate focusing does not always occur in contrastive focus contexts. It can be realized in all-new contexts as well as in scene-setting, presentational or information focus contexts which have nothing to do with contrastivity or exhaustivity. In most cases, predicate focus structures in these languages does not seem to exhibit real clefts from a syntactic perspective (cf. Aboh 2006).

- ‘As for buying the flowers, she bought.’
- c. Tuki (Biloa 1997:153). *Verb fronting*
- O-namba** owu vakatu va-**nambam** orese
 Inf-cook FOC women SM-cook rice
 ‘Women COOK rice.’
- d. Spanish (Vicente 2005: 44). *Verb fronting*
- Comprar**, Juan ha **comprador** un libro aunque luego no lo ha leido
 buy.INF Juan has bought a book but later not CL has read
 ‘As for buying, Juan has bought a book, although he didn’t read it later.’

(3) Languages with mixed strategies

These are languages in which both verbal copies, that is the fronted copy and the inflected (sentence internal copy) one, may be identical.

- a. Brazilian Portuguese (Cable 2004:22).
- a1. [Comido]_{Topic} VP eu tenho **comido** peixe. *Verb fronting*
 eaten I have eaten fish
 ‘As for having eaten, I have eaten fish.’
- a2. [Me emprestar]_{Topic} VP João me **emprestou** o livro *VP fronting*
 me to-lend John me lent the book
 ‘As for lending it to me, John lent me the book.’
- b. Russian
- b1. Paillard & Plungjan (1993:292) quoted by Aboh & Dyakonova (2009:1039).
Slomalas *(to) ona **slomalas'**,... *V fronting*
 break.PST.FEM.S (-PTCL) she.NOM break.PST.FEM.S
 ‘As for breaking, it did break...’
- b2. Abels (2001: ex. 1).
- Čitat'** (to) Ivan eë **čitaet**, no ničego ne ponimaet *VP fronting*
 Reading_{inf} TO Ivan it_{fem}.acc reads but nothing not understand
 ‘Ivan does read it, but he doesn’t understand a thing.’
- c. Yiddish (Cable 2004:2)
- c1. **Gegessen** fish hot Maks **gegessen**. *VP fronting*
 eaten fish has Max eaten
 ‘As for having eaten fish, Max has eaten them.’
- c2. **Essen, est** Maks fish *Verb fronting*
 to-eat eats Max fish
 ‘As for eating, Max eats fish.’

A cross-linguistic reading that emerges from V(P) fronting with doubling is that this construction is associated with some semantic import. The semantic interpretation obtained in general is that of focus and topic. In African languages, namely in Gungbe (1a), Asanti Twi (2a) and Tuki (2c) the semantic interpretation obtained is that of contrastive focus or identificational focus in the sense of E.Kiss (1998). This seems to be true for many other African languages including Nupe (Kandybowicz 2004a-b, 2006, 2008 etc.), Nweh (Nkemnji 1995), Vata (Koopman 1984, 1999, 2000), Shupamem (Nchare 2012) among others. However, it is true that predicate fronting with doubling conveys additional information that is different from contrastivity. For instance, in

Yoruba (Awóbùluyi 1978), Fòn (Ndayiragiye 1992, 1993), Gungbe (Aboh 2006) and as it is the case in Basaá, predicate doubling is all the same attested in all-new contexts that is, it can be a direct answer to a *what happened?* or *what is new?* question (see also Lefebvre 1990, Dekydssteller 1992 etc.). In this case, predicate doubling provides new information with a non-exhaustive interpretation and therefore opens a way for additional information in the discourse setting. As for other languages such as Brazilian Portuguese, Hebrew, Russian, Spanish, and Yiddish and whose examples were provided above, the semantic interpretation obtained is the one of topic as can be seen from the translations (*as for* constructions are well known as topics). However, this cannot be considered as a generalization because in (3b1 and b2), predicate doubling in Russian conveys both a topic as well as focus reading respectively. But in most cases, and as reported by Aboh & Dyakonova (2009), Dyakonova (2009), Paillard and Plungjan (1993) and McCoy (2002:24) cited by Aboh & Dyakonova (2009:1039), to name only a few, predicate doubling is in most cases associated with a contrastive topic interpretation.

5.2 A verb movement sketch in Basaá

This section aims at briefly providing a verb movement analysis which constitutes one of the earmarks of predicate doubling in Basaá. Put differently, as predicate doubling is dependent on verb movement, it is worthy to provide the reader with useful tools that will help tackle such a phenomenon as we proceed. In Basaá, verb movement is a reality although it comes out to be an intricate or even a difficult issue to handle. The arguments provided here are based on the fact that the inflectional domain of the language is made up of specific morphemes that encode tense, aspect, and mood etc. Another argument is based on the distribution of focus-sensitive particles such as negation among others (cf. also chapters two & five). In examples (4) below, the verb *bɛl-* ‘to plant/sow’ is associated with an overt aspectual morpheme namely *-ék* which encodes progressive aspect whereas the past tense morpheme is implicit. In (4b), the tense morpheme *bí-* precedes the verb root while no aspectual marker shows up. Example (4c) shows that the verbal root *bɛl-* ‘to plant/sow’ can combine with both the tense and aspect morphemes.

(4)

- a. Mudaá a- bɛl- ék bákwede
1.woman 1.SM-plant-PROG 2.potatoes
‘The woman was planting potatoes.’

- b. Mudaá a- **bí-** bél bákwedé⁵
 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-plant._{PERF} 2.potatoes
 'The woman was planting potatoes.'
- c. Mudaá a- **bí-** bél- ék bákwedé a- wáá
 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-plant-PROG 2.potatoes 1.SM-get tired
 'The woman planted potatoes until she got tired.'

The following examples indicate that the verb can neither move past the past tense morpheme *bí-* (5a) nor be right adjoined to the progressive aspect marker -ék (5b). In the latter case, it is shown that the verb cannot stay in-situ, i.e. it is not allowed to occupy the post-aspect position.

(5)

- a.* Mudaá a- bél- **bí** bákwedé⁶
 1.woman 1.SM-plant-PST2 2.potatoes
- b.* Mudaá a- ék bél bákwedé⁷
 1.woman 1.SM-PROG plant 2.potatoes

However, there are some verb tenses that license verb movement. A case in point is (6a) whereby the past tense morpheme -é follows the verbal root *kε-* 'go/leave'. All the same, sentences (6b-c) show that the verb can move and incorporate into the progressive aspectual marker -ék but cannot move past the continuative aspectual (cf. Haspelmath 1993 & Cinque 1999) marker *ŋgí*.

(6)

- a. Mudaá a kε-é yaaní líke
 1.woman 1.SM-go-PST2 1.yesterday 5.trip
 'The woman travelled yesterday.'
- b. Mudaá a **ŋgí-** bél-ék bákwedé⁸
 1.woman 1.SM CONT-plant-PROG 2.potatoes
 'The woman is still planting potatoes.'
- c. *Mudaá a bél- **ŋgí-** ék bákwedé⁹
 1.woman 1.SM-plant-CONT-PROG 2.potatoes

As the reader can see, the past tense marker -é in (6a) assimilates the vowel of the verbal root.

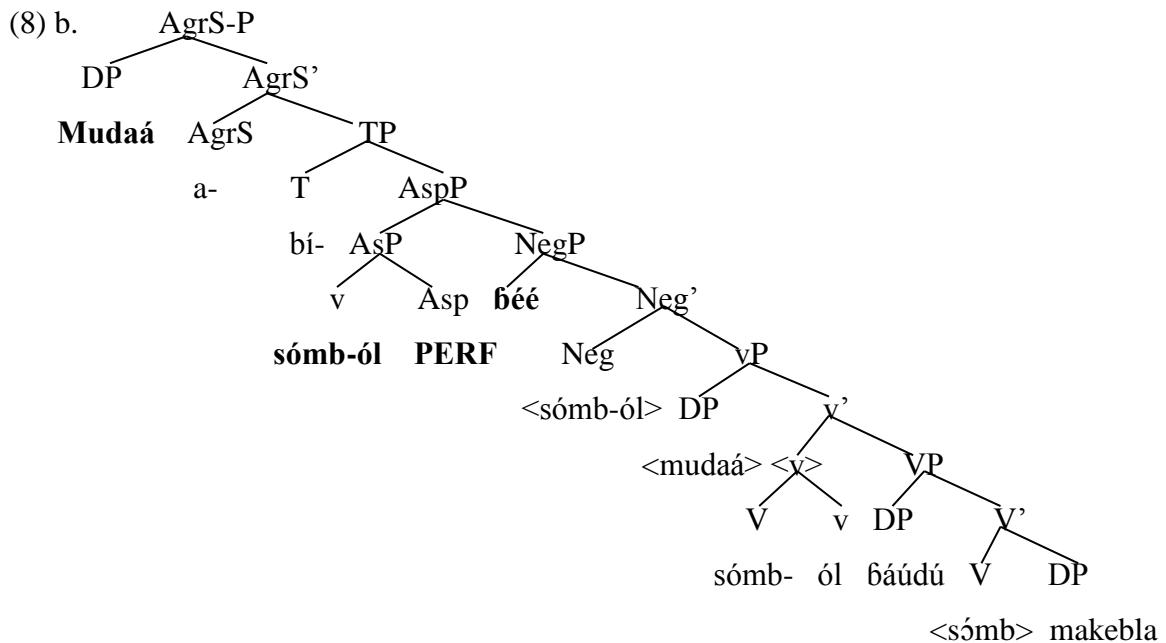
This generally occurs with monosyllabic verbal roots of the form consonant-vowel (CV). However, verbs which exhibit a different syllabic length in most cases undergo high tone bearing on the last vowel in order to mark past tense information. For example, the verb -tila 'to write' has a low lexical tone on both vowels, but when used in a remote/recent past tense form for example, the last vowel undergoes high tone bearing. However, note that this high tone bearing rule is restricted to the sole past tense (recent or remote).

- (7) Malet a- tilá bikaat yaaní
 1.teacher 1.SM-write 8.letters 1.yesterday
 ‘The teacher wrote the letters yesterday.’

Finally, the sentence in (8) below provides evidence that verb movement is attested in Basaá. As it was mentioned in chapter two, and as it will be demonstrated later on in chapter five, sentential negation is always postverbal.

- (8) a. Malêt a- bí- sómb-ól béeé báúdú makebla
 1.teacher 1-SM-PST2-buy-OBL.PERF NEG 2.students 6.presents
 ‘The teacher did not buy the presents to the students.’

In this position, it conveys a good number of interpretations, namely a vP interpretation, a narrow verb interpretation, a narrow (in)direct object interpretation and a narrow adjunct interpretation. In other words, in sentence (8) postverbal negation have wide scope over the whole VP and giving the reading NOT> VP as briefly depicted in (8b).



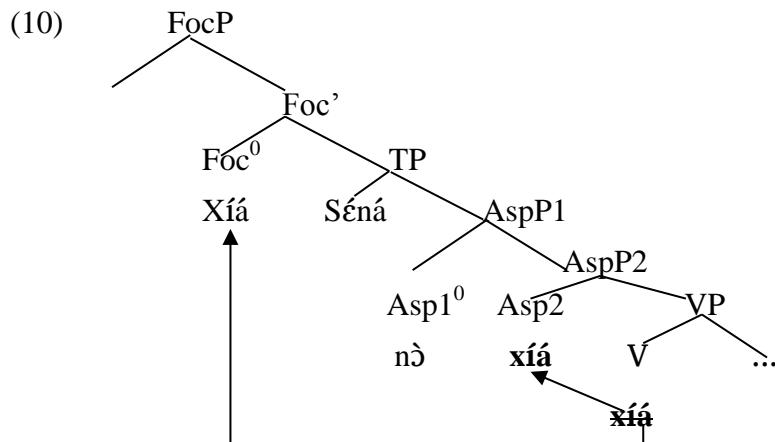
From (8b) precedes, it is obvious that the complex verb *sómb-ól* ‘buy for’ and the subject *mudaá* ‘woman’ are initially merged within vP i.e. under the scope of negation. The fact that they precede negation on the surface is due to their movement across negation, even though it is sometimes not easy to realize it. But at least, from the distribution of inflectional morphemes and negation, one can admit that verb movement in Basaá is a reality and that the verb actually moves to the inflectional domain where it can check tense, aspect or negation features in the sense of Pollock’s (1989) terminology or, rather, for aspect, tense or negation licensing in the spirit of Aboh & Dyakonova (2009). So far we can infer from the Basaá data that verb movement is attested in some contexts (8a-b) and banned in others (6c).

5.3 Predicate fronting and doubling: some introductory predictions

Like in many world languages, predicate fronting and doubling is attested in Basáá in certain contexts. On the basis of Gungbe and Russian, Aboh & Dyakonova (2009) made significant predictions that underscore the issue of predicate fronting with doubling and, which, in my opinion, are relevant for an adequate account of such a phenomenon. Although a review of literature will be broadly provided later on in subsequent sections, I will briefly give some key information as presented in Aboh & Dyakonova (2009). First of all, according to the authors, predicate fronting with doubling occurs if and only if there is no aspectual or modal auxiliary or any restructuring verb (Abels 2001) that precludes/blocks verb movement in the inflectional domain.

- (9) a. **Xíá** Séná nò **xíá** wémà lì ná Kofi. Gungbe (A & D 2009 : 1054)
 read Sena HAB read book DET PREP Kofi
 ‘Sena habitually READS the book to Kofi.’
- b. **Videt'**(to) ja ee davno ne **videla**,... Russian (A & D 2009:1039)
 see.INF(PTCL) I.NOM her.ACC long NEG see.PST.FEM.S
 ‘As for seeing her, it’s been a long time since I saw her.’

As the glosses show, the aspectual marker *nò* in Gungbe encodes habituality and is preverbal while the tense marker in Russian is preverbal (although it is not easy to distinguish it from the gender and number morpheme). As it is revealed by the authors’ analysis, there exists another aspectual morpheme in postverbal position in Gungbe, but this morpheme is implicit. A & C show that in Gungbe the verb raises from the vP/VP domain to the lowest aspect position (Asp2). The same verb subsequently moves from V into the focus domain. At the end of the derivation, the original verbal copy within VP position is unpronounced as depicted in (10) below.



The derivation of the Russian example in (9b) applies almost in the same way but with a little difference that in this specific case, what we have is a VP movement into Spec-TopP as it is seen

from the translation. The VP conveys a contrastive topic reading. However, one might be wondering whether it is a verb movement or a verb phrase movement. As the authors argue, predicate fronting with doubling in Russian is an instance of VP movement. The verb can sometimes front with its internal argument, namely the object, or the object first scrambles to some higher position to the left of the verb followed by remnant movement of the VP to the left periphery. More precisely, given that Russian is argued to exhibit a canonical SVO word order (see Bailyn 1995; Kallestinova 2007; Slioussar 2007 etc), a sentence like (9b) clearly shows that the accusative object *ee* ‘her’ has moved to a position below the subject of the sentence leaving behind a trace. After this scrambling has taken place, the verb first moves to the tense position for aspect/tense licensing, then the same verb finally moves along with the trace of the previously extracted object to the left periphery. This simply shows that remnant movement here involves a VP evacuation process during which the arguments first leave the VP layer prior to remnant movement of the VP into the topic field. In this case, it is not the sole verb that undergoes movement but either the verb and the traces of the extracted object and subject or the verb, the object and the trace of the extracted subject.

When verb movement is blocked by the presence of a modal, an aspectual auxiliary or a restructuring verb, doubling cannot occur. Aboh (2006:42) reports that in the Gbe language family, there exists a perfective VO versus imperfective OV asymmetry. While VO structures license predicate doubling (11a), OV constructions, on the contrary, which are often introduced by an aspect verb or auxiliary, rule out verb doubling (compare 11b with its counterpart 11c).

(11)

- a. **Sà wè Séná sà wémà ló ná Kòfí**
sell FOC Sena sell book Det Prep Kofi
‘Sena SOLD the book to Kofi.’
- b. **wémà ló sà ná Kòfí wè Séná tè**
book Det sell Prep Kofi-NR FOC Sena Prog
‘Sena is SELLING THE BOOK TO KOFI.’
- c.* **Sà Séná tò wémà ló sà ná Kofí**
sell Sena Prog book Det sell for Kofi-NR
‘Sena is SELLING THE BOOK TO KOFI.’

The preceding examples show that predicate fronting with doubling is sensitive to aspect realization in Gungbe. The progressive aspect marker *te* in the OV constructions in (11c) blocks verb movement in the inflectional domain; rendering therefore the sequence illicit. Aboh (2006) adds that OV constructions involve VP fronting without doubling because of the presence of

either an aspectual marker or a restructuring verb whereas doubling is permitted in VO structures which are transparent to verb movement.

Similarly, predicate doubling occurs in the same contexts in Hebrew and Russian as the following examples in (12) and (13) show respectively. In (12a) verb doubling is mandatory because as Landau reports, there is no *do*-support à la English in Hebrew. The tense and agreement features in T⁰ should be spelled out by a lexical material. So, the verb is obliged to move in T⁰ for morpho-phonological purposes, if not, one will end up with a violation of Lasnik's (1981, 1995) *Stray Affix Filter* (SAF). In other words, if the verb fails to move in T⁰, both tense and agreement features will be stranded without any support from a lexical material (a host). In (12b), verb doubling cannot occur because what fronts is an infinitival category i.e. an infinitive clause which does not require any inflection. In (13), verb doubling is ruled out because of the presence of the modal *smogu* 'can' and the future auxiliary *budu* that normally occupy the inflectional domain and which therefore prevent the verb from moving. As a result, no doubling should arise.

(12) Hebrew (Landau 2006:53)

- a. **le'hasbir** et ha-kišalon, hu lo **(*hisbir)**.

to-explain ACC the-failure he not explain

'As for explaining the failure, he didn't explain.'

- b. **[le'hasbir** et ha-kišalon]₁, hu lo *hicliax t₁*

to-explain ACC the-failure he not manage

'To explain the failure, he didn't manage.'

(13) Russian (Aboh & Dyakonova 2009: 1049)

- a. **Pomoč'**(-to) emu ja konečno *smogu* (***Pomoč**),...

help.INF PTCL him.DAT I.NOM certainly can help.INF

'Speaking of helping him, I certainly can do it,...'

- b. **Rujat'sja** (-to) ja konečno ne *budu* (***rujat'sja**),...

scold.INF.IMPF-PTCL I.NOM certainly NEG FUT.AUX scold.INF.IMPF

'As for making a row, I certainly will not do it,...'

Basaá provides us with interesting data when it comes to predicate fronting and doubling. Here again, Basaá comes out to be an intermediary or mixed language, that is, it is found in-between languages that realize predicate fronting and doubling on the left periphery and those in which predicate fronting and doubling apparently takes place rightward. Recall also that Basaá has both a verb fronting strategy and a VP fronting one. The context in (14) shows that the doubled verb can occur either sentence finally (14 A1) or sentence initially (14A 2).

(14) Did the boy TEACH mathematics?

A1: tɔ, (hilógá) hí- bí- **nígùl** mó (n- **nígùl-** ak)

no 19.boy 19.SM-PST2-learn 4.them NMLZ-learn-NMLZ

‘No, he LEARNED (as opposed to teaching) them/it.’

A2: tɔ, **n-** **nígùl-** **ak** wó-n (hilógá) hí- bí- *(nígùl) mó

no, NMLZ-learn-NMLZ 3-FOC 19.boy 19.SM-PST2-learn 4.them

‘No, he LEARNED (as opposed to teaching) them/it.’

What differs between Basaá and the other languages presented above is that the fronted verb is nominalized in the former while it is either identical with the original copy (Gungbe, Haitian) or in the infinitive in the latter (Tuki, Spanish etc). One can also see that the doubling of the lexical verb *nígùl* ‘learn’ in sentence internal position is mandatory when the nominalized verb is fronted. Like in other West African languages, predicate doubling is associated with contrastive focus information. The verbal predicate *nígùl* ‘learn’ is contrasted with ‘teach’ which is contained in the QUD³⁹. Both the subject *hilógá* ‘boy’ and the direct object ‘mathematics’ (*minsóy়gi* in Basaá) can be resumed by the corresponding subject marker *hí-* ‘class 19’ and *mó-* ‘them/it’ respectively without any resulting illicitness. Nominalisation is widely attested in African languages which license predicate doubling. The verbal predicate undergoes category shift, that is a grammatical changing in such a way that the two verbal tokens end up being non-identical. The fronted verb is either reduplicated or, simply, it combines with a special nominal morpheme in order to exhibit a morphological difference with the inflected verb. The following examples show that in Akan, Ewe, Edo, Nupe and Yoruba the fronted verbal predicate is either nominalized or (re)duplicated. The Akan, Ewe, Edo and Yoruba data are from Ameka (1992:8 & 12), Omoruyi (1989:288), and Awóbùlúyì (1978:131) and cited by Aboh (2004:272) while the Nupe ones are from Kandybowicz (2006:159).

(15)

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|
| a. nkyerew na mekyerew | <i>Akan</i> |
| NR-write Foc I-Hab-write | |
| ‘Writing I do.’ | |
| b. øo-øo- é wó- øo- é | <i>Ewe</i> |
| RED-hit Foc 3sg hit 3sg | |
| ‘Beating s/he beat him/her.’ | |
| c. òtué Ozó tuè mwè | <i>Edo</i> |
| greeting Ozo greet me | |
| ‘It is greeting that Ozo greeted me.’ | |

³⁹ The verb teach in Basaá is *níiga*

d. **jíjí** ni olè **jí** wé ɔmɔ náà Yoruba

stealinmg Foc thief steal book child Dem

‘What the thief did is that he stole the child’s book.’

e. **Yi-yà** Musa **yà** etsu èwò o Nupe

RED-give Musa give chief garment o

‘It was GIVING that Musa gave the chief a garment.’

Although predicate doubling in Basaá involves grammatical category changing (16a), the language does not appeal to duplication as the ungrammatical sentences in (16b-c) show.

(16)

a. Mudaá a- bí- **kónd** mááŋgé ɳ- **kónd**- ôk

1.woman 1.SM-PST2-blame 1.child NMLZ-blame-NMLZ

‘The woman BLAMED (as opposed to beating) the child.’

b.* **kónd**- **kónd** wó-n mudaá a- bí- **kónd** mááŋgé

blame-blame 3-FOC 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-blame 1.child

c. *muudaá a- bí- **kónd** mááŋgé **kónd**- **kónd**

1.woman 1.SM-PST2-blame 1.child blame-blame

In addition, nominalization is strictly total and never partial. In other words, verb nominalization in Basaá takes place through affixation, that is by means of prefixation and suffixation altogether (17a). When one of the two nominalizers goes missing, the sequence is ruled out (17b-c). And as reported by Aboh (2004:273), Yoruba also bans verb focusing without nominalization. Failure to duplicate the verbal copy gives rise to illicitness (17d).

(17)

a. Mudaá a- bí- **kónd** mááŋgé ɳ- **kónd**- ôk

1.woman 1.SM-PST2-blame 1.child NMLZ-blame-NMLZ

‘The woman BLAMED (as opposed to beating) the child.’

b. * Mudaá a- bí- **kónd** mááŋgé **kónd**- ôk

1.woman 1.SM-PST2-blame 1.child blame-NMLZ

c. *Mudaá a- bí- **kónd** mááŋgé ɳ- **kónd**

1.woman 1.SM-PST2-blame 1.child NMLZ-blame

d. * **jí** ni Dáda á **jí** owó Ojó Yoruba (Aboh 2004:273).

steal Foc Dada Infl steal money Ojo

‘What Dada actually did is that he stole Ojo’s money.’

As shown a while ago, Basaá is a language in which predicate doubling can take place either to sentence initial position or in sentence final position (14), a mechanism which is also attested in Shupamem (Nchare 2012). In addition, quoting Larson and Lefebvre (1991), Kandybowicz (2006:170) provides an instance of predicate doubling in Haitian, the form of which is similar to predicate doubling in sentence final position in Basaá. The following example in (18) drawn

from Kandybowicz (2006:170) is an illustration. Similarly, within the framework of African languages, and descriptively, it has been shown that verb focusing in Nweh and Shupamem, for instance gives rise to verb doubling whereby the doubled verbal copy shows up in the sentence final position like in Basàá.

(18)

- a. Haitian (Larson & Lefebvre 1991 cited by Kandybowicz 2006 :170)

Lame a **kraze kraze** vil la
army has destroy destroy town the
'The army really destroy the town.'

- b. *Nweh* (Nkemnji 1995:38).

Atem a kè? **nčúú akendɔŋ čúú**
Atem Agr P-1 N-boil plantains Ø-boil
'Atem BOILED plantains.'

- c. *Shupamem* (Nchare 2012:550).

Món ná ntáp twó **ŋkút** ì ndàp **kút** nà
child IRR NEG F2 PTCP-build 3sg house build QM
'Will the child be BUILDING the house (not destroying it)?'

Recall that predicate fronting with doubling in Basàá is not only associated with contrastive focus information, given that it is also felicitously attested in all-focus contexts, that is as a felicitous answer to a 'what happened' or 'what's new' question.

(19) Context: *Somebody travelled two weeks ago and is asking about home on the telephone.*

Q: Kíí í yé ŋken j̄ɔ̄
9.what 9.SM be new there
'What's new there?'

A1: Maanjé a- **ɓɔ̄ŋ** mε yaaní **m-** **ɓɔ̄ŋ-ɔ̄k**

1.child 1.SM-do me 1.yesterday NMLZ-do-NMLZ

Intended: 'The child DID (something incredible) yesterday to me.' 'Literally: the child DID me yesterday.'

A2: **m-** **ɓɔ̄ŋ-ɔ̄k** wó-n maanjé a- **ɓɔ̄ŋ** mε yaaní
3.NMLZ-do-NMLZ 3-FOC 1.child 1.SM-do me 1.yesterday

'Intended: 'The child DID something incredible yesterday to me.' 'Literally: the child DID me yesterday.'

(20) Context: *Father has just come back from work, and Mother goes to the kitchen in order to serve dinner. Once in the kitchen, she realizes that the children have eaten all the food and there is nothing left. As she starts complaining, Father comes.*

Q: Father: Kíí í ń- ke bée
9.what 9.SM-PRS-go NEG
'What's wrong?'

A1: Mother: bɔɔŋgé bá- m- bɔŋ mé m- bɔŋ- ãk

2.children 2.SM-PST1-do me NMLZ-do-NMLZ

Intended: 'The children DID (something incredible) to me.' Lit: 'The children DID me.'

A2: m- bɔŋ-ãk wó-n bɔɔŋgé bá- bɔŋ mε yaaní

3.NMLZ-do-NMLZ 3.FOC 2.children 2.SM-do me 1.yesterday

'Intended: 'The children DID something incredible yesterday to me.' Literally: the children DID me.'

Contexts such as (19) and (20) above provide *prima facie* evidence that predicate fronting with doubling is not always associated with a contrastive focus interpretation as is generally claimed in the literature by some authors investigating on African languages. Rather, the Basàá data demonstrate that it can also be attested in all-focus cases where it is associated with new, non-presupposed or unfamiliar information. The different answers provided above are all-new in the context, that is they are not shared or known by the person inquiring about the situation in the discourse. Syntactically, the doubled verbal copy can be sentence initial or final, with the same meaning. This simply shows, as discussed in chapters three and four that left peripheral focus is not always associated with contrastivity. In the above contexts, there is no relevant alternatives which enable to establish contrast between different entities in the discourse. Everything here is new, unknown or presupposed and the answers are felicitously interpreted.

So far, we I explored one instance of predicate fronting and doubling in Basaá. The process consists in fronting the sole verb without any of its arguments, followed by the doubling of the inflected verbal copy inside the sentence. The different interpretations obtained can be contrastive informational depending on whether there are relevant alternatives in the discourse or not.

Another instance of predicate fronting in Basaá consists in fronting the verb along with its internal arguments (the direct and indirect objects) (or the whole embedded infinitive clause) without any doubling effects. As opposed to V(erb) fronting, the hallmark of VP/TP fronting is that it disqualifies doubling inside the clause. Considering (21a) as the basic sentence, sentence (21b) shows that the verb *sómból* 'buy for' undergoes fronting in sentence initial position along with its internal arguments, namely the benefactive/recipient DP/NP *bɔn* 'children' and the theme DP/NP *bikaat* 'books.' As the reader can see, predicate doubling is not allowed even in the absence of the internal arguments.

(21)

The data in (21b) are reminiscent of what is attested in Gungbe, Hebrew and Russian as previously discussed in that each time there appears an (aspectual) auxiliary, a modal, a restructuring verb or the like in a given context, predicate doubling is not allowed. In the specific case of Basáá, the italicized control predicate *gwés* ‘want’ acts in lieu of a restructuring or modal verb and blocks doubling of the predicate *sómb-ól* ‘buy for.’ Similarly, (22b-c) below show that the predicate *lúY* ‘drive’ is banned from doubling due to the intervention of the italicized modal *la* ‘can/be able.’

(22)

- a. Ewas a- n̄- la lúY mátowa í ñgwa n̄ŷ Baseline sentence
 1.Ewas 1.SM-PRS-can drive 6.cars LOC 3.day 7.rest
 ‘Ewas is able to drive a car on Sunday.’

b. [n- lúY- á mátowa í ñgwa n̄ŷ] _i wó-n Ewas a- n̄- la t_i
 NMLZ-drive-NMLZ 6.cars LOC 3.day 9.rest 3-FOC 1.Ewas 1.SM-PRS-can
 (*lúY (*mátowa í ñgwa n̄ŷ)) VP-fronting without doubling
 drive 6.cars LOC 3.day 9.rest
 ‘DRIVING A CAR ON SUNDAY is what Ewas can do.’

c. li- lúY mátowa í ñgwa n̄ŷ] jō-n Ewas a- n̄- la t_i
 INF-drive 6.cars LOC 3.day 9.rest 5-FOC 1.Ewas 1.SM-PRS-can
 (*lúY (*mátowa í ñgwa n̄ŷ))
 drive 6.cars LOC 3.day 9.rest
 ‘DRIVING A CAR ON SUNDAY is what Ewas can do.’

The difference between (22b) and (22c) is that the fronted verbal copy is nominalized in the former whereas it is in the infinitive form in the latter. However, the meaning remains the same. It should be noted that the infinitive particle *li-* in Basaá, like in many Bantu languages, is inflected for class, that is it carries class and number features (morphology). For instance, if one focuses a noun which belongs to class 5 in Basaá, agreement morphology will be the same as in (22c). Furthermore, if the fronted predicate rather undergoes nominalization like in (22b) or in

other cases already discussed (e.g. 14 A2), agreement morphology will be the one attested with focused constituents belonging to class 3 in the Basáá noun system. Both phenomena are illustrated in (23c-b) below in turn as a denial of a previous statement uttered in (23a).

- (23)a. Mε n- nóY lé mudaá a- n- lámb kóp
I PST1-hear that 1.woman 1.SM-PST1-cook 9.chicken
'I heard that the/a woman cooked CHICKEN.'
- b. tɔ, litʃéé jó-n a- n- lámb, ndí hε kóp béeé
no 5.egg 5-FOC 1.SM-PST1-cook but hε 9.chicken NEG
'No, she cooked an EGG, not CHICKEN.'
- c. tɔ, nsúYí wó-n a- n- lámb, ndí hε kóp béeé
no, 3.sauce 3-FOC 1.SM-PST1-cook but hε 9.chicken NEG
'No, she cooked SAUCE, not CHICKEN.'

It can be finally seen that focus and agreement marking attested in (22c) parallels with the one in (23b) while the one in (22b) parallels with (23c) respectively. In addition, note that predicate fronting without doubling is not only limited to VPTP fronting. It is possible to encounter cases of verb fronting without doubling with the same restriction as in VP/TP fronting. This is generally attested in intransitive constructions as illustrated in the following examples.

- (24) a. bɔɔŋgé bá- n- la sál ni hjóm í ñgeda nòy
2.children 2.SM-PRS-can work and stroll LOC 7.time 9.rest
'Children can work and stroll during vacations.'
- b. min- hjóm-óY mó-n dilóYá dí n- la (*hjóm)
NMLZ-stroll-NMLZ 5-FOC 13.boys 13.SM-PRS-can (*stroll)
'STROLLING is what the boys can do (they cannot also work).'
- c. min- hjóm-óY mó-n dilóYá dí n- gwēs (*hjóm)
NMLZ-stroll-NMLZ 5-FOC 13.boys 13.SM-PRS-like/want (*stroll)
'STROLLING is what the boys like/want to do (they cannot also work).'

The prediction according to which predicate doubling is banned in the presence of a modal or a restructuring verb is borne out. In (24b-c) the nominalized fronted predicate cannot undergo doubling due to the presence of *la* 'can' and *gwēs* 'like/want' which act as interveners blocking verb raising in the inflectional zone.

Partially summarizing hitherto, the analysis has revealed that predicate fronting is attested in Basáá and is subject to a number of restrictions. The fronted predicate can front along with its internal arguments; in this case, we have an instance of VP/TP fronting without doubling. The fronted predicate can front alone without any attested arguments; in this case we have an instance of verb fronting with doubling. However, if we assume that intransitive predicates form full verb phrases even if they do not select for a visible/overt/explicit argument, then we can

conjecture that fronting an intransitive predicate is also an instance of V/VP fronting. In this case, what fronts visibly is in fact the predicate but both a narrow verb and a wide VP interpretations are possible

5.4 Movement versus base-generation: the competing proposals

This section provides arguments in support of a movement analysis of predicate fronting with doubling and shows that a base-generation approach is not tenable in the case of Basaá. In the literature on predicate fronting, some authors militate for a base-generation analysis while others defend a movement approach. Besides these two approaches, some other scholars militate for a mixed approach, i.e. the one which combines a base-generation and a movement approach at the same time. As for the advocates of a base-generation analysis, predicate focus or simply ‘predicate cleft’ according to some authors, involves a base-generated bi-clausal construction without any movement (Chomsky 1977 for cleft constructions in English); Dekydtspotter 1992; Lumsden and Lefebvre 1990; Larson & Lefebvre 1991) quoted by Kandybowicz (2006:170). Quoting these authors, Kandybowicz offers the following examples in (25) as an illustration for a bi-clausal approach to English, Haitian and Yoruba clefts respectively.

(25)

- a. English (Chomsky 1977) cited by Kandybowicz (2006:170).

It **is** trimming that Bradley is doing to the edge.

- b. Haitian (Larson and Lefebvre 1991) cited by Kandybowicz (2006:170).

Se kouri Jan kouri

it-is run John run

‘It is RUN that John did (not, for example, walk)’.

- c. Yoruba (Dekydtspotter 1992) cited by Kandybowicz (2006:170).

Fífún **ni** Tolú fún mi ní ìgbá.

giving ni Tolu give me CASE calabash

‘Tolu GAVE me the calabash.’

In light of the preceding examples, a bi-clausal analysis for the above languages is explained by the presence of the copula ‘*is*’ ‘*se*’ and ‘*ni*’ in English, Haitian and Yoruba respectively.

Those who argue for both a movement and a base-generation approach at the same time include Cable (2004), Hoge (1998), Manfredi and Laniran (1988), Massam (1990), Manfredi (1993), Vicente (2005) among others. On the basis of Brazilian Portuguese and Yiddish, Cable (2004) provides an analysis that allows for both a base-generation analysis and a movement one. As for the first one (base-generation), he argues that the fronted topicalized predicate and the copy inside the clause are not related by movement due to the fact that Yiddish, for instance, licenses genus-species sentences, i.e. sentences in which the meaning of a left peripheral constituent is

specified by the constituent found inside the clause. In other words, while the fronted constituent is general, its copy inside the clause is rather specific.

(26) *Genus-species sentences in Yiddish* (Cable 2004:7).

- a. ? Essen **frukht** est Maks **bananes**
to-eat fruit eat Max bananas
'As for eating fruit, Max eats bananas.'
- b.? **Forn** keyn *amerike* bin ikh **gefloygn** keyn *nyu-york*
to-travel to America am I flown to New York
'As for travelling to America, I have flown to New York.'
- c.? **Forn** keyn *amerike* bin ikh **gefloygn** keyn *amerike*
to-travel to America am I flown to America
'As for travelling to America, I have flown to America.'

(27) *Clause unboundedness and Island effects in Yiddish* (Cable 2004:3).

- a. **Veysn** hostu mir gezogt er **veyst** a sakh
to-know have-you me told he knows a lot
'As for knowing, you told me that he knows a lot.'
- b.***Veysn** hob ikh gezen dem yidn vos **veyst** a sakh
to-know have I seen the man who knows a lot
'As for knowing, I saw the man who knows a lot.'
- c.* **Veysn** hostu mir gezogt ver es **veyst** a sakh
to-know have-you me told who it knows a lot
'As for knowing, you told me who knows a lot.'

The Yiddish data show that there exists a mismatch between the fronted material and the lower copy inside the clause. In (26a) for instance, the lexical item *bananes* 'bananas' specifies the meaning of the item *frukht* 'fruits' the meaning of which is general and is located inside the fronted VP *essen frukht* 'eat bananas'. Similarly, in (27b) the items *forn* 'travel' and *amerike* 'America' are general terms whose meaning is specified by *gefloygn* 'flown' and *nyu-york* 'New York' respectively sentence internally. The same effects obtain in (27c) between *forn* 'travel' and '*gefloygn* 'flown''. However, if a base-generation analysis is possible on the basis of genus-species constructions in Yiddish, Cable argues himself that cases like (27) provide support for a movement analysis as A-movement of the fronted material complies with syntactic constraints such as subjacency.

In like manner, on the basis of Spanish, Vicente (2005:53-54), discussing two varieties of this language, militates for both a movement and a base-generation approach at the same time. For example, he shows that predicate fronting exhibits properties of A-bar movement such as clause unboundedness (28a) and sensitivity to islands (28b below violates Huang's (1982) Condition on Extraction Domain which is subsumed under subjacency).

(28)

- a. **Comprar**, Juan ha dicho que Maria ha **comprado** un libro
buy J has said that M has bought a book
'As for buying, Juan has told me that Maria has bought a book.'
- b. ***Comprar**, he ilo al cine despues de **comprar** un libro
buy have gone to cinema after of buy a book
'As for buying, I have gone to the movies after buying a book.'

More interesting is the fact that some Spanish speakers according to the author find genus-species sentences ungrammatical (an evidence for base-generation) while others find them well-formed (evidence for movement) as shown in (29a-b) below.

(29)

- a.***Cocinar**, Juan ha **asado** un pollo
cook J has roasted a chicken
'As for cooking, Juan has roasted a chicken.'
- b. **Cocinar**, Juan ha **asado** un pollo
cook J has roasted a chicken
'As for cooking, Juan has roasted a chicken.'

Similarly, the same dialect variation obtains when it comes to extraction out of a strong island such as a coordinate structure. While some speakers judge predicate fronting within a coordinate structure grammatical (base-generation), others, on the contrary, rule them out (movement) as in sentences (30a-b).

(30)

- a. ***Comer**, Juan [[ha **comido** pescado] y [bebido vini]]
eat J has eaten fish and drunk wine
'As for eating, Juan has eaten fish and drunk wine.'
- b. **Comer**, Juan [[ha **comido** pescado] y [bebido vini]]
eat J has eaten fish and drunk wine
'As for eating, Juan has eaten fish and drunk wine.'

The Spanish data in (29-30) are interesting in that they provide a dialect variation between speakers of the same language. A movement analysis is accounted for in (29a) and (30a). In (29a) the genus-species sentence is disallowed, that is if the meaning of the fronted verb (*comer* 'eat') is specified by the copy inside the sentence (*comido* 'eaten'), therefore the sentence is ruled out. In (30a), extraction of the conjunct *comer* 'eat' out of the coordinate structure *comido pescado y bebido vini* 'eat fish and drink wine' leads to a violation of the Coordinate Structure Constraint (CSC). The licitness of the corresponding sentences in (29b) and (30b) is an indication that movement has not taken place, that is the left peripheral constituents are base-generated.

A movement approach to predicate fronting is defended by some authors such as Abels (2001), Aboh (2004, 2006), Aboh & Dyakonova (2009), Landau (2004, 2006) etc. According to these authors, predicate fronting involves movement to the clausal left periphery. Among the relevant

arguments in favour of a movement analysis are island sensitivity and genus-species sentences in Hebrew as discussed by Landau (2006). Landau's analysis shows that the relation between the fronted topicalized predicate and the lower copy is formed by A-bar movement and that it does not matter whether what fronts to the left periphery is a phrasal category or a bare head. The author argues that predicate fronting is unbounded, that is, it can apply across clause boundaries as illustrated in (31) below.

(31) **Hebrew** (Landau 2006:42)

- a. **la'azor le-Rina**, eyn li safek še-Gil hivitax še-hu ya'azor
to-help to Rina there-isn't to-me doubt that-Gil promised that-he will-help
'As for helping Rina, I have no doubt that Gil promised he would help.'
- b. **la'azor**, eyn li safek še-Gil hivitax še-hu ya'azor **le-Rina**
to-help there-isn't to-me doubt that Gil promised that-he will-help to-Rina
'As for helping, I have no doubt that Gil promised he would help Rina.'

In (31a), movement targets a phrasal category, namely the verb phrase *la'azor le-Rina* 'helping Rina' while in (31b) the predicate *la'azor* 'helping' moves to sentence initial position leaving its internal argument (the object) *le-Rina* 'Rina' stranded. Furthermore, one can see that movement in both cases is unbounded, as the fronted element crosses over two intermediate CPs, the heads of which are undoubtedly the italicized lexical complementizers *še* 'that'. Besides, although V(P) fronting is unbounded, the author argues that it is sensitive to island constraints as can be observed in (32):

(32)

a. *Complex NP island*

- *likro et **ha-sefer**, Gil daxa et ha-te'ana še-hu kvar **kara**
to-read ACC the-book Gil rejected ACC the-claim that-he already read
'As for reading the book, Gil rejected the claim that he had already read.'

b. *Subject island*

- * likro et **ha-sefer**, še-yevakšu me-Gil še-yikra ze ma'aliv
to-read ACC the-book that-will-ask.3PL from-Gil that-will-read.3SG it insulting
'As for reading the book, that they would ask Gil to is insulting.'

c. *Adjunct island*

- *likro et **ha-sefer**, nifgašnu axarey še-kulam kar'u.
to-read ACC the-book met.1PL after that-everybody read.3PL
'As for reading the book, we have met after everybody read.'

From the foregone, we have provided cross-linguistic evidence in favour of the different approaches to V(P) fronting. The discussion revealed that there exist at least four frameworks upholding the phenomenon. It was shown that some authors militate for a bi-clausal approach, others for a base-generation approach. Besides these two approaches, there are those who claim

that both a base-generation and a movement approaches should be resorted to. Ultimately, there is another line of analysis according to which a movement approach seems to be relevant.

5.5 Other characteristics of V(P) fronting and /without doubling in Basáá

Although predicate fronting in Basáá does not involve a cleft-construction in the manner of English, I propose that it is a bi-clausal construction just like in the case of focus fronting with non-verbal elements (arguments and adjuncts). However, it should be recalled that the Basáá language does not have any copula à la English, à la Haitian or even à la Yoruba (cf. 25) above. In addition, a base-generation approach to predicate focusing is not tenable in the language. For instance, as opposed to Yiddish (26) and Spanish (29b) above, genus-species sentences are not allowed. Put differently, any mismatch between a fronted predicate and a copy inside the sentence leads to ungrammaticality. Some illustrations are given in (33) below.

(33)

- a.* **n- jé- ek** wó-n maanjé a- bí- **niámbáá** líkúβé
NMLZ-eat-NMLZ 3-FOC 1.child 1.SM-PST2-chew 5.banana
‘*EATING the child chewed a banana’.
- b. ***n- lámb-âk** wâ-n mudaá a- m- **ɓôm** kóp
NLMZ-cook-NMLZ 3-FOC 1.woman 1.SM-PST1-roast 9.chicken
‘*COOKING the woman roasted chicken’.
- c.* **n- lámb- âk hínuní** wó-n mudaá a- bí- **lámb híɓenj**
NMLZ-cook-NMLZ 19.bird 3-FOC 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-cook 19.pigeon
‘*COOKING a bird the woman cooked a pigeon’

As the reader can see, whenever the meaning of the fronted verb is specified by a different verb inside the clause, the sequence becomes illicit. Besides, as expected from any A-bar construction, predicate fronting is unbounded, that is, it can apply across clause boundaries. Given that Basáá has both verb fronting and verb phrase fronting I will examine them separately.

To begin with, verb fronting without any internal argument is unbounded and is sensitive to syntactic islands as shown in (34) and (35) respectively.

(34)

- a. **m- ɓeŋ-âk** wón mε n-nɔ́y lé mut wíβ a- m- **ɓeŋ** múdaá
NMLZ-do-NMLZ 3-FOC I PST1-heard that 1.man 3.theft 1.SM-PST1-do 1.woman
‘I heard that the thief DID (it to) the woman.’
- b. **ŋ- hól- ga** wó-n mε í-hójɔ́l lé mudaá a- bí- kăl lé
NMLZ-help-NMLZ 3-FOC I PRS-think that 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-say that
ɓeŋgé bá- bí- **hólá** málêt
2.children 2.SM-PST2-help 1.teacher
‘I think that the woman said that the children HELPED the teacher.’

- c. **m- bát- ga wó-n í m-** pooná weé maangé a- **m- bátá**
 NMLZ-collect-NMLZ 3-FOC Expl PRS-seem as if 1.child 1.SM-PST1-collect
bítuYûl

8.toys

‘*COLLECTING it seems that the children collected the toys.’

Another property of predicate fronting is that the dependency between the fronted verb and the copy inside the clause is island sensitive as illustrated in (35)-(39).

(35) *Complex NP Constraint*

- a.* **ŋ- hól- ga wó-n me bí- bómá í bccngé bá- bí- hólá** málêt
 NMLZ-help-NMLZ 3-FOC I PST2-meet DEF 2.children 2.SM-PST2-meet 1.teacher
 ‘*HELPING I met the children who helped the teacher.’

- b.* **m- bát- ga wó-n mudaá a- n- nôY njáñ lé** maangé
 NMLZ-collect-NMLZ 3-FOC 1.woamn 1.SM-PST1-heard 3.story that 1.child
a- bí- bátá bítuYû

1.SM-PST2-collect 8.toys

‘*COLLECT the woman heard the story that the child collected the toys.’

(36) *Adjunct island*

- a.* **m- bát- ga wó-n me bí- bómá maangéi ilclé proi a- m-bátá**
 NMLZ-collect-NMLZ 3-FOC I PST2-meet 1.child before pro 1.SM-PST-collect
bítuYûl

8.toys

‘*COLLECTING I met the child before collecting the toys.’

- b. ***m- bóm-ôY wó-n bccngé bá yé maséé ínyuúlé mudaá a- m-**
 NMLZ-roast-NMLZ 3-FOC 2.children 2.SM-be joy because 1.woman 1.SM-PST1-
bóm kóp
 roast 9.chicken

‘*ROAST the children are happy because the woman roasted chicken.’

(37) *Coordinate Structure Constraint*

- a.* **n- lamb-âk wó-n hiŋgonda hi- bí- lâmb bíjék ni jowa bipân**
 NMLZ-cook-NMLZ 3-FOC 19.girl 19.SM-PST2-cook 8.food and wash 8.clothes
 ‘*COOK the girl cooked food and washed the clothes.’

- b. ***n- jê- k wó-n maangé a- bí- jé líkúþé ni njó malép**
 NMLZ-eat-NMLZ 3-FOC 1.child 1.SM-PST2-eat 5.banana and drink 6.water
 ‘*EAT the child ate a banana and drank water.’

(38) *Wh-island*

- a.* **m- bát- ga wó-n mudaá a- bí- bat lé**
 NMLZ-collect-NMLZ 3-FOC 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-ask that

kélkíí bccngé bá- bí- bátá mákúþé

1.when 2.children 2.SM-PST2-collect 6.bananas

‘*COLLECT the woman asked when the children collected the bananas.’

- b. *n- **tíl ga** wó-n malet a- mí- bat lé
 NMLZ-write-NMLZ 3-FOC 1.teacher 1.SM-PRS-ask that
 héé báúdú bá- bí- **tíl-APPL** bíkaat
 1.when 2.children 2.SM-PST2-write-LOC 8.letters

*WRITE the teacher is asking where the students wrote the letters.

(39) *Subject island*

- a.*n- **néd- êk** wó-n lé báúdú bá- n- **néd** mákeksé
 NMLZ-pass-NMLZ 3-FOC that 2.children 2.SM-PST1-pass 6.exams
 (hala) a- íj- kosná máséé
 (that) 1.SM-PRS-make 6.joy

*PASS that the students passed the exams makes happy.'

- b.*m- **bíibá-** **Yá** wó-n lé Ewas a- m- **bíibá**
 NMLZ-get married-NMLZ 3-FOC that Ewas 1.SM-PST1-get married
 (hala) a ye lóŋ↓gé
 (that) 1.SM-be good

, I have provid 'GET MARRIED that Ewas got married is good.'

Hitherto ed evidence in support of a movement approach to predicate fronting in Basàá with particular attention to verb fronting without the internal arguments of the verb. Apart from the A-bar characteristics of verb fronting discussed so far, Basaá verb fronting also displays others properties. Among these properties, one finds the inability of the fronted verb to leave a gap in its extraction site (original position). Put another way, verb fronting always requires doubling inside the clause as can be seen from the ungrammaticality of (40a-b) whereby the original verbal copies get deleted. The deleted material is represented in the form of a ~~strike-through~~.

(40)

- a.* m- **bám- áY** wó-n malêt a- bí- t~~bám~~ báúdú
 NMLZ-blame-NMLZ 3-FOC 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-~~blame~~ 2.students
 b.* n- **tééda-Yá** wó-n mudaá a- n- t~~tééda~~ βítúgûl bí báóŋgé
 NMLZ-keep-NMLZ 3-FOC 1.woman 1.SM-PST1-~~keep~~ 8.toys 8.GEN 2.children

Another property of verb fronting is that the fronted verb does not move along with any inflectional morphemes (independently of whether there is a copy inside the clause or not). In other words, the fronted verb does not drag along with it tense, aspect, negation or any other verbal-related morphemes as can be illustrated in the ungrammatical sentences in (41b-c) below.

(41)

- a.* **bi-tééda** mudaá a- (**bí-tééda**) βítúgûl bí báóŋgé
 PST2-keep 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-keep 8.toys 8.GEN 2.children
 'Intended: The woman KEPT the toys of the children.'

- b. *téédá-Yá béeé mudaá a- (téédá-Yá béeé) βítúgûl bí bóóŋgé
 keep-PROG NEG 1.woman 1.SM-keep-PROG NEG 8.toys 8.GEN 2.children
 ‘Intended: The woman was not KEEPING the toys of the children.’

That predicate fronting does not involve pied-pipping of inflectional morphemes such as tense, aspect or negation is attested cross-linguistically. For instance, on the basis of Gungbe and Tuki, Aboh (2004:266-267) and Biloa (1997:111) respectively show that the fronted focused verb move along with tense and aspectual morphemes as illustrated below.

(42)

- a. *dù-nò-ná yé dù blédì lì Gungbe (Aboh 2004:267)
 eat-HAB-FUT 3pl eat bread Spf[def]
 b*O-ma-noba Isomo a-ma-noba agee waa Tuki (Biloa 1997: 111)
 INF-P2-beat Isomo SM-P2-beat wife his

More interesting is also the fact that while predicate fronting and doubling appears to be an unbounded phenomenon in Basaá, Hebrew, Nupe, Spanish and Tuki, in some languages, predicate fronting with doubling remains a root phenomenon that is, it is clause-bound. In Russian and Gungbe for instance, predicate fronting cannot apply across clausal boundaries. The following examples show that predicate fronting is unbounded in Nupe and Tuki (43a-b) while long-distance verb fonting is completely ruled out in Gungbe and Russian as in (43c-d).

(43)

- a. Tuki (Biloa 2013: 503).
o-banga owu Mbara a- b- [ee [nōsi waa a- nu-**bangam**]
 Inf.cry FOC Mbara SM-says that wife her SM-F1-cry
 “Mbara says that his mother will CRY”

b. Kandybowicz (2006:152).

- Si-si** Musa gan ganan Nàdàà kpe ganan Gana **si** eci o
 RED-buy Musa say COMP Nana know COMP Gana buy yam o
 ‘It was BUYING that Musa said that Nana knows that Gana did to the yam.’

c. Gungbe (Aboh 2004:266)

- *dù ún sè dɔ yé dù blédì lɪ
 eat 1sg hear-Perf that 3pl eat-Perf bread Spf[def]
 ‘Eat I heard that they ate the specific bread.’

d. Russian (Aboh and Dyakonova 2009:1040).

- ***Videt'**(-to) mama skazala čto ona Sergeja ne **videla**,...
 see-INF(-PTCL) mother.NOM say.PST.FEM.S that she.NOM Sergeja NEG see.PST.FEM.S
 ‘As for seeing Sergey, mother said that she did not see him.’

As reported by Aboh & Dyakonova (2009:1041), the fact that predicate fronting is a root phenomenon in Russian could be due to ‘the topical nature of the construction and to the fact that topicalization is also impossible in embedded contexts in Russian (cf. also Bianchi 2010 for the discussion on topics in root and embedded contexts).’ As for Gungbe, the authors argue that

predicate fronting is an instance of head movement as opposed to phrasal movement. Put another way, it is argued by the authors that predicate fronting in Gungbe is ‘an instance of long distance verb movement that evades the Head Movement Constraint (HMC) thanks to the presence of an IP-internal doublet’ which acts in lieu of ‘a resumptive verbal element and which saves a derivation that would otherwise crash (Aboh & Dyakonova 2009:1046).’ One can easily comprehend why verb fronting in Gungbe is clause-bound. The explanation is clear since verb movement is highly constrained as opposed to phrasal movement which is generally an unbounded phenomenon. The fact that verb focusing in Gungbe cannot apply beyond clause boundaries is therefore due to the fact that head movement is strictly local. However, if one can explain the Gungbe facts, there still remains a problem if one confronts verb fronting in Gungbe and what is attested in Russian. If in most cases phrasal movement is unbounded, so why is VP fronting in Russian, such as in (43b), strictly banned? It seems to be the case that the restriction of VP fronting is not its topichood. Either way, it is not because VP fronting is an instance of topicalization that it is strictly limited to root clauses. And as is argued by the authors (Aboh & Dyakonova 2009:1041), the failure to apply long distance predicate fronting in Russian ‘is presumably linked to another principle of Russian still to be explained.’

That the restriction on long-distance predicate fronting in Russian might be linked to its topichood is countered straightforwardly by the data provided above from Yiddish (27), Spanish (28) and Hebrew (31) and repeated below as (44a, b and c) respectively for convenience.

(44)

a. Yiddish (Cable 2004:7)

Veysn hostu mir gezogt er **veyst** a sak
 to-know have-you me told that he knows a lot
 ‘As for knowing, you told me that he knows a lot.’

b. Spanish (Vicente 2005 :53-54)

Comprar, Juan ha dicho que Maria ha **comprado** un libro
 buy J has said that M has bought a book
 ‘As for buying, Juan has told me that Maria has bought a book.’

c. Hebrew (Landau 2006:42).

la'azor le-Rina, eyn li safek še-Gil hivitax še-hu **ya'azor**
 to-help to Rina there-isn't to-me doubt that Gil promised that-he will-help
 ‘As for helping Rina, I have no doubt that Gil promised he would help.’

As can be observed, sentences in (44a-c) convey a contrastive topic interpretation. In this vein, topichood cannot preclude predicate fronting in embedded contexts. And as it is noted by Aboh & Dyakonova (2009), some other factors should explain why VP fronting can only operate in root contexts. There is a wide range of literature on whether topics are root phenomena or not, and on the mechanisms that characterize this phenomenon (e.g. Hopper & Thompson 1973;

Emonds 1970, 1976, 2004; Maki & al. 1999; Haegeman 2002, 2004, 2007, 2009, 2012; Meinunger 2004; Heycock 2006; Bianchi & al. 2010 etc.).

At this stage, I one instance of predicate fronting in Basáá has been discussed, namely verb fronting without the internal arguments. I was shown that this process is also attested in other languages like Gungbe, Nupe, and Tuki among others. A good number of restrictions such as the non-fronting of the verb along with tense, aspect or negation morphemes, sensitivity to islands etc have also been examined. In addition, it was shown to what extent predicate fronting and doubling in Basáá is similar to other languages.

In the following lines, I am going to examine VP fronting without doubling in Basáá and some mechanisms that account for it. VP fronting exhibits no doubling effects in the presence of modal auxiliaries or some other auxiliary-like verbs.

Like verb fronting, VP fronting in Basáá is unbounded (45b), is sensitive to island constraints (45c, d) and exhibits reconstruction effects both in main and embedded clauses (45d-e). Finally, fronting a wh-fronting is incompatible with VP fronting (45f).

(45)

a. *Baseline sentence*

híkií malêt_i a- n̄- la sómb-ól báúdú béé_{i/j} makebla
 every 1.teacher 1.SM-PRS-can buy-OBL 2.students 2.his/her 6.presents
 ‘Every teacher_i can buy the presents for his/her_{i/j} students.’

b. *Clause-unboundedness*

li- sómb-ól báúdú béé_{i/j} makebla j̄-n m̄e hóŋl-áY l̄é u n̄- kâl
 INF-buy-OBL 2.students 2.POSS 6.presents 5-FOC I think-PROG that you PST2-say
 l̄é híkií malêt a- n̄- la (*sómb-ól)
 that every 1.teacher 1.SM-PRS-can buy-OBL
 ‘I thought that you said that every teacher_{i/j} can BUY THE PRESENTS FOR HIS_{i/j} STUDENTS.’

c. *Coordinate Structure Constraint*

* [li- sómb-ól báúdú béé_{i/j} makebla]₁ híkií malêt_i a- n̄- la t₁ ni
 INF-buy-OBL 2.students 2.POSS 6.presents every 1.teacher 1.SM-PRS-can and
 [li-tíþl̄ litowa jéé_{i/j}]
 INF-repair 5.car 5.POSS

Intended: ‘BUYING THE BOOKS FOR HIS/HER_{i/j} STUDENTS and repairing his/her_{i/j} car is what every teacher can do.’

d. [li- sómb-ól báúdú béé_{i/j} makebla]₁ j̄-n híkií malêt_i a- n̄- la t₁
 INF-buy-OBL 2.students 2.POSS 6.presents 5-FOC every 1.teacher 1.SM-PRS-can
 Intended: ‘BUYING THE BOOKS FOR HIS/HER_{i/j} STUDENTS is what every teacher_i can do.’

e. [li- sómb-ól báúdú béé_{i/j} makebla]₁ jó-n me n-hóŋjɔl lé
 INF-buy-OBL 2.students 2.POSS 6.presents 5-FOC I PRS-think that

híkií malêt_i a- n- la t₁
 every 1.teacher 1.SM-PRS-can

'I think that every teacher_i can BUY HIS/HER_{i/j} STUDENTS THE PRESENTS.'

f. *Kélkíí [li- sómb-ól báúdú béé_{i/j} makebla]₁ jó-n híkií malêt_i
 when INF-buy-OBL 2.students 2.POSS 6.presents 5-FOC every 1.teacher
 a- n- la t₁
 1.SM-PRS-can

The above examples in (45d-e), show that the quantified subject *híkií malêt* 'every teacher' can bind the pronoun *béé* 'his/her' in both main and embedded contexts. Sensitivity to islands, the presence of connectivity effects as well as incompatibility with wh-words are arguments which provide strong support that TP-fronting in Basaá is an instance of A-bar movement. So, the ungrammaticality of (45f) is due to simultaneous fronting of the question word *kélkíí* 'when' at with the fronted infinitive clause *li-sómb-ól báúdú béé makebla* 'to buy his/her students the presents'. Under a widely known assumption that (some)wh-phrases are inherently focused, the illicitness of (45f) is expected.

Partially summarizing, both verb fronting and TP fronting are instantiations of A-bar movement. This state of affairs disqualifies any that would militate in favour of a base-generation approach. Furthermore, a mixed approach, that is, the one which combines both a movement and a base-generation approach is not available in Basaá. The following section deals with theoretical assumptions in view to decide which approach is reliable and adequate in the handling of V(P)/TP fronting with/without doubling in Basaá.

5.6 Theoretical assumptions

The aim of this section is twofold. First of all, it provides an overview of some previous works that have tackled the phenomenon of predicate fronting from a theoretical point of view. Secondly, it proposes that although the theoretical framework that better accounts for predicate doubling in Basaá is that of Aboh & Dyakonova (2009) whose main claim is to show that predicate fronting and/without doubling has syntactic motivations and not morpho-phonological ones, predicate fronting in Basaá need much more structure than Gungbe and Russian. In other words, by adopting the parallel chain approach to account for predicate fronting with doubling (Aboh & Dyakonova 2009), I propose that one also needs an approach which combines focus fronting with the EPP in a language like Basaá. Globally, with just some minor variations, I

propose that predicate fronting to some extent operates in the same way as non-predicate fronting. The only difference is that non-predicate focus fronting does not induce doubling effects like predicate fronting.

5.6.1. Predicate fronting and/without doubling: morphology, phonology or syntax?

Predicate doubling has received a good number of investigations from both a descriptive and a theoretical point of view. Almost in each language family, this phenomenon is attested. Kandybowicz (2006) provides a good inventory of works within the framework of predicate doubling constructions. In this work, I will simply refer to some of them in order to see how the Basaa empirical material differ or look like other languages from a descriptive and a theoretical perspective. The reader is requested to read Kandybowicz (2006) and the references cited therein for further understanding.

5.6.1.1. Koopman (1984) and the Government and Binding framework.

Koopman is undoubtedly one of the key figures in the investigation of predicate fronting with doubling or what she herself refers to as ‘predicate cleft construction’. To the best of my knowledge, she is probably the first researcher who heralded a new era in the study of predicate fronting with doubling on the basis of Vata, a West African language of the Kru family. According to Koopman (1984), verb doubling is a saving strategy without which a given sentence would otherwise be illicit. In this vein, the doubled verb in sentence internal position acts as a resumptive verbal that salvages a given construction that could otherwise be illicit. In addition, at that time of the prevailing GBT, when the notion of proper government was still in vogue, the author argued that verb doubling was a last resort strategy in order to circumvent/avert ECP violation. Either way, predicate focus does not require an empty category at the extraction site because that empty category cannot be properly governed by its antecedent in an A'-position. Koopman shows that verb movement to the edge of the clause is an instance of ‘V-bar movement’ since the head verb lands in the C head position. In her analysis, the focused verb could not land in Spec-CP because such a movement would violate the Structure Preservation Hypothesis that requires head categories to be moved into head positions and maximal projections into XP positions. The author demonstrates that verb doubling is an instance of predicate cleft construction whereby the left peripheral copy occupies the sentence initial position. According to her, from a semantic point of view, what she calls predicate cleft in Vata is associated with contrastive focus interpretation and is similar to English clefts as can be seen below (Koopman 1984 quoted in Koopman 2000:1):

(46)

- a. **pā** ñ- ká m̄é **pá** á
 throw you FUT it throw Q
 'Are you going to THROW (throw as opposed to *rool*) it?'
 b. **pā** ñ- ká m̄é **pá**
 throw you FUT it throw
 'I will throw it'

Syntactically, Koopman (1984:158-161) argues that predicate cleft in Vata involves A-bar movement due to the fact that it is an unbounded phenomenon (47a) and is sensitive to syntactic constraints (47b-c).

(47)

- a. **yĒ** ñ gūgū nā àbà pà wī nà ñ **yĒ** ngÚa yé é
 see you think NA Aba throw voice NA you saw them PART Q
 'Do you think that Aba announced that you SAW them?'
 b. ***taka** ñ wà fótó_i mŪmU_i ñ **tákà** 6O àbà e_i]]]
 show you like picture ITIT you show REL Aba
 'You like the picture that you SHOW Aba'
 c. ***yē** kòfí pÉ ml̄ nā wá **yĒ** mO yé
 see Kofi shout PART NA they saw him PART
 'Kofi shouted that they SAW him'

Sentences (47b-c) are ruled out because they violate the Complex NP Constraint and the Non-bridge Verb Island respectively. It is true that (47a) is an instance of long head movement that normally violates the Head Movement Constraint (Travis 1984), Relativized Minimality (Rizzi 1990) or the Minimal Link Condition (Chomsky 1995). Koopman justifies verb doubling in (48a) in terms of the ECP or in terms of government, that is if the verb does not double, the fronted verb will not be able to antecedent govern its trace because of the intervention of some other functional heads such as tense or other verbal inflectional morphemes which will block government between the extracted verb and its trace. The presence of this/these inflectional morpheme(s) occupying the head position(s) will block antecedent government. Besides, for morphological purposes, failure to double the verb at the base would strand the tense head which needs morphological support. In order to avoid a violation of grammatical principles such as the '*No-Free-Affix Principle* (Lasnik 1981; Koopman 1984:149) or the *Stray Affix Filter* (Lasnik 1981, 1995), double pronunciation should occur as a last resort strategy (although this was not yet used in the government and binding terminology). Koopman therefore proposes that 'predicate cleft' is an instance of long head movement that evades the Head Movement Constraint. She adds that since this type of head movement (what she also calls wh-type of head

movement) behaves like a phrasal movement; it considerably differs from the normal V-to-T movement.

5.6.1.2. Nkemnji (1995): between the GB approach and the Copy Theory of Movement (CTM).

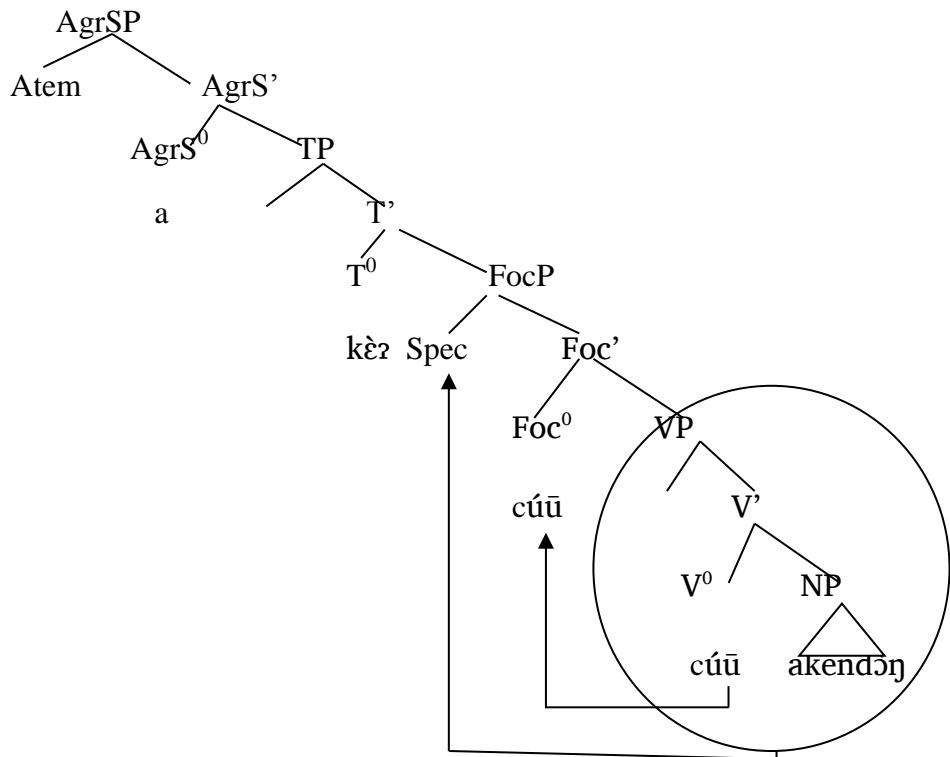
Nkemnji (1995) provides a semantic and a syntactic account of verb focus in Nweh, a Bantu language spoken in Cameroon. As argued by the author, verb focusing in Nweh usually ends up with two verbal copies: the ‘original’ verb and a ‘duplicated’ copy which stands in a chain relationship as in (49b below).

(49)

- a. Atem a kɛz nčúū akendòŋ (Nkemnji:1995:138-139).
A. Agr P-1 boil plantains
‘Atem boiled plantains’
- b. Atem a kɛz nčúū akendòŋ čúū
A. Agr P-1 boil plantains ø-boil
‘Atem BOILED plantains’

Nkemnji proposes that predicate doubling operates in two steps: first of all, head movement of the verb to Foc⁰ the head of FocP without verb deletion. Secondly, raising of the whole VP to Spec-FocP; a position located just below TP (the VP left periphery) in Nweh. The following derivation adapted from Nkemnji shows that the verbal copy in sentence final position results from a series of two successive movements, namely V⁰-to-Foc⁰, then pied-piping of the remnant VP to Spec-FocP. Under the assumption that the subject is base-generated in Spec-VP prior to movement into Spec-AgrS-P, it can be inferred that what moves into Spec-FocP is a remnant VP, that is the head verb, the object and the silent copy of the displaced subject.

(50)



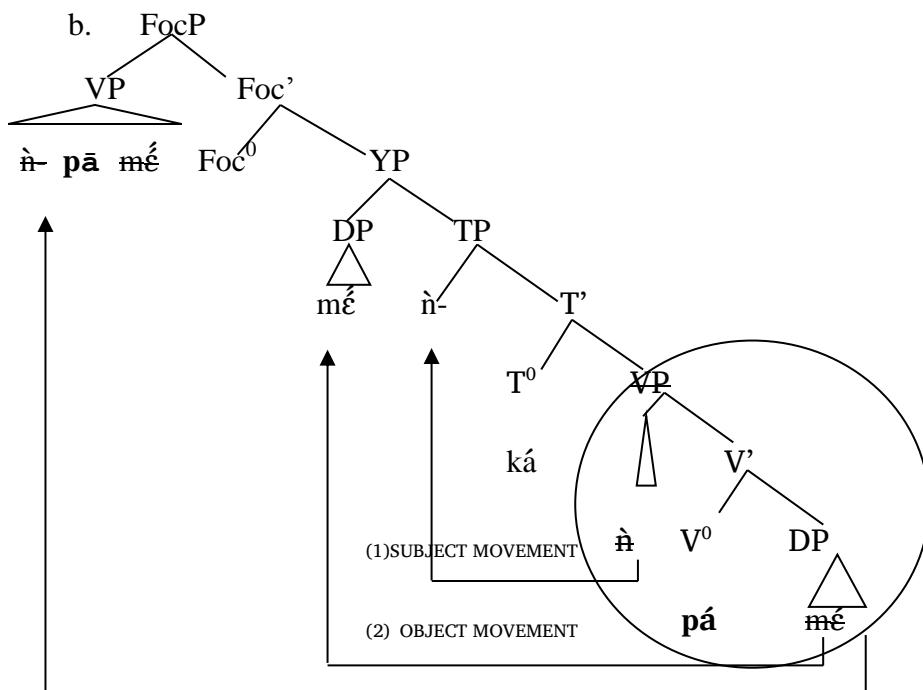
As Nkemnji (1995) argues, predicate doubling is explained along the lines of the Copy Theory of Movement. In his analysis, it is at the spell-out level that the grammar of a given language decides which copy of the chain is visible at PF, and hence, pronounced and which is visible at LF and interpreted. So there seems, in Nkemnji's analysis, to be no condition on copy deletion for the derivation in (50) to converge. The choice on copy pronunciation is dictated by particular language-internal considerations. The final argument for verb doubling in Nweh according to him is explained along the lines of the Government and Binding (GB) framework adopted by Koopman (1984). Verb deletion is therefore prohibited because the trace would not be properly governed by its antecedent.

5.6.1.3 Koopman (2000) and the Remnant Movement Approach (RMA)

In (2000), Koopman made significant progress in her analysis of predicate doubling and, recasted the first approach adopted in (1984) by proposing an alternative proposal. Adapting her investigation to the recent developments in generative syntax, she provided a unified study of predicate cleft constructions in Nweh (Grassfield Bantu) and Vata (Kru). With the elimination of the notion of government which prevailed in the 80's, she adopted a 'remnant movement' analysis in order to capture the issue of 'predicate cleft' construction. In this vein, she abstracted away from her previous proposals and showed that constituents that contain traces of earlier movement operations are allowed to move. By moving, these constituents create configurations in which traces are no longer bound by their antecedents. Many researchers, such as Thiersch (1985), den Besten and Webelhuth (1987, 1990), Webelhuth (1992), Kayne (1998) among others

conducted their investigations in this line although for many linguists (e.g. Fiengo 1974, Chomsky 1975, to name a few) remnant movement was considered not elegant in accounting for a number of movement operations. Koopman (2000) opted also for the Copy Theory of Movement (Chomsky 1993) according to which traces in fact are not part of core syntax, or better still, they are not part of the numeration (Chomsky 1995:225). Traces are thus viewed as being extra material which should not be added in the syntactic derivation because such an operation would violate the *Inclusiveness Condition* (Chomsky 1995:228). Within the framework of the Copy Theory of Movement, Koopman assumes that predicate cleft in Vata proceeds in a pair-wise fashion: first and foremost, VP-evacuation i.e.; an operation which consists in emptying the verb phrase with all its internal arguments, and secondly, movement of the remnant VP to Spec-FocP. For an illustration of her remnant movement analysis, sentence (51a) is derived as in (51b) where ~~strike-through~~ indicate deletion material whereas movement operations are shown by the arrows. She proposes a hypothetical YP projection, the specifier of which is occupied by the displaced object whereas the subject moves in to Spec-TP. After VP evacuation, the remnant VP moves to Spec-TP. According to Koopman, in a configuration where V-to-T takes place, it does so for morphological or morphophonological purposes while remnant movement to Spec-FoP is motivated by focus requirements.

- (51)a. **pā** n- ká mé **pá**
 throw you FUT it throw
 'I will throw it.'



(3) REMNANT MOVEMENT

At the final stage of the derivation, one ends up with two verbal copies slightly different in the sense that the highest copy *pā* bears a middle tone while the lowest one namely *pá* bears a high tone. As T^0 the head of TP is overtly realized, V-to-T movement cannot take place, but in other contexts where T^0 is not filled by a lexical material, V-to-T takes place for the *Licensing Condition* (LC). Furthermore, the author explains that the arguments contained within the fronted VP must not be spelled because they are not licensed. Overall, it proposed by the author that the fronting of the remnant VP into Spec-FocP follows from Koopman's (1996) *Principle of Projection Activation* (PPA):

- (50) *Principle of Projection Activation* (Koopman 1996; see also Koopman 2000; Koopman & Szabolcsi (2000)).

A Projection is interpretable iff it is associated with lexical material at some stage in the derivation.

Under standard assumptions that functional heads are strong, movement of the remnant VP into Spec-FocP is explained in the sense that it is motivated by checking purposes. Accordingly, the 'PPA prohibits representations in which neither the specifier nor the head position is associated by lexical material at any stage of the derivation' (Koopman & Szabolcsi 2000:3). The specifier of FocP must be filled in order to satisfy not only the PPA, but also, the *Generalized Doubly Filled Comp Filter* (GDFCF) defined in (51):

- (51) *Generalized Doubly Filled Comp Filter* (Koopman and Szabolcsi 2000:4).

No projection has both an overt specifier and an overt head at the end of the derivation.

Although (51) finds support to some extent in a number of cases such as the Vata derivation in (49b), it goes without saying that such a prediction cannot work successfully cross-linguistically. In other words, the principle in (51) predicts that a given projection should not have both an overt head and an overt specifier at the end of the derivation. In the Vata derivation in (49b) only the specifier of the focus phrase is filled by overt lexical material while the head remains silent.

Languages like Basaá, Bakoko, Búlu, Ewondo, Etón Gungbe, Tuki and many other languages require simultaneous overt realisation of both the head and the specifier in focus and topic constructions for instance and falsify (51).

5.6.1.4. Abels (2001) and the Stray Affix Filter (SAF)

Abels investigates predicate fronting in Russian and shows that predicate fronting with doubling is explained by two factors, namely a semantic factor and a morphological factor. Abels argues that the verbal copy doubles sentence internally if and only if 'there is no exponent of tense and agreement information hosted in Infl.' In this vein, predicate doubling comes out as a morpho-phonological process which is appealed to in order to avoid a violation of the *Stray Affix Filter* or

the *No-Free-Affix Principle* (Lasnik 1981, 1995; Koopman 1984). Given that Russian does not have *do-support* à la English, the verb should spell out in T⁰ in the absence of a modal, an auxiliary or a restructuring verb. Abels also provides evidence from VP ellipsis which shows that Infl (ection) can be filled by a raising verb or simply by an auxiliary.

(52) Abels (2001: ex 22a & b).

- a. Ivan čitaet etu knigu ka' doe voskresn'e, Petr ne čtaet [vp etu knigu ka doe ~~voskresn'e~~] Ivan reads this book every Sunday, but Peter not reads ~~this book every Sunday~~ 'Ivan reads this book every Sunday, but Peter *doesn't* (read it every Sunday).'
- b. Ivan budet čitaet' etu knigu ka' doe voskresene', a Petr ne budet [vp čitaet' etu knigu ka' Ivan will read this book every Sunday but Peter not will (~~read this book every doe voskresene'~~] Sunday) 'Ivan will read this book every Sunday. But Peter *won't* (read this book every Sunday).'

In (52a), the italicized verb čtaet 'reads' is spelled out because it supports the tense inflection due to the lack of *do-support*. In (52b), the entire VP undergoes ellipsis due to the presence of the modal auxiliary *budet* 'will' which is hosted in the I-domain. One can now understand that verb doubling occurs in the first case because there is no lexical material that can support tense morphology. According to the author, the conditions under which doubling occurs are not discussed. However, he undertakes his investigation in the spirit of Distributed Morphology and Lexical Insertion (Halle and Marantz 1993) according to which lexical items are not inserted into syntax fully inflected and that lexical insertion takes place as a post-syntactic process. Following Koopman (2000), Abels shows that the fronted VP satisfies focus requirement while the lower one satisfies morpho-phonological requirements under T.

5.6.1.5. Landau (2006)

Landau also shows that since Hebrew does not have any *do-support* in the manner of English so as to spell out tense and agreement features when VP is moved or elided, the verb is compelled to spell out both on T and inside the fronted VP. Therefore, one ends up with two verbal copies; an inflected one and a bare one. Departing from Koopman and Abels's views that predicate doubling is a PF operation Landau argues that copy deletion should be determined independently of any pragmatic/semantic factors. He proposes that the left peripheral verbal copy is due to a phonological requirement imposed by C, i.e. C requires that its specifier be phonologically realized. As for the bare-infinitive fronting in (53b), he proposes that it is an instance of V-fronting as opposed to a remnant VP-fronting attested in (50a). The argument for this being that in the second case i.e. in bare-infinitive fronting cases only the verb moves and this movement targets a head position namely C⁰, but not its specifier. Such a movement operation is therefore

in line with Chomsky (1995)'s *Chain Uniformity Condition*. In other words, what applies in (53a) below according to him is a remnant VP movement while (53b) is an instance of head movement namely V-to-C movement.

- (53) Landau (2006:37).

 - a. **le'ha'amin be-nisim**, hu ma'amin. *Phrasal infinitive fronting*
 to-believe in-miracles he believes
 'As for believing in miracles, he believes.'
 - b. **le'ha'amin**, hu ma'amin **be-nisim**. *Bare infinitive fronting*
 to-believe he believes in-miracles
 'As for believing, he believes in miracles.'

According to his predictions, the derivation of (53a) would proceed as follows: first of all, the subject *hu* ‘he’ moves from Spec-VP to Spec-TP. Secondly, the remnant VP made up of the verb and the complement PP *be-nisim* ‘in miracles’ moves into Spec-TopP/CP as in (54a) below (I will use TopP for convenience based on the translation).

- (54) a.

As for (53b), Landau proposes that what normally moves to the C-domain is not a remnant VP, but V alone without any internal argument. In other words, it appears that Hebrew does not license scrambling, that is, a sort of object-shift to some position between TP and VP, a position such as a hypothetical YP à la Koopman (2000). So, the prepositional phrase *be-nisim* ‘in miracles’ stays in-situ in postverbal position. In Landau’s terms, movement of the verb to the C-domain is simply an instantiation of long head movement in order to satisfy the phonological requirements according to which the specifier of CP/TopP should have an overt head. The overall analysis of predicate doubling according to Landau is that it is a morpho-phonological operation without any syntactic implications.

5.6.1.6. Kandybowicz (2006)

Kandybowicz (2006) provides an analysis of verb doubling effects in Nupe, a West African language spoken in Nigeria. In his account, verb doubling is accounted for in terms of movement operations, that is the fronted copy and the lowest one are related by movement. He therefore abstracts away from any attempt to derive verb doubling through a base-generation approach. According to him, predicate doubling should be conceived of as a morpho-phonological phenomenon which gives rise to the phonetic realization of multiple copies of the same element. Accordingly, chain linearization does not recognize verbal copies as being part of a syntactic chain. In this vein, linearization is a post-morphological operation which does not affect word-internal constituents. In concrete terms, Kandybowicz defends the idea that verb doubling does not depend on syntax. According to him, the deletion of the sentence internal verbal copy is not possible because it is invisible to linearization. As a result, one ends up with two non identical verbal copies.

However, the idea that the morphological distinction is the motivation for doubling effects is countered by Vicente (2007). Vicente's (2007) dissertation is based on the syntax of heads and phrases. According to Vicente, there is no restriction on movement, that is there exists no distinction between heads and phrases. In this vein, heads are licensed to move into specifier positions. He discusses predicate doubling in Hungarian and Spanish and provides a unified theory of movement which does not make any distinction between head and phrasal movement i.e. whether they involve two different movement operations. Even though he makes no account about what conditions can regulate verb doubling, he thinks that the morphological distinction between the fronted verb and the sentence-internal copy is far from accounting for the verb doubling phenomenon. In this perspective, he provides an illuminating case in Spanish which is also attested in Gungbe and Haitian and other languages. These examples provide further support to his view that verb doubling is possible even when both copies are identical.

(55)

a. Spanish (Vicente 2007:7)

Jugar, Juan suele *(**jugar**) al futbol los domingos
 play.INF J. HAB.3SG play.INF at football the Sundays
 ‘As for playing, Juan usually plays soccer on Sundays.’

b. Gungbe (Aboh & Dyakonova 2009:1050)

Xíá Séná nò xíá wémà lì ná Kofí
 read Sena HAB read book DET PREP Kofi
 ‘Sena habitually READS the book to Kofi.’

c. Haitian (Lefebvre 1989 quoted by Biloa 1997)

Se **tande** Jan **tande** volè a
it-is hear John hear thief a
'It is hear (not see) that John heard the thief.'

Sentences like (55a-c) led Vicente to argue that predicate doubling cannot be conditioned on the sole morphological distinctness, and that some other extra factors can be responsible for such a phenomenon. However, the author simply remains agnostic as far as these extra factors are concerned.

5.6.1.7 Aboh (2006) and Aboh & Dyakonova (2009): the parallel chains approach as a breakthrough

In their account of predicate fronting with doubling, Aboh (2006), Aboh & Dyakonova (2009) made a significant breakthrough in the understanding of this phenomenon which, until then, remained as a murky and puzzling one. The parallel chains approach to the best of my knowledge adequately accounts for the verb doubling phenomenon attested cross-linguistically. The authors suggest that predicate fronting and doubling is dependet on syntactic factors without any morpho-phonological considerations as often claimed by a number of researchers. In this vein, the authors examine predicate fronting and doubling under close scrutiny in Gungbe and Russian respectively as an instantiation of parallel chains in the spirit of Chomsky (2005). Recall that Aboh and Dyakonova's framework is couched within Chomsky's (2005:16-17). Chomsky's account of parallel chains is based on wh-movement of the subject as can be seen below.

(56)

- a. C [T [who [v*[see John]]]]]
- b. $\text{who}_i [\text{C}[\text{who}_j \text{T} [\text{wh}_k \text{ v}*[\text{see John}]]]]]$
- c. Who saw John

Considering v^* and C^* as phases, Chomsky shows that 'John' values all uninterpretable agreement features. As for the C head, he argues that the edge and Agree-features of C probe over the goal who in Spec-vP before movement. The subject who is first probed by T^0 and raises to Spec-TP for Agree requirements, or, better still, for EPP requirements and is subsequently probed over by C^0 which hosts the edge-features. At the end of the derivation, one ends up with two different syntactic chains, namely, the A-chain formed between who_j and the silent wh_k and the A-bar chain formed between who_i in Spec-CP and the silent wh_k . In this connection, there exists no direct link between who_i in Spec-TP and the silent wh_k .

Aboh and Dyakonova establish a parallel between Chomsky's account of wh-chains and predicate fronting with doubling. According to the authors, predicate fronting and doubling exhibits no 'extravagant' properties and requires no complex analysis as it might seem. They

consider the overt realization of two verbal copies as a natural fact that better account for chains formation i.e. only the highest copy in a given syntactic chain is pronounced. Accordingly, V(P) acts as a single *goal* which targets two different *probes* namely the I-domain for aspect licensing (or Agree) and the C-domain for focus or topic requirements. In concrete terms, first of all, the verb, which acts as a *goal* in the syntax moves to Asp⁰/T⁰ to value its aspect/tense features and thereby forming an A-chain. Then, V(P) moves to the C-domain to value its focus or topic features. At the end of the derivation, the root verb within the thematic layer ends up with a null spell-out by virtue of being the tail of two distinct syntactic chains namely A versus A' chains as shown in (57) below.

- (57) [CP V(P) [focus/topic].... [IP...[AsP[ø]....[V(P)[doublet]....]

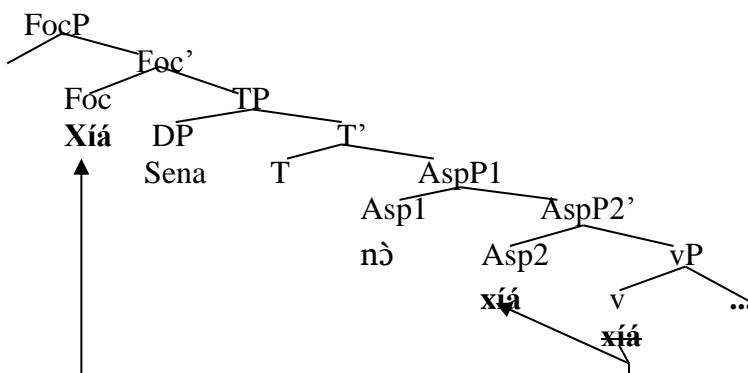
Furthermore, since predicate fronting with doubling is sensitive to tense/aspect and auxiliary selection in Gungbe and Russian, it is shown that the presence of an auxiliary, a restructuring aspectual or simply a modal verb in AsP⁰ blocks verb movement and therefore no doubling occurs. So, predicate doubling depends on verb movement into the Asp/T position. However, when the latter is already occupied by an overt lexical material such as an auxiliary, verb movement is blocked and the result is that the verb is completely deleted downwards as illustrated in (58).

- (58) [CP V(P) [focus/topic].... [IP...[AsP_{AUX/Aspectual/restructuring verbs}]....**Vgap**....]
Aboh & Dyakonova (2009:1051)

As an illustration of parallel chains in Gungbe and Russian, the following example in (59a) taken from Aboh & Dyakonova (2009:1054) can be derived as in (59b). Note that the derivation is simplified.

- (59)a. Xíá Séná nò xíá wémà ná Kòfí
read Sena HAB read book PREP Kofi
'Sena habitually READS books to Kofi.'

b.



In a case such as (59b), it is argued by the authors that two aspectual phrases are projected in Gungbe: the first one hosts the habitual aspect marker *nà* while the lower aspectual projection is empty and can license verb movement. At the end of the derivation, one ends up with two chains namely a V/v-to-Asp¹⁰ and a V/v-to-Foc⁰ chain. According to the authors, what moves to the focus domain is the head verb and not a VP, besides, v-to-Foc⁰ movement is an instance of long head movement that evades minimality constraints/effects such as the Head Movement Constraint (Travis 1984) or the Minimal Link Condition (Chomsky 1995). Aboh (2006:42-43) shows that object verb (OV) structures that are often introduced by an aspectual verb or an auxiliary block verb doubling. This is due to the fact that verb movement is blocked by the presence of phonetically-realized categories in the inflectional domain. In (60a-b) below, we have instances of OV structures in which (60a) involves the perfective aspect while (60b) involves the imperfective one. Predicate doubling is therefore expected according to Aboh's predictions because of the fulfilment of aspect licensing. In other words, verb movement to aspect is not blocked by the presence of the perfective aspect (although not phonologically realized). On the other hand, the ungrammaticality of (60b) is due to the presence of the progressive marker which is not transparent to verb movement. As a result, predicate doubling is ruled out because the verb is prevented from moving higher. Sentence (60c) shows that in OV structures with the imperfective aspect, the verb pied-pipes the entire VP to the C-domain and no doubling effects occur.

- (60)a. **Sà** wè Séná **Sà** wémà lí ná Kòfí
 sell FOC Sena sell book Det Prep Kofi
 ‘Sena SOLD the book to Kofi.’
- b.* **Sà** Séná tò wémà lí **Sà** ná Kòfí
 sell Sena Prog book Det sell Prep Kofi
 ‘Sena is SELLING THE BOOK TO KOFI’
- c. [wémà lí **Sà** ná Kòfí] wè Séná tè
 book Det sell Prep Kofi FOC Sena Prog
 ‘Sena is SELLING THE BOOK TO KOFI’

Quoting Abels (2001) and Dyakonova (2005), Aboh (2006:45) shows that doubling is prohibited in the presence of an auxiliary in Russian:

- (61) a. On *budet čitat'*
 he will read
- b.* *čitat'* (-to) on *budet čitat'*
 read Part he will read
- c. *čitat'* (-to) on *budet*
 read Part he will
 ‘He will read.’

A closer look at (61) enables one to observe that the presence of the modal *budet* ‘will’ is responsible for the illicitness of (61b) because it already occupies the I-domain and blocks verb movement. As a result, in order to obtain a grammatical sentence, verb fronting to the topic position takes place without the doubling of the verb *čitat* ‘read’ in (61c).

Based on Gungbe and Russian, Aboh (2006) and Aboh & Dyakonova (2009) provide a prediction according to which predicate doubling may not exist in languages with an auxiliary or a verbal element that is able to license T/Asp. In this vein, VP fronting without doubling in English can be accounted for in similar ways as the Gungbe construction in (60c) and repeated below as (62). In (62a), the aspectual marker *tò/tè* fulfils the *Agree*-relation in the I-domain while VP is attracted into Spec-FocP in order to satisfy the focus- criterion.

- (62) [wémà ló Sà ná Kòff] wè Séná tè
 book Det sell Prep Kofi FOC Sena Prog
 ‘Sena is SELLING THE BOOK TO KOFI ’

The parallel chain approach nicely accounts for VP topicalization in English. It is well known that English has a *do-support strategy*. Under this view, verb doubling will not be licensed because the dummy auxiliary ‘do’ realizes in T^0 and bears tense/aspect features while the whole VP fronts in Spec-TopP. Let us consider the VP topicalization in (64a) below taken from Culicover & Rochemont (1990:119). Cases of VP topicalization like in (64a) abound in English. One can encounter many other examples such as (64b-c).

(64) a. John was told to buy for Mary every book he could find, and **buy for Mary the book he could find** he *did!*

b. Peter wanted to buy a car, and **buy a car** he *did* (***buy**).

c. The students wanted to study mathematics, and **study mathematics** they *did* (***study**).

Under the standard assumption that the dummy auxiliary *do* in English supports inflection, verb doubling in English cannot occur because the lexical verb will not be able to raise to T/I due to the presence of the intervening inflected *did*. In the spirit of a parallel chain hypothesis, and following Rizzi (1997 and subsequent work), the topicalized English VP moves into Spec-TopP to satisfy the topic-criterion and the dummy auxiliary gets inserted in T/I for agree licensing, and therefore barring verb doubling. If the parallel chain hypothesis is right along the lines, I am going to prove that although the Basaá data nicely corroborate Aboh & Dyakonova’s (2009) predictions, one still needs much more structure above the left peripheral domain to perfectly derive predicate fronting with doubling in this Bantu language.

5.7. Predicate fronting with doubling and parallel chains in Basaá

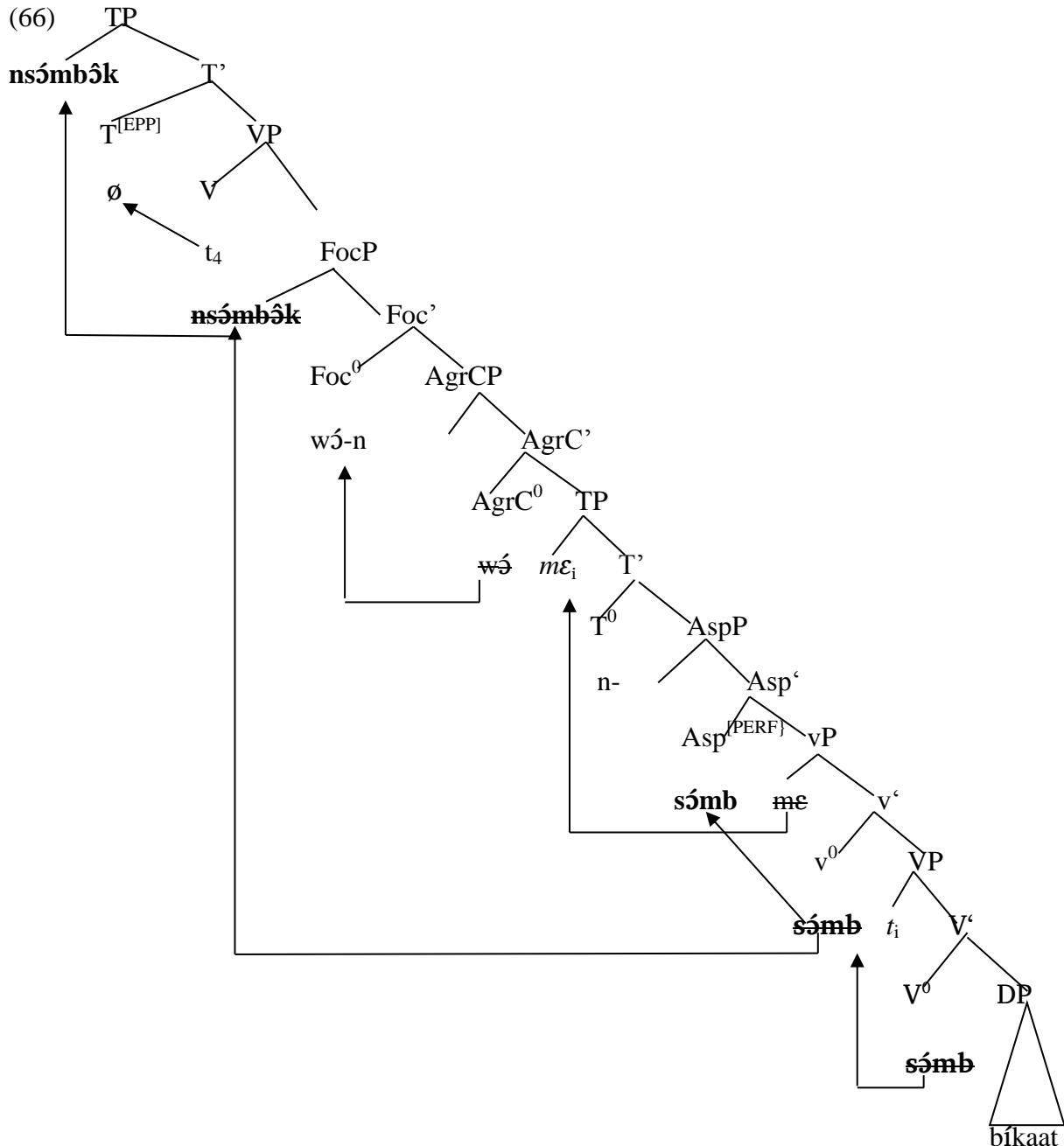
It was lengthily discussed in previous sections that predicate fronting with doubling is attested in Basaá. The following examples show that in the absence of a modal or control verb, predicate doubling occurs (65a-b). However, if there exists in the I-domain an intervening verbal category, verb doubling is disqualified (65c-d).

(65)

- a. **n-** **sómb-ᷕk** wó-n mε n- ***(sómb)** bíkaat
NMLZ-buy-NMLZ 3-FOC I PST1-buy._{PERF} 8.books
'I BOUGHT the books.'
- b. **n-** **sómb-ᷕk** wó-n mε *(**sómb-ᷕk**) bíkaat
NMLZ-buy-NMLZ 3-FOC I buy-PROG 8.books
'I was BUYING the books.'
- c. **li-sómb** bitámb jó-n bodaá bá- ñ-gwés (***sómb**)
INF-buy 8.shoes 5-FOC 2.women 2.SM-PRS-like buy
'Intended: BUYING THE BOOKS is what the women like.'
- d. **n-somb-á** bitámb wó-n bodaá bá- ñ- la (***sómb**)
NMLZ-buy-NMLZ 8.shoes 3-FOC 2.women 2.SM-PRS-can
'Intended: BUYING THE SHOES is what the women can do.'

These examples show that predicate doubling is mandatory in (65a-b) whereas it is not licensed in (65c-d). In (65a), the perfective aspect is not phonologically realized while in (65b) the progressive aspect is realized as *-ᷕk* (note that the progressive morpheme *-ᷕk* has the same morphology as the second verbal nominalizer *-ᷕk* but both differ phonologically and semantically). As we already pointed out when discussing verb movement in relation to negation in Basaá, some functional categories are implicit while others are explicit. Under this view, it is assumed that the perfective aspect in (65a) is represented by a null morpheme or is implicit. Since predicate doubling is attested, it can be conjectured that V⁰-to-Asp⁰ movement has taken place and since the aspectual morpheme is a bound/dependent one, the verb should move higher in order to incorporate into it. Recall also that what fronts in (65a-b) is the verb in its nominalised form, while (65c)-(65-d) are instances of TP fronting that involves either the infinitive *li-sómb* 'to buy' and its internal object *bitámb* 'shoes' (65c), or, VP fronting whereby the nominalized verb *n-somb-á* 'buy/the act of buying' and its internal object *bitámb* (65d) are fronted. Predicate doubling cannot arise here because of the presence of the italicized verbs *gwés* 'like' and *la* 'can' which blocks verb movement to the inflectional zone. Under the parallel

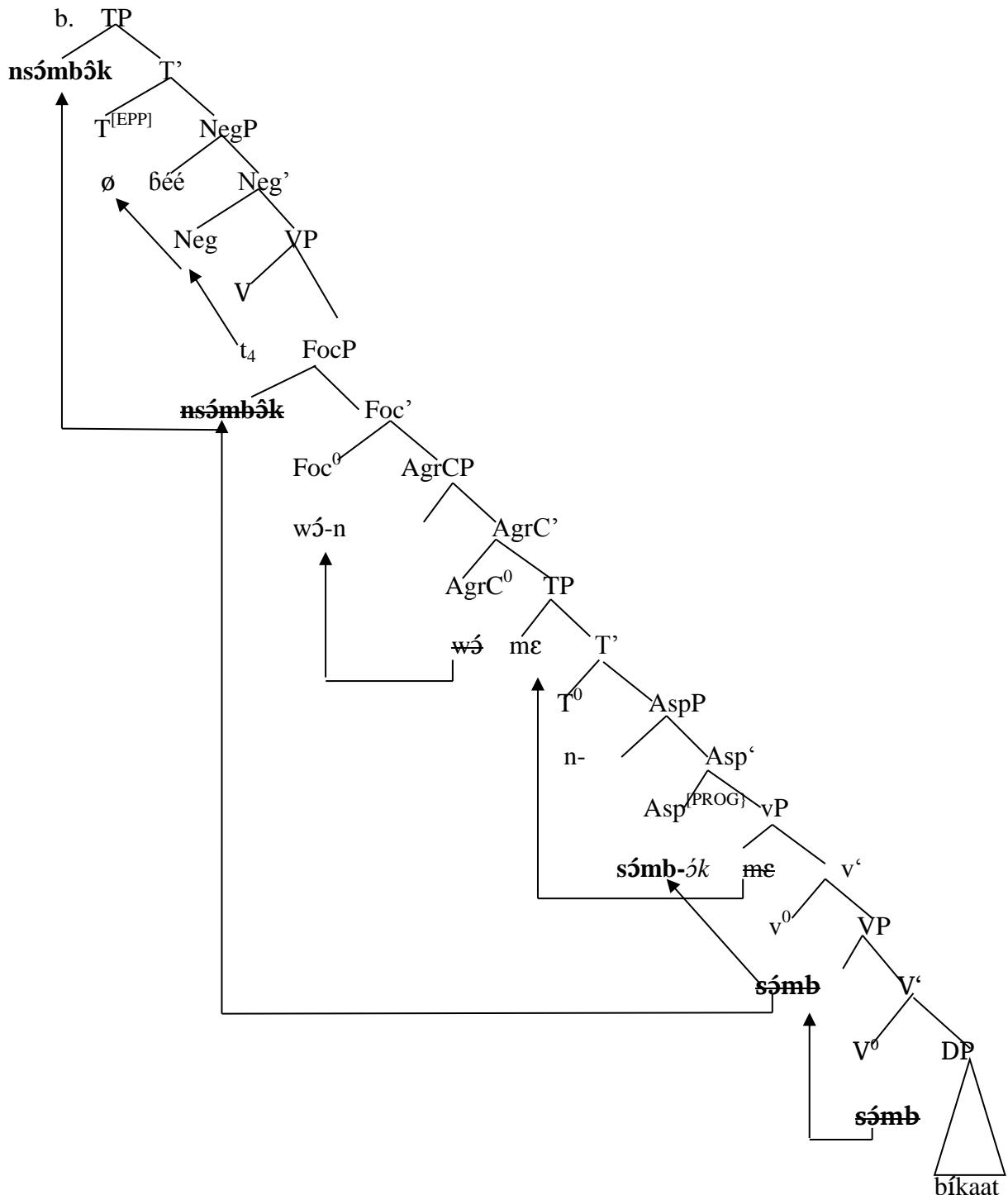
chains hypothesis, the predictions are borne out. Predicate doubling occurs if verb movement is licensed for Agree-requirements in the I-domain and if TP/V(P) movement takes place into the matrix TP for EPP and via the focus domain in order to satisfy the focus-criterion. If there appears to be an independent/free verb in the I-domain, verb movement is blocked and no doubling effects arise. Sentence (65a) can therefore be derived as (66) below.



As already mentioned in the preceding chapters (chapters three & four), focus fronting works hand in hand not only with agreement morphology but also with the EPP. Given that Basáá is a noun class language, agreement must be generated in AgrCP below the focus projection. Given that the focus marker should agree in noun class and number with the focalized item, head

movement from AgrC^0 to Foc^0 takes place prior to nominalized verb movement into the matrix TP via Spec-FocP. Our analysis is compatible with Aboh and Dyakonova's but with some differences. In Basaá, focus fronting involves a bi-clausal non-cleft structure so much much so that there is a matrix TP which require an overt subject in its specifier position for EPP purposes and an embedded FocP which need a focalized element in its specifier position prior to spellout. We nicely obtain different syntactic chains, namely v-to-Asp⁰ (A-chain) for Agree or aspect licensing purposes and v-to-Spec-FocP-to-Spec-TP (A-bar-A chain) for the focus-criterion and the EPP. Note also that a VP-shell analysis is adopted under the assumption that there is an implicit light verb to which is attached the root verb. This is simply done for exposition purposes and does not affect our analysis. Note that predicate fronting is derived exactly in the same way as non-predicate fronting. The only difference is that in order for the verb to be fronted, it needs to be nominalized so as to fulfil the noun class agreement with the focus marker in Foc. Another argument that shows that predicate fronting also involves a null copula structure is that the nominalized verb can be followed by negation as shown in (67) below.

- (67) a. n- sómb-ɔk béeé wó-n me *(sómb-ɔk) bíkaat
 NMLZ-buy-NMLZ NEG 3-FOC I buy-PROG 8.books
 'I was not BUYING the books.' Literally: * Not BUYING I was buying.'



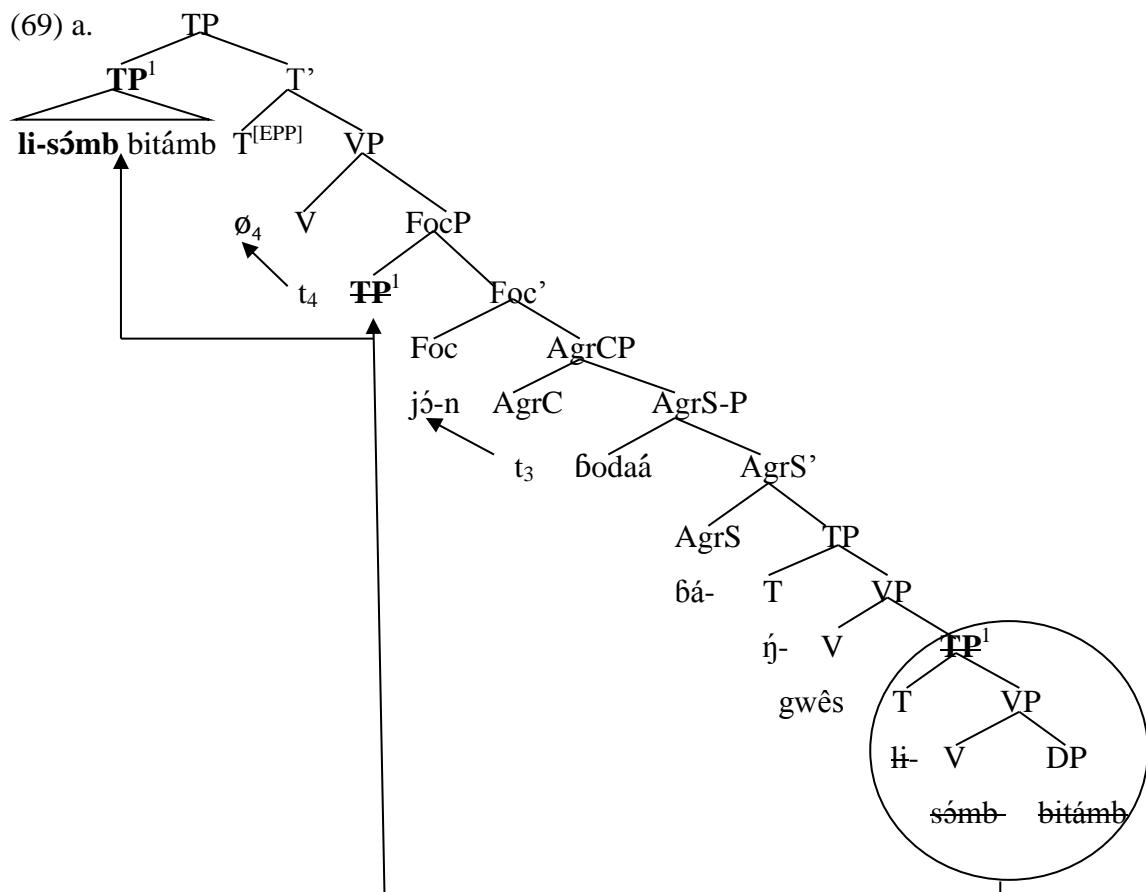
The derivations of sentences (65c-d), repeated below as (68a-b) TP and VP movement into the matrix TP via Spec-FOCP without verb movement to Aspect/Tense and without doubling because of the intervention of the control and modal verbs *-gwêṣ* ‘want’ and *-la* ‘can’ in the I-zone. So, sentences (68a-) are derived as (69a-b) respectively.

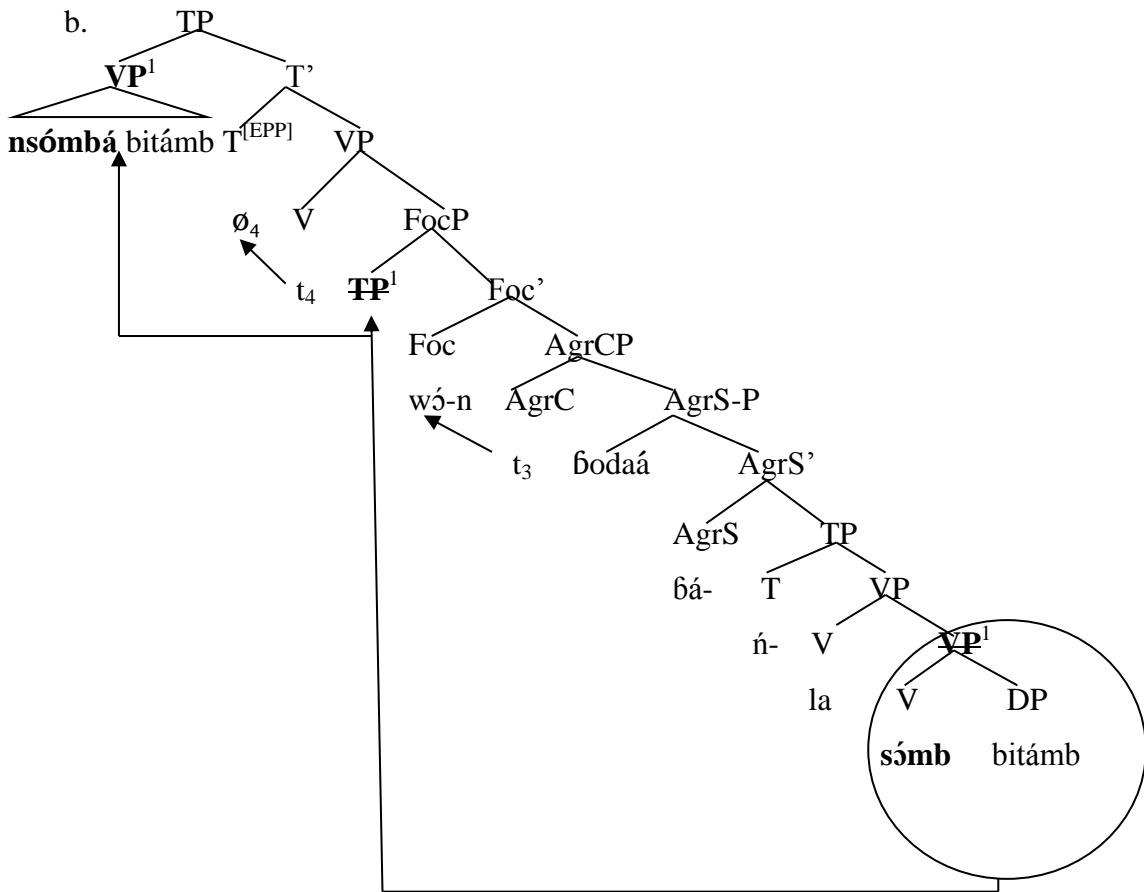
(68)

- a. **li-sómb** bitámb jó-n bodaá bá- íj-gwés (*sómb)
 INF-buy 8.shoes 5-FOC 2.women 2.SM-PRS-like buy
 ‘Intended: BUYING THE BOOKS is what the women like.’

b. **n-somb-á** bitámb wó-n bodaá bá- ín- la (*sómb)
 NMLZ-buy-NMLZ 8.shoes 8-FOC 2.women 2.SM-PRS-can
 ‘Intended: (TO BUY) BUYING THE SHOES is what the women can do.’

(69) a.





Note that in Basáá the items *gwēs* and *la* are verbs that means ‘like/love’ and ‘have the ability to’. However, when combined with other verbs like in the control constructions like in (68a-b), they act as modals and precede embedded verbs which can only be in the infinitive form (they are like the English can/be able to +verb, want to+verb). Note also that the vowel of the verb root can undergo morphological change when undergoing nominalization. In (68b) represented in (69b), the lower verb is *sómb*. But when undergoing nominalization, it becomes *sómb* and combines with the nominalizers *n-* and *á*.

It goes without saying that the parallel chain hypothesis helps us understand that predicate fronting behaves like a normal focus fronting in Basáá but with a difference that in the case of predicate fronting, the lexical verb can undergo doubling effects depending on its syntactic positioning, i.e. whether it is preceded by a modal-like verb or not. Predicate fronting with doubling generates parallel chains that are not attested in non-predicate fronting. The Basáá data are even different because, predicate fronting requires much structure above the focus field, just as in other focus fronting constructions in the language. In this vein, it becomes obvious that the pronunciation of the two verbal copies is not a random affair because it is in line with some

principles of Universal Grammar (UG) such as *Speak Up*, *Transparency*, *Silent Trace*, and *PF-sensitive Chain Resolution* taken from Kandybowicz (2006:16) and defined in (69) below.

(70)

a. *Speak Up* (Bobaljik 1995).

Pronounce the topmost/leftmost copy of each chain.

b. *Transparency* (Brody 1995:106).

If all chain links c-commanded by the contentive element are copies of the contentive, then only the highest member of the set of copies is visible for spell out.

c. *Silent trace* (Pesetsky 1998:361).

Do not pronounce the trace of a moved constituent.

b. *PF-Sensitive Chain Resolution* (Franks 1998).

The head of a chain is pronounced, unless pronunciation of the head position leads to a PF violation. Lower copy spell-out is possible only when issues of PF well-formedness are at stake.

Overall, predicate fronting with and without doubling in Basáá as well as VP topicalization (in English for instance) are better explained in terms of (70) above. The analyses relying on the assumption that double realization of the verbal copies involves one and the same chain appear to be inadequate as they violate (70) altogether. Summarizing, the principles defined in (70) above clearly predict that only the highest copy of a moved constituent is spelled out. As a result, the tail/foot of a chain needs to be silent. With (70) in mind, the ungrammaticality of sentences (71a-b), the simplified derivations of which are provided in (72) below, is straightforwardly accounted for.

(71)

a. ***n- sómb-ák wó-n me sámb-ák bíkaat**

NMLZ-buy-NMLZ 3-FOC I PROG-buy 8.books

Intended: 'I was BUYING the books.'

b. ***li-sómb bikaat jó-n bodaá bá- íj-gwés sámb**

INF-buy 8.books 5-FOC 2.women 2.SM-PRS-like buy

'Intended: BUYING THE BOOKS is what the women like.'

c. * **li-sámb jó-n me sámb-ák sámb bikaat**

~~INF buy~~ 5-FOC I buy-PROG ~~buy~~ 8.books

(72)

a. [TP **n-sómb-ák_i** [T \emptyset_k [VP t_k [FocP t_i [Foc $wó_j-n$ [AgrCP [AgrC t_j [TP me [AspP **sámb_i-ák**

3.NMLZ-buy-NMLZ COP

3-FOC

I

buy-PROG

[VP t_i **bíkaat**]]]]]]

8.books

- b. [TP{**li-sómb bikaat**}_i[T_{Øk} [VP_{t_k} [FocP_{t_i} [Foc_{jɔj-n} [AgrCP[AgrC_{t_j} [AgrS-P_{fodaá}[AgrS[**fa**
 5.INF-buy 8.books COP 5-FOC 2.women 2.SM
 [TP [T **j-** [gwêš <{[TP [T **↳** [VP **sómb** [DP **bitámb**]}_i]])]]]]]]]
 PRS-like 5.INF- buy 8.shoes
- c. [TP{**li-sómb**}_i[T_{Øk} [VP_{t_k} [FocP_{t_i} [Foc_{jɔj-n} [AgrCP [AgrC_{t_j} [TP_{me} [T [AspP **sómb-ɔk**
 5.INF-buy COP 5-FOC I buy-PROG
 [VP **sómb** [DP **bikaat**]}_i]])]]]]]
 buy 8.books

First of all, (71a) is ungrammatical because the A-chain (V^0/v^0 -to-Asp 0) remains silent, i.e. under the assumption that the verb ‘buy’ raises and incorporate into the progressive aspect morpheme $\dot{\alpha}k$. This is explained by the fact the complex made up of the progressive aspect marker $\dot{\alpha}k$ and the root verb *sómb* ‘buy’ is deleted altogether. Secondly, only the highest nominalized copy *nsómbɔk* in the matrix TP is realized and linked to a silent copy in Spec-FocP which in turn is linked to the lowest copy within VP/vP. Spec-TP-FocP is a kind of A-A-bar chain. It is obvious that the verb has moved and incorporated into the aspect marker but after incorporation, the whole complex gets deleted. In view of (70), the result is that (71a) violates *Speak UP* (70a) and *Transparency* (70b) because the highest copy in the V-to-Asp chain is deleted. As for the illicitness of (70b), we realized that the verb *sómb* ‘buy’ is stucked inside the lowest VP because there is no room for it to move higher up because of the presence of the auxiliary-like verb *gwéš* ‘like/want’. Consequently, one ends up with both the head *li-sómb* ‘to buy’ and the tail *sómb* ‘buy’ being spelled out simultaneously, violating all the principles in (70). In the same vein, the ungrammaticality of (71c) is due to a violation of (70a, b), to the extent that the head of the chain occupied by the infinitival nominalized verb *lisómb* ‘the buying/to buy’ in the matrix TP gets deleted as well as its tail in the lowest VP position. One ends up with an unpronounced chain altogether. Although the *agree* or *aspect* requirements are satisfied after V-to-Asp movement has taken place as well as the focus-criterion in the embedded FocP, the EPP fails because of the lack of any overt subject in the matrix TP.

The analysis proposed so far helps to realize that the realization of two verbal copies in predicate fronting is simply apparent. In fact, this operation involves different chains formed simultaneously, and fulfilling different requirements, namely the *agree-criterion/requirement*, the *focus-criterion* and the *Extended Projection Principle*. Overall, verb movement to the I-domain

takes place in order to check agree-features hosted in Asp/T. V(P) movement to the matrix TP clause via the left periphery is triggered by discourse and EPP features that probe over XP category simultaneously. In Aboh & Dyakonova's terms, one has to do with a scenario whereby one and only one single goal (here the verb) is simultaneously probed over by three different probes (the matrix T, the embedded Foc as well as the most embedded T/I⁰ heads. If our analysis holds along the lines, there still remains another problem to be explained. Why are the two verbal tokens non-identical? In other words, why is it the case that the left peripheral verb should undergo category shift/changing? The following section provides an answer to this question.

5.7.1. Nominalization as a last resort strategy to predicate fronting

It has been shown thoroughly that V(P)/TP fronting in Basáá involves conversion or category shift of the focused verb either into a nominal category or into an infinitival category. Verbal nominalization is widely attested in many world languages including Akan (Ameka 1992), Edo (Omoruyi 1989), Ewe (Ameka 1992), Yoruba (Awóbùlúyì 1979), Haitian (Lefebvre 1989), Nupe (Kandybowicz 2006, 2008) to name only a few. As for 'infinitivization', it is also attested in many languages such as Tuki (Biloa, 1992, 1997, 2013), Brazilian Portuguese (Cable 2004), Hebrew (Landau 2004, 2006), Hungarian (Vicente 2007), Russian (Abels 2001; Aboh & Dyakonova 2009; Dyakonova 2009), Spanish (Vicente 2005, 2007), Yiddish (Cable 2004) among others. The Basáá case is quite interesting because it combines both strategies. The fact that the verb must undergo category shift in Basáá is obviously predicted because Basáá is a noun class language and focus fronting works in tandem with agreement morphology which appears to be instrumental in the characterization of most noun class languages. A Basáá bare verb is cannot be focus fronted because it is devoid of nominal features/morphology. The following examples illustrate this state of affairs.

(73)

- a. **likebla** *(jó-n) malét a- bí- lɔná báúdú
 5.presents 6-FOC 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-bring 2.students
 'The teacher brought a/the PRESENT to the students.'
- b. **n-** **lɔn-** **ga** *(wó-n) malét a- bí- lɔná báúdú likebla
 NMLZ-bring-NMLZ 3-FOC 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-bring 2.students 5.presents
 'The teacher BROUGHT a /the present to the students.'
- c. **li-** **lɔna** **báúdú** **likebla** *(jó-n) malét a- bí-la (*lɔná)
 INF-bring 2.students 5.presents 5-FOC 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-can (*bring)
 'The teacher could BRING A/THE PRESENT TO THE STUDENTS.' Lit: 'What the teacher could do was to bring the students a /the present.'

d. *seβel	malět	a-	βí-	seβél	βáúdú
	call		1.teacher	1.SM-PST2-call	2.students
'Intended : The teacher CALLED the students.'					

The data above show that focus fronting involves agreement morphology between the fronted focus and the focus marker. In other words, the fronted focus must agree in class and number with the focus marker. Sentence (73a) is an instance of object focusing that targets the object *makebla* ‘presents’. This lexical item belongs to class 6 in the Basaá noun class system. This noun must agree in class and number with the focus marker *mó-n*. In (73b), the focus verb is converted into a nominalized form and in (73c) into an infinitival form. It can be observed that the infinitival form behaves exactly like the noun *likebla* ‘present’ which belongs to noun class 5 in Basaá as well. Both share the same agreement morphology. Given that focus fronting involves agreement morphology which is noun class-sensitive, it is plausible to consider category shift as a last resort strategy prior to spell out. Without nominalization, predicate fronting would otherwise yield wrong results because predicate fronting in the form of a bare verb will not be licensed.

It is said in the literature that in some languages, the fronted verb in verb focusing lands in Foc⁰. A case in point is Gungbe (Aboh 2004, 2006; Aboh & Dyakonova 2009). The Basaá data clearly show that predicate fronting involves a phrasal movement like in non-verbal focus fronting. This is predicted because if predicate fronting were movement to Foc⁰ the head FocP, then, such a claim would not be proved because the focus marker and the focused predicate would compete for the same slot. In addition, if predicate fronting in Basaá involved head movement, it would cause serious minimality problems such as the Head Movement Constraint (Travis 1984) and the Minimal Link Condition that require movement to operate in a stepwise fashion. More precisely, head movement of the verb would be blocked by intervening T⁰, Asp⁰ and AgrS⁰ and AgrC⁰ categories which intervene between the landing site of the extracted focused verb and its original position (v/V⁰). Another argument in favour of an XP movement instead of an X⁰ one is that V(P) fronting is unbounded, that is, it can operate beyond clausal boundaries, which is generally not possible with head movement as the latter is highly constrained. This state of affairs provides us with interesting results from a cross-linguistic perspective. For instance, it has been shown that in some languages, predicate fronting is an instance of head movement. As an illustration of this, Aboh (2004), Aboh & Dyakonova (2009) etc. show that in Gungbe, predicate fronting does not involve a phrasal movement, but a head

movement. It is the reason why it is a clause-bound process. The following examples from Basàá and Gungbe (Aboh 2004: 266-67) show that while predicate fronting can operate in matrix and embedded clauses in the former, it is highly constrained in the latter.

Under the assumption that head movement is subject to locality constraints, it can be easily deduced that predicate fronting in Basáá is phrasal movement whereas it is an instance of head movement in Gungbe.

(74)

- a. **n-** **níYá-ga** **wó-n** malët a- bí- **níYá** báúdú minsɔŋgí
NMLZ-teach-NMLZ 3-FOC 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-teach 2.students 4.mathematics
'The teacher TAUGHT the students mathematics.'
- b. **n-** **níYá-ga** **wó-n** mε ð- hóñjl lé malët a- bí- **níYá** báúdú
NMLZ-teach-NMLZ 3-FOC I PRS-think that 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-teach 2.students
minsɔŋgí
4.mathematics
'I think that the teacher TAUGHT the students mathematics.'

(75) Gungbe

- a. **dù** Séna **dù** blédì lì
eat Sena eat-Perf bread Spf [+def]
'Sena ATE the specific bread.'
- b. ***dù** ún dò dò yé **dù** blédì lì
eat 1Sg say-Perf that 3PL eat-Perf bread Spf[+def]
'EAT I heard that Sena ate the specific bread.'

The last issue to address in this section is the real nature of the nominalized verb. There exists in Basàá isomorphism/homomorphism between the nominalizers or nominalizing morphemes and the categories of tense and aspect. Such an apparent phenomenon needs to be explained for better understanding of predicate doubling in the Basáá language. For instance, in (76a), the present tense marker, which is the bilabial nasal *m*-, is isomorphic/homomorphic with the first nominalizer whereas in (76b), the second nominalizer is isomorphic/homomorphic with the progressive⁴⁰ aspect marker *-aY*.

⁴⁰ Note that the phonemes k, g and y overlap so that the progressive can be realized as V-k, V-g or V-y, where V can take the phonological features of the vowel of the verb root. e.g. the present progressive forms of the verbs *kíd* 'cut', *bay* 'separate', and *gwel* 'catch/hold' are *kíd-ík/g/y*, *bay-âk/g/y* and *gwel-êk/g/y* respectively.

(76)

- a. Malet a- **m-** *bám* *báúdú* **m-** *bám-* *âY*
 1.teacher 1.SM-PRS-blame 2.students NMLZ-blame-NMLZ
 ‘The teacher BLAMES the students.’
- b. Malet a- *bám-áY* *báúdú* **m-** *bám-* *âY*
 1.teacher 1.SM-blame-PROG 2.students NMLZ-blame-NMLZ
 ‘The teacher was BLAMING the students.’

First of all, a look at the above sentences enables to realize that from a phonological point of view, the first nominalizer which is the bilabial nasal *m-* bears a low tone (in this work the absence of tone on a given phoneme shows that this phoneme bears a low tone. Every sound which looks toneless normally bears a low tone) while the present tense morpheme in (76a) bears a high tone. Similarly, in (76b) the progressive aspect morpheme *-áY* and the first nominalising morpheme *-âY* are also isomorphic. However, they differ on tone assignment (the former bears a high tone while the latter bears a contour tone (falling one)). All these facts are likely to testify that the verbal doublet might bear tense and aspect morphologies. However, this is simply apparent because if we make use of the distant past tense (PST2-) marker *bí-* as in (77a) below, we will get different results in the sense that the nominalizer simply assimilates the first consonant sound of the verbal root as expected and will never look like the past tense morpheme as the illicitness of (77b-c) shows.

(77)

- a. Malet a- **bí-** *bám* *báúdú* **m-** *bám-* *âY*
 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-blame 2.students NMLZ-blame-NMLZ
 ‘The teacher BLAMED the students.’
- b. *Malet a- **bí-** *bám* *báúdú* **bi-** *bám-* *âY*
 1.teacher 1.SM-PST1-blame 2.students 8.NMLZ-blame-NMLZ
- c.* **bi-** *bám-* *âY* malet a- **bí-** *bám* *báúdú*
 PST2-blame-NMLZ 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-blame 2.students

The illicitness of (77b-c) simply indicates that, it is not the case that the doubled verbal copy takes the tense features.

Patially concluding, it can be noted that the mismatching between tense/aspect morphemes and nominalizer(s) is simply a matter of isomorphism but they do not fulfil the same fucntions. The nominalized verb undergoes affixation as a last resort strategy that takes place at a pre-spell out level in order to be fronted to the left periphery. It can be retained that predicate fronting, just in Basaá is substitution for Spec-TP and is subject to nominalization/infinitivization before spell out. Nominalization comes out as a last resort strategy that involves metamorphosis of the verbal

category into a nominal category in view of circumventing violation of minimality effects such as the Head Movement Constraint (HCM) or the Minimal Link Condition (MLC). The only difference between predicate fronting and non-predicate fronting is that the former sometimes gives rise to doubling effects that are not encountered in the latter.

5.7.2. Predicate fronting and Remnant movement

This section deals with the syntax of predicate fronting and remnant movement. I have examined one instance of predicate fronting in Basáá which involves leftward movement of the predicate in the form of a nominalized verb. There exists another instance of predicate fronting that was previously mentioned without any syntactic account. It was shown that in Basáá predicate doubling can also be realized in sentence final position,. The following examples show that both (78a) and (78b) convey the same focus interpretation, but differ on the surface on the basis of the position of the verbal doublet.

(78)

- a. Mε bí- bám báúdú m- bám- âY
I PST2-blame.PERF 2.students 3.NMLZ-blame-NMLZ
'I BLAMED (e.g. as opposed to BEAT) the students.'
- b. m- bám- âY wó-n mε bí- bám báúdú
3.NMLZ-blame-NMLZ 3-FOC I PST2-blame.PERF 2.students
'I BLAMED (e.g. as opposed to BEAT) the students.'

Although (78a) and (78b) differ on the surface, they share the same characteristics. First of all, the verbal doublet is nominalized in both cases. Secondy, the sentence in which the doublet occurs on the right also display properties of long distance dependencies such as clause unboundedness (79a), and sensitivity to island constraints such as the Complex NP Constraint (79b), the Coordinate Structure Constraint (79c) and the Factive/ Non-Bridge Constraint (79d) to name only a few.

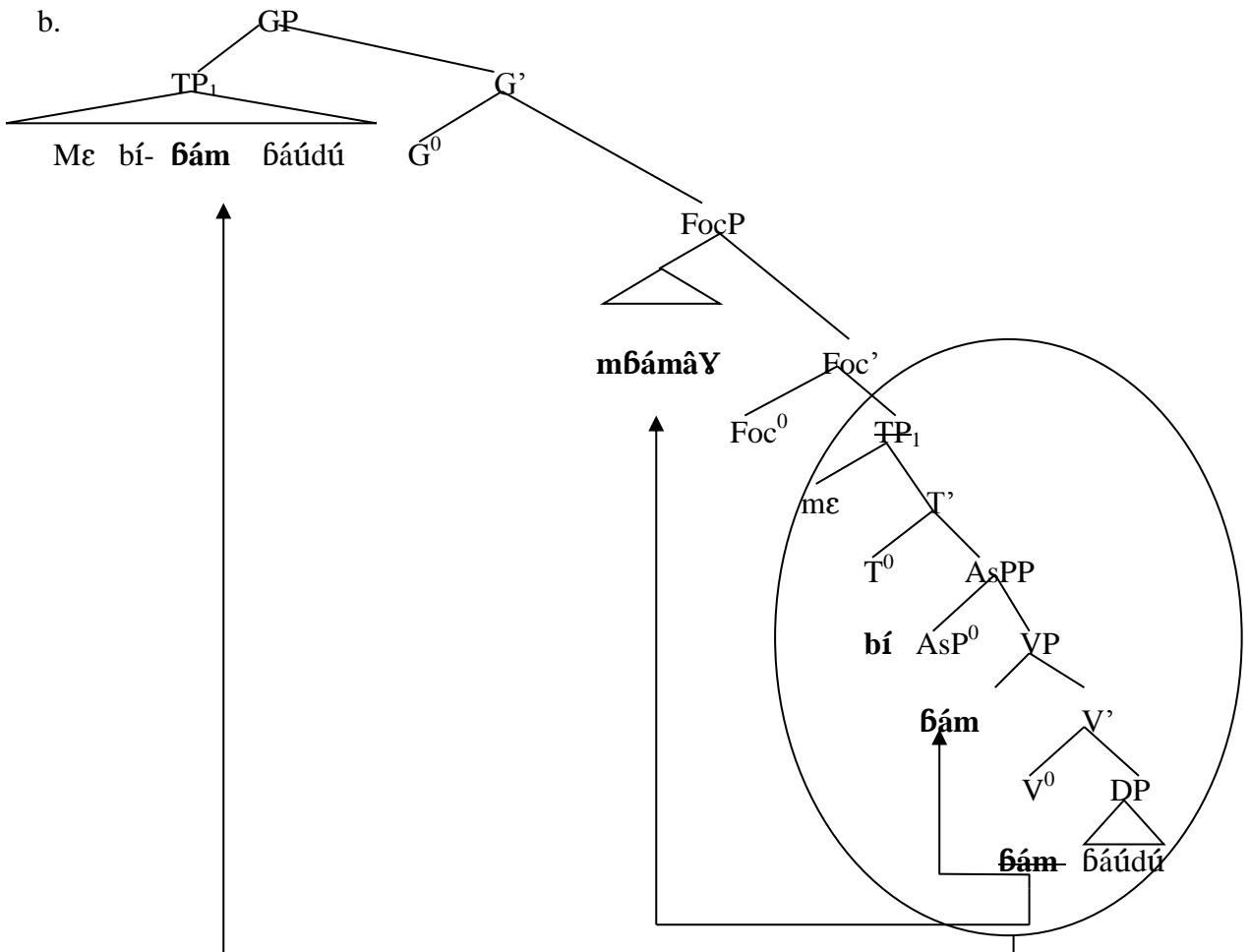
(79)

- a. mε j- hójól lé bagwâl bá- bí- kâl lé malêt a- bí- bám
I PRS-think that 2.parents 2.SM-PST2-say that 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-blame
báúdú m- bám- âY
2.students NMLZ-blame-NMLZ
'I think that the parents said that the teacher BLAMED the students.'
- b.?? Mε bí- bómá báúdú (bá) bá- bí- sômb bikaat n- sômb- ôY
I PST2-meet 2.students 2.Rel 2.SM-PST2-buy 4.books NMLZ-blame-NMLZ
'I met the students who BOUGHT the books.'

- c.*báŋgé bá- n- tóY ni jé n- jé- εY
 2.children 2.SM-PRS-play and eat NMLZ-eat-NMLZ
 ‘The children play and EAT.’
- d.* malêt a- bí- fám lé mε bí- sónjgól bíkaat yaaní
 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-regret that I PST2-read 8.books 1.yesterday
n- sónjg-1- ak
 NMLZ-read-EPTH-NMLZ
 ‘*The teacher regretted that I read the books yesterday READ.’

At this level, it can be inferred from the diagnostics above that constructions in which the predicate seems to double at the end of the sentence involve A-bar movement and that the fact that the verbal copy appears in sentence final position is simply superficial or simply deceptive. A construction like (78a) gives the impression that the predicate has been extraposed to sentence internal position final position. The illicitness of (79d) proves that extraposition is not possible. In fact, this suggests that the verbal doublet has been raised to the left periphery. It is also important to note that structures like (78a) or (80a) appear to constitute a major challenge to the antisymmetric approach. More precisely, on the surface, the verbal doublet seems to have undergone rightward movement, which would support an extraposition-based account. As a result, the standard view according to which traces or silent copies of extracted material should be asymmetrically c-commanded by their antecedent would be facing a major challenge. In line with the antisymmetry framework, and in the spirit of the cartographic approach, I argue that sentences where the verbal doublet occurs in sentence final position on the surface are well accounted for by postulating three consecutive movement operations. First and foremost, verb movement to the aspect position for aspect or Agree-licensing (Aboh 2009; Aboh & Dyakonova 2009; Chomsky 2005). Secondly, verb movement into Spec-FocP for focus requirements. After both the agree and focus requirements have been satisfied, the remnant clause undergoes a massive/heavy pied-piping (Ross 1969; Nkemnji 1995) into the specifier position of the Ground Phrase (Poletto & Pollock 2004). Following Pollock & Poletto (2004), I consider the Ground Phrase (GP) to be a functional projection which hosts background, presupposed or known information in the discourse i.e. information available in the mind of the discourse participants. In my analysis of predicate fronting, GP c-commands the focus phrase. In this perspective, sentence (78a) above for instance, repeated below as (80a) will be derived as in (80b). Following Poletto & Pollock (2004), the ground phrase

- (80) a. Mε bí- bám báúdú m- bám- âY
 I PST2-blame.PERF 2.students 3.NMLZ-blame-NMLZ
 ‘I BLAMED (e.g. as opposed to BEAT) the students.’



Step I: V^0 -to- Asp^0 movement for aspect licensing

Step II: Nominalized V -to-Spec- $FocP$ movement for the focus-criterion

Step III: Remnant movement of TP into $Spec-GP$

The derivation in (80b) provides a fine-grained mapping of sentence (80a) without any extrapolation mechanisms. In partial conclusion, it can be borne in mind that structures which involve predicate doubling on the right hand side of the sentence are simply superficial. They result from a series of three successive movement operations, namely V^0 -to- Asp^0 movement for aspect licensing, nominalized verb movement into the focus domain for focus purposes and remnant movement of the $TP/AgrS/IP$ into $Spec-GP$. This analysis helps to obtain the correct linear word order in line with the LCA and the cartographic framework.

5.7.3. Predicate focus with Inherent Complement Verbs (ICVs)

The term inherent complement verb is widely known in the literature. By Inherent Complement Verbs, it is meant verbs whose meaning is further specified by the complements. If the complement happens to be dropped, another meaning is obtained, which is quite different from a construction that associates both a verb and a complement in normal transitive constructions.

One may establish a parallel between phrasal verbs in English and inherent complement verbs in Basaá. For instance, the English phrasal verbs ‘run away’, ‘speak up’, ‘come out’ etc. with their prepositions dropped are very different from the verbs ‘run’, ‘speak’, and ‘come’ etc. ICVs abound in African languages (cf. Aboh and Dyakonova 2009; Aboh & Essegbe (2010); Avolonto 1995; Essegbe 1999; Nwachukwu 1985, 1987 a.o.). In Basaá, they include a good number of intransitive verbs followed by an inherent complement:

(81)

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| a. li-kε ŋgwéé; | b. li-kε híl̩; | c. li-wó jnuú |
| INF-go/walk 3.race | INF-go 19.sleep | INF-die 7.body |
| ‘to run.’ | ‘to sleep.’ | ‘to be ashamed.’ |
| d. li-jen pee | e. li-nók | masée |
| INF-stay 7.insomnia | INF-feel/hear/understand | 6.happiness |
| ‘to stay awake.’ | ‘to be/feel happy.’ | |
| f. li-kɔn masée | | |
| INF-be sick 6.happiness | | |
| ‘to be/feel happy/joyful.’ | | |

ICVs behave like idiomatic expressions because their meaning is not obtained from the composition of the individual meaning of each word taken separately. Their meaning is taken as a whole. In this case, if the complements are taken away or dropped, one obtains different meanings, namely ‘go/walk’, ‘die’, ‘stay’, ‘hear/understand/feel’ and ‘be sick’. The following sentences in (82) show that in an ICV construction, it is possible to get predicate fronting with doubling (82a-b), to front the inherent object (82c). However, simultaneous fronting of both the inherent complement and verb as a whole is not possible (82d). In like manner, multiple fronting of the verb and its inherent complement is disallowed (82e).

(82)

- | | | |
|---|-------------|---|
| a. Di ní- nók masée n- nóy- ók | | |
| we PRS-feel. _{IMPERF} | 6.happiness | 3.NMLZ-feel-NMLZ |
| ‘We ARE HAPPY’ | | |
| b. n- nóy- ók wó-n di ní- nók masée | | |
| 3.NMLZ-feel-NMLZ | 3-FOC | we PRS-feel. _{IMPERF} 6.happiness |
| ‘We ARE HAPPY’ | | |
| c. masée mó-n di ní- nók | | |
| 6.happiness | 6-FOC | we PRS-feel. _{IMPERF} |
| ‘We ARE HAPPY’ | | |
| d.* n- nóy- ók maséé wó-n di ní- nók | | |
| 3.NMLZ-feel-NMLZ | 6.happiness | 3-FOC |
| we PRS-feel. _{IMPERF} | | |

e. *masée mó-n di ní- nók n- nóy- ók
 6.happiness 6-FOC we PRS-feel.IMPERF NMLZ-feel-NMLZ
 ‘We ARE HAPPY’

An investigation of the ICVs provides interesting results when it comes to focus constructions. More important is also the fact that in a question-answer pair such as (83), statements (a-b) are felicitous reactions to (Q). More precisely, (83Q) is an instance of V/VP focusing and in this way, only (a-b) are felicitous reaction to (83Q) because they involve V/VP focus too. On the contrary, (83c-d) below can never be felicitous answers to a question that indicates V/VP focus. This is an indication that a question that targets an inherent complement cannot an answer whose focus is the object (83c-d). Questioning an inherent complement like in (83Q) entails questioning the whole VP and not the inherent complement in isolation. It is the reason why (83c-d) cannot be a follow-up to (83Q). The former indicate focus on the PP ‘to school’ and ‘house’ respectively while the latter indicates VP focus. Summarizing, it is not the inherent object *ŋgwéé* ‘race’ (83Q) which is focused or questioned, but the whole VP *kε ŋgwéé* ‘run’ with both the verb *kε* ‘go’ and its inherent complement *ŋgwéé* ‘race’. As can be observed in (83Q), the inherent complement *ŋgwéé* ‘race’ has only been fronted in isolation, leaving the intransitive verb *kε* ‘go’ in-situ.

(83) Q: **ŋgwéé_i** wó-n báudú bá- íj- kε t_i hála a
 3.race 3-FOC 2.sudents 2.SM-PRS-go.IMPERF so Pol
 ‘Are the students RUNNING?’

a.

báá u hójl-ák lé bá ní- nígíl
 Pol you.2SG.NOM think-PROG that they PRS-study.IMPERF
 n- nígl- ak ε
 NMLZ-study-NMLZ INTERR

‘Did you think they were STUDYING (as opposed to running)?’

b.

u hójl-ák lé yigíl yó-n bá ní- nígíl ε
 you.2SG.NOM think-PROG that 7.study 7-FOC they PRS-study.IMPERF Pol
 ‘Did you think they were STUDYING (as opposed to running)?’

c.

#U hójl-ák lé süklu yó-n bá- íj- ke ε
 you.2SG.NOM think-PROG that 7.school 7-FOC they PRS-go_{IMPERF} Pol
 ‘Did you think they were going TO SCHOOL (as opposed to running)?’

d. #U hójl-ák lé ndáp yó-n bá ní- jowa a?

you.2SG.NOM think-PROG that 7.house 7-FOC they PRS-clean. INTERR
 ‘Did you think they were cleaning the HOUSE (as opposed to running)?’

In an ICV structure, the intransitive verb and its inherent complement form an indissociable meaningful verbal complex. The above examples have shown that focusing an inherent complement cannot be contrasted with a complement in a regular/normal (in)transitive V(P). In other words, it is not possible to contrast a verb phrase of an IVC with an object (complement) in regular (in)transitive constructions. In this vein, the unacceptability of (83c-d) are expected because they are not felicitous to a question that indicate verb phrase focusing (89Q), which therefore indicates that (83Q) is a case of verb phrase focus and not an object focus in the proper sense of the term. What undergoes fronting in (83Q) is just *ŋgwéé* ‘race’ which is a subpart of the verb phrase *kε ŋgwéé* ‘run’ or ‘run the race’ literally.

As mentioned above, that the focalized inherent complement in (83Q) is not an independent object is clearly explained by the fact that the inherent complement cannot be contrasted with an independent complement as in (83c) and (83d) which contain each an independent prepositional complement *süklu* ‘to school’ (83c) and a DP *ndáp* ‘house’ (83d). Only sentences with predicate focus (83a-b) can be contrasted with the focused complex predicate *kε ŋgwéé* ‘run’/run the race’ contained in the content question (83Q).

Another interesting issue is that only a subpart of the complex predicate *kε gwéé* ‘run’/run the race’ undergoes focused movement. The Basàá data in (84) below show that in case of predicate fronting with doubling, the verb and its inherent complement can be stranded as can be seen in (84a), or only the inherent complement gets fronted (b).The lexical verb and its inherent complement cannot be fronted together (84c-d).

(84) Q: Are the students **running** or **cleaning the roof**?

- a. **ŋ-** **kε-n-** **ɛk** **wó-n** baudú bá- íj- **kε** **ŋgwéé**
 3.NMLZ-go-EPTH-NMLZ 3-FOC 2.students 2.SM-PRS-go._{IMPERF} 3.race
 ‘The students are RUNNING (as opposed to cleaning the roof).’
- b. **ŋgwéé wó-n** baudú bá- íj- **kε**
 3.race 3-FOC 2.students 2.SM-PRS-go._{IMPERF}
 ‘The students are RUNNING (as opposed to cleaning the roof).’
- c. * **ŋ-** **kε- n-** **ɛk** **ŋgwéé** baudú bá- íj- **kε**
 3.NMLZ-go-EPTH-NMLZ 3.race 2.students 2.SM-PRS-go._{IMPERF}
- d. * **kε** **ŋgwéé** baudú bá- íj- **kε**
 go 3.race 2.students 2.SM-PRS-go._{IMPERF}

It can be seen that what is being focused in inherent complement verbs is not the complement indeed, but the whole VP containing the inherent complement even if it is only a subpart of the

complex VP that undergoes focus movement. In this vein, an inherent complement cannot be questioned. This is explained by the fact that sentences like (85) cannot be appropriate answers to the unacceptable questions in (86a-b) given that the targeted information in these specific cases is the narrow inherent complement, which is unacceptable. However, (85a-b) are felicitous as answers to questions that indicate VP-focus interpretation (86c) while (85c-d) are felicitous answers to questions that indicate contrastive verb phrase focus interpretation (86d).

(85)

- a. b̥audú b̥á- íj- k̥e ŋgwéé
2.students 2.SM-PRS-go/walk._{IMPERF} 3.race
'The students run/ are running'
- b. b̥audú b̥á- ín- n̥k másée
2.students 2.SM-PRS-feel._{IMPERF} 6.happiness
'The students are happy.'
- c. b̥audú b̥á- íj- k̥e ŋgwéé íj- k̥e- n- êk
2.students 2.SM-PRS-go/walk._{IMPERF} 3.race NMLZ-go/walk-EPTH-NMLZ
'The students are RUN/RUNNING.'
- d. másée m̥-n b̥audú b̥á- ín- n̥k
6.happiness 6-FOC 2.students 2.SM-PRS-feel._{IMPERF}
'The students ARE HAPPY.'

(86) a. #Kíí b̥audú b̥á- íj- k̥e

- 9.what 2.students 2.SM-PRS-go/walk._{IMPERF}
'Lit: *What do the students walk/go?'

b. #Kíí b̥audú b̥á ín- n̥k

- 9.what 2.students 2.SM-PRS-feel/hear._{IMPERF}
'Lit: What do the students *feel/hear?'

c. Kíí b̥audú b̥á- m̥- b̥ɔ̥j

- 9.what 2.students 2.SM-PRS-do._{IMPERF}
'What do the students DO?'

e. b̥audú b̥á- íj- k̥e í s̥uklu tɔ̥lē...

- 2.students 2.SM-PRS-go._{IMPERF} LOC 7.school or...
'Do the students GO TO SCHOOL or...?'

None of the sentences in (86) can be a felicitous answer to a question indicating narrow object focus. This simply shows that inherent complements are not free objects, but are associated with a given set of predicates in order to form new lexical items. Although a subpart of an inherent complement verb can be extracted, the only possible reading is that of a V(P) focus and neither of the sole verb nor of the sole inherent complement taken in isolation.

Note that there are some contexts in which the whole verbal complex can be fronted. In this case, VP fronting in inherent complement verbs constructions is subject to the same restrictions that are attested in 'normal' V(P) fronting. For instance, if the inherent complement verb is the

complement of an auxiliary or a modal-like verb, the whole VP gets fronted but no doubling effects arise (87b).

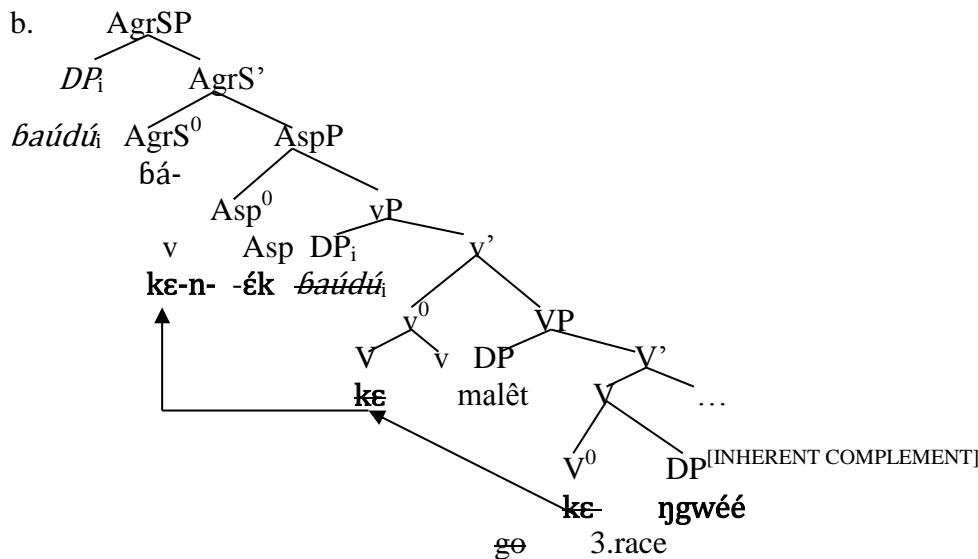
(87)

- a. báúdú bá n- la wó jnuú
2.students 2.SM-PRS-can/be able._{IMPERF} die 7.body
Lit: ‘The students can be ASHAMED.’
- b. li-wó jnuú jó-n báúdú bá n- la (*wó)
5.INF-die 7.body 5-FOC 2.students 2.SM-PRS-can/be able-_{IMPERF} die
‘The students can BE ASHAMED /Lit: the only thing the children can do is being ashamed.’
- c. n- wó- ɔk wó-n báúdú bá n- *(wó) jnuú
3.NMLZ-die-NMLZ 3-FOC 2.students 2.SM-PRS-die._{IMPERF} 7.body
‘The students ARE ASHAMED.’

The predictions made concerning predicate fronting are borne out: predicate doubling occurs if and only if there is no intervening modal or control verbal item preceding the inflected verb. In the presence of an intervening auxiliary or a modal verb, V(P)/TP fronting takes place without doubling. Note that the stranding of the inherent complement like *jnuú* ‘body’ in (87b) above is due to the fact that if it raises together with the verb *wó* ‘die’ in the aspect domain, it will block aspect assignment on the verb.

In order to have the verb fully inflected for aspect information, the inherent complement must stay in-situ, that is within the V/vP domain as the sketchy representation in (88b) shows. Sentence (88a) is represented in (88b) whereby the lexical verb -ke- ‘go/walk’ is initially merged with its inherent complement *ŋgwéé* ‘race’ as a complex verb before moving into Asp⁰ where it incorporates into the aspect head occupied by the progressive aspect morpheme *ék* (after epenthesis) for aspect licensing. By so doing, the inherent complement *ŋgwéé* ‘race’ is left in-situ in the lowest VP-shell. The direct object *málêt* ‘teacher’ is merged in Spec-VP (the lower VP) while the lexical verb *ke* ‘go/walk’ migrates into Asp⁰ via v⁰, the head of the highest vP (Larson 1988’s VP-Shell hypothesis). The DP subject ‘students’ raises from the VP internal position into Spec-AgrS-P where it becomes the syntactic subject of the sentence under a Spec-Head configuration with the subject marker *bá-* in AgrS.

- (84) a. báúdú bá- ke-n- ék málêt ŋgwéé
2.students 2.SM-go-EPTH-PROG 1.teacher 3.race
‘The students were running the teacher away.’

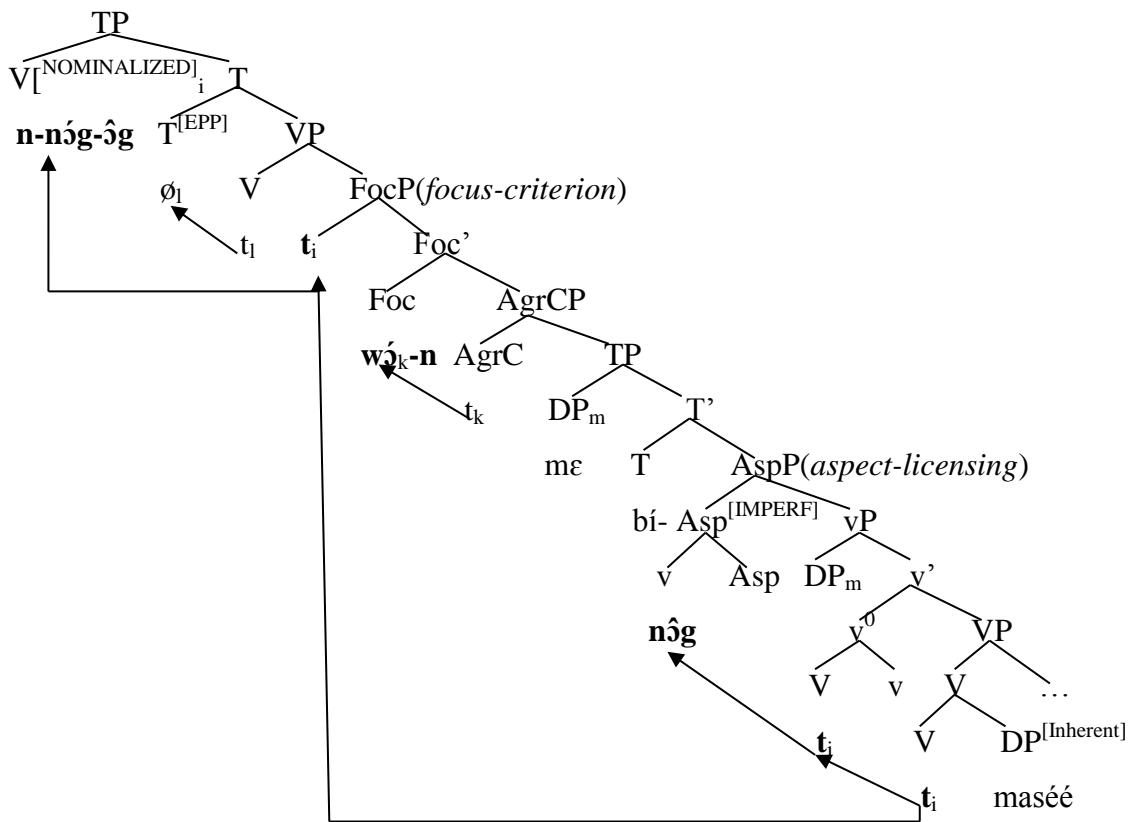


This analysis seems to support the view that the the verb and its inherent complement cannot raise together because into the aspectual domain, otherwise V-to-Asp movement would fail as illustrated below.

- (85) a. **n-** **n̩g-âg** **wó-n** **me** **bí-** **n̩g** másée
 3.NMLZ-feel-NMLZ 3-FOC I PST2-feel._{IMPERF} 6.happiness
 'I WAS HAPPY.'
- b. **masée** **mó-n** **me** **bí-n̩g** (***n-** **n̩g-âg**)
 6.happiness 6-FOC I PST2-feel 3.NMLZ-feel-NMLZ
 'I WAS HAPPY.'
- c. ***n-** **n̩g-âg** **másée** **wó-n** **me** **bí-n̩g**
 3.NMLZ-feel-NMLZ 6.happiness 3-FOC I PST2-feel

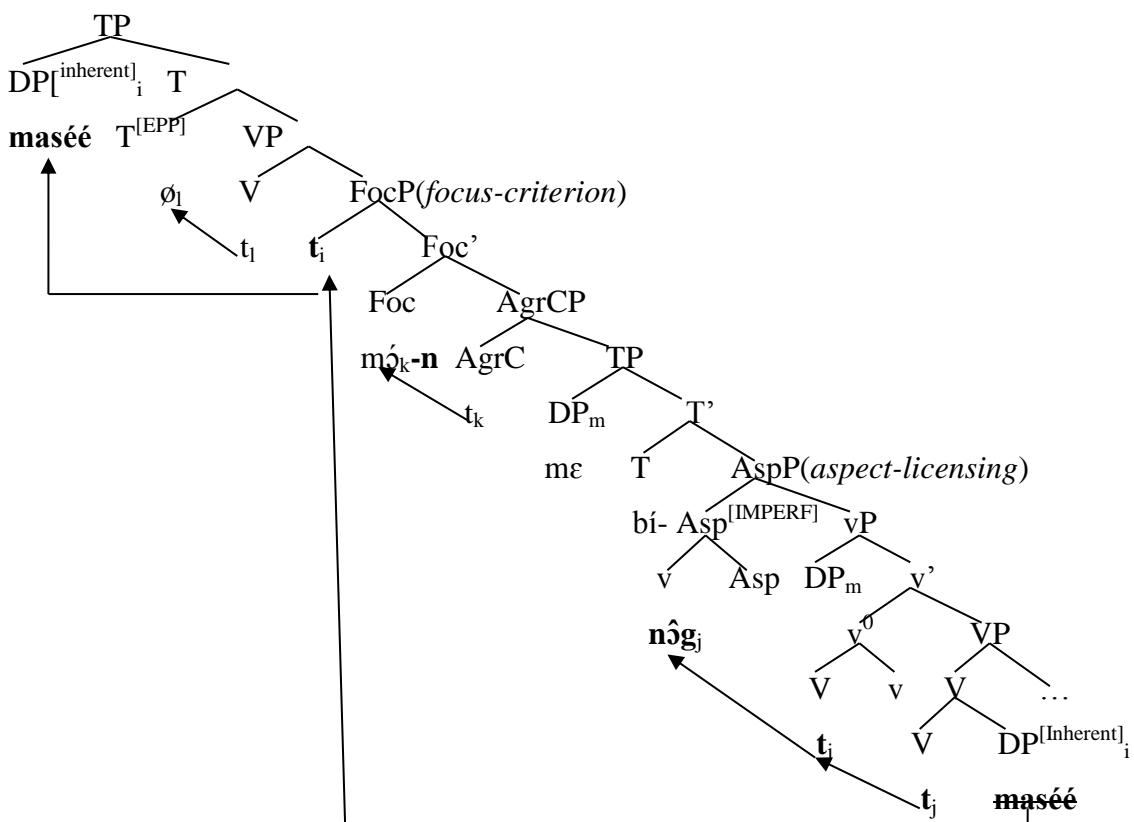
Sentence (85a), represented as (86a) is derived via the fronting of the nominalized verb into the matrix Spec-TP (for the EPP purposes) via Spec-FocP (for the focus-criterion). The lexical verb *n̩g'feel'*, first merges with its inherent complement *másée* 'happiness' to form the complex verb 'be happy', then raises into Asp via the light higher vP layer. After satisfying the agree requirements, the same verbal copy *n̩g'feel'* finally raises in its nominalized form into Spec-TP via the embedded FocP.

(86a)

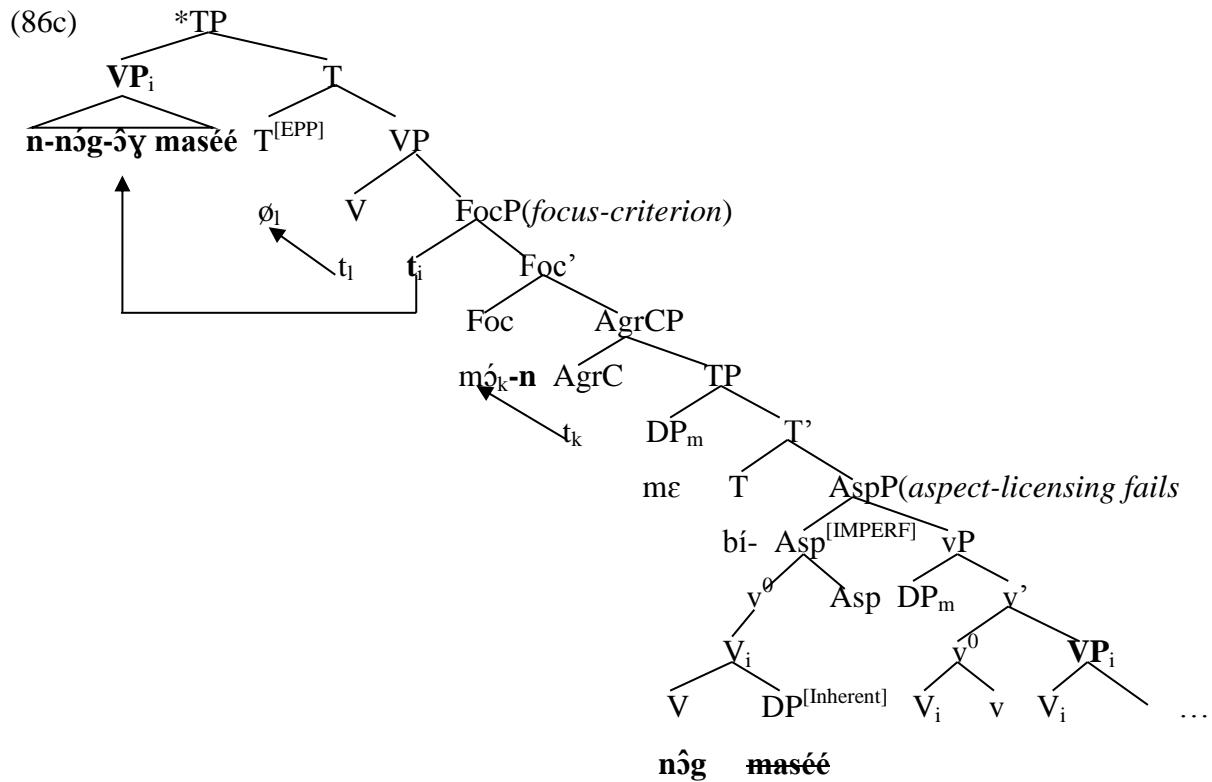


In (85b) derived as (86b) below, only the inherent complement *maséé* ‘happiness’ is raised into Spec-TP via FocP, while the verb *n̄g* raises into Aspect for agree requirements.

(86b)



The derivation of the ungrammatical sentence (85c), depicted in (86c) shows that fronting the verb and its inherent complement is not allowed. This is explained under the assumption that the verb needs to move into Asp like in (86a-b). When such a movement (v-to-Asp) takes place as shown in (86b), the inherent complement blocks aspect-licensing, i.e. the verb cannot incorporate into the aspectual morpheme (although implicitly realized in this case), due to the intervention of the inherent complement, making the derivation to crash.



Conclusion

In this chapter, I have discussed predicate fronting in Basáá from a phonological, morphological, semantic and syntactic perspective. The results obtained revealed that predicate fronting in Basáá sometimes gives rise to double realization of two non-identical verbal copies. From an interpretative point of view, predicate fronting can be associated with either new information or contrastive information. VP/TP fronting on the other hand does not produce double realization of the verb. From a syntactic point of view, predicate fronting with doubling comes out as a natural phenomenon that characterises chain formation. In the spirit of the parallel chains approach to predicate fronting, the results obtained do justice to recent works by Aboh & Dyakonova (2009) and Aboh (2009) which make insightful predictions on predicate doubling within the framework of the Copy Theory of Movement and the cartographic approach to syntactic structures. The originality of Basáá is that, just like non-verbal focus fronting, predicate fronting is triggered by the focus-criterion and the EPP simultaneously. This makes the fronted predicate to pass via the

embedded focus domain prior to moving into the matrix TP for the satisfaction of the Extended Projection Principle. Overall, the realization of two verbal copies in predicate fronting is simply an instance of parallel chains that give rise to simultaneous movements of the verb at three different positions, namely the aspect position, the focus position and the matrix TP position. These movements are motivated by, the aspect or Agree-licensing, the focus-criterion and the EPP. Inherent verb constructions in Basàá also provided support to such movement operations. Basaá comes out as a language which makes use of two predicate fronting strategies on the surface. However, under close scrutiny, one comes up with the conclusion that appearances are deceptive. Constructions in which the verbal copy seems to have been moved rightward are easily tackled by adopting an antisymmetric approach. Either way, the fact that the verbal copy can end up sentence finally is a result of a series of leftward focus fronting of the focused verb followed by remnant movement of the whole sentence above the focused verb. From all these observations, the Basaá clausal mapping appears to be richly organized as it provides a fine-grained analysis of clause structure in line with the cartographic project.

CHAPTER VI**QUESTION FORMATION AND THE IMMEDIATELY AFTER VERB POSITION**

Introduction

This chapter is concerned with question formation in terms of distribution and interpretation and its relation with the widely known layer named the Immediately After Verb position (IAV) in Bantu languages (Watters 1976; Aboh 2007; Hyman & Polinsky 2010 etc). The discussion shows that in Basaá, the IAV position is the locus of information structure, notably that of focus. Furthermore, it examines the structural asymmetry between non-wh focused constituents and some inherently focused wh-items. That the IAV position in Basaá encodes focus information is supported by the fact that some question words in the language can land immediately after the verb, a position which is not their canonical position. But they can also occur on the left peripheral zone of the sentence (cf. also chapter two). Overall, it is shown that question formation in Basaá triggers in the syntactic derivation the rise of a wide range of functional projections such as the focus phrase (FocP), negation phrase (NegP), Wh-phrase (Wh-P), polarity phrase (PolP) and the interrogative phrase (IntP), all these occur in a well-defined structural configuration.

The chapter is organized as follows. § 6.1 deals with the distribution and interpretation of argument question words. More specifically, it is revealed that argument question words can occur either at the left periphery or at the IAV position where they inquiry for new or non-presupposed information in the discourse. In other words, they encode no existential presupposition. The section also argues against Hamlaoui & Makasso (2011) who inadequately argue that there exists a one-to-one relationship between the position of question words and that of focus. According to the authors' analysis, the position of question words is dependent on the interpretation associated with them. § 6.1.1 is concerned with echo-questions and the contexts in which they occur. The section reveals that echo-questions have more pragmatic effects than syntactic and semantic ones. § 6.1.3 is dealt with question formation as an instance of A-bar movement on the basis of some characteristics of long-distance dependencies. In § 6.2 and § 6.2.1 emphasis is laid on adjunct wh-words, their distribution as well as their interpretation. Furthermore, the section shows that there is a kind of asymmetry in the distribution of time and place adjuncts. The section also focuses on some properties of A-bar dependencies. § 6.2.2 is concerned with non-referential adjuncts. More specifically, § 6.2.2.1 tackles the reason adjunct *ínyuukíí* 'why' in its phonological, semantic, syntactic, as well as its morpho-syntactic aspects. In § 6.2.2.1.1, it is shown that there is a morpho-syntactic asymmetry between the referential place

adjunct *héé* ‘where’ and its non-referential counterpart *ínyuukíí* ‘why’ in the sense that both may trigger extension of the verbal domain in the language. Clearly put, the fronting of these two question words triggers the rise of verbal extensions which express location and reason interpretation. § 6.2.2.2 deals with the multifunctional non-referential expression *léláá* ‘how/how come/what/why’ in its semantic, morpho-syntactic as well as its pragmatic distribution. § 6.3 focuses on theoretical assumptions. In general, the backdrop of the section is based on Chomsky’s (2000, 2001a,b) *Agree* and *Attract* as principles regulating movement in syntax as well as on Rizzi’s (1991 & 1997) wh- and focus-criteria. Globally, the analysis reveals that there exists a lower functional projection encoding focus information in the vicinity of VP in Basáá just like it has been shown in previous works on other world languages (e.g. Aboh 2007; Belletti 2004; Nkemnji 1995 *inter alia*). In § 6.3.1, attention on the asymmetry between wh-words and non-wh focused constituents. More specifically, the fact that only certain wh-words can land in the IAV position while non-wh focused constituents are disallowed in the same position is explained on the basis of minimality conditions such as the *Head Movement Constraint* (Travis 1984), *Relativized Minimality* (Rizzi 1990), the *Minimal Link Condition* and *Attract Closest Principle* (Chomsky 1995) etc. In § 6.3.2 I argue once more against Hamlaoui & Makasso (2011)’s view that question formation in Basáá is context-dependent and shows that question words, contrary to the previous authors, never undergoes vowel shortening in the contexts that they describe. Rather, under no circumstances⁴¹ can question words undergo morphophonological changes. § 6.4 addresses the interplay between focus and non-referential question words. It is shown that there exists above the focus phrase (FocP) a functional projection called Wh-phrase (Wh-P), the head of which is covert/implicit and the specifier of which is occupied by fronted non-referential wh-expressions either at LF or at PF. § 6.5 furthermore handles the distribution and interpretation of ‘negation’ and ‘only’-like constructions and shows that the fact that the focus particles *béé* ‘negation’ and *ndígí* ‘only’ occur at the IAV position is due to verb movement and that the negative article *béé* projects a functional projection in the Basáá clause. It recalled⁴² that constituent negation in Basáá is a bi-clausal construction made up of an

⁴¹ It will be shown in chapters eight and nine that question words can undergo morphophonological changing in sluicing and fragment question/answers, but not in the same contexts as the previous authors’s.

⁴² It has been already shown that focus fronting is bi-clausal. However, in this chapter more information is provided for in-depth understanding of negation in Basáá.

embedded focus phrase and a matrix TP headed by a null verbal copula. The fact Basàá lacks expletive subjects in constituent negation triggers the movement of the negated constituent into the specifier of the highest TP for EPP purposes. More specifically, section 6.5.1 talks about sentential negation, section 6.5.2 deals with the phrasal nature of the negative marker *béé* ‘not’, section 6.5.2.1 provide evidence in support of the phrasal nature of the negative marker in light of miniality and intervention effecs while section 6.5.2.2 is concerned with Merchant’s ‘why not’ test as a diagnostic for the phrasal nature of negation. § 6.6 handles polar and indirect questions and shows that Basaá resorts to specific morphemes which occur at the left edge of the clause when it comes to polar and indirect questions. Polar questions have phonological as well as pragmatic properties which are not attested in indirect questions formation. Globally, the section shows that there exist functional projections such as Interrogative Phrase (IntP) and Polar Phrase (PolP) at the clausal left peripheral area and these projections are associated with interpretative discourse properties. The last section is the conclusion.

6.1 The distribution and interpretation of arguments

In Basàá, argument question words include *njéé* ‘who’ for humans and *kíí* ‘what’ for things and animals. The sentences below show that these question words can either move sentence initial position (1a-b) or stay in-situ (2a-b).

(1)

- a. **Njéé** mudaá a- bí- bómá yaaní
1.who 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-meet 1.yesterday
‘Who did the woman meet yesterday?’

- b. **Kíí** mudaá a- bí- lámb yáání
9.what 1.woman SM-PST2-cook 1.yesterday
‘What did the woman cook yesterday?’

(2)

- a. Mudaá a- bí- lámb **kíí** yaaní
1.woman 1.SM-PST2-cook 9.what 1.yesterday
‘What did the woman cook yesterday?’
- b. Mudaá a- bí- bómá **njéé** yaaní
1.woman 1.SM-PST2-meet 1.who 1.yesterday
‘Who did the woman meet yesterday?’

Note that both questions in (2) have the same interpretation as their ex-situ counterparts in (1) i.e. they are all content or genuine questions which require new information in the discourse. They are therefore called information-seeking questions. As a result they are not echo-questions. There appears to be a direct matching between question formation and focus constructions in

Basaá in the sense that as wh-questions, focus can either be in-situ or ex-situ as can be seen in the context in (3) below.

- (3) **Kíí** mudaá a- n- lámb lén
- 9.what 1.woman 1.SM-PST1-cook 1.today
 ‘What did the woman cook today?’
- a. pro_i .a_i- n- lámb **gwóó**
 pro_i 1.SM-PST1-cook 8.yams
 ‘She cooked YAMS.’
 - b. **gwoó** **gwó-n** pro_i a_i- n- lámb
 8.yams 8-FOC pro_i 1.SM-PST-cook
 ‘She cooked YAMS.’

As already discussed in previous chapters, and as can be observed in (1-3) above, question words, like focused constituents, can stay stay in-situ or move to sentence initial position. As a matter of fact, the correlation between question words (arguments in this case) and focused constituents is unquestioned if one contents him/herself with the QUDs. The Basaá data are reminiscent of the distribution of question words and focused constituents cross-linguistically within the framework of information structure of African languages. For instance, it was demonstrated that in Aghem (Watters 1979; Hyman & Polinsky 2010 a.o.), and Kíítharaka (Abels & Muriungi 2008:706-707) the position of a wh-word correlates with its information structure, and more specifically with the focus of the sentence. In other words, on the one hand, if a wh-word is in-situ in a given position, the corresponding focus with the same presuppositional content should be at the same position. On the other hand, if a wh-word is ex-situ, so is the focus. It is widely known in the Bantu literature that focused constituents and wh-words in Aghem (4a-b) have a dedicated position, namely the Immediately After Verb position (IAV). In Kíítharaka, Abels & Muriungi claim that focused constituents and wh-questions are morphologically marked only in the ex-situ position and never in-situ (5-6). This explains why the presence of focus markers in in-situ contexts is ruled out.

- (4) Aghem (Hyman & Polinsky 2010: 206-208).
- a. à mò zì **ndúghó↓** bé↓ kó né (á)
 Es P1 eat who fufu D.OBL today QM
 ‘Who ate the fufu today?’
 - b. à mò zì **tì bvú -bìghà** bé↓ kó né
 Es P1 eat dogs two fufu D.OBL today
 ‘The TWO DOGS ate the fufu today.’

(5) Kîîtharaka (Abels & Muriungi 2008:706).

- a. Maria a- gûr- ir- e (*i) **-mbi**
1.Maria 1.SM-buy-PERF-FV FOC-what
'What did Maria buy?'
- b. Maria a- gûr- ir- e (*n)-**î-buku**
1.Maria 1.SM-buy-PERF-FV FOC-5-book
'Maria bought a BOOK.'

(6) Kîîtharaka (Abels & Muriungi 2008:707).

- a. **I -mbi** Maria a- gûr- ir- e
FOC-what 1.Maria 1.SM-buy-PERF-FV
'What did Maria buy?'
- b. **N- î-buku** Maria a- gûr- ir- e
FOC-5-book 1.Maria 1.SM-buy-PERF-FV
'Maria bought a BOOK.'

The overall picture is that there is a one-to-one relationship between the position of wh-words and that of focus in the above two languages, which is wrongly predicted for Basaá focus constructions by Hamlaoui & Makasso (2011). According to these authors, 'Basaá fronted wh-questions are preferably answered with an exhaustive answer, whereby the item answering the question is located in clause initial-position and is followed by a so-called 'emphatic pronoun'⁴³, in Hyman (2003)'s terminology. They add that sentences with initial focus and an 'emphatic pronoun' are also used in contrastive and corrective contexts as well as in alternative questions (p.51).' It should be stressed that there is no one-to-one relationship between the position of question words and that of focus as the previous authors have argued. Furthermore, when wh-words are fronted in Basaá, there is no preference for sentence-initial position or exhaustivity as they claim. The following examples adapted from Hamlaoui & Makasso (2011:50 ex.8) show that (7a), (7b) as well as (7c) are felicitously interpreted in the context of the QUD in (7).

- (7) **héé** maanjé a- ñ- ké
1.where 1.child 1.SM-PST1-go
'Where did the child go?'
- a. (maanjé) a- ñ- ké í **òom**
1.child 1.SM-PST1-go LOC 7.market
'He went to the MARKET.'

⁴³ What the authors name 'emphatic pronoun' is actually the noun class agreement marker in my analysis. In addition, the authors provide no in-depth analysis for the pronounhood of these markers. Pronouns are well known to be anaphoric i.e. discourse-linked. The idea that what precedes the focus marker in Basaá is a pronoun as the authors claim seems to be incorrect because this item occurs information focus of all kinds (including 'all-new' and scene-setting foci) and in contrastive focus. If information focus is non-presupposed or new information in the discourse, then there appears to be no relation between focus and anaphoricity.

- b. í **ɓom** nyé-n (maàngé) a- ɳ- k̄
 LOC 7.market 1-FOC 1.child 1.SM-PST1-go
 ‘He went to the MARKET.’
- c. (maàngé) a_i- ɳ- k̄ ɓéé **to-homá**, pro_i a_i n- noyé m- ndâβ
 1.child 1.SM-PST1-go NEG no-place pro 1.SM-PRS-rest there 7.house
 ‘He went nowhere; he is resting in the house.’

Another inadequate claim that the abovementioned authors make in relation to the questions above is that fronted wh-phrases in the case of Basaá are D-linked in the sense of Pesetsky (1987), and that such questions ask for a ‘precise’ answer so much so that both ‘the speaker and hearer have an identified set of ‘individuals’ in mind to the extent that the speaker asking such a question expects an answer from the hearer. As the reader can see, the question in (7) above has nothing special apart from asking for new or non-presupposed information about the place or location, something which is devoid of any existential presupposition. In effect, focus in this case has to do with new information and is not D-linked as the previous authors wrongly claim. There is no pre-established set of ‘places’ in the context out of which the speaker identifies a given place to which ‘the child went’. In the same vein, if (7) were D-linked, an answer such as (7c) would be infelicitous, i.e. disallowed. Similarly, to the best of my knowledge, the wh-phrase ‘where’ in a question such as ‘*where did the child go?*’ in English has no discourse-linked interpretation in the sense of Pesetsky (1987) due to the fact that it is not D-linked, or, better still, it conveys no presupposed meaning apart from asking for new, non-presupposed or unfamiliar information in the discourse setting.

What one can retain so far is that just as Basaá licenses in-situ foci, so does it with question words. The position of focus is not predicted from the position of question words. This state of affairs is not an isolated case as it can be attested in other world languages. More recently, Aboh (2007:85) has shown that even though Gungbe (Kwa) does not license in-situ wh-phrases (except for echo-questions), an object wh-question can be answered either in-situ or ex-situ depending on the focus interpretation associated with the question under discussion as in (8) below.

(8) Ménù wè à yró ?

who FOC 2sg call
 ‘Who did you call?’

- | | |
|---|---|
| a. Ün yró Kòfí
1.sg call Kofi | b. Kòfí wè ün yró
Kofi FOC 1.sg call
‘I call KOFI [New information focus].’ |
|---|---|

At this stage, it has been shown that argument question words in Basaá can stay in-situ or move to sentence initial position without any interpretative difference. There is no matching between

the position of wh-words and that of focus. In other words, the position of focus is not dependent on the positioning of the wh-item. The only likeness displayed between the two is that both can occur ex-situ or remain in-situ.

6.1.1. Echo questions (EQs)

Like in many languages, question formation in Basaá also involves echo-questions. There is no doubt that wh-questions can stay in their canonical position without any semantic effects as in normal/genuine wh-questions also called information seeking questions. As it has been claimed by a good number of authors in the literature (e.g. Adger 2003, Sabin 1978, 1990, 2009, 2010 a.o.), echo questions differ from ‘canonical wh-questions’ in that the former are essentially pragmatics-dependent as they are used to draw someone’s attention on a previous statement which might not have been heard. Also, they can be used to challenge someone’s statement so as to make him/her change it or correct it in a better way. In like manner, the speaker echoing part of a statement can aim at challenging or expressing some doubt vis-à-vis what the interlocutor has just previously said. Such strategies are attested in most, if not, in all natural languages.

In Basaá, echo-questions are not real or genuine questions in the proper sense of the term, they consist in replacing some part of a previously mentioned statement by a corresponding question word as shown below. Following in Sabin (2010)’s footsteps, I will use U for utterance and EQ for echo-question.

(9)

U1: **Mudaá** a- gá- lámb **kón** yaaní
 1.woman 1.SM-FUT2-cook 10.rice 1.tomorrow
 ‘The woman will cook rice tomorrow.’

EQ1: **Nj** â- gá- lámb kón yaaní *Note that Njéé (who) + a- (SM) = nj-â*
 1.who 1.SM-FUT2-cook 10.rice 1.tomorrow
 ‘WHO will cook rice tomorrow?’

EQ2: Mudaá a- gá- lámb **kíí** yaaní
 1.woman 1.SM-FUT2-cook 9.what 1.tomorrow
 ‘The woman will cook WHAT tomorrow?’

(10)

U1: **ŋgwá** i- bí- kɔyɔ́ híŋgɔnda yaaní
 9.dog 9.SM-PST2-bite 19.girl 1.yesterday
 ‘The dog bit the girl yesterday.’

EQ1: **Kíí** í- bí- kɔyɔ́ híŋgɔnda yaaní
 9.what 9.SM-PST2-bite 19.girl 1.yesterday
 ‘WHAT bit the girl yesterday?’

EQ2: *ŋgwó i- bí- kɔyóó njéé yaaní*
 9.dog 9.SM-PST2-bit 1.who 1.yesterday
 ‘The dog bit WHO yesterday?’

Considering U in (9) as an utterance produced by a speaker in a certain discourse context, it can be observed that the wh-word *njéé* (reduced to *nj-* which combines with the subject marker- *â* with high tone spreading on this latter) ‘who’ in the subject position is an echo question which replaces the subject *mudaá* ‘woman’ in EQ1 while the object question word *kíí* ‘what’ echoes the DP object *kón* ‘rice’ in EQ2. Such questions in this specific context are not considered as ‘information-seeking questions’. They are simply repetitive or ‘quotative’ in the sense that the speaker uttering them wants his/her interlocutor to rephrase or correct his/her statement in some respects. Probably, the speaker manifests some doubt in relation to a preceding utterance. In the same perspective, EQ1 & EQ2 in (10) fulfil the same requirements vis-à-vis a previously produced utterance, namely *ŋgwó i- bí-kɔyóó híngonda yaaní* ‘the dog bit the girl yesterday’.

Note that echo questions can also express surprise or emotion on the part of the speaker. For instance, EQs in (10) can be an expression of emotion or surprise given that ‘being bit by a dog is seriously dangerous’. It can also be the case that the speaker knows ‘the girl whom the dog bit’ so much so that s/he expresses some kind of pity/sympathy. This is an indication that in Basaá, argument question words can be used as echo questions in the subject and object position in root clauses.

It should be borne in mind that echo questions are not only restricted to main clauses, they can also occur in embedded contexts as illustrated in the following examples in (11). In (11), different constituents can be echoed in Basaá embedded clauses. These include a clausal object (EQ1), the subject (EQ2), a simple DP/NP object (EQ3). Multiple echo questions are possible as well (EQ4).

(11)

U: Mudaá a- ŋ- kál lé bɔɔŋgé bá- bí- jé kón
 1.woman 1.SM-PST1-say that 2.children 2.SM-PST2-eat 10.rice
 ‘The woman said that the children ate rice.’

EQ1: (Mudaá a- ŋ- kál) lé **kíí**
 1.woman 1.SM-PST1-say that 9.what
 ‘WHAT did the woman say?/ Lit: The woman said WHAT?’

EQ2: (Mudaá a- ɳ- kâl) lé ɳɔŋjéé/*njéé bá- bí- jé kón
 1.woman 1.SM-PST1-say that 2.who/ *1.who 2.SM-PST2-eat 10.rice
 '(The woman said) that WHO ate rice?'

EQ3: (Mudaá a- ɳ- kâl) lé ɳɔɔŋgé bá- bí- jé kíí
 1.woman 1.SM-PST1-say that 2.children 2.SM-PST2-eat 9.what
 '(The woman said) that the children ate WHAT?'

EQ4: (Mudaá a- ɳ- kâl) lé ɳɔŋjéé/*njéé bá- bí- jé kíí
 1.woman 1.SM-PST1-say that 2.who/ *1.who 2.SM-PST2-eat 9.what
 '(The woman said) that WHO ate WHAT?'

Note that due to class and number agreement in Basaá, the singular question word *njéé* ‘who’ in (11EQ4) is disallowed because it does not match the number agreement of the echoed constituent, namely the subject *ɳɔɔŋgé* ‘children’ which is plural. This state of affairs amounts to saying that echo questions display agreement matching between the question word and the missing constituent which is being echoed. As a result, only the question word *ɳɔŋjéé* ‘the who/or and its associates (literally)’ is allowed because it agrees in number and class with the constituent *ɳɔɔŋgé* ‘children’. The fact that the matrix clause *Mudaá a- ɳ-kâl* ‘the woman said’ is bracketed indicates it is optional and the speaker can felicitously start up the sentence from the lexical complementizer *lé* ‘that’ by omitting the preceding bracketed matrix clause. The analysis hitherto shows that the main objective of echo questions is not a request of information in the proper sense of the term, but it has to do with pragmatic effects such as doubt, challenge, confirmation, surprise, emotion and the like. Under the assumption that wh-movement is triggered by the sake of feature-checking in the English type languages, for instance, one can say that echo questions do not respect such requirement if one has to consider wh-moment as being obligatory in these languages. Echo questions would be said to be devoid of [Q-] or [wh-] features in that they are not real interrogatives and therefore are syntax-free or have no direct access to syntax. In the sense of Carnie (2007) cited by Sabin (2010:137), ‘EQs involve a C with only a feature [+INT] (intonation) which triggers no movement, and which triggers the phonology to impose upward final intonation on an EQ or a like intonational question.’ I am not concerned with the debate on whether echo questions are syntactically encoded or not, rather my goal is to show that echo questions in Basaá, like in many languages, have much to do with pragmatics because they are context-dependent, require repetition and their semantics can be defined as ‘which expression X is such that you said ‘...X..’?’ (cf. Sabin 2010:135). For further illustrations on the issue, the reader can consult the abovementioned authors.

6.1.2 Other properties of argument questions

In addition to the characteristics discussed above, argument question words in Basáá exhibit other characteristics such as clause-unboundedness (12a), incompatibility with focused constituents (12b), compatibility with topic constructions (12c-d), sensitivity to islands (13a-b) and parasitic gaps (13c). As a specific chapter is dedicated to topic constructions (chapter seven), I will not deepen the analysis at this stage. The examples provided here are simply illustrative. However, in the meantime, it is important to know that in (12c), the extracted direct object *baken* ‘guests’ is a hanging topic while *mudaá* ‘woman’ is an additive topic. All the same, in (12d) the extracted direct object *mudaá* ‘woman’ is an aboutness or a contrastive topic (the difference between a contrastive and an aboutness topic will be discussed later on). ~~Strikethrough~~ indicates deletion of the constituents.

(12)

- a. **Kíí** mudaá a- íj- hóŋjol lé bcoŋgé bá- íj- kál lé baken bá- 9.what 1.woman 1.SM-PRS-think that 2.children 2.SM-PRS-say that 2.guests 2.SM-gá- jé **kíí** yáání FUT2-eat 9.what 1.tomorrow
‘What does the woman think that the children say that the guests will eat ~~what~~ tomorrow?’
- b. * **makəndə₂** mós-n njéé₁ mudaá a- bí- keβél **njéé₁** **makəndə₂**
6.plantains 6-FOC 1.who 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-serve 1.who 6.plantains
‘*The woman served PLANTAINS TO WHOM?’
- c. *baken*, **kíí** mudaá nyé-k a- ñ- kéβél b̥
2.guests 9.what 1.woman 1-TOP 1.SM-PST1-serve 2.them
‘As for the guests₁, WHAT did the woman served them₁ too.’
- d. *mudaá₁* nyé₁, **njéé** bcoŋgé bá- ñ- úndá nyé₁ **njéé₂**
1.woman 1.TOP 1.who 2.children 2.SM-PST1-show 1.her 1.who
‘As for the woman, whom did the children showed her?’

(13)

- a. *Complex Noun Phrase Constraint*

* **Kíí₁** malêt a- m- bómá [í munlôm (nú) a- bí- sómb **Kíí₁**
9.what 1.teacher 1.SM-PST1-meet DEF 1.man 1.REL 1.SM-PST2-buy 9.what
‘*What did the teacher meet the man who buy ~~what~~?’

- b. *Adjunct island*

* **Njéé₁** mudaá a- n̥y máséé [ínyuúlé a- bí- tēh̥ **njéé₁** yáání]
1.who 1.woman 1.SM-PRS-feel 6.happiness because 1.SM-PST2-see 1.who 1.yesterday
‘*Who does the woman feel happy [because she met ~~who~~₁ yesterday]?’

c. **Kíí** b̥ɔɔŋgé bá- bí- jé **kíí** ñgi jowa Pg₁

9.what 2.children 2-SM-PST2-eat 9.what without washing

‘What did the children eat without washing?’

The analysis reveals that fronted question words in Basaá are derived, rather than base-generated. This is explained by subjacency requirements, interaction with focus and topic constructions and parasitic gaps. Also of interest is the fact that even if Basaá licenses in-situ wh-words in ‘normal’ contexts as discussed in a short while, question formation is licensed within syntactic islands only in case of echo-questions. Put differently, the presence of question words within syntactic islands conveys an echo interpretation and never information question interpretation. This says, the illicit sentences in (13a-b) above can only be rescued if the question words remain in-situ with an echo interpretation as exemplified in (14) and (15). In addition, when focus fronting takes place alongside a wh-question, the latter can only have an echo interpretation so much so that there is no room for a content/genuine question reading (16). For instance, the in-situ wh-word *kíí* ‘what’ in (16) requires no information focus interpretation, it is simply a repetition of a previous statement which the speaker wants the interlocutor to repeat in some sense.

(14) *Context*

U: malêt a- m- b̥ómá [í munlôm (nú) a- bí- sómb **lítówa**]

1.teacher 1.SM-PST1-meet DEF 1.man 1.REL 1.SM-PST2-buy 5.car

‘The teacher met [the man who bought a car].’

EQ: malêt a- m- b̥ómá [í munlôm (nú) a- bí- sómb **kíí**]

1.teacher 1.SM-PST1-meet DEF 1.man 1.REL 1.SM-PST2-buy 9.what

Lit: ‘The teacher met the man who bought WHAT?’

(15) *Context*

U: mudaá a- n̥y máséé [ínyuúlé a- bí- téhê **máwándá** yaaní]

1.woman 1.SM-PRS-feel 6.happiness because 1.SM-PST2-see 6.friends 1.yesterday

‘The woman is happy because she saw friends yesterday.’

EQ: mudaá a- n̥y máséé [ínyuúlé a- bí- téhê **njéé** yaaní]

1.woman 1.SM-PRS-feel 6.happiness because 1.SM-PST2-see 1.who 1.yesterday

Lit: ‘The woman is happy because she saw WHO yesterday.’

(16) *Context*

U: Mε íj- h̥ɔŋj̥l lé **minsowá** **m̥-n** mudaá a- bí- lámb yáání

I PRS-think that 4.ripe plantains 4-FOC 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-cook 1.yesterday

‘I think that the woman cooked RIPE PLANTAINS yesterday.’

EQ1:(U íj- h̥ɔŋj̥l) lé **minsowá** **m̥-n** **njéé** a- bí- lámb yáání

you PRS-think that 4.ripe plantains 4-FOC 1.who 1.SM-PST2-cook 1.yesterday

‘... that WHO cooked RIPE PLANTAINS yesterday?’

EQ2: (U ñ- hóŋjɔl) lé minsowá mɔ-n njéé a- bí lámb kɛlkíí
 you PRS-think that 4.ripe plantains 4-FOC 1.who 1.SM-PST2-cook 1.when
 ‘... that WHO cooked RIPE PLANTAINS WHEN?’

It is possible to have simultaneous realization of focus fronting and wh-questions. But the interpretative properties of the wh-words in this context are only felicitous as echoing a previous statement as indicated in the appropriate context, otherwise the constructions are ruled out. This is expected if it is assumed that wh-phrases are generally conceived of as being inherently focused. So, in case the wh-words *njéé* ‘who’ and *kɛlkíí* ‘when’ require new information, we will end up with multiple foci in one and the same sentence, which is not true at least in Basaá and Basaá-like languages such as Gungbe, Italian, Kîtharaka, Tuki etc (see e.g Aboh 2004; Rizzi 1997, 2004b; Biloa 1997; Abels & Muriungi 2008) where focus fronting is incompatible with wh-fronting because both compete for the same slot. The point here is that there should be at most only one focus per clause. So, if the wh-questions in (16) above for instance were to be genuine/content /information-seeking questions, this would violate the ‘one per clause focus’ principle which requires that a clause should contain at most a single focus. Note also that utterances with in-situ question words require neither a pair-list nor a single-pair answer due to the fact that they are not proper questions per se.

6.2. The distribution and interpretation of adjuncts

This section is not only concerned with the distribution and interpretation of adjunct phrases, but also with their typology. Section 6.2.1 deals with the referential adjuncts *héé* ‘where’ for place/location and *kɛlkíí* ‘when’ for time while section 6.2.2 tackles the non-referential adjuncts *léláá* ‘how/ how come /why’ and *ínyuúkíí* ‘why’.

6.2.1. Referential *héé* ‘where’ and *kɛlkíí* ‘when’

The referential adjuncts *héé* ‘where’ and *kɛlkíí* ‘when’ indicate place/location and time respectively. As their argument counterparts *njéé* ‘who’ and *kíí* ‘what’, the referential adjuncts *héé* ‘where’ and *kɛlkíí* ‘when’ are phonologically characterized by vowel lengthening with invariable high tone bearing (contra Hamlaoui & Makasso (2011)⁴⁴ who claim that vowel lengthening attested in question words in Basaá are context-dependent i.e. vowel lengthening

⁴⁴ I will discuss this issue at length in subsequent sections

depends on whether question words occur clause-initially, internally or finally). One of the main properties of referential adjuncts in Basáá is that they exhibit a distributional asymmetry in both root and embedded contexts. Even if both can occur sentence-initially and in the postverbal position, only the time adverbial *kélkíí* ‘when’ is marginally interpreted as an echo question in sentence final position. In (17), it is shown that the place adjunct *hééé* ‘where’ can occur either sentence initially (17a), or in the postverbal position (17b). It cannot be sentence final (see asterisk). In (18), the time adverbial *kélkíí* ‘when’ can be occur in sentence initial position or immediately after the verb; the so-called Immediately After Verb position (IAV) (to be discussed later on in this chapter, see also Hamlaoui & Makasso 2011 for the IAV position in Basáá). In (18b) where the time adverbial *kélkíí* ‘when’ occurs in sentence final position, only an echo reading is possible. This means that there is no way (18b) with the time adverbial in sentence final position can convey an information-seeking question.

(17)

- a. **hééé** malêt a- íj- kε yáání (***hééé**)
1.where 1.teacher 1.SM-FUT1-go 1.tomorrow 1.where
‘Where will the teacher go tomorrow?’
- b. Malêt a- íj- kε **hééé** yáání (***hééé**)
1.teacher 1.SM-FUT1-go 1.where 1.tomorrow 1.where
‘Where will the teacher go tomorrow?’

(18)

- a. **kélkíí** malêt a- íj- kε í süklu
1.when 1.teacher 1.SM-FUT1-go LOC 9.school
‘When will the teacher go to school?’
- b. malêt a- íj- kε **kélkíí** í süklu (% **kélkíí**)
1.teacher 1.SM-FUT1-go 1.when LOC 9.school 1.when
‘When will the teacher go to school?’

In embedded contexts, the same distributional patterns are attested as in matrix contexts. For instance, apart from the fact that both the time and place adjuncts *kélkíí* ‘when’ and *hééé* ‘where’ can occur sentence initially and in the IAV position in (19), the presence of the time adverbial *kélkíí* ‘when’ is marginally acceptable in sentence final position (19b). However, a sentence-final place adverbial is completely ruled out (19a). Note in addition that in terms of interpretation, the time adverbial *kélkíí* ‘when’ can only convey an echo interpretation (19b). Similarly, the IAV

position of the two adjuncts can also convey an echo-question reading if and only if the corresponding constituent has been mentioned in a previous discourse.

(19)

a.

Mudaá a- íj- kâl lé (**héé**) malêt a- íj- ke (**héé**) yáání
1.woman 1.SM-PRS-say that 1.where 1.teacher 1.SM-FUT1-go 1.where 1.tomorrow
(***héé**)

1.where

‘Where does the woman say that the teacher will go tomorrow?’

b.

Mudaá a- íj- kâl lé (**kêlkíí**) malêt a- íj- ke (**kêlkíí**) í süklu
1.woman 1.SM-PRS-say that 1.when 1.teacher 1.SM-FUT1-go 1.when LOC 9.school
(% **kêlkíí**)

1.when

‘When does the woman say that the teacher will go tomorrow?’

In addition to the many other properties exhibited by referential adjuncts, there is also the fact that they can move across clausal boundaries (20a-b), are mutually exclusive with fronted foci (20c), are island-sensitive (21a) and can simultaneously co-occur with topic constructions as in (21b-c).

(20)

a. **héé**₁ mudaá a- íj- hóŋj̪l **t**₁ lé malêt a- bí- ke **t**₁ yáání
1.where 1.woman 1.SM-PRS-think that 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-go 1.yesterday
‘Where does the woman think that the teacher went yesterday?’

b. **kêlkíí**₁ mudaá a- íj- kâl **t**₁ lé malêt a- bí- nójós báúdú **t**₁
1.when 1.woman 1.SM-PRS-say that 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-punish 2.students
‘When does the woman say that the teacher punished the students?’

c. ***héé**₁ **malêt**₂ nyé-n mudaá a- kâl-ák **t**₁ lé **t**₂ a- bí- ke **t**₁ yáání
1.where 1.teacher 1-FCO 1.woman 1.SM-say-PROG that 1.SM-PST2-go 1.yesterday
‘*Where is the woman saying that the TEACHER went yesterday?’

(21)

a. * **kêlkíí**₁ **njéé**_i **t**_i a- bât-ák lé malêt a- bí- ke **t**₁ í süklu
1.when 1.who 1.SM-ask-PROG that 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-go LOC 7.school
‘*When is Who asking that the teacher went to school?’

b. **malêt**₂ nyé-k, **kêlkíí**₁ bôt bá- íj- kâl **t**₁ lé **t**₂ a- bí- nójós báúdú **t**₁
1.teacher 1-TOP 1.when 2.people 2.SM-PRS-say that 1.SM-PST2-punish 2.students
Lit: ‘When do people say that as for the teacher, he punished the students too?’

c. báúdú₁, **héé**₂ malêt a- bí- nój- hé bá₁ **t**₂
2.students 1.where 1.teacher 1.SM-PST-punish-APPL 2.them 1.where
‘As for the students, where did the teacher punish them?’

From the above, one can retain that although the two referential adjuncts display some properties of A-bar movement, convey the same interpretation (each of them requires new information and can be used as echo-question) and can occur in root and embedded contexts, their distribution is subject to a little asymmetry in the sense that only the place adverbial *hēé* ‘where’ is disallowed in sentence final position in main and embedded contexts (17a-b) and (19a) while its time counterpart *kélkíí* ‘when’ is marginally acceptable in the same positions (18b) and (19b). The following section deals with non-referential adjuncts.

6.2.2. Non-referential adjuncts *ínyuúkíí* ‘why’ and *léláá* ‘how/ how come/what/why’.

This section is concerned with the monosemic *ínyuúkíí* ‘why’ and the polysemic *léláá* ‘how’/ ‘how come’/ ‘what’/ ‘why’, not only from a syntactic and semantic perspective, but also from a morpho-syntactic angle. Each of them will be examined in a specific section.

6.2.2.1 The non-referential *ínyuúkíí* ‘why’

To begin with, the non-referential *ínyuúkíí* ‘why’ is used to express the reason why some event at some point has occurred. Like its argument and referential counterparts, it can be realized phonologically with vowel lengthening which has nothing to do with any positional factor. In other words, the non-referential *ínyuúkíí* ‘why’ always ends with vowel lengthening irrespective of its position in the clause, a point of view which further runs counter to Hamlaoui & Makasso (2011) who predict that vowel lengthening of question words in Basaá is dependent on their syntactic position.

The data in (22) below show that the non-referential *ínyuúkíí* ‘why’ can be used in both root and embedded clauses. Of interest from a morpho-syntactic point of view is the fact that the use of *ínyuúkíí* ‘why’ can work in tandem with extension of the verbal base, and this phenomenon is clause-bounded, i.e. extension of the verb base happens if the non-referential *ínyuúkíí* ‘why’ and the verb occur in the same clause. Generally, when *ínyuúkíí* ‘why’ is used in a given clause, there is an applicative morpheme which associates with the verbal root (22a-b) and (24a-b). Sentences in which the applicative morpheme is dropped are all the same acceptable as can be seen in (23a-b) and (25a-b).

(22)

- a. ínyuúkíí ɓalêt ɓápé ɓá- mí- bíβ-íl ɓáúdú ɓâβ
 why 2.teachers 2.others 2.SM-PRS-beat-APPL 2.students 2.their
 ‘Why do other teachers_i beat their_{i/j} students?’

- b. ɓalêt ɓápé ɓá- mí- bíβ-íl ɓáúdú ɓâβ ínyuúkíí
 2.teachers 2.others 2.SM-PRS-beat-APPL 2.students 2.their why
 ‘Why do other teachers_i beat their_{i/j} students?’

(23)

- a. ínyuúkíí ɓalêt ɓápé ɓá- mí- ɓéβ ɓáúdú ɓâβ
 why 2.teachers 2.others 2.SM-PRS-beat 2.students 2.their
 Intended: ‘Why do other teachers_i beat their_{i/j} students?’

- b. ɓalêt ɓápé ɓá- mí- ɓéβ ɓáúdú ɓâβ ínyuúkíí
 2.teachers 2.others 2.SM-PRS-beat 2.students 2.their why
 Intended: ‘Why do other teachers_i beat their_{i/j} students?’

(24)

- a. ínyuúkíí ɓɔn ɓáhóyí ɓá- ní- sol- ól ɓágwâl ɓâβ
 why 2.children 2.certain 2.SM-PRS-insult-APPL 2.parents 2.their
 ‘Why do certain children insult their parents?’

- b. ɓɔn ɓáhóyí ɓá- ní- sol- ól ɓágwâl ɓâβ ínyuúkíí
 2.children 2.certain 2.SM-PRS-insult-APPL 2.parents 2.their why
 ‘Why do certain students insult their parents?’

(25)

- a. ínyuúkíí ɓɔn ɓáhóyí ɓá- ní- sɔl ɓágwâl ɓâβ
 why 2.children 2.certain 2.SM-PRS-insult- 2.parents 2.their
 ‘Why do certain children insult their parents?’

- b. ɓɔn ɓáhóyí ɓá- ní- sɔl ɓágwâl ɓâβ ínyuúkíí
 2.children 2.certain 2.SM-PRS-insult 2.parents 2.their why
 ‘Why do certain children insult their parents?’

The position of *ínyuúkíí* ‘why’ provides us with interesting results from a semantic point of view.

If sentences with in-situ *ínyuúkíí* ‘why’ and the ones with ex-situ *ínyuúkíí* ‘why’ have the same interpretative effects, therefore it can be said that an in-situ *ínyuúkíí* ‘why’ undergoes LF raising at the left periphery of the clause and that is why it successfully scopes over the whole clause as its fronted counterpart.

Note that whether the applicative morpheme is attached to the verbal root in ‘reason/why clauses’ or not does not affect their semantics, but it is clear that constructions with applicative morphemes seem to be standardly used than the ones which make use of no applicative morphemes. In the same vein, the use of verbal extensions in why-clauses is conditioned phonologically, notably vowel assimilation, which can be partial or complete. For instance, when comparing (22) with (23), one realizes that the verbal root in the former is *bíβ-* while it is

realized as *béβ* in the latter. In fact, the original root form -*béβ-* means ‘beat’ but since there is extension of the verbal base in (22) through the addition of the applicative *-íl* to the original verbal base, the vowel [e] of the original verbal root -*béβ-* changes into [í] so much so that it assimilates the vowel [í] of the applicative morpheme [-*íl*]. As the end, one obtains the complex verb *bíβ-íl* which can be literally translated as ‘beat for some reason(s)’. Similarly, when comparing (24) with (25), one obtains the same result. In fact, the original verb is the lexical item *-sol-* ‘insult’ (24), but when associated with an applicative, there is vowel assimilation in such a way that vowel [ɔ] of the original verb *-sol-* ‘insult’ changes into [o] and one obtains the complex verb *sól-ól* ‘insult for some reason’ (literally). Finally, it can be said that the use of *ínyuukíí* ‘why’ sometimes triggers regressive vowel assimilation of the verbal base by a following applicative⁴⁵.

From a distributional point of view of the non-referential *ínyuukíí* ‘why’, there exists a root-embedded asymmetry. *ínyuukíí* ‘why’ is preferably used ex-situ in embedded clauses (26a) and is marginally accepted in-situ (26b). In-situ cases such as (26b) are felicitous as echo-questions and never as a request of information.

(26)

- a. Mudaá a- mí- bat lé *ínyuúkíí* bɔn báhóyí bá- ní- **sol-** ól
 1.woman 1.SM-PRS-ask that why 2.children 2.certain 2.SM-PRS-insult-APPL
 bágwâl t_i
 2.parents
 ‘The woman is asking why certain children insult parents.’
- b.?? Mudaá a- mí- bat lé bɔn báhóyí bá- ní- **sol-** ól bágwâl
 1.woman 1.SM-PRS-ask that 2.children 2.certain 2.SM-PRS-insult-APPL 2.parents
 ínyuúkíí (preferable as echo-question).
 why
 Intended: ‘The woman is asking why certain children insult their parents.’

Sometimes, there are processing difficulties when *ínyuúkíí* ‘why’ occurs at the left periphery.

Concretely, when used across clausal boundaries, the non-referential *ínyuúkíí* ‘why’ can only see

⁴⁵ cf. Bitja'a Kody 1990; Lemb & Gastines 1973; Mbom 1990; & Njock 1996 for a comprehensive analysis of verbal extensions in Basaá.

as far as the root clause and cannot scope over the whole sentence. For instance, the interpretation obtained in (27a-b) is such that *ínyuúkíí* ‘why’ scopes only over the root clause but cannot assign scope over the embedded one. So, the interpretation obtained in this case is rendered as ‘for which reason does the woman say that certain children insult their parents?’ where *ínyuúkíí* ‘why’ scopes only over the root verb *kal* ‘say’ and not over the embedded *sɔl* ‘insult’ i.e. the interpretation ‘for which reason do certain children insult’.

(27)

- a. *ínyuúkíí* mudaá a- íj- **kal** lé bɔn báhýí bá- n- *sɔl* bágwâl
why 1.woman 1.SM-PRS-say that 2.children 2.certain 2.SM-PRS-insult 2.parents
‘**Why** does the woman **say** that certain children insult their parents?’
- b. *ínyuúkíí* mudaá a- íj- **kel-él** lé bɔn báhýí bá- n- *sɔl*
why 1.woman 1.SM-PRS-say-APPL that 2.children 2.certain 2.SM-PRS-insult
bágwâl
2.parents
‘**Why** does the woman **say** that certain children insult their parents?’

One piece of evidence in support of the fact the non-referential *ínyuúkíí* ‘why’ cannot scope over the most embedded verb comes from verb morphology. Recall that it was shown a short while that the use of the non-referential *ínyuúkíí* ‘why’ may trigger extension of the verbal base. For instance, both (27a-b) convey the same meaning notwithstanding the absence of the applicative on the root verb *kal* ‘say’ in (27a). The following sentence in (28a) is ungrammatical because the verbal base of *sɔl-* (derived from the root *-sɔl-*) ‘insult’ is extended as *sɔl-ól* ‘insult of some reason(s)’ showing non-referential adjunct *ínyuúkíí* ‘why’ cannot scope over the most embedded clause.

(28)

- a. * *ínyuúkíí* mudaá a- íj- *kal* lé bɔn báhýí bá- n- **sół- ół**
why 1.woman 1.SM-PRS-say that 2.children 2.certain 2.SM-PRS-insult-APPL
bágwâl
2.parents

#The woman asked for which reasons X some children insult their parents for X.

- b. * Mudaá a- mí- **bed-él** lé *ínyuúkíí* bɔn báhýí bá- n- *sɔl*
1.woman 1.SM-PRS-ask-APPL that why 2.children 2.certain 2.SM-PRS-insult
bágwâl *t_i*
2.parents

#For which reasons X does the woman say for X that some children insult their parents?’

If one compares the illicit sentence in (28a) with its licit counterparts in (27), one realizes that the most embedded verb *sɔl'* 'insult' in (27a)-(27b) respectively undergoes no morphological change, which indicates that the non-referential *ínyuúkíí* 'why' cannot see as far as the embedded clause. On the contrary, the root verb *be* extended (27a). This provides *prima facie* evidence that a sentence initial *ínyuúkíí* 'why' does not scope over the most embedded verb, but rather over the closest c-commanded verb. Finally, the ungrammaticality of (28b) shows that an embedded *ínyuúkíí* 'why' cannot scope over the matrix clause. Under no circumstances can (28b) be interpreted as 'for which X does the woman say that for X that some children insult their parents?'.

At this juncture, I have examined the distribution and interpretation of the non-referential adjunct *ínyuúkíí* 'why' and have shown that it can be used in both main and embedded contexts. Also, its presence within the clause may trigger verbal extension. In terms of scope, the non-referential *ínyuúkíí* 'why' always scopes over the closest c-commanded verb either at PF or LF.

6.2.2.1.1 On the symmetry between *ínyuúkíí* 'why' and *-héé* 'where'

Although I have already examined the behaviour of the referential *héé* 'where' in § 6.2.1, it is important to come back to the similarities it displays with its non-referential counterpart *ínyuúkíí* 'why'.

The behaviour of the non-referential reason adjunct *ínyuúkíí* 'why' is similar to its referential time counterpart *héé* 'where' to some extent. For instance, morpho-syntactically, the use of the latter sometimes also triggers extension of the verbal base. And like *ínyuúkíí* 'why', when used across clausal boundaries, the referential *héé* 'where' simply scopes over the closest verb as can be seen in (29a-c) below (note that the English representation is simply indicative in order to show the original position of the extracted wh-word). Sentence (29a) shows that the referential place adjunct *héé* 'where' cannot originate in sentence final position and this is clearly shown by the absence of any applicative on the verb *nóYós* 'punish' which occurs in the most embedded clause. However, the presence of the applicative *-él* on the root verb *kal* 'say' (which realizes as

kél-él as a result of assimilation of the vowel of the main verb by the vowel of the applicative morpheme *-él*) clearly shows that the referential place adjunct *héé* ‘where’ originates in postverbal position of the main clause. Sentence (29b) shows that the presence of the applicative *-ná* on the root *bɔmná* ‘meet’ is optional. In like manner, note that in (29b), the referential place adjunct has scope only over the embedded verb *bɔmná* ‘meet’. In sentence (29c), it can be observed that the time adjunct cannot scope over the most embedded verb, namely *bɔmná* ‘meet’ because they are very far away from one another. It is the reason why the presence of the applicative *-ná* is disqualified. This simply means that sentence (29c) is grammatical in the absence of the applicative *-ná*, on the most embedded on verb *bɔmná*. The sentence will become licit without the applicative morphem the place adjunct *héé* will scope only over the main verb *kal* ‘say’ (realized as *kél-él*) which appropriately bears an applicative morpheme.

(29)

a.

héé₁ mudaá a- ŋ- **kél-él** **héé₁** lé malêt a- bí- nóYós
 1.where 1.woman 1.SM-PST1-say-APPL 1.where that 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-punish
báúdú (***héé**)

2.students 1.where

‘Where₁ did the woman say where₁ [that the teacher punished the students (*where)]?’

b.

mudaá a- ŋ- **kál** lé **héé₁** malêt a- bí- **bɔmná-(ná)** *báúdú* **héé₁**
 1.woman 1.SM-PST1-say that 1.where 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-meet-APPL 2.students 1.where

‘Where₁ did the woman say that the teacher met with the students where₁?’

c. **héé₁** mudaá_i a- ŋ- **kél -él** **héé₁** lé malêt **pro_i** a- bí-
 1.where 1.woman 1.SM-PST1-say-APPL 1.where that 1.teacher pro 1.SM-PST2-
bɔmná-(ná) *báúdú* (***héé**)

meet-APPL 2.students 1.where

‘Where did the woman say that the teacher met with the students?’

The idea that the place adjunct *héé* ‘where’ scopes over the closest c-commanded verb just like the non-referential reason adjunct *ínyuúkú* ‘why’ cannot be subject to generalization. For instance, sentence (29a) above and repeated below as (30a-b) clearly shows that the place adjunct *héé* ‘where’ successfully scopes over the most embedded verb namely the intransitive *ke*

‘go’ and the transitive *bɔmná* ‘meet’. As the reader can see, sentence (30b) is grammatical iff the applicative morpheme *-ná* is attached to the embedded verb *bɔmná* ‘meet’.

(30)

- a. **héé**₁ mudaá a- íj- hóŋjol t₂ lé malêt a- bí- kε t₁ yáání
1.where 1.woman 1.SM-PRS-think that 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-go 1.yesterday
‘Where does the woman think that the teacher went yesterday?’
- b. **héé**₁ mudaá a- íj- kâl t₁ lé malêt a- bí- *bɔmná*-*(*ná*) báúdú t₁
1.where 1.woman 1.SM-PRS-say that 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-meet-APPL 2.students
‘Where does the woman say that the teacher met the students?’
- c. **héé**₁ mudaá a- íj- hóŋjol-éné t₁ lé malêt a- bí- k-il t₁ yáání
1.where 1.woman 1.SM-PRS-think-_{APPL} that 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-go 1.yesterday
‘Where₁ does the woman **think** t₁ that the teacher went yesterday?’
‘Where₁ does the woman think t₁ that the teacher **went** t₁ yesterday?’
- d. **héé**₁ mudaá a- íj- kâl-él t₁ lé malêt a- bí- **bɔmná-ná** báúdú t₁
1.where 1.woman 1.SM-PRS-say-_{APPL} that 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-meet-APPL 2.students
‘Where₁ does the woman **say** t₁ that the teacher met with the students?’
‘Where₁ does the woman **say** t₁ that the teacher met with the students t₁?’

The difference between (30a) and (30b) relies on the nature of the predicate i.e. intransitives seem not to require applicatives as opposed to transitives which do. Note also that it is not a rule that the use of *héé* ‘where’ is predicate-dependent, because there are other cases whereby intransitives can associate with applicatives and cases whereby transitives do not associate with any applicative morpheme (I will not discuss this issue here at length). Sentences (30c-d) show that the referential place adjunct *héé* ‘where’ can reconstruct both in the root and in the embedded clause. This is explained by applicative marking on both the root and embedded verbs as shown in (30c-d).

The relationship between question formation and verb phrase extension is specific to Basàá, it is attested cross-linguistically in the literature within the Bantu language family. For instance, Letsholo (2011 ex.32-33) shows that in the SVO Bantu language Ikilanga spoken in Botswana and Zimbabwe, question formation interact with the extension of the verb phrase. Question formation in this language sometimes works in tandem with extension of the verb base in such a way that question words must occur in-between the verb and the NP object. However, for this to happen, the author shows that an applicative, namely the morpheme *-el/-il* has to be attached to the verb base, otherwise the sequence becomes illicit. The following examples which illustrate this point of view show that the non-referential adjunct *ni* ‘why’ occurs in the IAV position and the applicative *-el* should associate with the verb base *teng* ‘buy’ on its right. With

this in mind, the ill-formedness of (31b-c) is expected. Notwithstanding the presence of the applicative morpheme *-el* in the postverbal position (31b), the sentence is still ruled out because the non-referential adjunct *ni* ‘why’ does not occur in the IAV position. Sentence (30c) is ruled out because although the wh-word *ni* ‘why’ does occur in the IAV position, the applicative morpheme *-el* is omitted.

(31)

- a. Ludo wá- ka- teng-**el** a- **ni** lori
 Ludo_{1a} SA₁.PAST-buy-APPL-FV why car
 ‘Why did Ludo buy a car?’
- b. *Ludo wá- ka- teng-**el** a- lori- **ni**
 Ludo_{1a} SA₁.PAST-buy-APPL-FV car-why
 ‘Why did Ludo buy a car?’
- c.* Ludo wá- ka- teng- a-**ni** lori
 Ludo_{1a} SA₁.PAST-buy-FV-why car
 ‘Why did Ludo buy a car?’

These data provide evidence that the relation between question formation and verbal morphology is not Basaa-specific, buy is attested cross-linguistically (cf. Letsholo 2011 for more details on question formation in Ikilanga).

6.2.2.2 The non-referential *léláá* ‘how’/‘how come’/‘what’/‘why’

As regards the non-referential *léláá* ‘how’/‘how come’/‘what’/‘why’, it is worth noting at the very outset that phonologically, this lexical item also exhibits vowel lengthening as its counterparts already discussed above, and its vowel lengthening does not depend on a specific position in clause structure. It is therefore invariable contrary some previous analyses. Compositionally, it is made up of the particle *lē* which is homophonous with the lexical complementizer *lē* ‘that’ followed by *láá*. It is probably why sometimes it can be shortened as *láá* for economy purposes.

As a result, we can say that *léláá* is literally translated as ‘that how’. May be this is due to its little complexity and that is why it is polysemic depending on the context. So, the non-referential *léláá* denotes more than one lexical entry in the language and conveys a wide range of interpretations depending on its syntactic distribution.

First of all, when construed as a ‘how/‘in what manner’ reading, the non-referential *léláá* can be used sentence-initially and in the IAV position. It is ruled out in sentence final position when construed with the same interpretation as illustrated in (32). In addition, remember that the verb

kε *ŋgwéé* ‘run a race’ is an inherent complement verb (chapter five) so much so that if the inherent complement *ŋgwéé* happens to be dropped, then the meaning of the whole complex is lost altogether. The meaning will simply be that of the intransitive *kε* (which literally means ‘go’ or leave) alone. So, when used with inherent complement verbs the non-referential *léláá* ‘how’ occur in-between the intransitive verb and its inherent complement.

(32)

- a. (*léláá*) bodaá bá- ní- lámb (*léláá*) péé (**léláá*)
how 2.women 2.SM-PRS-cook how 7.viper how
‘How do women cook viper?’
- b. (*léláá*) bɔɔŋgé bá- ní- kε (*léláá*) ŋgwéé (**léláá*)
how 2.children 2.SM-PRS-go how 3.race how
‘How do children run?’

When used in embedded clauses, the same distribution and interpretation are obtained as can be seen in (33a) below. Note that when interpreted as ‘how’, the non-referential *léláá* cannot be used across clausal boundaries. The unacceptability of (33b) is therefore expected because extraction applies out of an indirect question. As will be shown in a short while, (33b) is correct iff the non-referential *léláá* is interpreted not as a manner adverbial, but as ‘why or how come’, and in this case it is base-generated in sentence initial position.

(33)

- a. bɔɔŋgé bá- mí- bafbá lé (*léláá*) bodaá bá- ní- lámb (*léláá*) péé (**léláá*)
2.children 2.SM-PRS-wonder that how 2.women 2.SM-PRS-cook how 7.viper how
‘The children wonder how women cook viper.’
- b. #(*léláá*) bɔɔŋgé bá- mí- bafbá lé bodaá bá- ní- lámb péé
how 2.children 2.SM-PRS-wonder that 2.women 2.SM-PRS-cook 7.viper

However, in certain intransitive constructions, *léláá* ‘how’ is strictly used sentence-finally. But, this happens in ‘existential’ or ‘stative’ constructions that denote a state of being. For instance, the verb *kε* which naturally means ‘go’ loses its original meaning in (34a) where it rather means ‘be’. So, there is some kind of meaning/semantic transfer/switching from a motion interpretation to a stative one so that both (34a)-(34b) convey the same meaning.

(34) Context: *Two friends talking in the restaurant.*

a.

- Q: lihaa_i lí- ý- kε **léláá**
 5.family 5.SM-PRS-go how
 'How is the family?' /*How goes the family?'
 A: pro_i lí- ý- kε lóŋgɛ̄
 pro 5-SM-PRS-go goodness
 'They are fine.'/*They go well.'

b.

- Q: lihaa_i lí- yé **léláá**
 7.family 7.SM-be how
 'How is the family?'
 A: pro_i lí- yé lóŋgɛ̄
 pro 7.SM-be goodness
 'They are fine.'

Note that in constructions such as (34a-b), a sentence initial *léláá* 'how' is ruled out as exemplified in (35) below.

(35)

- Q: ***léláá** lihaa lí- ý- kε
 how 5.family 5.SM-PRS-go
 'How is the family?' /*How goes the family?'

- Q: ***léláá** lihaa lí- yé
 how 7.family 7.SM-be
 'How is the family?'

The second meaning of *léláá* is 'how come' or 'why'. When interpreted as 'how come' or 'why', it can only occupy the clause-initial position (36a) and (37a) and never in-situ as shown in (35b) and (36b). Interestingly, the non-referential *léláá*, in addition to the sentence-initial position, can be felicitously used in-between the modal *-la* and the lexical verbs *jé* 'eat' and *ndóYb-éné* 'disobey' as illustrated in (36a) and (37a). At this position i.e. in-between the modal and the lexical verbs, the non-referential *léláá* 'how come' or 'why' conveys the same meaning as when used sentence-initially.

(36)

- a. (**léláá**) mut wadá a- ní- la (**léláá**) jé ñgîm kôβ nyé↓támá !
 how come 1.man 1.one 1.SM-PRS-can how come eat whole 7.chicken 1.alone
 'How come somebody can eat a whole chicken alone!'

- b.%mut wadá a- ní- la jé ñgîm kôβ nyé↓támá **léláá** !
 1.man 1.one 1.SM-PRS-can eat whole 7.chicken 1.alone how come
 Intended: 'How come somebody can eat a chicken alone!'

(37)

- a. (**léláá**) mǎn a- ní- lá (**léláá**) ndóYb-éné bágwâl
 how come 1.child 1.SM-PRS-can how come disobey-APPL 2.parents
 'How come a child can disobey his/her parents?'

- b.% mǎn a- ní- lá ndóYb-éné bágwâl **léláá**
 1.child 1.SM-PRS-can disobey-APPL 2.parents how come
 Intended: 'How come a child can disobey his/her parents?'

Pragmatically, utterances with *léláá* ‘how come’ can express unexpectedness, disappointment or surprise vis-à-vis a situation which seems impossible or unexpected to the speaker’s mind. Generally, such statements denote much more exclamation than question. With this in mind, sentence (36a) cannot be construed as ‘in what manner /why can someone eat a chicken alone?’, rather it means ‘how is possible for someone to eat a whole chicken!’ because for the speaker the situation is unusual, surprising or unexpected. So, the implication or presupposition which lies behind (36a) is that ‘somebody is not able to eat a whole chicken alone’. Similarly, sentence (37a) cannot be construed as ‘in what manner can a child disobey his/her parents?’ but as ‘how come a child can disobey his/her parents?/why can a child disobey his/her parents?’ As a result, the presupposition or implication is that ‘a child should not disobey his/her parents’ because this is not allowed. Disobeying one’s parents is consequently considered as being unusual to the speaker or society.

In the absence of a modal, the non-referential *léláá* occupies either the sentence-initial position or the IAV position, but never the sentence-final position as illustrated in (38) below.

(38)

- a. **léláá** mut wadá a- ní- jé (**léláá**) ŋgîm kôβ nyé↓támâ ! (% **léláá**)
how come 1.man 1.one 1.SM-PRS-eat how come whole 7.chicken 1.alone how come
‘How come somebody eats a chicken alone?’
- b. **léláá** mǎn a- ní- ndóYb-éné (**léláá**) bágwâl (% **léláá**)
how come 1.child 1.SM-PRS-disobey-APPL how come 2.parents how come
‘How come a child disobeys his/her parents?’

Under the assumption that ‘why’ and ‘how come’ convey the same interpretation i.e. they ask for the reason ‘why a given event has happened or is happening’, they are not associated with any operator associated with a quantifier-variable pair unlike arguments. They have full propositions as their only arguments (cf. Bromberger 1992; Stepanov & Tsai 2008 a.o.), and in this vein the results obtained above can be said to be expected.

Finally, the last earmarks of the lexical item *léláá* are the following: first of all, it can be interpreted as an argument. In this case it is synonymous with the English argument ‘what’ or French ‘que/quoi’. When used as an argument, it must be either sentence-initial or in the IAV position as illustrated in (39) below.

(39)

- a. (**Léláá**) malêt a- ɪj- kâl (**Léláá**) báúdú (***Léláá**)
9.what 1.teacher 1.SM-PST1-tell 9.what 2.students 9.what
‘What did the teacher tell the students?’ ‘*how did the teacher tell the students?’

- b. (**Kíí**) malêt a- n̩- kâl (**Kíí**) báúdú (***Kíí**)
 what 1.teacher 1.SM-PST1-tell 9.what 2.students 9.what
 'What did the teacher tell the students?' '*how did the teacher tell the students?'

In (39a), the lexical item *léláá* asks for new, non-presupposed or unfamiliar information in the discourse. That the item *léláá* in such contexts is interpreted as an argument is supported by the fact that (39a)-(39b) convey exactly the same interpretation i.e. they ask for a question which requires a direct object focus interpretation ('what did I tell you? (quantifier-variable meaning)' as opposed to '*how did I tell you? (no quantifier-variable value)'). As can be seen in (39), the question words are not licensed in sentence-final position, neither as genuine questions nor as echo ones. Note also that for better understanding and interpretative reasons, the item *léláá* above is glossed as 'what' instead of 'how/how come'.

Furthermore, when used as the English argument 'what', the item *léláá* can also express pragmatic effects such as disappointment or despair. For instance, sentences (40a) and (40b), can be used in desperate or unsolvable situations to express someone's discouragement, emotion or despair.

(40) *A & B have just had dinner a few hours ago. After some time, A is informed about B's death while he presented no sign of illness.*

Considering the above context, the following exclamative questions can be uttered by speaker A:

- a. (**léláá**) mé kâl (**léláá**) wé ↓ a l̩Yá (***léláá**) hála nyé-n niŋ í-yê !!
 9.what I tell._{SUBJ} 9.what you.2sg VOC guy 9. what 1.that 1-FOC 10.life 10-SM-be._{PRS}
 'What /*how can I tell you guy, such is life!!'
- b. (**Kíí**) mé kâl (**Kíí**) wé ↓ a l̩Yá (***Kíí**) hála nyé-n niŋ í-yê !!
 9.what I tell._{SUBJ} 9.what you.2sg VOC guy 9. What 1.that 1-FOC 10.life 10.SM-be._{PRS}
 'What can I tell you guy, such is life!!'

In the context of (40), none of the questions is information-seeking, i.e. they are not expressed to request some information. They are simply uttered for pragmatic reasons. Sentence (40b), although using a different question item, conveys the same meaning as its counterpart in (40a).

This state of matters amounts to saying that the use of the lexical item *léláá* in (40a) acts as an argument expression.

The above discussions have revealed that the question item *léláá* is polysemic because of a wide range of interpretations it conveys depending on not only its syntactic distribution but also on its contextual usage. It is the reason why it can be construed as 'how', 'how come/why' and 'what' respectively.

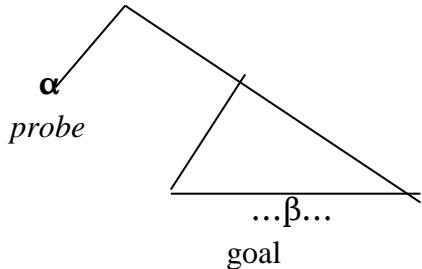
6.3. Theoretical assumptions: About a lower FocP in the Immediately After Verb (IAV) position

The theoretical backbone in this section for accounting for question formation in Basáá is minimalist in nature. More precisely, the section discusses Chomsky's (2000, 2001a, b) *Agree* and *Attract* principles which require feature-matching between the target of movement, namely a *probe* and the moved category, i.e. a *goal* as illustrated in (41) below. The *Agree* relation in Chomsky's terms values and deletes uninterpretable phi-features and basically relies on closest c-command of a category β called goal with phi-features by the agreeing category α called probe. *Attract* involves displacement or raising of category β from its base position because category α has matching features with it, and α attracts β to check its uninterpretable features.

(41)

- a. *Agree* (α, β) iff α c-commands β ; α & β have matching features; there is no γ with matching features such that α c-commands γ and γ c-commands β .

b.



In Chomsky's terms, raising of the goal β to Spec- α (probe) is dependent on a prior Agree relation or feature matching between both β and α . In addition, of central interest in our analysis of question formation is Rizzi's (1991 & 1997) wh- & focus-criteria which require local relation between an interpretable wh- or focused XP in the specifier position of their respective functional heads C^0 or Foc^0 . In current cartographic terminology, the relation holds between a wh-phrase/focused XP category and a Foc^0 head. Under a widely-known assumption that wh-phrases are inherently focused, I simply assume that in some cases in Basáá, 'wh-movement' is an instance of focus movement. One piece of evidence is the complementary distribution between some question items and focused elements in Basáá (see also Biloa 1992, 1995, 1997, to appear; Rizzi 1997; Aboh 2004 etc. for the incompatibility between wh-phrases and focused elements in Tuki, Italian and Gungbe) respectively. In other words, I will show that question words in Basáá land in different positions, namely the focus field for inherently focuses wh-items and the WP field, a field that hosts non-referentia adjuncts.

The hallmark of this section is the postulation of a lower focus phrase projection (FocP) in the vicinity of the VP left periphery in Basaá following previous authors such as Nkemnji (1995), Belletti (2004), Aboh (2007) etc. who convincingly show that in Nweh, Italian and Aghem respectively, there exists a focus phrase projection in the VP left periphery. I will not dwell on the former works undertaken on these abovementioned languages, rather, I will concentrate on the Basaá empirical material in order to see how far the language accommodates these previous approaches to information structure in the VP domain. As already demonstrated above, and as shown below for convenience, the IAV position is the locus of ‘wh-movement’. Remember that a typical double object construction in Basaá requires that the indirect object must precede and never follow its direct object counterpart.

(42)

- a. Mudaá a- bí- *keβél* **báúdú** **bijéγ** **báúdú* yaaní *Baseline sentence*
 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-serve 2.students 8.food 2.students 1.yesterday
 ‘The woman served food to the students yesterday.’

- b. Mudaá a- bí- *keβél* **kíí** **báúdú** (***kíí**) yaaní *D.O wh-question*
 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-serve 9.what 2.students 9.what 1.yesterday
 ‘What did the woman serve to the students yesterday?’

(43)

- a. Mudaá a- bí- *keβél* **njéé** **bijéγ** yaaní *I.O wh-question*
 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-serve 1.who 8.food 1.yesterday
 ‘Whom did the woman serve food yesterday?’

- b. Mudaá a- bí- *kăl* **léláá** **báúdú** yaaní ***léláá** *D.O wh-question*
 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-tell 9.what 2.students 1.yesterday what
 ‘What did the woman tell the students yesterday?’*How did the woman tell the students...?’

(44)

- a. Mudaá a- bí- *sómb-ól* **héé** **βítámb** **βíməndʒ** * **héé** *Place adjunct question*
 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-buy-APPL where 2.shoes 8.new where
 ‘Where did the woman buy new shoes?’

- b. Mudaá a- bí- *kebél* ***kélkíí** **báúdú** **bijéγ** **kélkíí**
 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-serve when 2.students 8.food when
 ‘When did the woman serve the students food?’

In (42a), the indirect object *báúdú* ‘students’ cannot follow its direct object counterpart *bijéγ* ‘food’. As the reader can see from (42)-(44), and considering (42a) as the basic sentence, question formation involves movement or displacement of the wh-words items *kíí* ‘what (42b), *léláá* ‘what’ (43b) and *héé* ‘where’ immediately after the verbs *keβél* *serve* (42b), *kăl* ‘tell’ (43b)

and *sómb-ól* ‘buy’ (44a) respectively. It should be recalled that the question item *kéláá* in (43b) has an argument interpretation i.e. it can only be construed as ‘what’ and never as ‘how’/in what manner’ in this context. This is clearly explained by the fact that a manner interpretation is disallowed. Given that the basic word order is SVIODO (subject-verb-indirect object-direct object) in Basaá, it superficially appears that the question item *njéé* ‘whom’ in (43a) has not been subject to movement i.e. it seems to occupy the canonical indirect object position as predicted from the basic word order. This is due to the fact that the indirect object argument *njéé* ‘whom’ has moved vacuously and as it is the case with subject wh-questions in many languages including English. Given that the indirect object canonically follows the verb, this proximity is likely to show that no movement has taken place in the syntax. Sentence (44b) shows that there exists a sort of asymmetry between the time adjunct *kélkíí* ‘when’ and the other question items notably *kíí* ‘what’ *njéé* ‘who’ and *héé* ‘where’. In other words, the referential adjunct *kélkíí* ‘when’ is not licensed⁴⁶ in the IAV position.

The Basaá data certainly provide interesting results against the background of the distribution of question words. It is widely attested crosslinguistically that in languages such as Gungbe (Kwa), Ikilanga (Bantu) and Tuki (Bantu) etc. wh-phrases or items are focused (see Aboh 2004, 2007, 2010; Letsholo 2011; Biloa 1992, 1995, 1997, 2013). If we assume following the well-known assumption that the VP is the locus of information structure-related devices cross-linguistically (Watters 1976; Tuller 1992; Nkemnji 1995; Belletti 2004; Aboh 2007; Hyman & Polinsky 2010 etc), then it can be conjunctured that Basaá provides additional support to such an assumption due to the behaviour of its question items. The fact that the place adjunct *kélkíí* ‘when’ is not licensed in the IAV position in the presence of the direct and/or the indirect object(s) constitutes a challenge to the theory of focus. One is inclined to think that the time adjunct *kélkíí* ‘when’ is opaque to any movement to the IAV position when used in the presence of the direct and/or indirect object(s). In other words, although the time adjunct *kélkíí* ‘when’ in Basaá can occur

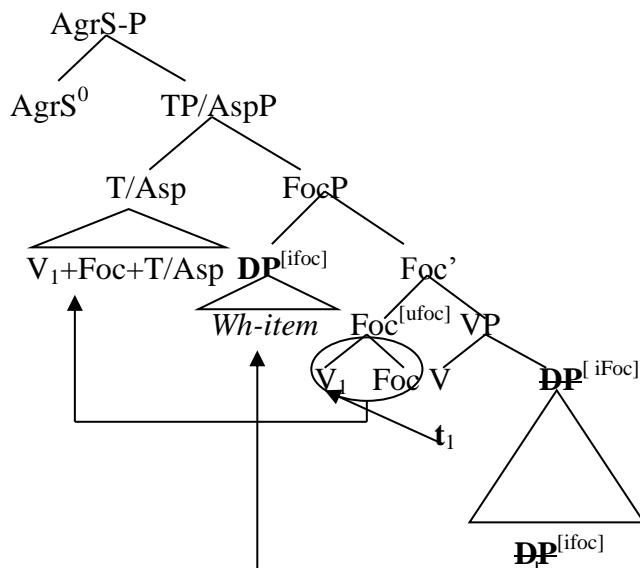
⁴⁶ The referential adjunct *kélkíí* ‘where’ can occur in the IAV iff it is the sole complement of the verb (i). It can also alternate with locative/place adverbials as in (ii).

e.g. (i) maangé a- n- l_o **kélkíí** (ii) maangé a- j- ke (**kélkíí**) í súklu (**kélkíí**)
1.child 1.SM-FUT1-come 1.when 1.child 1.SM-FUT1-come (1.when) LOC 9.school (1.when)
‘When will the child come?’ ‘When will the child go to school?’

sentence-initially in genuine questions contexts and sentence-finally (marginally in transitive verb constructions) in echo-questions, it resists movement to the IAV position in the contexts just described. Before proceeding, let us so far go straight to the formulation of our theoretical proposal.

I would like to propose that there exists a focus phrase projection (FocP) in the lower IP-layer of the clause in Basáá. This focus phrase is located immediately above VP but below the inflectional domain i.e. the clausal area encoding tense and aspectual information. To obtain the word order in which some question words immediately follow the main verb, I argue that two movement operations should take place namely, V⁰-to-T⁰/Asp⁰ movement for tense/aspect licensing (Aboh 2010; Aboh & Dyakonova 2009; Pollock 1989 *inter alia*) and phrasal/XP movement of the wh-item into Spec-FocP for focus requirements. I consider Foc the head of FocP to be a *probe* category endowed with uninterpretable focus-features (_ufoc) and the displaced question item as a goal with interpretable focus-features (_ifoc). Verb movement to the tense/aspect position passes via Foc⁰ the head of the lower FocP for locality considerations. This is only possible if Foc⁰, the head of FocP is empty, i.e. not occupied by any lexical material. This is also expected in the spirit of minimalism which requires that movement should operate in a cyclic(al)/step-wise fashion. The schema in (45) is a snapshot of the derivation of question formation in the IAV position whereby arrows indicate movement of extracted categories.

(45)



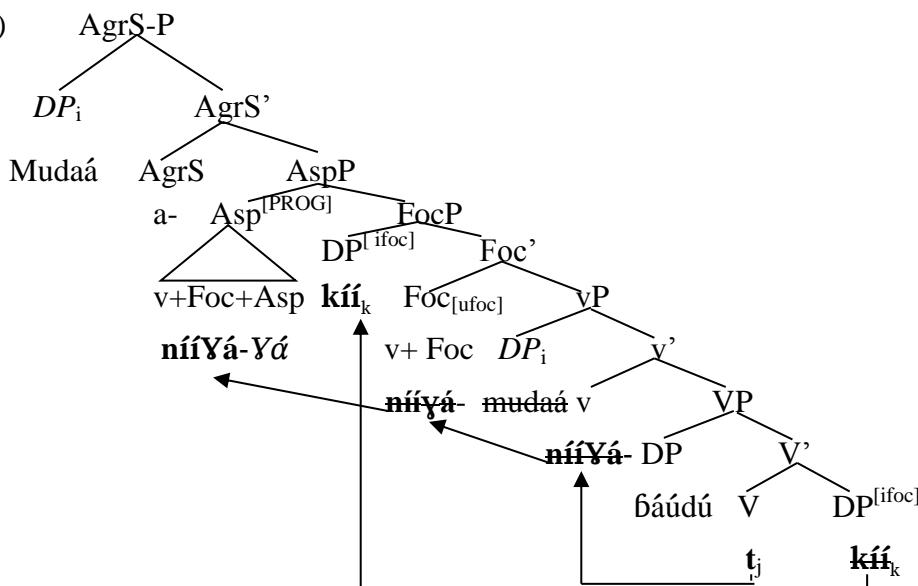
To demonstrate how (45) above operates, let us reconsider the double object construction in (46a) below whereby the question item *kíí* ‘what’ endowed with interpretable focus-features raises from its canonical direct object position to the IAV, and precisely into Spec-FocP where it

can check its features against uninterpretable focus-features Foc. The structure in (47) provides the derivation of sentence (46a). Note that in order to derive (46b), the same process is followed as in (46a). The only difference is that the progressive aspectual information is morphologically realized in (45a) as *-áY* while the perfective aspect morpheme is implicit in (46b). The applicative morpheme *-él* in (46b) acts as a light verb in line with Larson's (1988) VP-shell hypothesis. Despite the fact that perfective aspect is covert in (46b), I postulate that here too, there is cyclical verb raising of the lexical verb *lám̥b* 'cook' (realised as *lémb-* for assimilation purposes) from V⁰ to v⁰ where it combines with the applicative *-él* to form the complex *lémb-él* (*cook+location*). The verbal complex *lémb-él* (*cook+location*) subsequently moves into Asp⁰ via Foc the head of FocP and combines with the implicit perfective aspectual morpheme for aspect licensing purposes.

(46)

- a. Mudaá a- nííYá-Yá kíí₁ báúdú kíí₁ D.O wh-question
 1.woman 1.SM-serve-PROG 9.what 2.students 9.what
 'What did the woman serve the students?'
 b. Mudaá a- n- lémb-él héé₁ βíjéY héé₁ βikéekela wh-adjunct
 1.woman 1.SM-PST1-cook-APPL-PERF 1.where 8.food 1.where 8.morning
 'Where did the woman cook the food in the morning?'

(47)



Another striking difference between (46a) and (46b) is that while the light verb is silent/covert in the former, it is phonetically realized in the latter in the form of an applicative morpheme (*-el*). Furthermore, as the wh-item *héé* 'where' endowed with interpretable focus-features is probed

over by Foc⁰ the head of FocP with uninterpretable focus-features, this wh-item moves from its original position, i.e. in between the direct object *βíjéY* ‘food’ and the time adjunct *βikéekela* ‘in the morning’ and lands into the focus domain immediately after the raised verb in order to fulfil the focus-criterion (Brody 1990, Rizzi 1997 a.o). Recall that verb movement into the aspectual domain takes place because the aspect morpheme (explicit or implicit) is a bound/dependent morpheme which needs to be incorporated into the verb base.

In partial conclusion, the syntax of focus in the IAV position in Basáá involves two different movement operations namely successive cyclic head-to-head of the verb from the VP domain into the tense/aspectual domain via an empty Foc⁰, and phrasal movement of the question item in the focus field in the IAV position. Both movement operations are motivated by checking or Agree purposes which can be subsumed under Minimalism and Cartography requirements.

6.3.1 On the asymmetry between wh-phrases and focused non-wh in the IAV position

The core of this section is to explain why there exists an asymmetry in the distribution of wh-phrases and their focused non-wh constituents. In other words this section attempts to investigate, why some question items (wh-phrases) occur at the IAV position while focused non-wh constituents are disallowed in the same syntactic environment. Remember that I adopt the line of analysis according to which only ‘some wh-phrases’ (arguments and the referential place referential) are focused in Basáá because they can be attracted into the IAV position. This state of affairs is well supported by the fact that left peripheral focused constituents and these wh-phrases are mutually exclusive (48). More precisely, it is not possible to have simultaneous fronting of these question words and focalized items in the same clause. However, these wh-phrases are compatible with topicalized⁴⁷ constituents as can be seen in (49).

(48)

- a. *Focused XP-Wh-phrase
- *Malêt₁ nyé-n kíí₂ mudaá a- bí- keβél t₁ t₂ yáaní
 1.teacher 1-FOC 9.what 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-serve 1.yesterday
 ‘*THE TEACHER WHAT did the woman serve yesterday?’
- b. *Wh-phrase-Focused XP
- *héé₁ makebla₂ mó-n malêt a- gá- tí- né báúdú t₁ t₂
 1.where 6.presents 6-FOC 1.teacher 1.SM-FUT2-give-APPL 2.students
 ‘*WHERE THE PRESENTS did the teacher give to the students?’

⁴⁷ Topic constructions will be discussed in the subsequent chapter.

(49)

- a. *Additive topic-Wh-phrase*

baúdú₁ **bɔ-k,** *kíí₂* mudaá a- bí- keβél **bɔ₁** *t₂*
2.students 2-TOP 9.what 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-serve 2.them

‘As for the students, what did the woman serve them too?’

- b. *Additive topic-Focused XP*

baúdú₁ **bɔ-k,** *kón₂* *yɔ-n* mudaá a- bí- keβél **bɔ₁** *t₂*
2.students 2-TOP 10.rice 10-FOC 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-serve 2.them
‘As for the students, the woman served them RICE too.’

Note that the additive topic in the cases in (49) carries the presupposition that ‘*somebody else*, in addition to the *students*, was served too’. In other words, sentences in (49) can be uttered iff ‘the woman served food to some other people’. In this case, the additive topic⁴⁸ particle *too* in English above scopes over the DP/NP topic *students*. Of interest is that just like there appears to be some incompatibility between some wh-phrases and focused constituents in sentence initial position, in like manner, a fronted focus cannot co-occur with a wh-phrase which occurs in the IAV position as can be seen in (50) below whereby a fronted focus displays incompatibility with a displaced wh-phrase in the IAV position. However, note that the sentences in (50) are acceptable as echo questions where the speaker is repeating a previous statement with focus/echo on the question words *kíí* ‘what’ (50a) and *héé* ‘where’ (50b).

(50)

- a. ??mudaá nyé-n *t₁* a- bí- keβél *kíí₂* bɔɔŋgé *t₂* yaaní

1.woman 1-FOC 1.SM-PST2-serve 9.what 2.children 9.what 1.yesterday

- b. ??bɔɔŋgé **bɔ-n** mudaá a- bí- bɔmná-ná **héé₁** **bɔɔŋgé** **héé₁** yáání

2.children 2-FOC 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-meet-APPL where 2.children where yesterday

The ungrammaticality of (50) is due to a violation of the *Uniqueness Principle* (Brody 1995, 1997; Rizzi 1997 a.o.) a UG principle which requires that a clause should contain at most one focus, hence the uniqueness of focus per clause. The ungrammaticality obtained above is therefore expected and proves that there exists a lower focus phrase in the IAV position which hosts displaced wh-phrases. Under Chomsky’s (1995) checking theory and the focus criterion (Brody 1990; Rizzi 1997) focus requirements can be fulfilled only in one syntactic position. If this is true along the lines, it is obvious that in cases like (50) above, once an element is moved into the focus domain, it checks and erases the focus-features encoded by Foc⁰ the head of FocP. After feature-checking has taken place, there remain no features to be checked in such a way that

⁴⁸ For more details on additive topics, an in-depth analysis will be provided in the following chapter dedicated to topic constructions.

when another category is moved into the focus domain (either sentence-initially or in the IAV position), it remains unchecked, and consequently, the derivation clashes.

An additional striking question to be answered at this juncture has to do with the asymmetry attested between wh-phrases and focused XPs in the IAV. In other words, why is it the case that non-wh focused constituents cannot be moved into the lowest FocP?

The answer is going to be very straightforward. Focused XPs are disallowed in the IAV because of minimality requirements such as the Head Movement Constraint (Travis 1984), Relativized Minimality (Rizzi 1990), the Minimal Link Condition (MLC) or Attract Closest (Chomsky 1995). All things being equal, I assume that the earmark all these minimality conditions is that they all revolve around the notion of *locality* a principle which requires that movement operations should be local or as shorter as possible. In English for instance, one can easily account for the ill-formedness of the sentences like (51c) and (52c) below in terms of the abovementioned minimality conditions.

(51)

- a. John thinks **Peter** has bought **a car**
- b. **Who**₁ does John think **Who**₁ has bought **what**?
- c. ***What**₂ does John think **who** has bought **what**₂ ?

(52)

- a. John **should have done** his homework.
- b. **Should**₁ John **should**₁ have done his homework?
- c. ***Have**₁ John should **have**₁ done his homework?

It is universally acknowledged that extraction of the subject wh-phrase ‘who’ in (51b) is licensed under the assumption that C the head of CP in English is endowed with uninterpretable tense and wh-features which need to be checked. The movement of ‘who’ is allowed because it is the closest wh-phrase to the C-domain which needs to be raised into Spec-CP/Spec-FocP in order to ensure feature-checking. In like manner, the ‘dummy’ auxiliary ‘does’ embedding present tense features raises to C in order to check and erase the uninterpretable tense features hosted in C. Movement of ‘does’ from T to C also applies locally as it crosses no intermediate head on its way upwards. The ungrammaticality of (51c) results from a violation of minimality requirements cited above because wh-movement of the wh-phrase ‘what’ in the C-domain is not local. The wh-phrase ‘what’ is not the closest element to the C-domain and therefore cannot be attracted upwards because of the presence of the subject wh-phrase ‘who’ which acts as an intervener in

the sense of Rizzi (1990, 2004). In the same vein, the ungrammaticality obtained in (52c) also results from a violation of the minimality requirements, but with a little difference that what moves in (52c) is a head category as compared to phrasal category movement in (51c). Following the assumption that yes/no questions in English requires head raising of an auxiliary/modal to the C-domain, it becomes obvious that C can only probe over the nearest head. In this case, the closest c-commanded X^0 category to C is the modal ‘should’ which is supposed to be hosted in T as opposed to ‘have’ which is supposed to be hosted below T (probably in Aux the head of AuxP). With this in mind, moving the lowest category which is the auxiliary ‘have’ will not do justice to the Shortest Move subsumed under the Head Movement Constraint, and Relativized Minimality. More concretely, the modal ‘should’ acts as an intervener with the same featural make-up as ‘have’ in such a way that movement of the latter on its way to the C-domain is disqualified because of the intervention of the former which is of the same category (a head category) as the extracted modal ‘should’.

With this little background in mind, one can now explain why focused XPs i.e. focused non-wh-phrases are prevented from moving in the IAV position in Basaá. Recall that focus fronting in sentence initial position in Basaá is morphosyntactic in the sense that it involves both constituent reordering and obligatory morphological marking as can be seen in (53b) below. With (53a) as the input sentence without any focus, sentence (5cc) shows that a wh-phrase in Basaá may be morphologically marked only for agreement. In other words the presence of the focused marker is completely ruled out (see the asterisk preceding the focus marker **-n**). It can be observed that morphosyntactic focus marking in the IAV position is prohibited (53d).

(52)

- a. Mudaá a- gá- keβél báken makəndɔ
1.woman 1-SM-FUT2-serve 2.guests 6.plantains
‘The woman will serve plantains to the guests.’
- b. Makəndɔ₁ mó-n mudaá a- gá- keβél báken t₁
6.plantains 6-FOC 1.woman 1.SM-FUT2-serve 2.guests
‘The woman will serve PLANTAINS to the guests.’
- c. Kíí₁ (yɔ)-*n mudaá a- gá- keβél báken t₁
9.what 9-FOC 1.woman 1.SM-FUT2-serve 2.guests
‘What will the woman serve to the guests?’
- d. *Mudaá a- gá- keβél makəndɔ₁ mó-n báken makəndɔ₁
1.woman 1.SM-FUT2-serve 6.plantains 6-FOC 2.guests 6.plantains
‘Intended: The woman will serve PLANTAINS to the guests.’

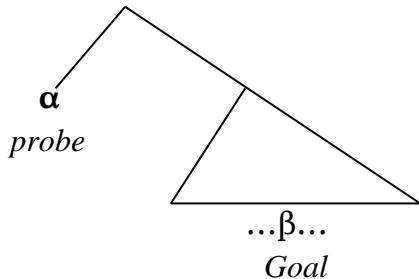
In the preceding chapters, it has been shown that focus fronting in Basaá gives rise to two embedded FocP and AgrCP functional projections. The agreement complementizer phrase

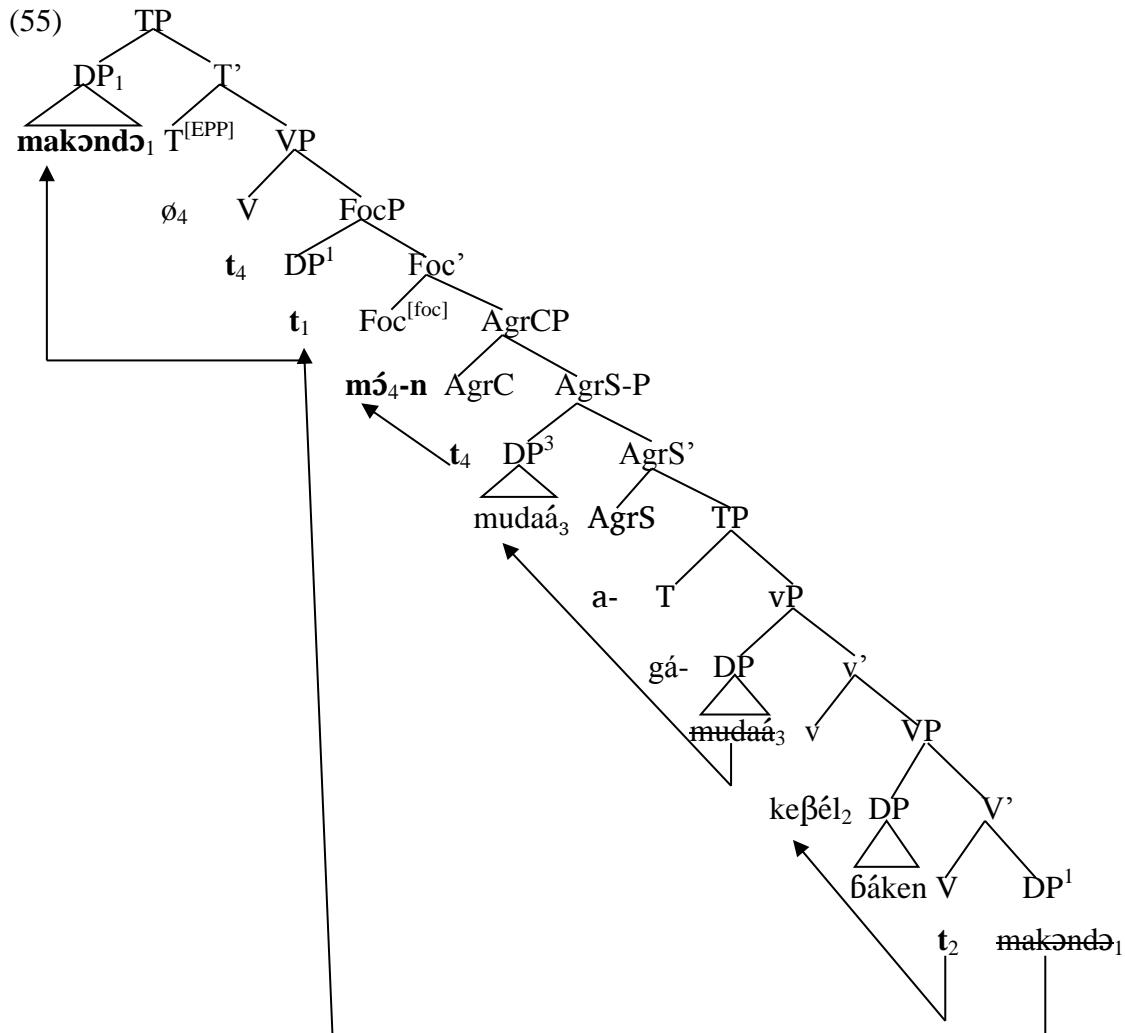
(AgrCP) is the locus of agreement, FocP encodes focus and dominates AgrCP. It was postulated that the complex head, which encodes both agreeing and focus information and which acts as a probe, is uninterpretable so that it probes over a goal category endowed with interpretable focus features. In addition given that focus fronting in this language works in tandem with EPP, it was said that focus is derived by a bi-clausal structure which requires movement of the focused constituent into the matrix TP for EPP via the embedded FocP for the focus-criterion. Adopting Chomsky's (2000, 2001a, b) principle in (41) above and repeated below as (54), the derivation of sentence (53b) will proceed as in the structure in (55).

(54)

- a. *Agree (α, β) iff α c-commands β ; α, β have matching features; there is no γ with matching features such that α c-commands γ and γ c-commands β .*

b.





Note that if the derivation of (53b) is easily provided as in (55), there still remain some questions concerning the derivation of sentence (53c) in which the fronted wh-phrase *kíí* ‘what’ must exclusively be marked for agreement but never for focus. It is widely known in African linguistics that in many languages, wh-phrases are focused marked as can be illustrated in the following Gungbe (Kwa) and Tuki (Bantu) data:

(56) **Gungbe** (Aboh 2004a:239)

- | | |
|---|---|
| a. éte *(wè) Séna xiá
what Foc Sena read-Perf
'What did Sena read?' | b. ménú *(wè) t _i xiá wémà l5?
who Foc read-Perf book Spf[def]
'Who read the specific book?' |
|---|---|

(57) **Tuki** (Biloa 1997:37&61)

- | | |
|--|---|
| c. Ate (aye) Puta a- ma-namba
what FOC Puta SM-P2-cook
'What did Puta cook?' | d. Ouate (owu) Puta a- m(a)-ibam moni
why FOC Puta SM-P2- steal money
'Why did Puta steal the money?' |
|--|---|

Recall that if focus marking is mandatory in Gungbe wh-constructions, in Tuki, on the contrary, wh-phrases are optionally marked for focus. However, focalized non-wh-phrases in Tuki are

mandatorily focus marked as claimed thoroughly in a good number of works (Biloa 1992, 1995, 1997, 2013). When compared with Basaá, it can be realized that there exists a cross-linguistic variation when it comes to the distribution of wh-phrases crosslinguistically. Biloa points out that fronted wh-phrases in Tuki agree in class and number with their corresponding focus markers insofar as any random assignment of focus markers leads to illicitness. As opposed to Tuki, Gungbe is not a noun class language. However, Aboh claims that wh-in-situ constructions are not licensed in Gungbe. Wh-phrases must be fronted and focused marked morphologically. The demarcation line between Tuki and Basaá which are Bantu languages is that even if both allow morphological marking in wh-fronting (53c) and (57), Basaá does not license morphological focus marking, but only agreement marking may be attested. As already mentioned in a subsequent chapter, it is not easy to separate and identify the focus morpheme from/ and its agreement counterpart in Tuki because both seem to be inextricable. Conversely, in Basaá, dissociating the focus marker from the agreement marker is obvious. This can be explained by the fact agreement can occur without the focus (53c).

The fact that wh-phrases cannot be focus marked in Basaá is highly expected if one adopts the standard assumption that wh-phrases are generally said to be inherently focused although in some languages wh-phrases and focused constituent do not exhibit any symmetrical relation, i.e. their behaviour is not the same (e.g (Dyakonova 2009; Stepanov 1997, Strahov 2001 among others for the asymmetry between wh-phrases and focused constituents in Russian). I would like to argue that wh-phrases cannot be focus marked in Basaá because of a clash of features. In other words, if Basaá wh-phrases such as *njéé* ‘who’ *kíí* what’ *héé* ‘where’ and *léláá* ‘what’ (in the contexts whereby it denotes an argument interpretation) cannot be focus marked, this is because these wh-items are focused inherently. With this feature inheritance in mind, there is no other way they can be focus marked at the same time, hence the ruling out of sequences which license focus marking on wh-phrases as can be further illustrated below.

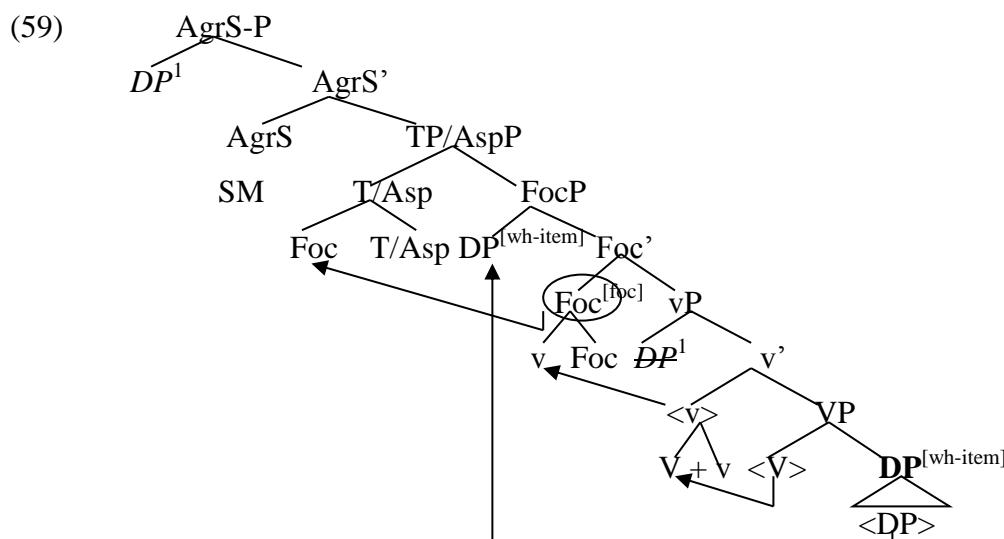
(58)

- a. **héé** (**nyé**)-*n malêt a- n- níYá-ná báúdú
1.where 1-*FOC 1.teacher 1.SM-PST1-teach-APLL 2.students
‘Where did the teacher teach the students?’
- b **Njéé** (**nyé**)-*n mudaá a- bí kefél mbóngóó
1.who 1-*FOC 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-serve 7.mbóngóó
‘Whom did the woman serve mbóngóó?’

- c. Kíí (*yó*)-*n mudàá a- bí- sómb-ól bósóŋgé
 9.what 9-*FOC 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-buy-BEN 2.children
 'What did the woman buy for the children?'

The sentences in (58) show that, wh-fronting does not license focus marking, and it is the reason why the presence of the focus marker *-n* is disqualified. However, the fronted wh-phrase may agree in class and number with an agreeing morpheme. The assumption is that since the wh-items *héé* ‘where’ and *njéé* ‘who’ in (58) are inherently focused, then the presence of a potential focus marker is unwarranted because of a clash of two focus features (i.e. one borne by the wh-item and the other one by the focus marker). This state of affairs offers us with interesting results from a cross-linguistic perspective by showing that wh-phrases are not always focus marked not only across African languages but also across world languages.

Following the idea that there exists a lower FocP in the vicinity of VP in Basaá and after shown that this information structure-related projection is the locus of some extracted wh-phrases, one would wonder why wh-phrases in the IAV position should not be focus marked morphologically. The lower focus phrase is only filled in its specifier position by a moved wh-item while the head position is empty or implicit, allowing the lexical verb to raise freely into the inflectional layer. The following structure in (59) provides furthermore a simplified snapshot of the clausal mapping of a lower focus phrase in Basaá.



Steps 1: Successive cyclic verb movement from V into T/Asp via v and Foc

Step: DP subject raising

Step 3: Wh/focus movement

The clausal architecture provided in (59) straightforwardly explains why sentences with morphological focus and agreement marking of the wh-items and focused items is not permitted at the IAV position. This is simply because the immediately after verb focus position does not license any ‘Doubly-Filled-FOC Filter’. In other words, a configuration in which both the specifier and the head of the lower focus phrase are simultaneously filled by lexical materials is disqualified. The mapping in (59) only licenses wh-movement in the IAV without any morphological marking of the focus head. In this case, in order to obtain a wh-phrase in the IAV position, the lexical verb should raise in a step-wise/cyclic fashion from the VP/vP-layer to the inflectional domain (Tense /Aspect-licensing) via the intermediary implicit Foc⁰ the head of the lower focus projection.

(60) **Morphosyntactic focus marking at the IAV position*

- a. *Mudaá a- gá- keβél **makəndə₁** mó-n báken **makəndə₁**

1.woman 1.SM-FUT2-serve 6.plantains 6-FOC 2.guests 6.plantains

‘Intended: The woman will serve PLANTAINS to the guests

- b. * Mudaá a- gá- keβél **mó-n makəndə₁** báken **makəndə₁**

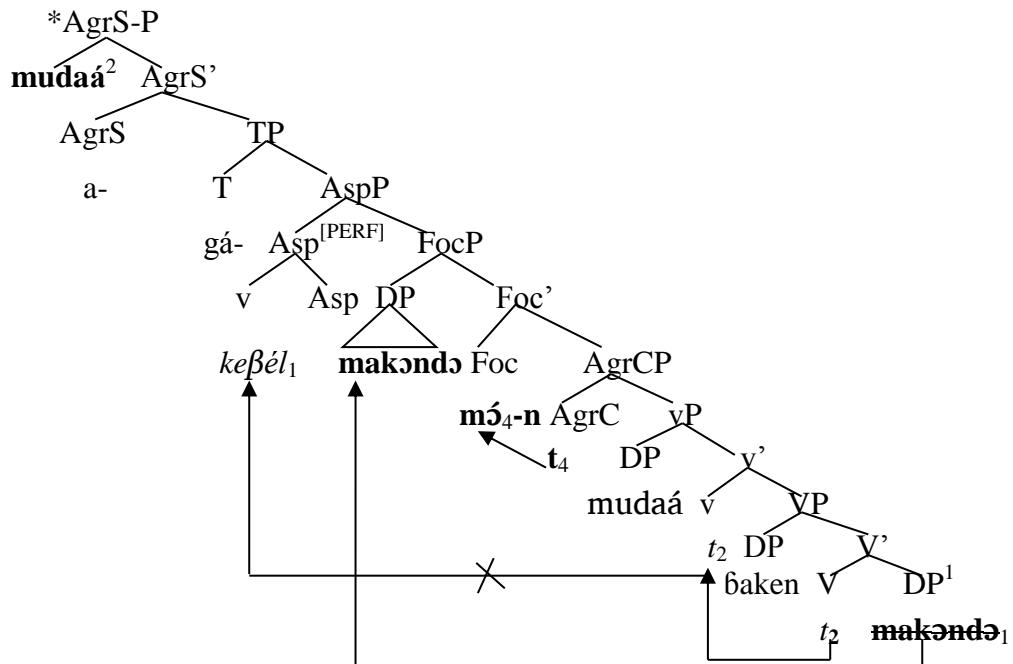
1.woman 1.SM-FUT2-serve 6-FOC 6.plantains 2.guests 6.plantains

‘Intended: The woman will serve PLANTAINS to the guests

The derivation of the ungrammatical sentence in (60a) depicted in (61a) shows that, the presence

of the complex focus morpheme *mó-n* blocks verb movement into the inflectional domain.

(61) a.



With (59) in mind, the ungrammaticality of (60a) as well as the (60b) can be accounted for in terms of the minimality conditions such as the Head Movement Constraint, Relativized Minimality or the Minimal Link Condition. In other words, once Foc⁰ the head of FocP is filled by the focus marker, verb movement into the aspectual domain is blocked by the presence of the

complex *mó-n* in Foc. Sentence (60b) shows that even if the verb picks up the focus head on its way to the Asp, the sequence is still illicit. The ungrammaticality of sentences like (60a-b) is not only linked to minimality effects, but also to the fact that one cannot adequately account for the null copula hypothesis argued for in this work. In other words, given that focus fronting of non-wh-phrases requires a bi-clausal structure, one cannot account for how the null copula can be integrated into the lower focus field in the context of (61).

In partial conclusion, the structure in (61) does not do justice to minimality conditions which require that movement should comply with the shortest move or locality constraints, i.e. it must be as shorter as possible in order to minimize syntactic chains (Rizzi 1990; Chomsky 1995 *inter alia*). In terms of Rizzi's (2004) Minimal Configuration (MC), elements entering into a local relation should be 'short-sighted', i.e. they can only see as far as the first potential bearer. This is further supported by the fact that focus fronting of wh-items in the IAV position should comply with minimality effects. The data below show that wh-movement to the IAV position cannot cross over a preceding wh-item on its way to the lower Spec-FocP. As Basáá exhibits a subject-verb-indirect object-direct object-Adjunct basic word order, if the direct object is a wh-item and the indirect object an NP/DP, wh-movement of the direct object across an indirect DP/NP constituent successfully yields an illicit construction. However, if both objects are wh-phrases, the direct object wh-phrase cannot cross over its indirect object wh-counterpart because it would violate locality principles which can be subsumed under superiority and subjacency (62c). Similarly, a direct object DP/DP constituent is banned from crossing over its indirect object DP/NP counterpart for the same reasons (62d). More precisely, movement of the direct object over its indirect object counterpart is not possible.

(62)

- a. Mudaá a- gá- keβél **ńáken** *βijék βilám*
1.woman 1.SM-FUT2-serve 2.guests 8.food 8.nice
'The woman will serve the guests nice food.'
- b. Mudaá a- gá- keβél $\sqrt{kíi}_1$ **ńáken** $\sqrt{kíi}_1$
1.woman 1.SM-FUT2-serve 9.what 2.guests 9.what
'What will the woman serve the children?'
- c. Mudaá a- gá- keβél (**kíi*) **njéé** $\sqrt{kíi}$
1.woman 1.SM-FUT2-serve 9.what 1.who 9.what
'What will the woman serve the guests?'
- d. Mudaá a- gá- keβél **βijék βilám* **ńáken** $\sqrt{βijék βilám}$
1.woman 1.SM-FUT2-serve 8.food 8.nice 2.guests 8.food 8.nice
'The woman will serve the guests nice food?'

At this stage the structures exhibited in (62) can be conceived of as the ones which must comply with Rizzi's (2004) *Minimal Configuration* defined as (63) below.

(63)

Y is in a Minimal Configuration (MC) with X iff there is no Z such that

- (i) Z is of the same structural type as X, and
- (ii) (ii) Z intervenes between X and Y
- (iii)

Principle (63) clearly restricts movement operations and shows that the latter are highly constrained by some principles of UG for convergence and Full Interpretation. In light of (63), categories of the 'same type' are subject to locality restrictions so much so that a wh-item or a head category cannot cross over its wh or head counterpart in a given context just as a direct object NP/DP is banned from skipping/scrambling (over) its indirect object counterpart. Summarizing, a wh-item cannot be fronted to the IAV position if there is another wh-item in-between the lower FocP and the target wh-item as depicted in (64).

(64) ...[AgrSP [AgrS [TP [AspP [FocP_▲ [Foc [vP DP [v [VP <DP^[wh]>[V ...<DP^[wh]>...]]]]]]]

6.3.2. Against a vowel lengthening analysis of wh-constructions in Basaá

This section criticizes inadequate predictions recently made by Hamlaoui & Makasso (2011) about the distribution of question words in Basaá. The authors claim that the position of question words in Basaá has to do with existential presupposition. For instance, they argue that ex-situ wh-items carry a D-linked presupposition in the sense of Pesetsky (1989), and that ex-situ wh-items call for an exhaustive focus interpretation. Another wrong prediction made by these authors is that, wh-phrases in sentence-initial and final positions are always long while when used at the IAV, they are short. In other words, their claim is that (65a-b) are different from (66a-b) in that in the first case, the wh-item exhibits vowel lengthening whereas such lengthening is not attested when the question word(s) is/are raised in the IAV.

(65)

- a. **héé** maaŋgé a- íj- kε
 1. where 1.child 1.SM-PRS-go
 'Where does the woman go?'
- b. maaŋgé a- íj- kε **héé**
 1.child 1.SM-PRS-go 1.where
 'Where does the child go?'

(66) *Vowel shortening of wh-items* (Hamlaoui & Makasso 2011: 52-53).

- a. mààŋgé a- ñ- sómb kí ñâŋ
child sm3sg P1-buy what mother
'What did the child buy for his mother?'
- b. à ñ- bòŋ lá mákàlà
SM3sg PRES-make how doughnuts
'How does he make doughnuts?'

Note that from my native speaker judgement/intuition⁴⁹, there is nothing such as (66a-b) in Basaá where question words are shortened. Instead, the idea is that question words almost⁵⁰ never undergo vowel reduction no matter where they are located in clause structure. More precisely, as opposed to the previous authors, I argue that (66a-b) are not possible in the language, hence incorrect. The correct way of forming questions in the IAV position is to have question words unchanged, i.e. without any vowel reduction as can be seen in (67) below.

(67)

- a. mààŋgé a- ñ- sómb-ól kíí ñâŋ
1.child 1.SM-PST1-buy-BEN 1.what 1.mother
'What did the child buy for his mother?'
- b. pro_i à_i ñ- bòŋ láá mákàlà
pro 1.SM-PRS-make how doughnuts
'How does he make doughnuts?'

Furthermore, my judgement of (66a) is that the verb *sómb* 'buy' must combine with an applicative with a beneficiary interpretation. When the direct object of *sómb* 'buy' is not a beneficiary, it cannot combine with an applicative morpheme. So (66a) in my judgment⁵¹ is not only ruled out because of the lack of vowel lengthening on the wh-item *kíí* 'what', but also because of the absence of an applicative on the verbal root *sómb* 'buy'. Note that it is the applicative *-ól* in (67a) which conveys a beneficiary interpretation. For instance, it can be literally translated as 'for' because the complex *sómb-ól* means 'buy for'/for the benefit of'. In this vein, it requires two objects, namely a theme/patient argument (here *kíí* 'what') and a beneficiary/benefactive argument (here *ñâŋ* 'mother').

⁴⁹ According to Bitja'a Kody (p.c) another native speaker of Basaá and linguist, sentences such as (66a-b) are meaningless in Basaá.

⁵⁰ In sluicing cases, question items may undergo vowel shortening. However, Hamlaoui & Makasso (2011) predict that shortening is attested in information-seeking questions. Their analysis does not address sluicing.

⁵¹ It is possible that the choice of the benefactive morpheme is subject to dialect variation across speakers

6.4. On the position of the Wh-phrase: the interplay between focus and léláá /ínyuúkíí ‘how come / why’

In section 6.2.2, the distribution of the question items *léláá* and *ínyuúkíí* in Basáá was discussed and the analysis showed that the non-referential adjunct *léláá* is polysemic, that is, it encodes more than one lexical entry. So it was shown that it does not only mean ‘how’ (manner adverbial interpretation), but it can also mean ‘what’, ‘why’ and ‘how come’ depending on whether it conveys an argument interpretation or not. The non-referential *ínyuúkíí* ‘why’ is not polysemic i.e. it expresses only a reason interpretation. On the assumption that ‘why’ and ‘how come’ denote reason, it was postulated that the non-referential *ínyuúkíí* ‘why’ expresses reason. Of interest is that the non-referential *ínyuúkíí* ‘why’ /‘how come’ always precedes focus, i.e. it can never be used in a position whereby it is dominated by focus. In its non-referential reading, the lexical item *léláá*, also behaves like *ínyuúkíí* ‘why’ /‘how come’ i.e. it always precede and never follow focalized constituents. In this perspective, it can never be dominated by focus. When interpreted as ‘what’ it is focused in the same manner as argument wh-items *njéé* ‘who’ and *kíí* ‘what’ and the referential adjuncts *héé* ‘where’ and *kélkíí* ‘when’ which, as we have discussed above, are inherently focused. This was said to be linked to the fact that arguments and referential adjuncts cannot co-occur with focused items and can be raised at the IAV position⁵².

In (68a-b), it can be seen that both *léláá* ‘how come/why’ and *ínyuúkíí* ‘why’ ‘how come’ must precede focused constituents and not the other way round (68c-d). Sentence (66a) shows that when used alongside focus, the reading according to which the lexical item *léláá* conveys a manner interpretation is not possible (it cannot be translated as ‘how’).

(68)

- a. ***léláá***₂ *dīŋgɔnda*₁ *tʃ̪-n* malêt a- n̄- tí (*t₁*) makeβla *t₂*
 how come/why 13.girls 13-FOC 1.teacher 1.SM-PRS-give 6.presents
 ‘Why/how come the teacher gives the presents to GIRLS?’
 *’How does the teacher give the presents to GIRLS?’
- b. ***ínyuúkíí***₂ *dīŋgɔnda*₁ *tʃ̪-n* malêt a- n̄- tí (*t₁*) makeβla *t₂*
 how come/why 13.girls 13-FOC 1.teacher 1.SM-PRS-give 6.presents
 ‘Why/how come the teacher gives the presents to GIRLS?’

⁵² The reason why the temporal adjunct ‘when’ cannot be raised in the IAV position is still unknown.

- c.* *dīngɔnda₁ tʃ̥-n léláá₂* malêt a- ní- tí (*t₁*) makeβla *t₂*
 13.girls 13-FOC how come/why 1.teacher 1.SM-PRS-give 6.presents
- d.* *dīngɔnda₁ tʃ̥-n ínyuúkíí₂* malêt a- ní- tí (*t₁*) makeβla *t₂*
 13.girls 13-FOC how come/why 1.teacher 1.SM-PRS-give 6.presents

It is worth mentioning that when used sentence finally, both *léláá* and *ínyuúkíí* can be preceded by a fronted focus as shown in (69a-b) below.

(69)

- a. *dīngɔnda₁ tʃ̥-n* malêt a- ní- tí (*t₁*) makeβla ***léláá*** ?
 13.girls 13-FOC 1.teacher 1.SM-PRS-give 6.presents how come/why
 ‘Why/how come the teacher gives the presents to GIRLS?’
 *’How does the teacher give the presents to GIRLS?’
- b. *dīngɔnda₁ tʃ̥-n* malêt a- ní- tí (*t₁*) makeβla ***ínyuúkíí*** ?
 13.girls 13-FOC 1.teacher 1.SM-PRS-give 6.presents how come/why
 ‘Why/how come the teacher gives the presents only to GIRLS?’

This state of affairs raises the question concerning the distribution of *léláá* and *ínyuúkíí* and their relation to focus. In other words, why is there a kind of asymmetry between (68c-d) and (69a-b) since the former are ruled out while the latter are correct? The answer to this question is straightforward. A non-referential wh-phrase takes scope over focus either at PF or LF. The reason why (68c-d) are ruled out is due to the fact that the non-referential wh-phrases *léláá* and *ínyuúkíí* ‘how come’/why’ are c-commanded by focus at PF. On the contrary, sentences (69a-b) are ruled in because the same non-referential wh-phrases scope over the whole sentence and c-command their focus at LF. One can draw an inference from these facts and propose that non-referential adjuncts must always dominate the focus of the sentence either at PF or at LF whereby they undergo LF raising to a c-commanding position in the clause structure. In this vein, sentences (68a-b) and (69a-b) have the same LF interpretation but only differ at PF.

In previous works Bassong (2010) postulates that the non-referential wh-phrases *léláá* and *ínyuúkíí* ‘how come’/why’ occupy the specifier position of a functional projection called Wh-phrase the head of which is implicit/covert in the Basaá clausal left periphery. Of interest is the fact that focused constituents and the non-referential *léláá* and *ínyuúkíí* ‘how come’/why’ can co-occur in the same sentence whose illocutionary force is expressed by the lexical *lé* ‘that’ in

Basaá. These three elements always occur in a fixed hierarchical word order, namely Force > Wh-phrase > FocP either at PF or LF as depicted in (70a) and (70b).

(70)

a. *PF representation: ForceP > Wh-phrase > TP > FocP*

Mε mí- bat **lé** ínyuúkíí₂ *dingonda*₁ *tʃɔ-n* malêt a- ní- tí (*t₁*) makeβla
I PRS-ask that why/how come 13.girls 13-FOC 1.teacher 1.SM-PRS-give 6.presents
ínyuúkíí₂

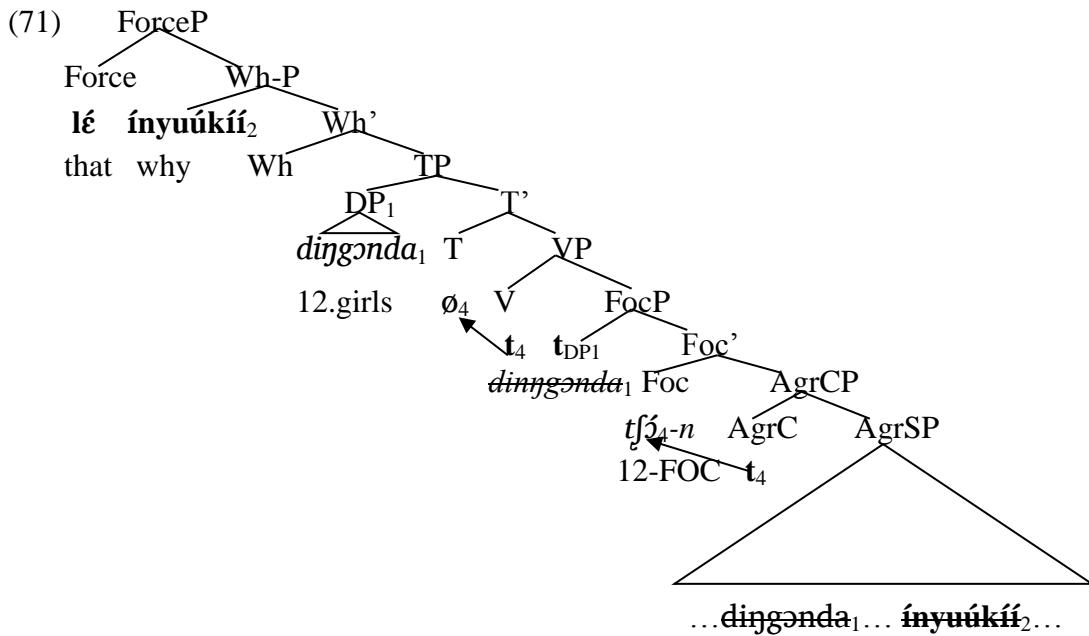
why/how come

‘I wonder why the teacher only gave the presents to the GIRLS.’

b. *ForceP > TP > FocP > Wh-phrase at PF, but ForceP > Wh-phrase > TP > FocP at LF*

U mí- bat **lé** *dingonda*₁ *tʃɔ-n* malêt a- ní- tí (*t₁*) makeβla **ínyuúkíí**
you.2SG PRS-ask that 13.girls 13-FOC 1.teacher 1.SM-PRS-give 6.presents why/how c.
‘I wonder why the teacher only gave the presents to the GIRLS.’

Under the assumption that in-situ non-referential wh-phrases undergo LF raising to the left periphery where they have wide scope over the whole proposition it can be inferred that both (70a) and (70b) have the same LF representation i.e. a clausal mapping in which the focus phrase occurs in the c-commanding domain of the non-referential wh-phrases. The following structure in (71) portrays in a very simplified manner the clausal architecture of both (70a) and (70b) respectively at PF and LF. Even if at PF a non-referential wh-phrase seems to be c-commanded by focus, the idea is that the former raises at LF to the left periphery where it has wide scope over the whole sentence. Typologically, speaking, only the non-referential adjuncts **ínyuúkíí** ‘why’ and **léláá** ‘how come/why’ occupy Spec-Wh-P. Recall that as the non-referential adjunct **léláá** is polysemic, it occupies Spec-Wh-P only when it is interpreted as ‘how come/why’. Other wh-items, when moved, occupy Spec-FocP.



A more technical answer to the phenomena going on in (69-70) where a non-referential wh-phrase can be ex-situ or in-situ, is to propose that cases like these are subject to a grammatical criterion, namely the wh-criterion (Rizzi 1991, 1996), a general principle of UG which is responsible for the surface distribution of wh-operators in English-like languages and the LF distribution of the Chinese-like ones. Consider the following principle in (72) below:

(72) *Non-referential Wh-criterion*

- A wh-operator with a non-referential interpretation must be in a Spec-Head configuration with a non-referential $X^0_{[+wh]}$*
- A non-referential $X^0_{[+wh]}$ must be in a Spec-Head configuration with a non-referential wh-operator.*

Borrowing from Brody's (1990:208) focus-criterion, I attempt to reformulate Rizzi's (1991, 1996) wh-criterion in the following terms:

(73) *Wh-criterion (revisited)*

- At PF and LF the Spec of a Wh-phrase must contain a +wh-phrase*
- At LF all +wh-phrases must be in the Spec of a Wh-phrase.*

Principle (73) is an indication that at a certain stage of representation, every +wh-phrase must stand in a Spec-Head configuration with a head endowed with a +wh-feature. Therefore, there is no doubt that (73) can apply cross-linguistically, or better still, universally in the sense that English-like languages will have the wh-criterion satisfied in overt syntax while Chinese-like ones will get it satisfied at LF. Besides the English-like and Chinese-like there appears the Basaa language whose wh-criterion is satisfied either at PF (69a) or LF (69b). In this vein, Basaa is considered as a mixed language which combines both English and Chinese properties. In the

spirit of Chomsky's (1995) checking theory and Rizzi 's (1997) cartographic approach to syntactic structures, the wh-criterion can be conceived of as a symmetrical relation between a wh-phrase in Spec-Wh-P and Wh⁰ a corresponding head with the same features. Such a symmetrical relation can hold either at PF (69a) or LF (69b) in Basaá.

6.5. Negation phrase and the position of *ndígí* 'only'

This section provides a cursory syntactic and semantic account of two focus operators in Basaá, namely the negative operator *béé* and the exclusive operator *ndígí* 'only'. Although an account of both particles was provided in chapter three from a descriptive point of view, this section will focus on the theoretical account of these particles for in-depth understanding. In addition to the interpretation associated with the negation particle *béé*, it will be shown that this negative particle is a phrasal category based on some diagnostic tests used in the literature. The discussion will show that each of 'not > only' and 'only not' sequence in Basaá yields the same ambiguous readings. In other words, whether negation *béé* 'not' is preceded or followed by the exclusive operator *ndígí* 'only', one still obtains the same ambiguous readings, namely, the 'not > only' and the 'only > not' readings. The only difference between the two particles is that as opposed to negation, a postverbal *ndígí* 'only' cannot scope over a preceding subject in sentential negation contexts.

To begin with, recall that the negative operator *béé* in Basaá has two structural positions in clause structure, notably, the IAV position in sentential negation contexts and the immediate post verbal null copula in constituent negation constructions.

6.5.1 On sentential negation

When used in sentential negation structures, the negative operator *béé* 'not' always occurs at the IAV position where it conveys no existential presupposition. Either way, as discussed in chapter three, sentential negation in Basaá can be interpreted either as denial of a contextually known utterance or as a corrective statement in relation to what has been already mentioned in the discourse setting. For instance, sentence (74b) *Mudaá a-bí-kebél béé bɔ́ɔŋgé bijéY βilám* 'the woman did not serve the children nice food' can be subsumed under correction in the sense that

it expresses a denial of an utterance such as *Mudaá a-bí-kebél bós̄ŋgé bijéY βilâm* ‘the woman served the children nice food’ in (74a) which has been previously mentioned in the discourse.

- (74) Kíí mudàá a- bí- bɔŋ
9.what 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-do
‘What did the woman do?’

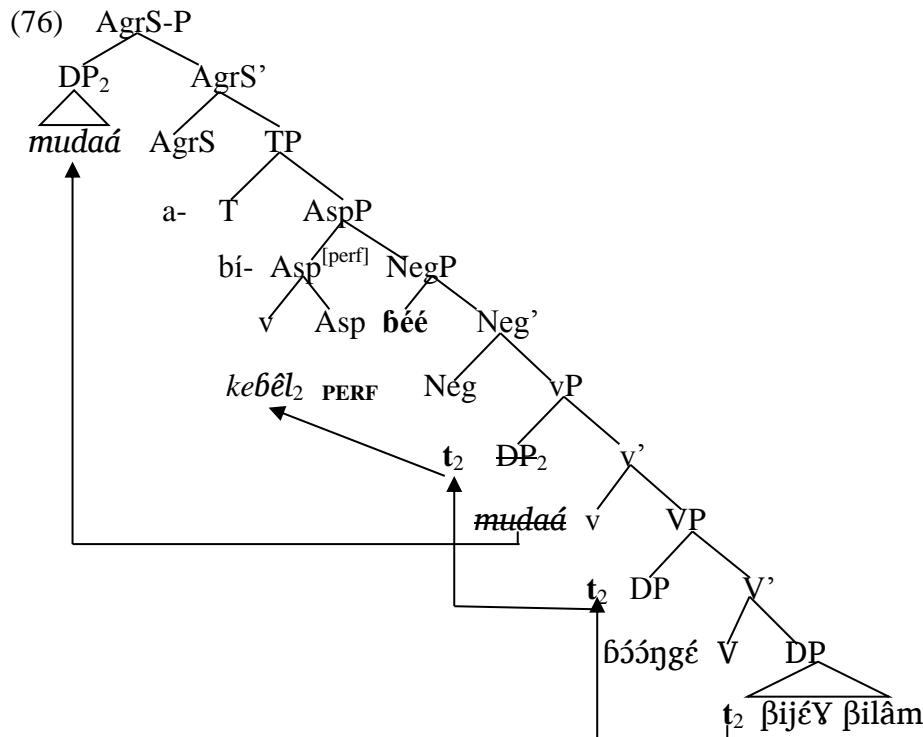
- a. Mudaá a- bí- kebél bós̄ŋgé bijéY βilâm *Declarative sentence*
1.woman 1.SM-PST2-serve.PERF 2.children 8.food 8.nice
‘The woman served the children nice food.’
- b. Mudaá a- bí- kebél bée bós̄ŋgé bijéY βilâm *Negative sentence*
1.woman 1.SM-PST2-serve.PERF NEG 2.children 8.food 8.nice
‘The woman did not serve the children nice food.’

Recall that a postverbal negation in Basaá conveys a wide range of interpretations. For instance, considering the question under discussion *What did the woman do?* in (74), sentence (74b) is a felicitous denial of a preceding utterance such as (74a) i.e. *Mudaá a-bí-kebél bós̄ŋgé bijéYβilâm* ‘the woman served the children nice food’. From a semantic point of view and taken out of the blue, sentence (74b) conveys the following readings, I addition to a sentential negation reading are possible:

- (75) a. It is not the case that the WOMAN served the children nice food: NOT > the woman
b. It is not the case that the woman SERVED THE CHILDREN NICE FOOD: NOT > VP
c. It is not the case that the woman served the CHILDREN nice food: NOT > the children
d. It is not the case that the woman served the children NICE FOOD: NOT > nice food

If it is true that a variety of interpretations can be obtained from (74b), one should be able to explain why a postverbal negation happens scope over the a preceding subject, the VP and a preceding verb given standard assumption that focus particles in general should be in a structural position where they c-command their focus. To answer this question, it was mentioned in chapter three that the different focus interpretations obtained in the context of postverbal negation in Basaá are well accounted for under the VP-Internal Subject Hypothesis (Sportiche 1988, Koopman & Sportiche 1991, Kuroda 1988 etc.) and verb movement.

In order words, at a given stage of the derivation, negation occupies a higher position in clause structure where it c-commands the whole verb phrase. The fact that negation occurs immediately after the subject and the verb is the result subject and verb raising out of the VP. While the subject raises for EPP or Spec-Head requirements, verb raising is due to aspect-licensing or agree as depicted in (76).



The derivation in (76) shows that negation is merged in a position where it c-commands the verb phrase prior to subject and verb movement. This is an indication that surface c-command is not necessary for scope relations between negation and its focus. The fact that postverbal negation scopes over a preceding subject and the verb is simply superficial. The verb needs to raise cyclically from the verbal layer into the aspect position (a position lower than negation) via Neg for aspect licensing or Agree (Aboh & Dyakonova 2009). Under the Copy Theory of Movement, it is assumed that the silent copies of the extracted subject and verb are c-commanded by negation and the subject and the verb reconstruct.

6.5.2 Negation as a phrasal category

I postulate that the negative particle is a phrasal category which occupies the specifier of a functional negation phrase (NegP), the head of which is empty and which host the displaced verb on its way to Asp. NegP c-commands VP and is c-commanded by any other functional projection in the inflectional domain. In other words, NegP is c-commanded by AgrSP, TP and/or AspP. In this line, the lexical verb raises to Asp⁰ to pick up aspectual information via Neg⁰ the head of NegP.

6.5.2.1 Minimality/intervention effects

That sentential negation involves head movement of the verb into the I-domain is clearly illustrated in the (77) below where the lexical verb *níigá* ‘teach’ attaches to an overt past progressive aspectual morpheme -Yá which is in turn followed by the particle *bée* ‘not’. In fact,

in sentence (77a), the lexical verb originates below the negation and aspectual morphemes. The fact that the verbal root *-nígá-* ‘teach’ precedes these inflectional morphemes is explained under successive cyclic(al) verb movement into Asp⁰ via Neg⁰. At the final stage of the derivation, the root verb precedes the progressive aspect morpheme which in turn, precedes negation.

(77)

- a. Malêt a- níigá-Yá béé báúdú minsɔŋgí¹
1.teacher 1.SM-teach-PROG.PST1 NEG 2.students 4.mathematics
‘The teacher was not teaching the students mathematics.’
- b. *Malêt a- -Yá béé níigá- báúdú minsɔŋgí¹
1.teacher 1.SM-PROG.PST1 NEG teach 2.students 4.mathematics

Where verb movement to the I-domain fails to apply, ungrammaticality arises as shown in sentence (77b). Since the verb is unable to move upward, we end up with an illicit sequence. So, what differs between (74b) above and (77a) is that in the former the perfective aspectual morpheme is implicit whereas in the latter, progressive aspect is overtly realized. Sentences (74a) and (74b) provide us with a convincing evidence that the verb needs to raise to the I-domain even though some inflectional information such as aspect, tense and the like may not be overtly realized.

Last, but not the least, the idea that the negative marker *béé* is a maximal projection and not a head is also supported in (78a) whereby the exclusive focus particle *ndígí* ‘only’ can precede or follow negation. So, if the Basàá negative marker *béé* was a head category and not a maximal projection, it would be impossible to explain how the lexical verb ‘teach’ can raise across negation on its way to the aspectual domain where it incorporates into the progressive aspect marker *-Yá*. It would also be impossible to have the exclusive focus operator *ndígí* ‘only’ in-between the verb complex *níigá-Yá* (78a) and the negative marker *béé*.

(78)

- a. Malêt a- níigá-Yá (ndígí) béé (ndígí) báúdú minsɔŋgí¹
1.teacher 1.SM-teach-PROG.PST1 only NEG only 2.students 4.mathematics
‘The teacher was not only teaching the students mathematics.’
- b. * Malêt a- níigá béé Yá ndígí báúdú minsɔŋgí¹
1.teacher 1.SM-teach NEG PROG only 2.students 4.mathematics

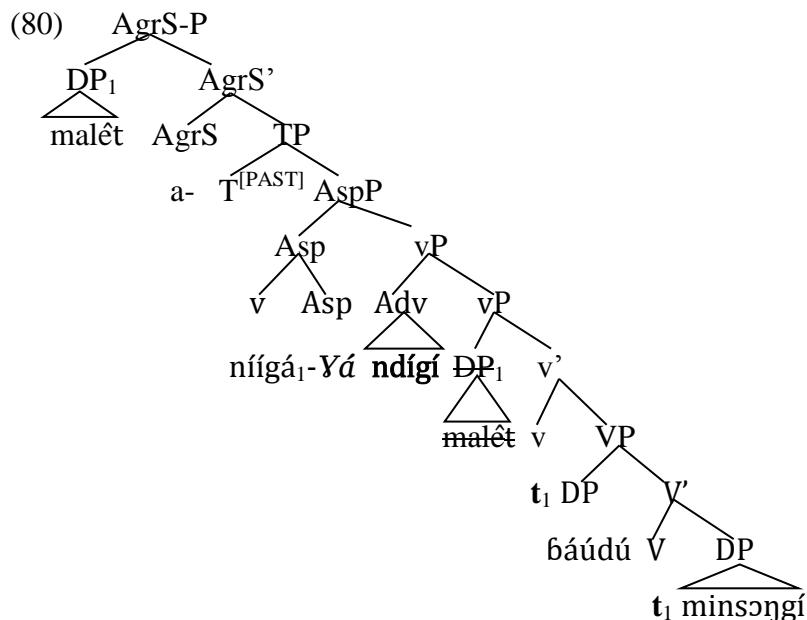
The ungrammaticality of (78b) shows that on its way to the aspectual domain, the lexical verb must not pick up the negative marker *béé*. In other words, if the negative marker was a head, one would expect it to be dragged along with the verb on its way to the aspectual domain and one would obtain a grammatical sentence in (78b). Similarly, if the negative particle *béé* was a head category, the movement of the lexical verb *níigá* ‘teach’ into the aspectual domain in (78a)

would be blocked by the intervening negative marker, giving rise to minimality effects, which is not the case.

As for the position of the exclusive focus operator *ndígí* ‘only’, it should be noted that it can precede or follow negation. Taken in isolation, i.e. in the absence of negation, it conveys the same semantic readings as its negative particle counterpart *ndígí* ‘only’. The following example shows that the exclusive operator *ndígí* ‘only’ occupies the IAV position where it can convey a wide range of interpretations. However, as opposed to negation, a postverbal *ndígí* ‘only’ cannot assign scope on a preceding subject as the unacceptable reading in (79i) shows.

- (79) Malêt a- níígá-Yá ndígí báúdú minsɔŋgí
- 1.teacher 1.SM-teach-PROG.PST1 only 2.students 4.mathematics
 ‘The teacher was not only teaching the students mathematics.’
- (i) # Only the **teacher** was teaching the students mathematics: #Only > teacher
 - (ii) It was the case that the teacher was only **teaching the students mathematics**: Only > VP
 - (iii) It was the case that the teacher was teaching only **the students** mathematics: Only > students
 - (iv) It was the case that the teacher only teach the students mathematics: Only > teach
 - (v) It was the case that the teacher was teaching the students only **mathematics**: Only > **mathematics**

The different readings above are possible if one assumes that the exclusive operator *ndígí* ‘only’ is a vP-adjoined adverb as in (80) where it assigns scope on the whole vP, i.e. prior to subject and verb extraction.



Under the Principle of Lexical Association (Beaver & Cleark 2008), one can understand why the reading in (79i) is not possible. More concretely, according to the PLA, a focus operator cannot scope over a trace of an extracted element. For example, in the English sentence ‘**John_i**, *Mary only likes t_i*’, the reading according to which ‘*Mary likes John and nobody else is not possible*’ under the PLA since the focus operator ‘only’ cannot associate with the trace of the direct object DP ‘John’. As a result, ‘John’ cannot reconstruct in postverbal position. In like manner, the reading in (79i) seems to be expected given that the trace of the subject ‘teacher’ is unable to reconstruct in the presence of the exclusive operator *ndígí* ‘only’. However, if the PLA seems to be true with subject extraction, it fails to account for (79ii) and (79iv) with VP and V focus readings given that the extracted verb *níigá* ‘teach’ successfully reconstructs in the presence of the exclusive operator *ndígí* ‘only’. One way of circumventing such an asymmetry is to assume that the PLA does not hold and that if the verb can reconstruct in the presence of the exclusive operator *ndígí* ‘only’ while the subject cannot, then the subject is base-generated out of the scope of the exclusive operator *ndígí* ‘only’, namely in Spec-AgrS-P. In this case, a reading such as (75a) where negation has scope over a preceding subject would be explained under Neg-raising, i.e. the subject is simply base-generated in Spec-AgrS-P and negation raising applies at the Logical Form.

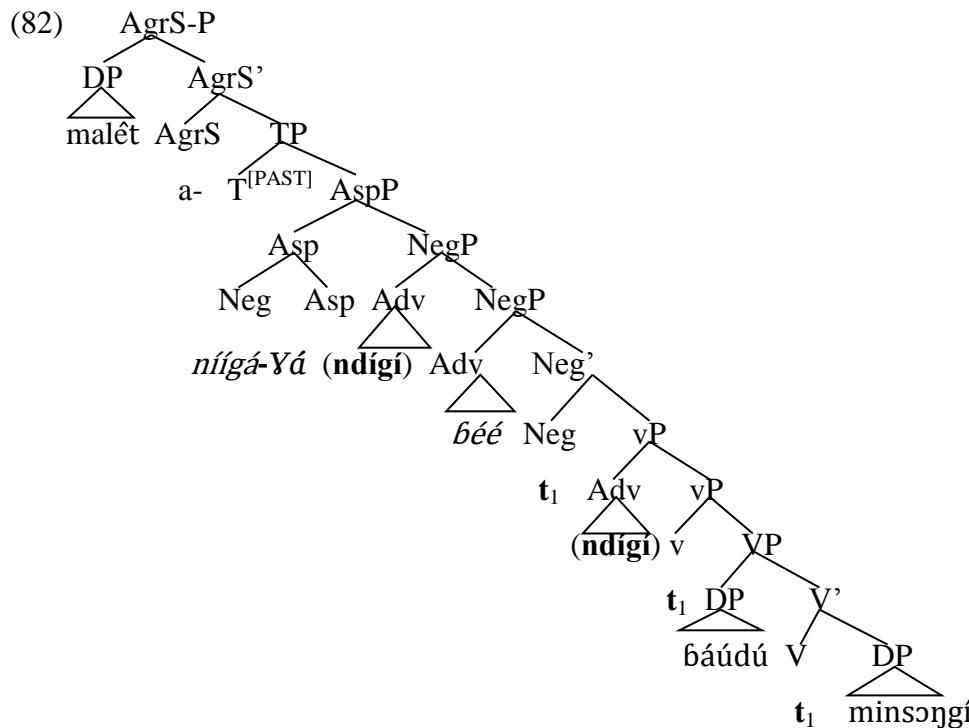
Note that the structural positioning of the the exclusive operator *ndígí* ‘only’ and negation is flexible, i.e. the former can precede the latter and vice-versa as illustrated in (81). Either negation precedes or follows the exclusive operator *ndígí* ‘only’, one obtains the same two ambiguous readings, which is not true of English. In other words each of the sentences in (81) is unambiguously interpreted in English while in Basaá, each of the sequences ‘not >only’ and ‘only >not’ is ambiguously interpreted.

- (81) a. Malêt a- níigá-Yá bée ndígí báúdú minsɔŋgí
- 1.teacher 1.SM-teach-PROG.PST1 NEG only 2.students 4.mathematics
- (i) ‘The teacher was not only teaching the students mathematics’ : NOT > ONLY
 - (ii) ‘The teacher was only not teaching the students mathematics’ ONLY > NOT
- b. Malêt a- níigá-Yá ndígí bée báúdú minsɔŋgí
- 1.teacher 1.SM-teach-PROG.PST1 only NEG 2.students 4.mathematics
- (i) ‘The teacher was not only teaching the students mathematics’ : NOT > ONLY
 - (ii) ‘The teacher was only not teaching the students mathematics’ ONLY > NOT

Given the flexibility of the exclusive *ndígí* ‘only’ as shown in (81), I assume that it is ajoined either to NegP or to VP. In other words, given the relative freedom⁵³ of adverbs in clause

⁵³ Adverbs in Cinque’s analysis are said to be hierarchically organized. However, the exclusive operator ‘only’ seems not to be part of his adverb hierarchy.

structure, I assume that in cases like (81a) the exclusive *ndígí* ‘only’ is adjoined to vP while in cases like (81b), it is adjoined to NegP. The overall picture is given in (82) below.



The representation in (82) clearly shows that if the negative particle *béé* ‘not’ was a head category, verb movement into Asp⁰ would be blocked by the intervening negative head. The fact that the exclusive focus operator *ndígí* ‘only’ can intervene in-between the verb and negation is an indication that the negative particle *béé* ‘not’ is not a head category but a phrasal one.

6.5.2.2 Merchant's (2006) ‘why not’ test

There is another relevant diagnostic test in the literature which consists in determining if in a given language negation is a head or a phrasal category. Merchant (2006:20) has proposed the ‘why not’ test for determining the phrasal nature of a negative particle and states that,

‘If the sentential negative marker in a given language is phrasal (an XP, generally adverbial), it will occur in the collocation why not?; if it is a head (an X⁰, generally clitic-like), it will not. In the latter languages, the word for ‘no’ can sometimes be used, itself (presumably) a phrasal negative adverb...’

In the spirit of Merchant, in a language where there is a word for ‘not’ and another for ‘no’, the ‘why not’ test succeeds, but ‘*why no’ is ruled out in most cases as shown in the list below (Merchant (op.cit)).

(83)

- | | |
|------------------------|---------------|
| a. English why not? | *why no?1 |
| b. German warum nicht? | * warum nein? |
| c. Dutch waarom niet? | * waarom nee? |

- d. Danish hvorfor ikke? * hvorfor nej?
 - e. Icelandic hverfor ekki? * hvarfor nej?
 - f. French pourquoi pas? * pourquoi non?²
 - g. Tsez shida anu? *shida ey?

Merchant makes use of the ‘why not’ test crosslinguistically as a reply to a negative statement (e.g. A: Anna is not leaving. B: why not?) but not in a quotational use of ‘no’ (e.g. A: the answer is no. B: why no?, why not yes?). What is important is that in all the languages in (83), the lexical word for the English ‘not’ is phrasal and not a head i.e. it is a phrasal category. As expected, the Basàá negative particle *béé* passes the ‘why not’ test as can be seen in the following examples.

- (84) A: bàá b̥ɔɔŋgé bá- kólí jé-lá ni bagwál ε
 Pol 2.children 2.SM-be allowed eat-COM with 2.parents Pol
 ‘Are the children allowed to eat with their parents?’
 B: ínyùúkíí b̥éé
 why NEG
 ‘ Why not?’

Keep in mind that the Basàá negative item *tò* ‘no’ when used as the English negative ‘no’, also passes the ‘why not’ test’ quotative contexts i.e. as a response to a positive polar answer (85a A-B-C). It cannot be used to negate a sentence as illustrated in (85b) below. But when used as the English scalar particle *even*, it is homophonous with its negative counterpart and follows the verb as in (85c).

I shall not focus on the function and nature of the particle *tɔ* here, but it can be retained from the above tests that it is polysemic and homophonous with the scalar focus particle *tɔ* ‘even’ in negative⁵⁴ statements. After it showing that the negative particle *béé* ‘not’ is a phrasal category

⁵⁴ The positive counterpart of *tɔ* 'even' as a scalar focus operator is *jag/k/y* 'even' as in the following example
 Kémbê í- ní- jé yag mapêp

and not a head based on a movement (locality) and ‘why not’ tests, I am going to investigate another structural position this negative particle occupies in Basáá clause structure, namely in focus fronting contexts.

6.5.3 On constituent negation

This section shows that negation occupies the same structural position in clause structure. The only difference is that in constituent negation contexts, negation c-commands a VP, the head of which is a null verbal copula.

Another structural position occupied by negation in Basáá is when it associates with a fronted focus in sentence initial position, and more specifically in constituent negation contexts. As discussed in chapter three, a negated constituent always precedes negation. Semantically, it conveys an existential presupposition as opposed to sentential negation. In other words, in most cases, constituent negation is negation of a specific sentence constituent and involves a null copula structure. Constituent negation always works in tandem with morpho-syntactic focus marking. In this respect, whenever there is constituent negation, one must obtain a morpho-syntactic left peripheral focus marking and a matrix clause headed by a null verb.

Considering (86Q) as the question under discussion, sentence (86a) is a declarative sentence whose focus (in-situ) falls on the direct object *minsowá* ‘ripe plantains’. Sentence (86b), which is an instance of constituent negation, shows that ‘the woman served something else to the children’ but not ‘ripe plantains’.

- (86) Q: Kií mudaá a- bí- keβél b̥ɔ́ŋgé¹⁰
 9.what 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-serve 2.children
 ‘What did the woman serve to the children?’

- a. Mudaá a- bí- keβél b̥ɔ́ŋgé **minsowá**
 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-serve 2.children 4.ripe plantains
 ‘The woman served the children RIPE PLANTAINS.’
- b. tɔ, **minsowá** b̥éé *(m̥ɔ-n) mudaá a- bí- keβél b̥ɔ́ŋgé¹¹
 no, 4.ripe plantains NEG 4-FOC 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-serve 2.children
 ‘No, the woman did not serve RIPE PLANTAINS to children.’: NOT > RIPE PLANTAINS
- c.* tɔ, **minsowá** *(m̥ɔ-n) b̥éé mudaá a- bí- keβél b̥ɔ́ŋgé¹²
 no, 4.ripe plantains 4-FOC NEG 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-serve 2.children
 ‘Intended: ‘No, the woman did not serve RIPE PLANTAINS to children’.

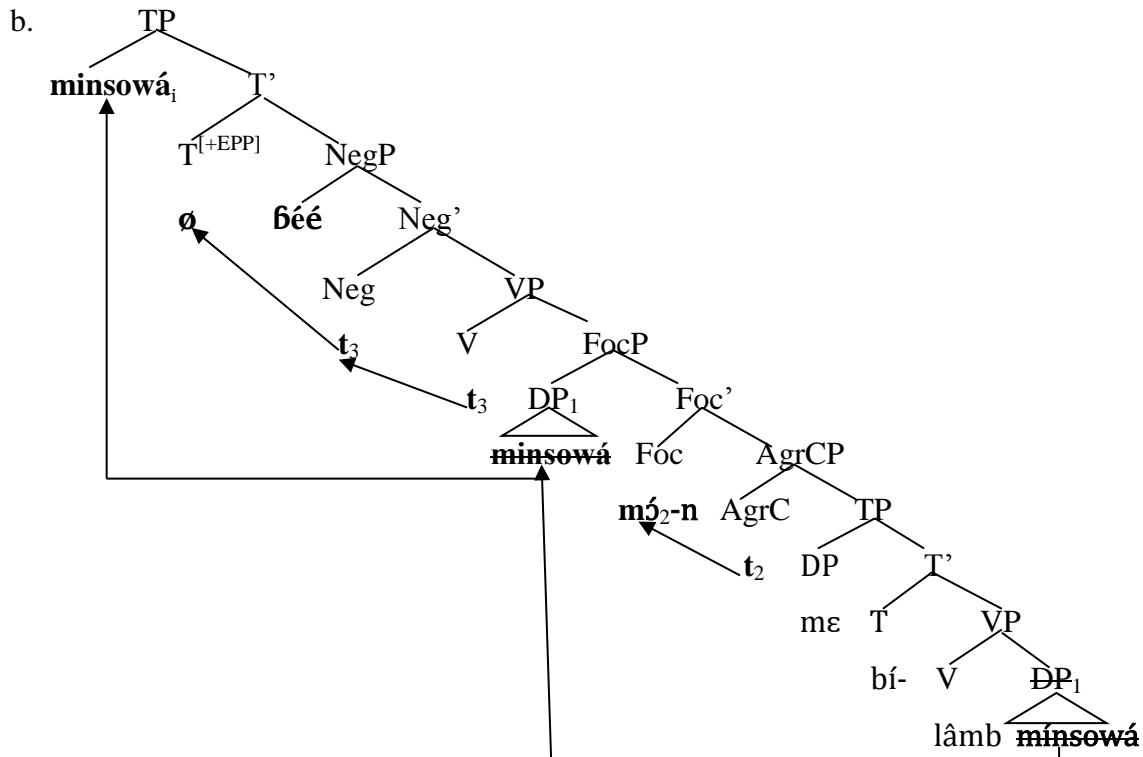
10.goats 10.SM-PRS-eat even 6.paper
 ‘Goats eat even/also papers’

What is being negated in (86) is the direct object *minsowá* ‘ripe plantains’. As can be seen, constituent negation always involves focus marking on the negated element and the order between negation and the focus marker is strict, i.e. when a constituent is negated, negation always precedes the focus marker and not the other way round, otherwise the sentence becomes illicit (86c).

The behaviour of negation in relation with focus in constituent negation contexts raises two striking questions that have been answered in chapter three. First of all, what position does a left negation occupies in the context of constituent negation in the Basaá clause structure? Secondly why must negation always precedes the focus marker and not the reverse?

To begin with the position negation, it has been postulated that just like in sentential negation, the negative marker *béé* ‘not’ is a maximal projection which occupies the specifier position of NegP. For uniformity purposes, there is no disparity between sentential negation and constituent negation in terms of structure. What differs between both forms of negation is that in sentential negation, there is an overt verb phrase c-commanded by NegP while in constituent negation, there is no overt verbal category on the surface. It is assumed that just like in sentential negation constructions, there exists, in constituent negation contexts a verb phrase below NegP but that VP c-commanded by NegP is headed by a null copula. Similarly, it is shown that NegP is in-between TP and VP in such a way that the null verb copula raises into T⁰ while the negated constituent raises into Spec-TP for EPP purposes as can be seen in (87b). Sentence (86c) repeated as (87a) is derived in (87b).

- (87) a. **minsowá béeé *(m̩-n)** mε bí-lâmb
 4.ripe plantains NEG 4-FOC I PST2-cook
 ‘I did not cook RIPE PLANTAINS’. /It is not ripe plantains that I cooked.’

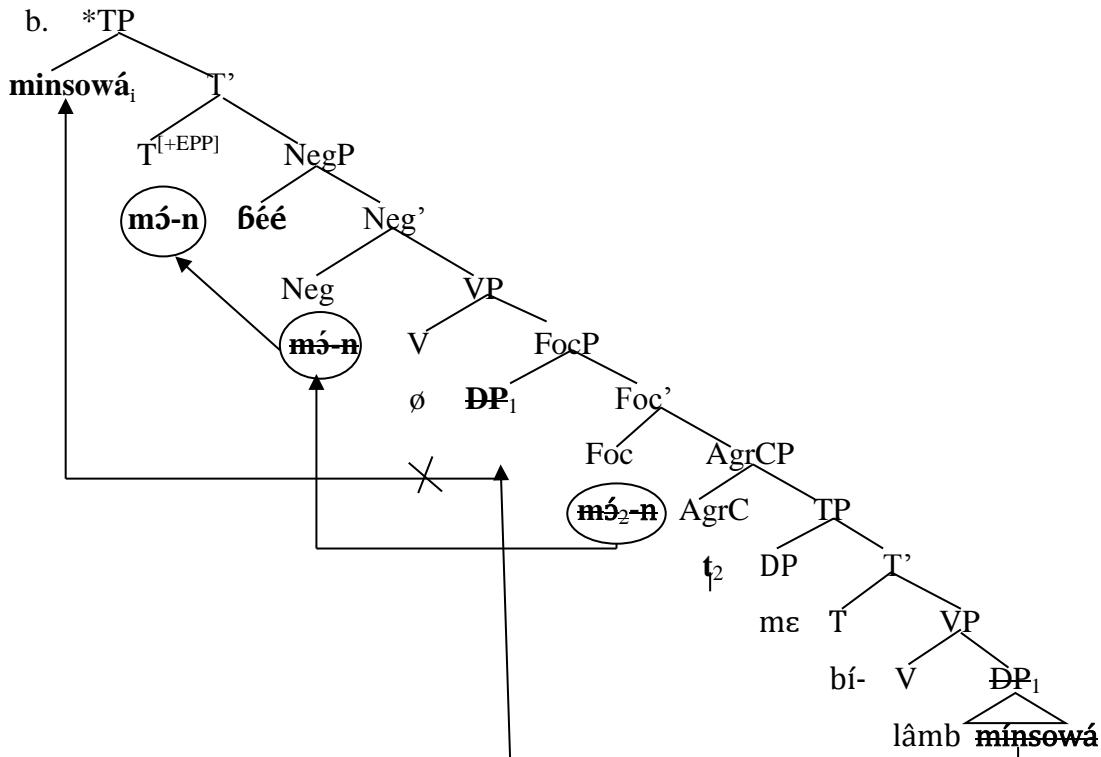


The phrase marker in (87b) shows that constituent negation involves a copula structure in which the negated constituent is simultaneously probed over by the embedded focus head the highest T head for focus ad EPP requirements respectively.

The last question to be answered is the following: why should negation always precede the focus marker? In other words, why is (86c) illicit while (86b) is correct?

It was shown in chapter five that cases where the focus marker precedes negation violate minimality requirements which pertain to the Head Movement Constraint. More precisely, the illicitness of (86c) is due to the fact that head movement is highly restricted, that is, movement of the embedded focus head is not possible across clause boundaries. The derivation in (88b) shows that Foc-to-V is not possible due to the intervention of the null verbal copula and to the fact that such a head movement is not allowed to apply across clause boundaries.

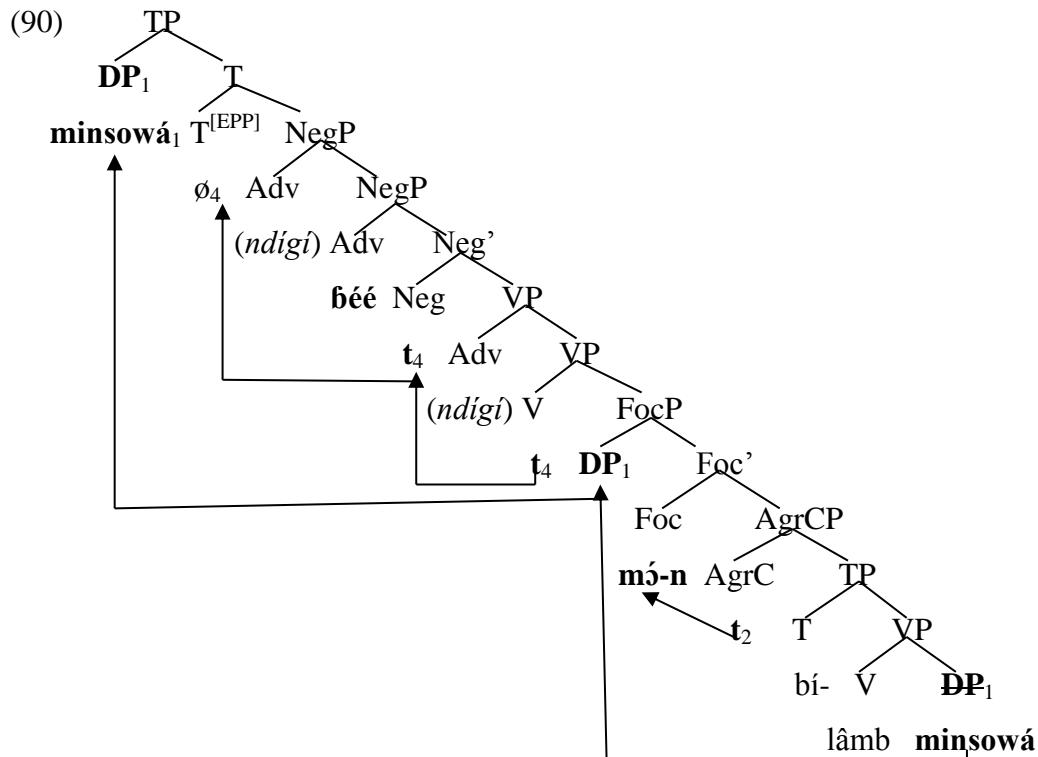
- (88) a. *minsowá (m52-n) bée me bí-lâmb
 4.ripe plantains 4-FOC NEG I PST2-cook



A salient parallel between sentential negation and constituent negation is that, just as sentential negation (89a), constituent negation (89b) can also be preceded or followed by the exclusive focus operator *ndígí* ‘only’. The paraphrases in (89a) and (89b) clearly indicate that the structural positioning of the negative marker *bééé* ‘not’ in relation to the exclusive *ndígí* ‘only’ is the same in clause structure and gives the same interpretative results. Recall that each of the ‘not>only’ and ‘only>not’ sequences yields ambiguous readings as shown in (89).

- (89) a. me bí- lâmb (*ndígí*) *bééé* (*ndígí*) minsowá
 I PST2-cook only NEG only 4.ripe plantains
 (i) ‘It is not the case that I only cooked ripe plantains.’
 (ii) ‘It is only the case that I did not cook ripe plantains.’
- b. minsowá (*ndígí*) *bééé* (*ndígí*) mó-n me bí-lâmb
 4.ripe plantains only NEG only 4-FOC I PST2-cook
 (i) ‘It is not the case that I only cooked ripe plantains.’
 (ii) ‘It is only the case that I did not cook ripe plantains.’

The phrase marker in (82) shows that in the context of sentential negation, the exclusive *ndígí* ‘only’ can be adjoined either to NegP or to vP/VP. The same results are obtained in constituent negation constructions. More precisely, the derivation of (89b) depicted in (90) below shows that when the exclusive *ndígí* precedes negation, it is adjoined to NegP while it behaves like a VP-adjoined adverb when it follows negation.



Overall, it can be retained that the structural positioning of negation is uniform in the Basáá clause structure and produces the same interpretative effects.

6.6. Polar and indirect questions

This section is concerned with polar and indirect questions. It will be shown throughout the section that there exist specific morphemes in the Basaá grammar which help type a clause as polar or indirect interrogative. The phenomenon is widely spread in world languages even if variations sometimes occur at the level of the realization of question morphemes. Some languages like Basaá (Bitja'a Kody 1990; Ngo Ndjeyiha 1996, 2005; Bassong 2010), Lele (Aboh 2010; Aboh & Pfau 2011 etc.), Tuki (Biloa 2013) make use of overt question markers to encode yes/no questions whereas others like French (Sportiche 1995, see also Koopman 1997), Gungbe and English (Aboh 2010, Aboh & Pfau 2011 a.o.) make use of either abstract or implicit question morphemes or tonal/pitch accent for the same purpose. Section 6.6.1 is concerned with yes/no questions while section 6.6.2 tackles indirect questions.

6.6.1. Polar questions

Yes/no or polar questions in Basáá have a wide range of properties which require close scrutiny for better understanding of question formation in the language. The first characteristic is

phonological. The first polar⁵⁵ morpheme which encodes yes/no questions is syntax and phonology-sensitive. For instance, if the item in clause final position ends with a vowel sound, the polar (ity) morpheme must completely assimilate that vowel, hence the notion vowel harmony/assimilation. In most cases, the question particle bears a low tone. In (91), the polar morpheme assimilates the vowel of the preceding item with a light difference on tone realization. The question morpheme bears a low tone while the preceding item may bear either a low or a high tone on the last vowel sound. That there must be vowel harmony between the question particle and the last vowel of the last word of the sentence is supported by the ruling out of other vowel types in clause final position.

(91)

- a. malêt a- n- níÍYá báúdú minsɔŋgí ì *ù *à *ò*è
1.teacher 1.SM-PST1-teach 2.students 4.mathematics Pol
'Did the teacher teach the students mathematics?'
- b. báúdú bá- ï- kε lén í sǔYlù ù *à *ì*è *ò
2.students 2.SM-FUT1-go 1.today LOC 7.school Pol
'Will the students go to school today?'

When the final word in sentence final position ends with a consonant sound, the polar (ity) particle is always realized as /è/ or /é/ depending on the speaker. Any other vowel sound in this context is ruled out as can be seen in (92) below.

(92)

- a. báúdú bá- ï- kε lén é/è * ù *à *ì*è *ò
2.students 2.SM-FUT1-go/leave 1.today Pol
'Will the students leave/go today?'
- b. Mudaá a- bí- keβél báúdú mbòŋ è *é * ù *à *ì *ò
1.woman 1.SM-PST2-serve 2.students 1.cassava Pol
'Did the woman serve the students cassava?'
- c. Mudaá a- bí- sómb sél è *é * ù *à *ì*ò
1.woman 1.SM-PST2-buy 7.basket Pol
'Did the woman buy a basket?'
- d. Mudaá a- Yá- sómb péñ é * ù *à *ì*è *ò
1.woman 1.SM-FUT2-buy 7.chalk Pol
'Will the woman buy chalk?'

Furthermore, note that the polar (ity) morpheme can bear either a high or a low tone depending on the syntactic environment. First of all, if the lexical tone (natural one) on the final word is high, the polar (ity) morpheme must be realized as [é] as in (92d). On the other hand, if the

⁵⁵ In this work, Pol stands for polar or yes/no questions while PolP stands for Polar(ity) Phrase.

lexical tone on the final word is a contour tone i.e. [^] or [˘], the polar(ity) morpheme can be realized either as /é/ or /è/ as in (92a). Thirdly, if the lexical tone on the final word is low as in (92b), the polar(ity) morpheme must bear a low tone. Fourthly, there are cases where the lexical tone on the item preceding the question particle is low. But if in a syntactic environment that low tone changes into a high one, the polar(ity) morpheme is low (92c). In other words, since the lexical tone of the item *sél* ‘basket’ (92c) is low, given its proximity immediately after the verb *sómb* ‘buy’, direct object *sél* ‘basket’ bears a high tone. In such cases, the polar(ity) morpheme takes the phonological features of lexical tone of the preceding item. As a result, given that the item *sél* ‘basket’ has a low tone as its lexical tone, the polar question item should be realized as /è/ and not as /é/.

Another strategy of forming polar questions consists in using the sentence initial polar (ity) item *báá* (which can be translated as the French sequence ‘est-ce que’ or like ‘is it the case that’ in English). In yes/no or polar questions, the use of this particle works hand in hand with the above mentioned polar(ity) item in clause final position. In concrete terms, whenever the particle *báá* is used in yes/no or polar questions, there must be a clause final question morpheme as illustrated in (93) below. Note also that the polar(ity) question item *báá* shall also be glossed throughout as ‘Pol’ given that it encodes a polar question.

(93)

- a. **báá** mudaá a- ní- la lámb kúl *(é) *ù *à *í*è *ò
Pol 1.woman 1.SM-PRS-can cook 7.tortoise Pol
‘Can a woman cook tortoise meat?’
- b. **báá** Ewas a- ní- sómb bót *(é) *è *ù *à *í*ò
Pol 1.Ewas 1.SM-PRS-buy 7.bag Pol
‘Does Ewas buy a bag?’

It is observed in (93) that the polarity morpheme in sentence final position should not be dropped. In other words, if the particle é in (93a) and its counterpart è in (93b) are dropped, the sentence becomes illicit. In (93a), the question particle is realized as é since the preceding item which is *kúl* ‘tortoise’ ends with a consonant while in (93b), the question morpheme is è for the same reason.

From a semantic point of view, the use of the sentence initial particle *bàá* carries the presupposition that some event should have occurred. More specifically, the speaker asking questions in (93) has the expectation that the event of ‘cooking tortoise meat by a woman’ might not be realized because ‘cooking tortoise meat’ in those days in the Basaá tradition⁵⁶ was not a women affair, therefore, this was prohibited, as indicated by the use of the modal *-la* ‘can’. In this context, the speaker mostly expects a negative and not a positive answer from its interlocutor. On the other hand, the question in (93b) presupposes that ‘Ewas is/was planning to buy a bag’, and the speaker is asking whether the action will be fulfilled as planned/expected or not. The answers to (93b) might be positive or negative while the most expected answer in the context of (93a) is a positive one.

From a syntactic perspective, Bassong (2010) proposes that the sentence initial particle *bàá*, as well as the sentence final question morpheme, occupy each a head position of a functional interrogative projection called interrogative phrases (IntP). Although these former denominations convey the right interpretations, I propose that the sentence initial particle *bàá* and its sentence final counterparts are functional syntactic heads which project Polarity phrases (PolP) by virtue of encoding polarity question information. The denomination of polarity phrases here does not automatically go in line with positive and negative polarity items à la English or in the sense of Laka (1990). By polarity phrase, it is simply meant that the lexical items exhibited above convey polar (ity) questions interpretation and occupy polar/peripheral positions in the Basaá clause structure.

It is important to highlight that although the sentence initial particle *bàá* and the final question morpheme encode polar questions, it should be recalled that they do not convey automatically exactly the same semantics in some respects.

From a pragmatic point of view, while a direct/polar question with a sentence final question marker can be answered indirectly i.e. ‘unexpectedly’, or with a kind of surprise on the part of the interlocutor, a question with a sentence initial particle *bàá* can hardly be answered in this way as illustrated in (94) below.

(94)

a.

⁵⁶ In those days, i.e. at least as far back as three or four generations now, women were not supposed to cook any kind of meat in the Basaá tradition. It is true that such taboos can still be encountered here and there in some Basaá communities which have remained conservative.

A: Ewas a- ní- sómb bót *(é) *é *ù *à *í*ò

1.Ewas 1.SM-PRS-buy 7.bag Pol

‘Does Ewas buy a bag? (he was supposed to buy the clothes).’

B: √jnj/tò, í mí- pooná hálá/ bébèv OR √bàá pro_i a lám-gá sómb bót è

yes/ no Expl PRS-seem so/probably/maybe Pol pro he should.PST2 -buy 7.bag Pol
‘Yes/it seems so/probably/may be/ was he supposed to buy a bag?’

b.

A: **bàá** Ewas a- ní- sómb bót *(é) *é *ù *à *í*ò

Pol 1.Ewas 1.SM-PRS-buy 7.bag Pol

‘Does Ewas buy a bag? (he was supposed to buy the clothes)’

B: √jnj/tò, í mí- pooná hálá/ bébèv / (#bàá pro_i a lám-gá sómb bót è)

yes/no/ Expl PRS-seem so /probably/maybe Pol pro he should.PST-buy 7.bag Pol
‘It seems so/probably/may be/ (#was he supposed to buy a bag)?’

In (94a), speaker A asks a polar question with a sentence final question morpheme. Such a question can be felicitously answered by ‘yes/no/probably’ or by a reaction such as ‘was he supposed to buy the clothes?’ which expresses some kind of unexpectedness. On the contrary, in (94b), the answers are very limited/restricted in the sense that expressing unexpectedness is infelicitous in speaker B’s answer.

Two theoretical arguments uphold my current analysis of the final question particles in Basaá.

The first one is based on Kayne’s (1994) antisymmetry framework according to which there is no head-final versus head initial parameter. In other words, Kayne advocates uniformity of syntactic structures so much so that crosslinguistic and language internal variations remain simply superficial or apparent. In other words, in Kayne’s terms, all languages have the same underlining structure and the fact that functional heads (for instance) in some languages are sentence initial while they are sentence final in others is due to movement operations. A striking question to be answered is the following: why does Basaá seem to exhibit surface asymmetry as far as the distribution of functional head is concerned? In other words, why is it the case that in some cases Basaá exhibits head-initial properties while in other cases one encounters head-final cases like in the following examples?

(95)

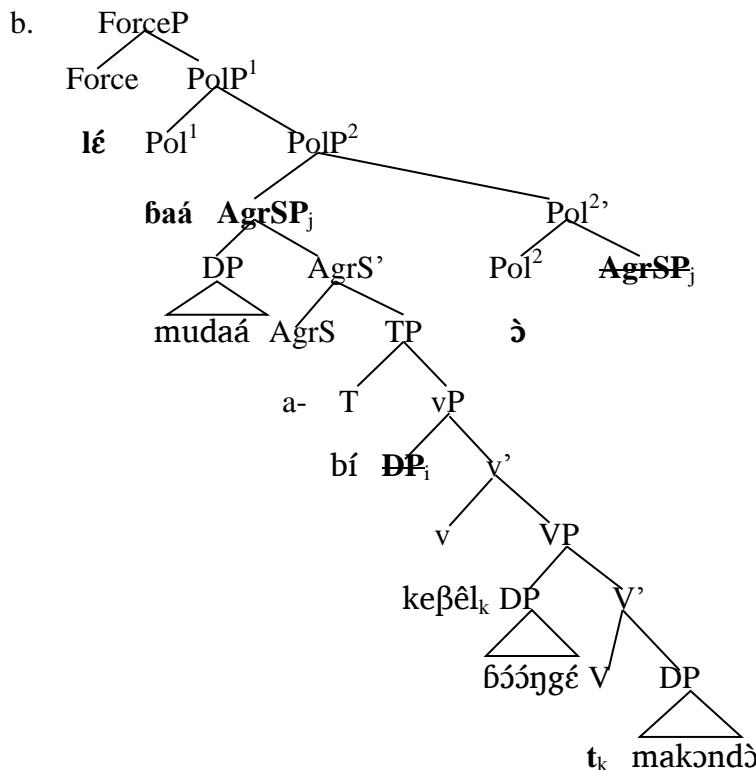
a. Mε m-bat lé **bàá** mudaá a- bí- kebél bósngé makondò ò
I PRS-ask that Pol 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-serve 2.children 6.plantains Pol
‘Lit: *I ask that did the woman serve the children plantains?’

b. *Mε m- bat **bàá** a- bí- lē mudaá bósngé makondò kebél ò
I PRS-ask Pol 1.SM-PST2-that 1.woman 2.children 6.plantains serve Pol

As seen above, all the bold-printed lexical items in (95a) constitute functional heads in the Basáá phrase structure. From left to right, there are the lexical complementizer *lÉ* ‘that’ which expresses illocutionary force, the polar(ity) question item *bàá*, the subject agreement marker which occupies AgrS^0 position in clause structure, the tense marker *βí-* encoding temporal information, the lexical verb *keβél* ‘serve which heads the verb phrase projection and the polar question particle *đ* which encodes a yes/no question. Note that these functional items occur in a strictly fixed order and cannot occur in any other order as the ungrammaticality of (95b) shows. Assuming that each of the bold-printed materials above head a functional projection, it becomes obvious that in Basáá, the order of clausal functional heads is fixed i.e. polarity cannot precede force and cannot be directly followed by tense and agreement (95b). All the same, the lexical verb cannot be preceded by its complements. The right word order in (95a) shows that complements in most cases always follow their heads. The fact that the polar (ity) morpheme in sentence final position occurs at the end of the sentence (95a) counters the idea that in Basáá heads precede their complements. Following previous authors such as (Chomsky 1995; Sportiche 1995; Aboh 2004, 2010; Aboh & Pfau 2011; Biloa 2013; a.o.), I argue that the question morpheme in sentence final position is part of the numeration that is, it is a lexical entry which is present in core syntax with scopal properties. In terms of Sportiche (1995), Aboh (2004, 2010), Aboh & Pfau (2011) and Biloa (2013), it is postulated that the sentence final polar (ity) question morpheme can be considered as a clause final complementizer which is merged in clause structure at the left periphery in Pol^0 the head of polar(ity) phrase (PolP). At this position, it scopes over the whole proposition. The fact that it occurs sentence finally is due to heavy pied-piping of its complement, namely the whole proposition into Spec-PolP as illustrated in (96b) below where the highest maximal projection is the force phrase followed by two polarity phrases, the heads of which are occupied by the polar(ity) question morphemes *bàá* and *đ* respectively.

(96)

- a. Mε m- b- lÉ **bàá** mudaá a- bí- keβél bɔ́ɔŋgé makɔndì đ
 I PRS-ask that Pol 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-serve 2.children 6.plantains Pol
 ‘Lit: *I ask that did the woman serve the children plantains?’



In Kayne's terminology, there exists no 'Directionality Parameter' as concerns the position of the different functional heads which occur in phrase structure. The fact that one can end up with a sentence final question morpheme in Basaa pertains to the movement AgrSP to the left of Pol_2^0 , the head of PolP_2 . Such a movement is in conformity with the Linear Correspondence Axiom Kayne (1994) which requires that the specifier should precede its head which in turn should precede its complement. Sequences in which the head seems to be preceded by its complement on the surface simply result from the movement of the complement to the left of the head. In the context whereby the polar(ity) particle *baá* is used sentence initially, it is assumed that it is merged as a lexical entry in a left peripheral position notably in Pol_1^0 , the head of PolP_1 where it c-commands PolP_2 as shown in (96b). This line of reasoning also indicates that the polarity item enters the syntactic derivation as a formal feature in core syntax i.e. it is part of the syntactic building block mechanisms just like tense, aspect, focus, topic, and the like.

The second theoretical argument in favour of the idea the polar(ity) question items are merged as syntactic functional heads is cartography-driven, i.e. it is rooted in the cartographic background a major tenet of which is the idea of criterial positions. The idea of criterial is crucial here in the sense that there is a proliferation of functional heads at the left periphery of the clause such as Top, Foc. Q, Rel, etc., which fulfil both syntactic and semantic functions. From a syntactic point of view, and as far as the position of the polar(ity) question morphemes is

concerned, it can be assumed that the sentence final polar(ity) question morpheme is a probing head endowed with EPP and [yes/no question-features] that attracts the whole proposition into the specifier position of PolP². From a semantic perspective, i.e. at the interfaces between sound and meaning, the head Pol₂⁰ triggers an interpretive routine for the proper assignment of scope, and, for the assignment of the appropriate pitch contour (tone assignment on the question morpheme). In this vein, the interpretive articulation is undoubtedly and transparently manifested in the syntax in a Spec-Head configuration created by external and internal merge of Pol⁰ as a functional head. This configuration is assumed to express scope-discourse semantics in the light of Cinque & Rizzi (2010), by yielding visible representations at the interface levels for the assignment of interpretive properties such as polarity, scope and the like. In this case, one can assume that, just like focus, topic, and wh-criteria for instance, there exists in Basàá syntax another criterion called *Pol-criterion* which is fulfilled in polar/yes/no questions either by moving the whole proposition at the left of Pol₂⁰, or by merging a null polar (ity) operator in the specifier position of Pol₁⁰.

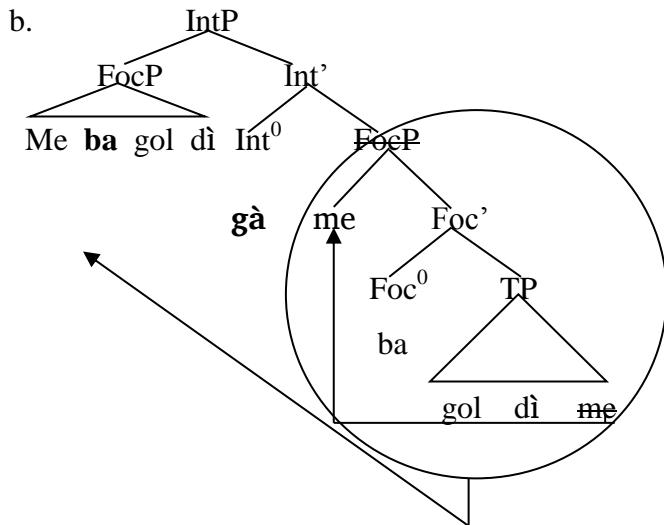
Note that the analysis undertaken here is by no means an isolated case. Previous researchers in the domain of generative syntax have proposed almost similar mechanisms in accounting for the existence of a(n) overt or covert question morpheme in other world languages. This state of matters provides further evidence that clausal pied-piping in interrogative constructions is not specific to Basaá. Sportiche (1995) argues that intonational questions in French such as (97a) involve pied-piping of IP into the specifier position of an abstract question morpheme Q as illustrated in (97b).

(97) a. Tu vas revenir demain?

b. [IP Tu vas revenir demain Q [IP [▲] Tu vas revenir demain]]

More recently, on the basis of Lele, a Chadic language of the Chad republic, Aboh (2010:24), quoting Frajzyngier (2001) has demonstrated that question formation can simultaneously involve both a focus construction and a question particle in clause final position. More importantly, Aboh demonstrates that while focus is overtly expressed by a specific marker, interrogation (yes/no question) is rather expressed by quite a different morpheme. Based on this, the author argues that focus and interrogation are encoded in the syntax of Lele as two distinct formal features just like tense, case, aspect and the like. As a result they should be considered as syntactic heads that project in the syntax as depicted in (98b) whereby two movement operations take place. First of all, movement of the object wh-phrase *me* ‘what’ into Spec-FocP, secondly, pied-piping of the whole FocP into Spec-IntP.

- (89) a. Me **ba** gol dì **gà**
 what Foc see 3SG.M INTERR
 ‘What did he see?’



Based on these cross-linguistic data, one can observe that question morphemes are syntactic heads which project their own projections even if these morphemes may be sometimes covert in some languages. Each of the functional heads Foc, Int, Pol etc. takes part in clausal typing, i.e. they can type a sentence either as focused, interrogative, polar or as both (all) of them at the same time depending on the type of information structure of a sentence.

6.6.2 Indirect questions

Indirect questions are morphologically realized by the morpheme *tòá* ‘if/whether’ which is introduced by epistemic verbs such as *batbá* ‘wonder’ or *bat* ‘ask’. These morphemes can be used in both root and embedded contexts i.e. just after a verb introducing indirect questions or in initial position. In the latter case, the main clause *me m-batbá lé* ‘I wonder *that’ can be implied or omitted in sentence initial position but never sentence final position as illustrated in (99b). In addition, it should be noted that an indirect question can optionally be preceded but never be followed by the lexical complementizer *lé* ‘that’ which encodes the illocutionary declarative force of the sentence (99a).

(99)

- a. Me mí- batbá (*lé*) **tòá** (**lé*) malêt a- Yá- lɔ yáání í súYlu
 I PRS-wonder that if that 1.teacher 1.SM-FUT2-come 1.tomorrow LOC 7.school
 ‘I wonder if the teacher will come to school tomorrow.’

- b. (Mε mí- bafbá 1é) tò́ malêt a- Yá- lɔ yáání í súYlu
 I PRS-wonder that if 1.teacher 1.SM-FUT2-come 1.tomorrow LOC 7.school
 (*Mε mí- bafbá 1é)

I PRS-wonder that

‘Intended: I wonder if the teacher will come to school tomorrow.’

It should also be noted that when the matrix clause is negative, the indirect question clause can precede or follow it as illustrated in (100a-b), but the ordering of these clauses does not affect the semantics of the question, i.e. whether the indirect question precedes or directly follows the negative main clause does not produce different interpretations.

(100)

- a. [Mε ní- yí béeé] tò́ malêt a- Yá- lɔ yáání í súYlu
 I PRS-know NEG if/whether 1.teacher 1.SM-FUT2-come 1.tomorrow LOC 7.school
 ‘I don’t know if the teacher will come to school tomorrow.’
- b. tò́ malêt a- Yá- lɔ yáání í súYlu [mε ní- yí béeé]
 if/whether 1.teacher 1.SM-FUT-come 1.tomorrow LOC 7.school I PRS-know NEG
 ‘I don’t know whether the teacher will come to school tomorrow.’

Another striking issue in the realization of indirect questions in Basaá is that a sentential indirect clause can be focused when fronted. In the following micro-discourse context in (101) for instance, the fronted interrogative clause conveys a contrastive focus reading.

(101) *Context:*

A: *I am wondering about two things; whether the teacher will come to school tomorrow or whether the students will stay home.*

B: tò́ malêt a- Yá- lɔ yáání í súYlu (hála) nyé-n
 whether 1.teacher 1.SM-FUT-come 1.tomorrow LOC 7.school (this) 1-FOC
 mε ní- yí béeé, ndí mε ní- yí yáá lé báudú bá- Yá- yén
 I PRS-know NEG but I PRS-know at least that 2.students 2.SM-FUT2-stay
 í ndáp
 LOC 7.home

Lit: ‘Whether the teacher will come to school tomorrow is what I don’t know. But at least, I know that the students will stay home/ what I know is that the students will stay home.’

As the reader can see, speaker B’s sentence involves a focused construction in which a whole clause, notably the sentential indirect question *tò́ malêt a-Yá-lɔ yáání í súYlu* ‘whether the teacher will come to school tomorrow’ moves leftward and is followed by the focus marker, namely the complex *nyé-n* which encodes gender-specific and focal information. As can be observed from the data, the complex *nyé-n* encodes noun class and number information that are

related to noun class one in Basaá. This is simply explained by the fact that the sentential indirect question is a clause and sentential subjects are known in the literature to display third person singular as opposed to plural information. In addition, in the specific case of Basaá, when the focused sentence is nominalized it acquires nominal features which enable it to function as a normal noun with a specific noun class. The particle *hála* ‘this’ which functions as an anaphoric marker is optional and co-refers to the fronted clausal material *tòj̊ malêt a-Yá-lɔ yáání í súYlu* ‘whether the teacher will come to school tomorrow’.

As could be expected from any question formation process, in Basaá, there is incompatibility between the indirect question particle *tòj̊* ‘if/whether’ and its yes/no counterpart(s), namely the polarity items ‘*bàá*’ and the final question particle, which indicates that a question cannot simultaneously convey a yes/no reading and an indirect information as exemplified by the illicit sentences in (102a-b) below.

(102)

- a.* Mε mí- ɓatbá (lé) **tòj̊** **bàá** malêt a- Yá- lɔ yáání í súYlu
I PRS-wonder that if Pol 1.teacher 1.SM-FUT2-come 1.tomorrow LOC 7.school
b.* Mε mí- ɓatbá (lé) **tòj̊** malêt a- Yá- lɔ yáání í súYlu **ù**
I PRS-wonder that if 1.teacher 1.SM-FUT2-come 1.tomorrow LOC 7.school Pol

It seems interesting to note that polar(ity) and indirect question items are compatible with focalized items/wh-arguments and referential adjuncts (103a-b) with non-referential adjuncts (103c-d). These constructions show that in more complex sentences, the lexical complementizer *lé* ‘that’ precedes interrogative, polarity and focus markers, giving rise to a fine-grained hierarchical clause structure.

(103)

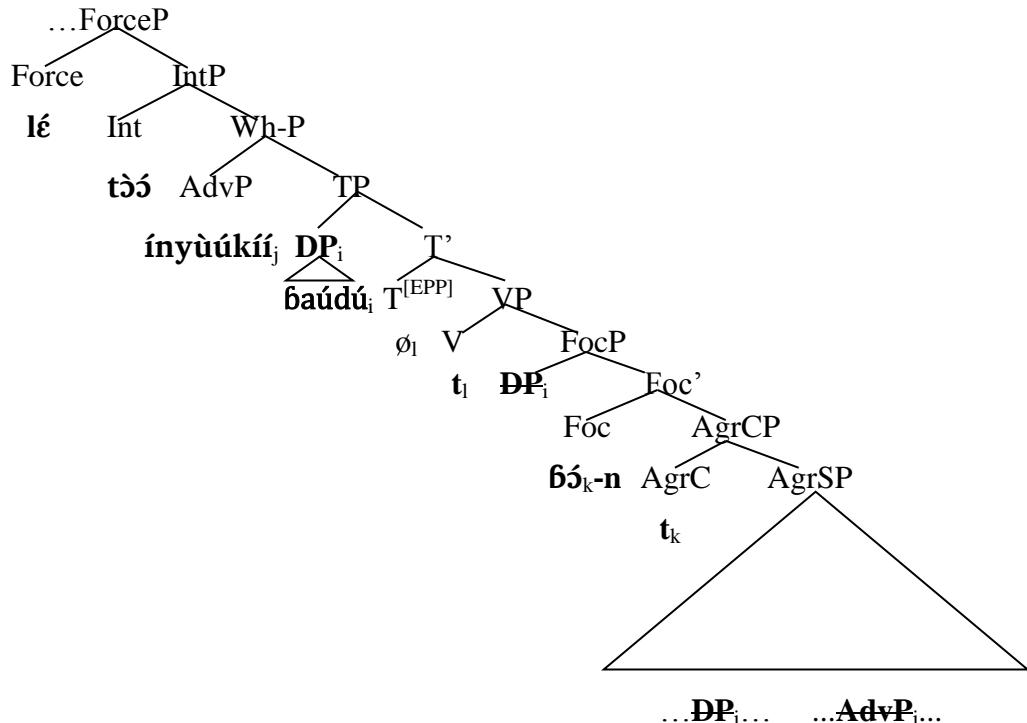
- a. Mε mí- ɓatbá **lé** **tòj̊** **njéé_i** malêt a- ñ- tí **t_i** mákebla
I PRS-wonder that Int 1.who 1.teacher 1.SM-PST1-give 6.presents
Lit: ‘I wonder that if who the teacher has given the presents to.’
Intended: ‘I wonder to whom the teacher has given the presents.’
- b. Mε mí- ɓat **lé** **bàá** **baúdú_i** **ɓó-n** malêt a- ñ- tí **t_i** mákebla **a**
I PRS-ask that Pol 2.students 2-FOC 1.teacher 1.SM-PST1-give 6.presents Pol
Lit: ‘*I ask that did the teacher give the presents to the CHILDREN?’
- c.
Mε mí- ɓat **lé** **tòj̊** **ínyùúkíí_j** **baúdú_i** **ɓó-n** malêt a- ñ- tí **t_i** mákebla **t_j**
I PRS-ask that if why 2.students 2-FOC 1.teacher 1.SM-PST1-give 6.presents
Lit: ‘* I ask that if why that the teacher has given the presents to the STUDENTS?’

d.

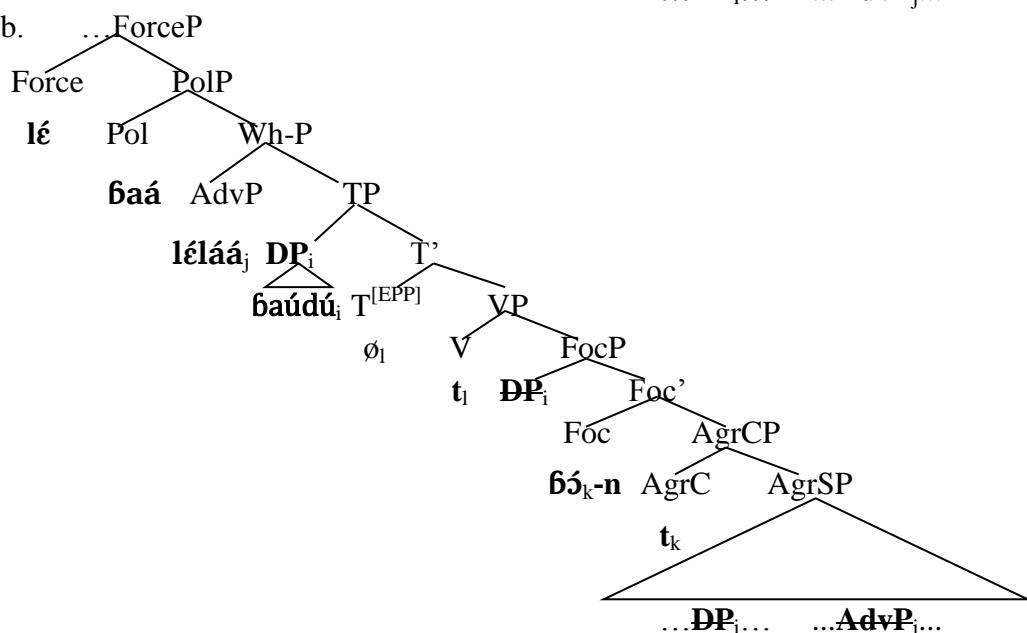
Mε mí- bat **lé** **ɓàá lélááj** **ɓaúdúi** **ɓó-n** malêt a- ñ- tí **t_i** mákebla **t_j**
 I PRS-ask that Pol how come 2.students 2-FOC 1.teacher 1.SM-PST1-give 6.presents
 Lit: '*I ask that how come the teacher has given the presents to the STUDENTS?'

From the above sentences in (103-c-d), the following clausal architecture (104a-b) are obtained with a difference that polar and indirect questions are in complementary distribution.

(104) a.



(104) b.



It can be noted in partial conclusion that like it is the case with direct questions, the formation of indirect questions in Basaá provides a fine-grained mapping of the complementizer system enriched with a wide range of specific discourse-related morphemes project functional phrases.

These functional phrases can simultaneously occur at the left edge of the clause. The data show that one can obtain a structure in which the highest maximal projection at the left periphery is the ForceP, the head of which is occupied by the declarative complementizer *lē* ‘that’. ForceP is followed by other functional projections such as IntP/PolP, Wh-P and FocP.

Conclusion

This chapter was an attempt to provide a characterization of the I(nflectional) and C(omplementizer) domains of the Basaá clause with special emphasis on question formation. After exploring a wide range of question formation mechanisms attested in the language and their interpretations, one has arrived at a good number of outcomes. It was revealed that, like in many other world languages, the Basaá inflectional layer hosts a functional projection called focus phrase (FocP), the head of which is silent/covert and the specifier of which is the locus of some question items, namely arguments and the referential place adjunct. These question items are derived into the specifier position of a lower FocP in vicinity of VP as a result of movement. Besides, it was demonstrated that the analysis of focus in the Immediately After Verb position (IAV) is subject to minimality. In other words, due to minimality effects, one could understand why focalized non-wh constituents are not licensed in the IAV position. As a result, the Basaá case study provides further support to the theoretical apparatus of information structure in the sense that it contributes to the arguments according to which the low IP domain is the locus of information structure devices.

Question formation also triggers morpho-syntactic semantic, phonological, as well as pragmatic effects such as extension of the verbal base, inquiry of new/non-presupposed information, confirmation, challenge, despair, disappointment, surprise etc. It was also shown that wh-movement in Basaá can be interpreted either at LF or at PF. In overt syntax, wh-movement can take place in the Immediately After Verb position or occur sentence initially. Non referential question words are polysemic due to a wide range of interpretations they convey, and their syntactic distribution is dependent on their semantics.

The chapter argued against previous analyses of questions in Basaá which establish a one-to-one relationship between the position of question words and that of focus. Those analyses establish wrong predictions as far as the phonology of question words is concerned. The discussions showed that the distribution of question words in Basaá is not context-dependent and does not affect the phonological frame of question items. Furthermore, Basaá clause mapping

comes out as being very well articulated as it is endowed with a variety of functional projections such as Negation Phrase (NegP), Focus Phrase (FocP), Wh-phrase (Wh-P), Polarity Phrase (PolP), and Interrogative Phrase (IntP), which encode negation, focus, ‘wh’, polarity information and indirect questions respectively. These functional projections are activated in the syntax in the form of overt or covert features. This state of affairs enables to provide a fine-grained characterization of the clausal mapping which does justice to the cartographic approach to syntactic structures. The interaction of negation *béé* and the exclusive focus particle *ndígí* ‘only’ showed that each of the ‘not > only’ and ‘only > not’ in Basaá is associated with two different semantic interpretations. In other words, ‘only > not’ can also be interpreted as ‘not>only, just as ‘not>only’ can be be interpreted as ‘only>not’. The study on polar and indirect questions revealed that there exist specific discourse-related devices that encode polarity, and indirect question reading in Basaá. These morphemes occur in a well-defined structural configuration at the left periphery and are compatible with ForceP, the Wh-Phrase and the Focus Phrase.

Conclusion of the part

This part was concerned with the syntax of focus and questions as well as their semantic interpretations. Focus in Basàá is derived in the syntax as a grammatical primitive, i.e. it is projected in the form of a formal feature. Focus movement of non-wh-phrases in Basàá works hand and hand with the Extended Projection Principle. The focus item needs to raise stepwise on the phrase structure. Its movement involves phrasal movement of the targeted constituent into a matrix TP via an embedded Spec-FocP position. Focus movement is motivated by the focus-criterion while movement into the matrix TP is triggered by the EPP. Given that Basáá is devoid of expletive subjects that would satisfy the EPP in the matrix clause, the focalized constituent is compelled to raise higher in the matrix TP to comply with the Extended Projection Principle. In analyzing Basàá questions, the discussions revealed that there exists a lower focus field in the vicinity of the VP. This lower FocP projection occurs higher than the VP nad lower than the inflectional domain. It hosts ex-situ arguments and the referential place adjunct. The fact that wh-phrases occur immediately after the verb boils down to successive head movement into the inflectional layer via Foc the head of the focus phrase. Besides, wh-phrases can be fronted in sentence initial position in two different ways. Fronted arguments and the referential place adjunct moves into the focus domain while non-referential ones move into the specifier position of a Wh-Phrase. Polar and indirect questions are realized by distinct and specific question particles in the left periphery that project specific functional projections such as the Polar (ity) Phrase (PolP), and the Interrogative Phrase (IntP).

PART III
TOPICS AND ELLIPSIS

Introduction of the part

This last part discusses two main discourse-related properties, namely topic and elliptical constructions. Chapter seven deals with topic constructions, with special attention on their typology, their semantic interpretation and their syntactic distribution. It discusses five topic types and shows that each of them is associated with a specific semantic interpretation. In terms of syntax, the discussion shows that Basàá topics are derived by movement. While additive, contrastive, and aboutness topics are proposed to be derived via a bi-clausal structure like fronted foci, hanging and scene-setting topics only involve substitution for the specifier of TopP through a simple A-bar movement process.

Chapter eight and nine are concerned with ellipsis, a domain, which has not yet been (considerably) the subject matter of linguistic inquiries within the framework of African linguistics. It is shown that sluicing and fragment answers are well accounted for under the PF-theory of movement plus deletion (Ross 1969, Merchant 2001, 2004, 2008 etc). The feature responsible for ellipsis in Basàá can be overtly realized as compared to some natural languages whereby this feature is covert. The overall discussion shows that sluicing and fragment answers give rise to a variety of functional discourse-related projections in the left periphery of the Basàá clause. One obtains a prolific left peripheral domain that can be made up of a force phrase (ForceP), an interrogative phrase (IntP) a focus phrase (FocP), a copula construction (in fragments only) and a functional projection called EvidP (Evidential Phrase), the head of which is occupied by a gender-sensitive morpheme. Sluicing and fragment answers differ on the basis of island (in)sensitivity and on the target of ellipsis. In other words, sluicing exhibits no island effects as opposed to fragments which are sensitive to locality constraints. Fragment answers involve PF deletion of FocP and are derived in the same way as fronted foci, i.e., they involve a matrix copula clause headed by a null verb followed by an embedded Evidential(ity) Phrase, so much so that the fragment moves stepwise into the matrix TP via Spec-EvidP. As opposed to fragments, the target of PF deletion in sluicing is AgrS-P/TP. However, there exists a very isolated case where both fragments and sluicing look alike. In some context, the complement of a fragment NPI can be an AgrS-P/TP so much so that what undergoes ellipsis is not a FocP projection but an AgrS-P/TP.

CHAPTER VII
TOPIC CONSTRUCTIONS

Introduction

This chapter provides additional support to the cartographic approach by showing that, just like focus and interrogation, topic as an information structure-related device, is syntactically encoded. The presence of overt agreement morphology alongside topic markers (overt or silent) constitutes the hallmark of our claim. In most cases, topic fronting in Basaa involves agreement and topic morphology which are obtained if and only if movement has taken place in the syntax. Generally, topic activation always triggers noun class agreement morphology like focus so that both agreement and topic markers combine together to form a complex linguistic unit. This state of matters is symptomatic of the idea that topic is a grammatical primitive just like case, tense, negation, aspect and the like. Throughout this chapter, a topic will be considered as what a sentence is about, i.e. in the sense of Reinhart's (1981) 'aboutness topic'. As opposed to focus, topics display prosodic effects in the object position while subject topics exhibit no prosodic effects. While additive, contrastive and aboutness topic are said to involve a bi-clausal non-cleft structure whereby the topicalized item raises into a matrix TP via Spec-TopP in the embedded clause, hanging and scene-setting topics are proposed to involve either movement or base-generation in Spec-TopP.

The chapter is organized as follows. In § 7.1, I provide a typology of topic constructions under discussion. § 7.1.1 discusses additive/equative topics. The analysis reveals that topics with an additive presupposition are old information known in the discourse and conveys the interpretation according to which there exist/s in the discourse some other entity/entities which share(s) the same predication/value as the additive topic. Additive topics are morphologically marked by the morpheme *-k* to which is attached a gender-specific agreeing morpheme. § 7.1.1.1, discusses argument-adjunct asymmetry and shows that arguments can be topicalized in the subject and object position as opposed to adjuncts which can only be topicalized in the subject position. In addition, in the same section, it is shown that VP topicalization with an additive presupposition is possible in the subject and object position just like argument topics. In this vein, when VP topicalization involves the object, resumption is required in sentence internal position. Given that the fronted VP behaves like an DP/NP, it agrees in class and number with the topic marker. The whole discussion on additive topics is that resumption is required if the topicalized constituent is the object while the subject does not resume, or is assumed to be resumed by a pro category. Additive topics are derived syntactically and this is explained by their sensitivity to syntactic constraints. In § 7.1.2 I discuss contrastive topics in line with Büring (1997; 2003) and show that contrastive topics in Basaa require the presence of relevant alternatives in the discourse. It is

shown that arguments and VPs can be contrastive topics in the subject and object position while adjunct topicalization is limited to the sole subject position. Besides, while resumption and prosodic effects are attested in object topicalization, such effects are not attested in subject topicalization. Morphologically, contrastive topics have no explicit topic morpheme, but only a gender-specific marker shows up at the left periphery. Contrastive topics are also island-sensitive. § 7.1.3 is dedicated to aboutness topics. Pragmatically, these topics need to be old information and have no explicit alternatives in the discourse. Aboutness topics have the same morphological marking as their contrastive counterparts, but differ with the latter in that they do not have explicit alternatives in the discourse. In § 7.1.3.1 a study of some syntactic properties of aboutness topics is provided. The discussion shows that aboutness topics exhibit reconstruction effects and are sensitive to syntactic islands. § 6.1.4 introduces hanging topics. In § 7.1.4.1, a cross-linguistic survey on the distinction between hanging topics and clitic left dislocation is provided. The results show that hanging topics and clitic left dislocation differ in intonational languages such as Catalan, Czech, Italian etc in that the former are not part of core syntax while the latter is. § 7.1.4.2 discusses hanging topics in Basaa and provides evidence that the widely-spread idea according to which hanging topics are syntactic ‘outsiders’ or ‘imposters’ needs some refinements because the Basaa empirical data put into play controversial results which are also obtained in Gungbe (Kwa) as analysed by (Aboh 2004). Overall, hanging topics appear to be considered as ‘hybrids’ constructions which are in-between syntax and ‘meta-syntax’. More concretely, like in Gungbe, hanging topics in Basaa display some syntactic properties but at the same time are insensitive to other syntactic properties. § 7.2 discusses topic-drop constructions with a flash back to pro-drop and focus-drop. The Basaa data constitute a novelty to the theoretical landscape of the syntax-information structure interface because it seems to be the case that no other African language, to the best of my knowledge, has yet been said to have topic-drop and focus drop constructions. Other supporting arguments are provided based on other Bantu languages like Ewondo and Etón. Just like focus-drop, topic-drop is dependent on two factors, notably the availability of discourse referents and overt agreement morphology. § 7.3 discusses theoretical assumptions. The core idea is that the syntax of topic and focus displays the same mechanisms. Topic fronting requires automatic activation of agreement morphology so that the fronted topic agrees in class and number with the topic marker. There exists on the left edge two different functional heads encoding two distinct information, namely agreement and topic. When these two heads incorporate, they probe over the topicalized constituent which first moves into

Spec-TopP (topic phrase) for the satisfaction of topic requirements/topic-criterion prior to movement into the matrix TP for the satisfaction of the EPP. §7.4 focuses feature-percolation and topic pied-piping. The analysis used here is the same resorted to in a previous chapter (chapter four). It is shown that topic pied-piping occurs when the topicalized element found inside a chunk which does not license any movement percolates its topic features across the whole constituent containing it. Consequently, the probed constituent provokes a massive or heavy pied-piping (Nkemnji 1995; Ross 1967) of the whole chunk into the topic domain. § 7.5 is concerned with the interplay between focus and topic and the mapping of the left periphery. It discusses a good number of co-occurrence restrictions and constituents ordering. It is shown that not only focus, but also topic fronting is subject to the *Uniqueness Principle* which requires fronting of only one topic in the same clause. Multiple topic fronting is due to the fact that only topics of different classes or topics sharing different interpretational properties should be fronted simultaneously. In § 7, I talk about the focus-topic interplay and the mapping of the left periphery. Overall, both focus and topic fronting obey the *Uniqueness Principle*. The last section is the conclusion.

7.1. On the typology of topics

To the best of my knowledge, if there exists an information structure-related aspect that has been broadly studied in African languages, such an aspect is undoubtedly **focus**. As for **topic**, it is obvious that a lot has not yet been said about it from a theoretical perspective. However, it should be noted that many authors such as Chafe (1976), Givón (1976), Louwrens (1979), Wald (1979), Bresnan & Mchombo (1987), Demuth & Johnson (1989), Zerbian (2006), to name only a few, have handled topic as an information structure-related device from different perspectives. Most, if not all these authors, carry out approaches which address topic as explicit, implicit, old, non-presupposed or familiar information already mentioned in the discourse setting. For others, topic is conceived of as a constituent under discussion. Aboh (2004, 2007, 2010 etc.), Bassong (2010), Bessala (2010), Biloa (2013), Nchare (2012), among others have discussed topic constructions in African languages within the framework of the cartographic approach. This section introduces five kinds of topic constructions in Basàá, namely the contrastive topic, the additive or equative topic, the ‘aboutness or familiar’ topic, the hanging topic and the scene-setting topic. All these topics are located in clause initial position. It is important to note that although both focus and topic exhibit morphological marking, they differ in some respects. First of all, topic exhibits prosodic effects that are not encountered in focus constructions. Hanging topics are not morphologically marked. In most cases, a topic in the object position is followed

by an intonation break that separates it from the rest of the clause. Conversely, subject topics in most cases do not exhibit any prosodic effects. In this section, and as already been mentioned, special focus will be on five instances of topic constructions, namely hanging topics, scene-setting topics, contrastive topics, aboutness topics and additive/equative topics. As previously mentioned, hanging and scene-setting topics differ from contrastive, aboutness and additive/equative ones in the sense that whereas the former exhibit no morphological marking, the latter do. Moreover, a topic with an additive/equative presupposition is bimorphemically marked while its aboutness and contrastive counterparts are monomorphemically marked. The common characteristic between the five constructions is that they may license a resumptive pronoun in sentence internal position depending on whether what is fronted is the subject or the object.

7.1.1 The additive or equative topic

From a discourse point of view, a topic construction with an additive or equative presupposition in Basáá must always be activated, that is it should be defined or known by the discourse participants. Morphologically, it is marked by the marker *-k* combined with a gender-specific morphene. It is obtained when in the discourse there is an implication that some other individual/s share/s the same relevant value. Under this view, it becomes clear that this type of topic carries an existential presupposition. It is important to recall that this kind of topic construction licenses a bimorphemic marking like fronted foci examined in chapters three, four, and five. Put another way, an additive topic involves the fronting of the topicalized element in sentence initial position and morphological marking as in (1).

(1)

- A: Malêt_i a- bí- nájá bôt í ñgand yaaní
 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-invite 2.people LOC 7.party 1.yesterday
 ‘The teacher invited the people to the party yesterday.’
- B: ñj̊, ndi pód-ól mε **ñaúdú**, pro_i a_i- bí- nájá béeé bó ɔ
 yes but speak-APLL me 2.students, pro 1.SM-PST2-invite NEG 2.them Pol
 ‘Yes, but tell me about **the students**; didn’t he invite them?’
- A': nt̊Y **ñaúdú** *(bó-k), malêt a- bí- nájá *(bó)
 of course 2.students 2-TOP 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-invite 2.them
 ‘Yes, as for **the students**, the teacher invited them too’

The fronted topic is always left adjacent to a bimorphemic item which encodes not only gender information but also topic one. In a context like (1), the topic *ñaúdú* ‘the students’ carries the presupposition that ‘some other people was/were invited at the party’. So by equative topic, it is

meant part of information (here a subset a given set of individuals or entities) sharing or having the same value as another part of the same set.

In this case, topic is considered as what the conversation is about. Similarly, a sentence like (1A') can only be uttered or can only be true if and only if ‘the teacher also invited some *other individuals*’ in addition to ‘*the students*’. Keep also in mind that the reply in (1A') can neither be uttered out-of-the blue, nor can it be an answer to a wh-question (e.g. *who did the teacher invite?*) like in (2) below.

(2)

Q: Njéé̄ malêt a- bí- náñá í ñgand yaaní
 1.who 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-invite LOC 7.party 1.yesterday
 ‘Who did the teacher invite to the party yesterday?’

A1: malêt a- bí- náñá **baúdú**...

1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-invite 2.students
 ‘The teacher invited the STUDENTS...’

A2: **baúdú** **bó-n** malêt a- bí- náñá...

2.students 2-FOC 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-invite
 ‘The teacher invited the STUDENTS.’

A3:# **baúdú** **bó-k**, malêt a- bí- náñá *(bó)

2.students 2-TOP 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-invite 2.them
 ‘As for **the students**, the teacher invited them too.’

The fact that (2A3) is unacceptable or infelicitous is simply an indication that it is not a focus construction (here a direct answer to an object wh-question). In the context of a question like (2), stamen (2A3) simply denotes nonsense, infelicity or ‘incongruence’. The question in (2) requires new information or non-presupposed information that is unknown to the hearer. It is true that in such a context, the speaker asks for information which they do not know or are supposed not to know. The answer in (2A3) clearly indicates that the DP/NP *baúdú* ‘the students’ in the context of (1) has been the subject of a previous conversation, i.e it has been the topic of the sentence. Apart from the difference noted at the level of discourse, a fronted focus and a topic with an additive /equative presupposition also display a morphological difference. For instance, a topic with an equative or additive presupposition differs from focus fronting at the level of morphological marking. The bimorphemic morpheme that agrees with a focused constituent in Basàá is made up of an agreement marker and the nasal morpheme *-n* as in (2A2) above, while a topic with an equative/additive presupposition like in (1A') requires the morpheme *-k*. Another interesting fact is that the agreeing morphemes in (1A') and (2A2) share the same morphology but only differ from a phonological point of view. This morpheme bears a contour tone [^] in

the topic construction while it bears a high tone [ˊ] in the focus case. In addition, the resumptive pronoun *bɔ́* ‘them’ in the postverbal position (1A’) and the gender-specific morpheme *bɔ̄* in the pre-subject position are morphologically alike or isomorphic, and share the same noun class (class 2 in Basáá) but differ at the level of tone realization. Each of them is gender-sensitive in that it agrees in class and number with the topicalized NP *baúdú* ‘students’. Another issue to point out is that since the additive/equative topic NP *baúdú* ‘students’ occurs in the object position, the topic marker should be followed by an intonational break (here a comma). It should be recalled that resumption is required only with active topics because passive ones do not resumption as illustrated in (3B). Moreover, when passivization applies, no intonation break is attested after the topic marker, and resumption is lost altogether (compare 3B with 1A’).

(3)

- A: Mε n- nóy lé mudaá a- bí- sómb másangó yaaní í sáβ̄e
 I PST1-hear that 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-buy 6.appliances 1.yesterday LOC 7.shop
 ‘I heard that the woman bought **appliances** at the shop yesterday.’
 baá pro_i a_i- bí- sómb bée bipân ε
 Pol pro 1.SM-PST2-buy NEG 4.plates Pol
 ‘Didn’t she buy **the plates**?’
- B: ñjý, bipân gwô-k bí- bí- sómb-á↓
 yes 8.plates 8-TOP 8.SM-PST2-buy-PASS
 ‘As for the plates, they were bought too’

I consider the DP/NP *bipân* ‘plates’ (3B) here in light of Reinhart (1981) who defines a topic as ‘what the sentence is about’ i.e. shared knowledge between discourse participants. In this vein, the definition of topic is pragmatics/context-oriented. So, the topicalized DP/NP *bipân* ‘plates’ (3B) is to be taken as old information already mentioned in the previous discourse. It goes without saying that the topic DP/NP *bipân* ‘plates’ has already been mentioned in A’s statement and resumed in B’s one. The same reasoning applies for the topicalized NP *baúdú* ‘students’ in (1B’). It has been previously mentioned that it is that part of the sentence about which a comment is made i.e. the comment (here is the act of ‘*being invited*’).

It is of interest to point out that the passivized DP/NP *bipân* ‘plates’ in (3B) occupies neither its canonical position (object position) nor the subject position, that is before the subject marker. In fact, it has been fronted to sentence initial position where topic and agreement requirements are

fulfilled as will be discussed in subsequent sections. By so doing, the term passive/passivized topic or simply A-bar passive is used to refer to a construction such as (3B) and active topic to a construction like (1B).

The constructions in (4) below show that an additive/equative topic displays properties of A-bar dependencies such as clause unboundedness (4a), parasitic gaps (4b) and sensitivity to island constraints such as the adjunct island (4c), and the Coordinate Structure Constraint (4d). The grammaticality of (4e) seems to contradict the claim that topic fronting is an instance of A-bar movement. Sentence (4e) shows that topic extraction has applied out of a complex noun phrase, which is a syntactic island. The licitness of this sentence can be accounted for under the assumption that topics are non-quantificational i.e. are not operators as opposed to focus and wh-phrases that are operators. In previous chapters (chapter four & five) it was shown that wh-movement and focus movement are sensitive to adjacency, to the extent that it is not possible to extract a wh-item or a focalized constituent out of a complex noun phrase. Given that relative clauses are operator constructions, topic fronting out of a relative clause cannot be blocked because a topic is no a quantificational element.

(4)

- a. **makúbé mō-k,** me ní- yí lé bōɔŋgé bá- bí- jé mō
6.bananas 6-TOP I PRS-know that 2.children 2.SM-PST2-eat 6.them
'As for the bananas, I know that the children ate them too.'
- b. **makúbé mō-k,** bōɔŋgé bá- n- jé (mō) ŋgi jowa (mō)
6.bananas 6-TOP 2.children 2.SM-PST1-eat 6.them without wash 6.them
'As for the bananas, the children also ate them without washing.'
- c. ***makúbé mō-k,** mudaá a- n̩ol ínyuúlē bōɔŋgé bá- bí- jé mō
6.bananas 6-TOP 1.woman 1.SM-PRS-laugh because 2.children 2.SM-PST2-eat 6.them
'*As for the bananas, the woman laughs because the children ate them.'
- d. ***makúbé mō-k,** maan̩gé a- bí- sómb (mō) ni máán̩golo
6.bananas 6.TOP 1.child 1.SM-PST2-buy 6.them with 6.mangoes
'As for the bananas, the child bought them with the mangoes'
- e. **makúbé mō-k,** maan̩gé a- bí- bómá í mut nú a- bí- sómb mō
6.bananas 6-TOP 1.child 1.SM-PST2-meet DEF 1.man 1.Rel 1.SM-PST2-buy 6.them
'As for the bananas, the child met the man who bought them.'

Note that the presence of the resumptive pronouns in (4b) and (4d) is optional and their absence cannot yield an illicit structure. The following section discusses the asymmetry that exists between argument topics and their adjunct counterparts. In the spirit of Rizzi's (2004a) terminology, only elements with the same featural make-up i.e. elements which belong to the same natural class act as interveners. In this vein, a quantificational element such as a wh-phrase

in (4e) cannot act as an intervener for a topic because both do not have the same featural make-up.

7.1.1.1 Argument-adjunct asymmetry

In the preceding section it was shown that subjects and objects can be topicalized. Subject topics differ from their object counterparts in that the former cannot resume while the latter can. Another difference is attested at the level of intonation. Object topics are followed by an intonation break whereas subject topics have no prosodic effects.

Argument topics with additive or equative presupposition differ from their adjunct counterparts in the sense that, while the former can be topicalized at both the subject and object position, the latter, on the other hand, can only be topicalized at the subject position. In other words, adjunct can only be topicalized if they act as objects, or, more simply, as complements of the verb. This cannot happen if an adjunct is the subject of the sentence. In a conversation like (5) below, the time adjunct *yaaní* ‘tomorrow’ is mentioned in a previous discourse, more precisely, in A’s statement. Under the view that a topic with an additive / equative presupposition needs to be old or presupposed, the topicalized time adjunct *yaaní* ‘yesterday’ in B’s statement occupies the subject position and as expected, no intonation break is attested.

(5)

- A: nɔɔmáa a- bée ilâm ŋganday, me ní-yí béeé
 1两天 ago 1.SM be.PST2 9.nice a lot/very I PRS-know NEG
 léláá yaaní a- gá- bâ
 how 1.tomorrow 1.SM-FUT2-be
 ‘*Two days ago* was a very lovely day, but I am wondering about *tomorrow*.’
- B: me ʃ-hóŋʃl lé yaaní nyê-k a- gá bá nlâm
 I PRS-think that 1.tomorrow 1-TOP 1.SM-FUT2 be 1.nice
 ‘I think that *tomorrow* will be a lovely day **too**.’

However, if the topicalized time adjunct *yaaní* acts as the object (complement of the verb), the sentence becomes illicit as illustrated in the following context in (6).

(6)

- A: baken bá- bí- jé nɔɔmáa, me m- batbá lé tɔó bá- bí- jé
 2.guests 2.SM-PST2-eat 1两天 ago I PRS-wonder that INTERR 2.SM-PST2-eat
yag yáání
 also 1.yesterday
 ‘The guests ate two days ago, I wonder whether they ate yesterday too.’

B: *ñj̄j̄, yáání nyê-k bá- bí- jé

yes 1.yesterday 1.TOP 2.SM-PST2-eat

‘*Yes, they ate *yesterday* too.’ (intended, the consumed yesterday (where *yesterday* is eatable, like in *they ate meat*)

It is also important to note that if there is an asymmetric relation between arguments and adjuncts at the level of additive topicalization. Such a disparity is not attested in the case of verb phrase topicalization. In other words, it is possible to have a VP with an additive presupposition in the subject and object position. When used in the object position, the verb phrase resumes like a normal DP/NP object while resumption is not attested if the VP is the subject. The fact that VP resumes sentence internally stems from nominalization, i.e. the tyopicalized VP undergoes category shift by being nominalised. This enables it to bear nominal features like a normal noun like in the following context.

(7)

A: Mé ní- yí lé malêt a- ní- la níigá báúdú minsɔŋgí,
 I PRS-know that 1.teacher 1.SM-PRS-can teach 2.students 4.mathematics
 kâl me ñgim jam ikɔlbaya li-bɔma bagwâl
 tell me some 5.thing about 5.INF-meet 2.parents
 ‘I know that the teacher can teach the students mathematics. Tell me something about
meeting with the parents.’

B: li-bɔma bagwâl jô-k, a- ní- la jô

5.meet 2.parents 5-TOP 1.SM-PRS-like 5.it
 ‘As for *meeting with the parents*, he can too.’

In (7B), the verb phrase *li-bɔma bagwâl* ‘to meet with the parents’ is a topic with an additive presupposition. It is first introduced in the discourse in A’s statement and, in this case, it constitutes old, given, presupposed or familiar information activated in the mind of the participants. The expected outcomes are also obtained insofar as the topicalized VP in the object position is resumed in the post-modal position (after the modal verb *la* ‘can’) and is followed by an intonation break (here a comma).

(8)

A: li-óm-lε mawándá bikaat lí- ní- lémêl Bâhóyâ
 5.INF-send-BEN 6.friends 8.books 5.SM-PRS-interest 1.Bahoya
 ‘Selling the letters to friends interests Bahoya.’

baá li- léégε baken jô-k lí- ní- lémêl nyé ε
 Pol 5.INF-receive 2.guests 5-TOP 5-SM-PRS-interest 1.him INTER
 ‘Is he **also** interested in **receiving the guests**?’

Similarly, given that the topicalized VP *liléége baken* ‘to receive the guests’ in (8B) is the subject, neither resumption nor intonation break is attested. As for the infinitive particle *li-* in Basàá, when it associated with a verbal root, forms a nominalized verbal category which belongs to class five in the Basàá noun class system. The infinitive particle, as discussed in chapter four is homophonous with the prefix of noun class five in the language. This explains why in (7B) the agreement morpheme *jɔ-* exhibits agreement morphology of noun class five.

Another property of VP topicalization with an additive presupposition is that it exhibits reconstruction effects both in main and embedded clauses as illustrated in (9) below.

(9)

- a. [li-tí ɓaúdú ɓéé_{i/j} makebla jɔ-k]_k, híkií malêt_{i/j} a- ní- la jɔ_k
 5-give 2.students his/her 6.presents 5-TOP every 1.teacher 1.SM-PRS-can 5.it
 ‘Intended: Every teacher_i can give his_{i/j} students the presents.’
 Lit: ‘*[Giving his_{i/j} students the presents], every teacher_i can do it.’
- b. [li-tí ɓaúdú ɓéé_{i/j} makebla jɔ-k]_k Mε ń-hóŋɔl lé
 5-INF-give 2.students his/her 6.presents 5-TOP I PRS-think that
 ɓagwâl ɓá- ń- kâl lé híkií malêt_i a- ní- la jɔ_k
 2.parents 2.SM-PRS-say that every 1.teacher 1.SM-PRS-can 5.it
 ‘Intended: I think that the parents say that every teacher_i can give the presents to his/her_i/students.’

In (9a) and (9b), the quantified subject *híkií malêt* ‘every teacher’ can bind the possessive *ɓéé* ‘his/her’ contained in the fronted VP *li-tí ɓaúdú ɓéé makebla* ‘give the students the presents’.

The presence of connectivity effects in (9) is interpreted as evidence for long distance extraction as showed in (4) above as well. This further suggests that the additive topic moves in a cyclic fashion and is not base-generated in its surface position. Based on the preceding facts, it can be partially summarized that, like focus fronting, additive topic constructions are also derived by movement.

7.1.2 Contrastive topic (CT)

After Reinhart’s (1981) approach to topic constructions, other approaches have been later on proposed in the literature. With the advent of Büring (1997, 2003 and subsequent work), new approaches to the notion of topic have been proposed. However, as opposed to focus which is much easier to handle cross-linguistically, topic remains a murky issue as it covers different paradigms. Reinhart’s (1981) notion of sentence topic is based on aboutness. According to her, a sentence topic denotes the entity about which the sentence is. In the author’s terms, the propositional Common Ground constitutes an unordered set of propositions and is divided into

subsets of propositions which are stored under different entries to which correspond the topic denotations. Using the *file cards* metaphor, she shows how discourse information can be partitioned into several sets of possible worlds associated with the topic entities (cf. also Portner & Yabushita 1998). The notion of contrastive topic here is mainly based on alternative semantics. More specifically, a contrastive topic is obtained in the presence of relevant alternatives in the discourse setting (cf. Buring 2003; Krifka 2008 and Vallduví & Vikuna 1998).

In Prince's (1998a: 290-91) terms, '*contrast is not a primitive notion but rather arises when alternate members of some salient set are evoked and, most importantly, when there is felt to be a salient opposition in what is predicated of them.*'

Building on Roberts (1996), Buring's (2003) contrastive topic approach is based on a hierarchical mode of discourse structure. Using the representational model of Kuppevelt (1991, 1995, 1996) and Roberts (1996), the author makes use of discourse-trees (DT) and the *Relevance of Question Under Discussion* in order to show that the purpose of contrastive topics is to indicate how the asserted proposition corresponds to the strategy of inquiry. A contrastive topic in his sense, and since Jackendoff (1972), is represented by a B-accent while focus is represented by an A-accent. In other words, in intonation languages, a topic is generally said to be deaccented as opposed to focus which is said to be more accented. The A-accent involves rising intonational contour which marks focus while the B-accent involves a fall-rise intonational contour which characterizes contrastive topic. Roberts (1996) shows that in a context like (10), there exist two intonational patterns, namely a focus pattern and a topic one.

(10) Roberts (1996:122).

- a. Where were you at the time of the murder?
- b. I_{CONTRASTIVE TOPIC} was at HOME_{FOCUS}

On the basis of (10b), and from a prosody-related perspective, the author argues that the contrastive topic intonation associated with the subject 'I' implies that there exist some parallel questions that involve alternatives to the contrasted topic 'I'. Put differently, from an intonational point of view, the utterance in (10b) creates the expectation in the hearer's mind that there are some other relevant alternatives to the contrasted topic 'I'. For instance, 'at the moment the murder took place', I_{Contrastive Topic} was at HOME_{Focus}, but 'Bill_{Contrastive Topic} was at the BAR_{Focus}, and John_{Contrastive Topic} was at SCHOOL_{Focus} etc. The question in (10a) can be rephrased such as 'where were/was you/Bill/John etc. at the time of the murder', or, more simply, 'where was each one of the individuals at the time of the murder' in such a way that the 'where' part of the question represents the focus (new information) while 'you, Bill, John etc.' represent the topics (old/familiar information). The production of the contrastive topic 'I' suggests that there exist

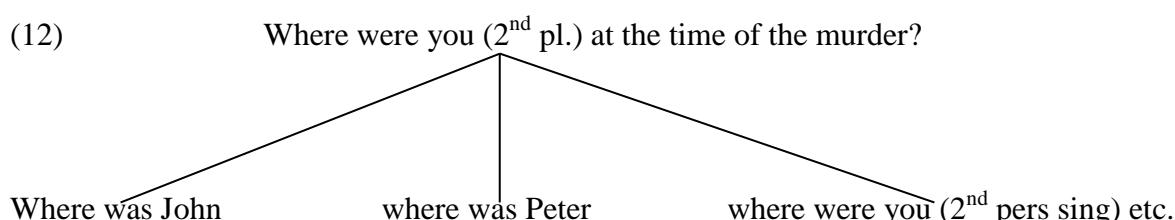
alternatives to it in the discourse setting. In this vein, a sentence such as (10b) cannot be uttered out-of-the blue, but only when alternatives are involved in the discourse. In addition, it is argued that alternatives need not be overtly expressed in the universe of discourse, but they may be implied by the use of intonation. According to Buring, the accentuation patterns used in (10b) are symptomatic of the fact that (10a) is active in the context and implies the presence of other alternative questions such as ‘where was Bill at time of the murder?’ where was John at the time of the murder?’ etc.

Similarly, from an interpretative point of view, Buring indicates that sentences with contrastive topics involve partial answers to the question under discussion (QUD). In other words, (10b) above cannot convey an exhaustive interpretation. For instance, it is known that English cleft constructions carry an exhaustive or an identificational interpretation in the sense of Kiss (1998 and subsequent work). A sentence like (11b) below is true iff ‘John killed nothing else but the SNAKE’. Conversely, a sentence like (11a) does not exclude the possibility according to which John killed something else in addition to the ‘snake’. In this vein, while it is possible to follow up (10a) with a sentence such as ‘he also killed the cat..’, such a possibility is not applicable in the context of (10b) because the domain of identification is closed.

(11) What did John kill?

- a. John killed the SNAKE_{Information focus}
- b. It was the snake_{Identificational focus} that John killed.

Coming back to contrastive topics, it is true that the domain of identification in a sentence like (10b) above is not closed, rather it involves alternatives to the contrasted topic ‘I’. Summarizing, Buring’s machinery operates in the form of a discourse-tree (DT) such that the question under discussion ‘where were you at the time of the murder?’ in (10) above is represented as in (12) below.



In sense of Buring (2003), the sentence ‘I_{Contrastive Topic} was at HOME_{Focus} in (10b) is simply a partial answer to the question under discussion ‘where were you at the time of the murder?’ which constitutes the larger question. Once an answer such as (10b) is provided in the discourse, this automatically implies that there exist active alternative questions such as the sub-questions ‘where was John?’, or ‘where was Peter?’ etc.

Although in Basaá focus and topic differ in terms of prosody/phonology (focus has no prosodic effects as opposed to topic), accentuation and deaccentuation are not attested in the language and cannot be distinguishing factors between them. As opposed to fronted foci and topics with an additive presupposition, contrastive topics in Basaá do not display an overt topic morpheme. This morpheme is implicitly realized, only the item encoding class and number agreement morphology shows up. For convenience, I will use the null - \emptyset morpheme to represent the topic marker. An instance of CT in Basaá is provided in (13a-b) where the contrastive topics *baken* ‘the guests’ and *maaygé* ‘child’ are respectively followed by the gender-specific agreeing items *bó-* (noun class 2) and *nyé-* (noun class 1).

(13) Context: *The meal is served. What should we (guests, the child, etc.) eat?*

- a. **baken** *bó-* \emptyset *bá-* *ní-* *jé* *mínsowá* *ni* *mbóngóó*
2.guests 2.TOP 2.SM-PRS-eat 4.ripe plantains with/and 9.mbongóó
‘As for the guests, they eat RIPE PLANTAINS with ‘MBO η GÓÓ.’
- b. **maaygé** *nyé-* \emptyset *a-* *ní-* *jé* *kóp* *ni* *kón*
1.child 1.TOP 1.SM-PRS-eat 9.chicken and 10.rice
‘As for the child, he eats CHICKEN and RICE.’

The statement uttered in (13), namely ‘the meal is served, what should we eat?’ is true iff there is a set of different people such as ‘the guests’, ‘the child’ and other ‘individuals’ in the discourse who share the same predication or event (the act of eating). In this vein, all the different individuals in the eating process are opposed/contrasted because they do not eat the same thing. For instance, when a statement such as (13a), is uttered in Basaá, it shows that there is an alternative to the topic *baken* ‘guests.’ These alternative members are many other people who act as subsets of the whole set ‘we’. Focus in this case is assumed to be represented by *mínsowá*

ni mbóngóó ‘RIPE PLANTAINS and MBO η GÓÓ (13a) and *kóp ni kón* ‘CHICKEN and RICE’

(13b) which denote new information. The alternate members of the topic are *baken* ‘the guests’ (13a) and *maaygé* ‘child’ (13b). So, the answers provided indicate that the current statements do not give maximal information, or, better still, are not exhaustive due to the presence of alternatives to the answers provided. These alternates, that constitute the set of individuals taking part at the dinner are assumed to be open or unlimited. Establishng a parallel between Buring’s D-trees and Basaá contrastive topics, it can be realized that the question under discussion in (13),

namely ‘what should we eat?’ entails an open set of different individuals just as in the English question ‘where were you at the moment of the murder?’ examined above.

In certain contrastive topic contexts in Basàá, there exists a morphosyntactic process which gives rise to the extension of the verbal base. Semantically, the applicative morpheme which attaches to the verbal base encodes contrast and simultaneity, which indicates that at least two actions are taken place concomitantly/at the same time, but with opposing values. This specific morpheme is glossed below as SIMUL (for simultaneity).

(14) Context: *What do the children study?*

ɓoolóm	ɓ́-ø	ɓá-	ní-	nígíl	mínsɔŋgi,	ɓodaá	ɓ́-ø	ɓá-	nígl-	* (ak)
2.males	2.TOP	2.SM-PRS-learn	4.mathematics	2.females	2.TOP	2.SM-learn-SIMUL				
mahóp										
6.languages										

‘The male students learn MATHEMATICS. As for the female ones, they learn LANGUAGES.’

Note that the question under discussion ‘what do the children study’ in (14) carries the existential presupposition that there is an open set of ‘children’ (male and female). The answer provided establishes contrast between ‘male children’ and ‘female ones’ while the constituents *mínsɔŋgi*

‘MATHEMATICS’ and *mahóp* ‘LANGUAGES’ constitute the foci which are associated with new information focus interpretation. A context like (14) shows that a contrastive topic is in fact a combination of both a topic and a focus in the sense that it (contrastive topic) is made up of an aboutness topic (what the question under discussion is all about) which contains a focus (here new or alternative information in the discourse) (see e.g. Krifka (2008)). Clearly put, the question in (14) is not exclusively concerned with ‘the children’ (the topic under discussion), but also, it contains focal information which is represented here by *mínsɔŋgi* ‘MATHEMATICS’ and *mahóp* ‘LANGUAGES’ (new and alternative information). This state of affairs led Krifka (2008) to point out that a contrastive topic is sometimes a topic which contains a focus (cf. Krifka 2008 for more details).

Given that in (14) topicalized elements are subjects, there is no intonational break that separates them from the rest of the sentence. Furthermore, in (14), if the applicative morpheme *-ak* encoding simultaneity/contrastivity is dropped the sentence becomes infelicitous. One can also see that in both clauses, the CTs can be marked morphologically. In addition, the applicative morpheme *-ak* cannot appear in the first clause. In a series of contrastive topics, only the last clause must contain the simultaneity morpheme *-ak* on the verb. This never occurs in other

clauses. For instance, if the order in (14) above is reversed like in (15), below, then one ends up with an illicit construction:

- (15) *What do your children study?*

***bodaá** **ɓ́-ø** bá- nígl- **ak** mahóp **boolóm** **ɓ́-ø** bá- ní- nígl ,
 2.females 2.TOP 2.SM-learn-SIMUL 6.languages 2.males 2.TOP 2.SM-PRS-learn
mínsɔŋgí
 4.mathematics

‘Intended: The males learn mathematics. As for the females, they learn languages’

The reader can notice that the item *-ak* which expresses contrast on the verb is toneless (or it bears a low tone). In certain discourse situations and specifically in the subjunctive mode, the sentence in (15) can be rescued if the applicative morpheme with a simultaneity/contrastive reading on the verb becomes mandatory. In this case, it undergoes tone changing by bearing a high tone like in (16). Although such change operates at the tonal level, a contrastive topic reading is still available.

- (16)

bodaá **ɓ́-ø** bá- nígl- **ák** mahóp **boolóm** **ɓ́-ø** bá- ní- nígl
 2.females 2.TOP 2.SM-learn._{SUBJ-SIMUL} 6.languages 2.males 2.TOP 2.SM-PRS-learn
mínsɔŋgí
 4.mathematics

‘Let the female students learn languages; as for the male students, they learn mathematics.’

It should be recalled that there is subject-object asymmetry in the realization of CTs. Subjects do not resume, but objects do, unless they are passivized.

- (17)

Q: **baá** baken **bá** bí- jé bíjék gwóβísóná mudaá a- bí- kéþél ɓ́ o
 Pol 2.guests 2.SM-PST2-eat 8.food 8.all 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-serve 2.them Pol
 ‘Did the guests eat all the foods that the woman served them?’

a.

pro_i **bá_i** bí- jé mínsowá mwómísô, **Kón**, **j̪-ø**, **bá** bí- tí *(y̪)
 pro 2.SM-PST2-eat 4.ripe plantains 4.all 10.rice 10.TOP 2.SM-PST2-give 10.them
bɔɔŋgé
 2.children

‘They ate all the ripe plantains. But as for *the rice*, they gave it to the children’

b.

pro_i **bá** bí- jé mínsowá mwómísô, **Kón** **j̪-ø** í bí- lób- á
 pro 2.SM-PST2-eat 4.ripe plantains 4.all 10.rice 10.TOP 10.SM-PST2-throw-PASS
 ‘They ate all the ripe plantains. As for *the rice*, it was thrown away.’

In (17a), the contrastive topic *Kón* ‘rice’ occupies the object position and that is why resumption must be attested sentence internally. On the contrary, when the same object is passivized, it becomes in fact the grammatical subject topic, and resumption is lost altogether (17b). Besides, in (17a-b) above, only the last cue of the numeration introduces contrastive topic interpretation as can be seen from morphological marking following the contrastive topic topic *Kón* ‘rice’.

7.1.2.1 Contrastive topics with adjuncts and the verb phrase

There exists an asymmetry between adjunct and the verb phrase in contrastive topics contexts. Adjuncts can act as contrastive topics iff they function as the subject and never when they function as the object (or complement). On the contrary, VP/TP-topicalization is possible in both contexts. The following contexts show that a topicalized subject VP acts as a normal DP/NP argument. The expected results are obtained in the sense that the contrastive VP *li-áŋ bikaat* ‘read the books’ in (18) is not followed by a prosodic break while such a break is attested in (19) when the same topicalized VP functions as the object. Another issue is that a topicalized VP which functions as object (19) is resumed by a pronoun in sentence final position.

(18) *Contrastive VP in subject position*

baúdú_i bá- gwée mam máa lí-bc̥ŋ íŋgeda nøy,
2.children 2.SM-have.HAB 6.things 6.two INF-do during 7.vacations
li-áŋ bikaat ni li-yúúya mawándá, pro_i bá n- yúúya mawándá māβ
 5-INF-read 8.books and 5-INF-visit 6.friends pro 2.SM-PRS-visit 6.friends 6.their
 híkií k̥el, ndí **li-áŋ bikaat j̥-ø** lí n- náy b̥ó
 every 9.day but 5-INF-read 8.books 5-TOP 5-SM-PRS-surpass 2.them
 ‘Children have two things to do during vacations: reading the books and visiting friends.
 ‘They visit their friends every day. But, as for *reading the books*, this surpasses them.’

(19) *Contrastive VP in object position*

baúdú_I bá- gwée mam máa lí-bc̥ŋ íŋgeda nøy,
2.children 2.SM-have.HAB 6.things 6.two INF-do during 7.vacations
li-áŋ bikaat ni li-yúúya mawándá, pro_i bá n- yúúya mawándá māβ
 5-INF-read 8.books and 5-INF-visit 6.friends pro 2.SM-PRS-visit 6.friends 6.their
 híkií k̥el, ndí **li-áŋ bikaat j̥-ø, pro_i bá- n- la b̥éé j̥**
 every 9.day but 5-INF-read 8.books 5-TOP pro 2.SM-PRS-can NEG 5.it
 ‘Children have two things to do during vacations: reading the books and visiting their friends.
 ‘They visit their friends every day. But as for *reading the books*, they cannot.’

On the contrary, the sentences below show that adjuncts are felicitously interpreted as contrastive topics only if the function as subjects (20b) while they fail to do so when fulfilling the function of object as in (21b).

(20) Context:

- a. *Kél yaaní i bée ilâm ñganday, ndí me n-yí bée tɔ́*
 9.day 1.yesterday 9.SM be.PST2 9.nice very but I PRS-know NEG whether/if
lén a- gá- bá léláá
 1.today 1.SM-FUT2-be how
 'Yesterday was a very lovely day, but I wonder about today.'
- b. *Mε ñ- hóŋjól lé lén nyé-ø a- gá- bá bée nlâm*
 I PRS-think that 1.today 1-TOP 1.SM-FUT2-be NEG nice
 Intended: 'I think that today will not be a lovely/nice one.'

(21) Context:

- a. *Mε n- yí lén báúdú bá- ñ- kε í súklu bikékela,*
 I PRS-know that 2.students 2.SM-PRS-go LOC 7.school 8.morning
pód-ól mε mbús kɔɔsi
 talk-OBL me 7.back midday
 'I know that the students go to school in the morning. What about the afternoon?'
- b.**mbús kɔɔsi yø-ø, bá- ñ- kε í báase*
 7.back 7.midday 7-TOP 2.SM-PRS-go LOC 7.church
 Lit: 'As for *the afternoon*, they go to church.'

As can be observed, both the time adjunct '*kél yaaní* 'yesterday' and *lén* 'today' in (20a) are introduced in the discourse and constitute alternatives in a given set of days under discussion. In other words, both days appear as two opposing/contrasted entities in the discourse in relation to the weather forecast (whether today will be a nice day as yesterday or not). It appears in (20b) that the time adjunct *lén* 'today' carries a contrastive interpretation in the sense that it does not share the same truth value as its counterpart '*kél yaaní* 'yesterday'. In other words, the utterance in (20b) is true in every context where there exist/s some other day/s in the universe of discourse such that this/these day/s will /will (not) be lovely. It is therefore obvious that a sentence such as (20b) cannot be uttered out-of-the blue. Rather, it carries the presupposition that there is/are some other member/s of the set which enter into contrast with the one presented in the speaker's assertion. The ungrammaticality of (21b) simply shows that adjuncts cannot function as contrastive topics when used as the object (complement) position.

At this stage, the discussion on contrastive topics has revealed that arguments as well as VP can function as contrastive topic both as subject and object. As for the adjuncts, they can only convey a contrastive interpretation if used as the subject.

Contrastive topics exhibit reconstruction effects (22a-c). In (22a), the quantified subject ‘each student’ successfully binds the pronominal *yě_{i/j}* ‘his/her’ contained in the contrastive NP/DP *kaat yě* ‘his/her book’. Similar connectivity effects are attested in (22b) between the null pro subject and the R-expression *Tónyé_i* contained within the genitive DP/NP *litówa lí Tónyé_i líbísú* ‘the first car of *Tónyé_i*’. Finally, binding connectivity effects hold between the pronominal *béé_{i/j}* ‘his/her_{i/j}’ contained within the topicalized VP [*li-sómb-ól báudú béé_{i/j} bikaat*]_k ‘buying his/her students the books’.

(22)

- a. *kaat yě_{i/j} ibisu yɔ-ø, [híkií njúdú]_i a- bí- áŋ ↓ yɔ*
7.book 7.his/her 7.first 7-TOP every 1.student 1.SM-PST2-read 7.it
Lit: ‘As for his_{i/j} first book, every student_i read it’
- b. *litówa lí Tónyé_i líbísú jɔ-ø, pro_i a bí- sómb-ól jɔ í Duwálá*
5.car 5.GEN 1.Tonye 5.first 5-TOP pro 1.SM-PST2-buy-OBL 5.it LOC Douala
‘As for the first car of Tonye_i, he_i bought it in Duala.’
- c. *[li-sómb-ól báudú béé_{i/j} bikaat]_k jɔ-ø, híkií malet_i a- n- la jɔ_k*
5-INF-buy-OBL 2.students 2.his/her books 5-TOP every 1.teacher 1.SM-PRS-can 5.it
‘Intended: Every teacher_i can buy his_{i/j} students the books.’

Contrastive topics are also sensitive to island constraints such as the Coordinate Structure Constraint (23a) and the Adjunct Island Constraint (23b). However, like their additive counterpart, contrastive topics are not sensitive to constraints involving operator movements such as the complex noun phrase constraint (23d) and the wh-island constraint (23e). This furthermore confirms our claim that topics are non-quantificational i.e. they are non-operators because their movement cannot be blocked by intervening operators (here the italicized relative operator and the wh-item *héé* ‘where’).

(23)

a. *Coordinate Structure Constraint*

- **litówa jè_i líbísú, jɔ-ø, malêt_i a- bí- sɔmb ndâp ni jɔ_i*
5.car 5.his/her 5.first 5-TOP 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-buy 7.house and 5.it
*‘Lit: ‘As for his_i first car, the teacher bought a house with it_i’

b. *Adjunct Island*

- **litówa jè_i líbísú, jɔ-ø, malêt_i a- ye maséé*
5.car 5.his/her 5.first 5-TOP 1.teacher 1.SM- be 6. joy
ínyuúlé hilóYá hí n- tibíl jɔ_i
because 19.boy-19.SM-PST1-repair 5.it

Lit: ‘As for his_i first car, the teacher_i is happy because the boy repaired it.’

c. *Non-bridge Verb / Factive island Constraint*

*Bikaat bí mínsɔŋgí gwó-ø, malêt a- n- tám lé a- bí- tí
 8.books 8.GEN 4.mathematics 8-TOP 1.teacher 1.SM-PRS-regret that 1.SM-PST2-give
 gwó ñaúdú
 8.them 2.students

Lit: ‘As for mathematics books, the teacher regrets that he gave them to the students.’

d. [litówa likoybáYá]i j̪i-ø mudaá a- m- bómá í mut nú a- bí-
 5.car 5.red 5-TOP 1.woman 1.SM-PST1-meet DEF 1.man 1.Rel 1.SM-PST2-
 nuŋúl j̪i
 sell 5.it

‘As for the red car, the woman met the man who sold it.’

e. [litówa likoybáYá]i j̪i-ø héé mudaá a- bí- sómb-ól j̪i
 5.car 5.red 5-TOP where 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-buy-APPL 5.it
 ‘As for the red car, where did the woman buy it?’

At this juncture, it has been shown that there exist topics with an additive/equative presupposition as well as topics with a contrastive interpretation. Both types of topics exhibit prosodic effects when they are objects and never when they function as subjects. Furthermore, the analysis of these two topic types has revealed that a topic with an additive presupposition is marked by a bi-morphemic morpheme which encodes noun class and number information and topic information. Contrastive topics only exhibit an overt gender-specific morpheme while the topic marker is silent. The use of connectivity effects as well as the diagnostics for A-bar movement showed that both topic types are derived and not base-generated in the pre-subject position.

7.1.2.2 Contrastive focus (CF) versus contrastive topic (CT)

This section shows that although a contrastive focus and a contrastive topic share some commonalities such as contrast, sentence initial positioning and overt agreement morphology, these two notions, however, diverge in terms of topic morphology and semantic interpretation to. Before closing off this section on contrastive topics, it seems important to establish the noticeable difference that exists between a contrastive focus and contrastive topic in Basáá. First of all, as already discussed at length, a contrastive focus (CF) and a contrastive topic (CT) differ morphologically in that in the former case, both the noun class agreeing morpheme and the focus marker are overt (24B) while in the latter, only the agreeing morpheme is overt, with the topic marker being silent (25A). Syntactically, both are similar because each of them occurs in sentence initial position (24B) and (25A).

(24) A: Mε n- n5Y lé mudàái a- n- lámb kón
 I PST1-hear that 1.woman 1.SM-PST1-cook 10.rice
 ‘I heard that the woman has cooked RICE.’

B: hééní, minsowá mó-n pro_i a_i- n- lámb
 no 4.ripe plantains 4-FOC pro 1.SM-PST1-cook

CF

‘No, she has cooked RIPE PLANTAINS.’

- (25) Q: Kíí mudàá_i a- mí- boŋ-ól bíjék bíní
 9.what 1.woman 1.SM-PRS-do-BEN 8.food/supplies 8.DEM.PROX
 ‘What does the woman do with these foods/supplies?’

A: Kón yɔ̃-ø, pro_i a_i- ní -nuŋŷl yɔ̃, minsowá mɔ̃-ø, pro_i a_i-jé-keβél CTs
 10.rice 10.TOP pro 1.SM-PRS-sell 10.it 4.ripe plantains 4.TOP pro 1.SM-PRS-serve
 mɔ̃ baken...
 4.them 2.guests

Lit: ‘As for rice, she sell it, as for ripe plantains, she serves it to the guests....’

The example in (24B) denotes a contrastive focus construction under correction, i.e. it contradicts a previous utterance, namely *mudàá a-n-lámb kón* ‘the woman has cooked RICE’. The utterance in (24B) shows that the previous statement in (24A) is not true. By so doing, (24B) conveys as a contrastive focus interpretation which excludes any other possible ‘thing’ ‘the woman might have cooked’. So, (24B) is true in every context whereby ‘the woman has cooked RIPE PLANTAINS’ and nothing else, so much so that the set of entities that have been cooked is closed and allows no additional element in the set. Globally, a contrastive focus such as (24B) allows no alternatives in the discourse.

On the contrary, in a contrastive topic situation like (25A), if only one cue of the numeration is provided by the interlocutor as a reaction to the question under discussion *Kíí mudàá a- mí-boŋ-ól bíjék bíní* ‘what does the woman do with these foods?’, then the expectation is that ‘the woman does something else with *alternative food/supplies*’ in the discourse. In other words, an answer such as the one in (25A) carries the presupposition that there are alternative *food/supplies* in the context and that the set of *these food/supplies* is not closed.

In terms of É. Kiss (1998 and subsequent work), a contrastive focus conveys an exhaustive reading in that the focus denotation in this case is the only one that leads to a true proposition, and consequently, is the one expressing maximal information. Any other alternative to the contrastive focus is not possible. As opposed to a contrastive focus which closes off the set of alternative entities in the discourse due to its exhaustiveness, an answer with a contrastive topic interpretation is non-exhaustive in that it is open, and this can be seen by the use of suspension marks which demonstrate continuation. Accordingly, a contrastive topic is also called continuation topic, i.e. the one which, when uttered in a given context, does not express exhaustive information, but implies that there is further expectation from the part of the hearer. In this case, if a contrastive topic answer is provided in a given context, there must be alternatives to the provided answer, for the latter to be true. It is the reason why a contrastive topic conveys a non-exhaustive interpretation. Globally, (25A) is true iff alternatives to the answer/s provided in the context are open and not closed as it is the case with contrastive focus.

7.1.3 Aboutness or Left Dislocated (LD) topics

Following Reinhart (1981), a topic denotes what a sentence is about. By aboutness topics in this section, it is simply meant that part of the sentence about which the conversation is. In more concrete terms, this type of topic construction is neither contrastive nor additive/equative. From a syntactic point of view, aboutness topics involve left dislocation or fronting of the topicalized constituent in sentence initial position followed by resumption in sentence internal position if the dislocated constituent is an object. When the dislocated topic is a subject, resumption is not attested. Pragmatically, an aboutness topic is attested in the course of conversation when already mentioned/activated by a discourse participant. In other words, aboutness topics, like the previous types of topics examined above, need to be given or old information in the mind of the speaker and/hearer and may be associated with a contrastive interpretation. Aboutness topics exhibit the same morphology as contrastive topics, but differ from these latter only in the context. For convenience, aboutness or left dislocated topics will be represented by the null morpheme -Ø just to the right of the gender-specific morpheme.

(26) *Context:*

- A: bá n- náŋá bés lén í ŋgand, ndí mε n- yí béé tɔ́ maɔ̡k
 INDEF PRS-invite 1.us 1.today LOC 7.party but I PRS-know NEG if 6.wine
 má m- bá jnɔ́
 6.SM-FUT1-be there

'We are invited to a party this evening, but I don't know if there shall be **wine** over there'.

- B: maɔ̡k mɔ́-Ø má n-la béé hánj í ŋgand, (bébêy yɔ́m íp̩é yaá)
 6.wine 6-TOP SM-PRS-can NEG miss LOC 7.party maybe 9.thing 9.other yaá
 Intended: Something else can lack at the party but not wine.'

Aboutness topics can be resumed if they are objects and resumption appears to be mandatory. As can be seen below, the topicalized constituent *maɔ̡k* 'wine' is resumed sentence internally by the pronominal *mɔ́* 'them'. The complex morpheme which makes up topic morphology is followed by an intonational break.

(27) *Context:*

- A: bá n- náŋá bés lén í ŋgand, ndí mε n- yí béé tɔ́ maɔ̡k
 INDEF PRS-invite 1.us 1.today LOC 7.party but I PRS-know NEG if 6.wine
 má m- bá jnɔ́
 6.SM-FUT1-be there

'We are invited to a party this evening, but I don't know if there shall be **wine** over there'.

B: **mačok mô-ø**, me n-téhe bée *(mô) nséj, (íbálê bijék gwó-ø bí- mí-
6.wine 6.TOP I PRS-see NEG 6.them necessary if 8.food 8.TOP 8.SM-FUT1-
bá hala a- kolf)
be 1.it 1.SM-suffice.PRS

'Intended: If there is **food**, that is sufficient, but as for the **wine**, I don't think it is necessary.'

In the preceding examples, an aboutness topic may carry a contrastive interpretation. This is made possible by the use of parenthetical sentences that follow the sentences containing the dislocated topics. In fact, contrastive topics differ from their aboutness counterparts in that alternatives are explicit in the former while they may be explicit in the latter. In other words, a contrastive topic requires the presence of relevant alternatives known by both the speaker and hearer while in dislocated topics, alternatives can remain implicit or even optional in the speaker's mind. The fact that the parenthetical sentence following an about topic is optional indicates that an aboutness topic requires no salient alternative in the discourse. The use of the parenthetical sentences in (26) and (27) indicate that the bold-printed constituents *yžm ipé* 'something else' and *bijék* 'food' constitute alternatives to the contrasted topic *mačok* 'wine'.

Note that these alternatives are not necessarily required in so far as (26) and (27) do not have explicit alternatives in the discourse, and in this case, no contrastive topic interpretation is attested. The interlocutor reacting to speaker A's utterances in (26)-(27) above may simply extend his/her statement by adding other information which constitute alternative/s to the aboutness topic.

As the reader can notice from (26-27) the sentences in A only make mention of one topic which is the nominal *mačok* 'wine' in this case. As for *yžm ipé* 'something else' in (24) and *bijék* 'food' (25), they are not mentioned in a previous discourse i.e. in the question/s under discussion (26A & 27A). They are simply optionally realized in the replies provided by speaker B. This helps to argue that only the context allows one to obtain the difference between a contrastive topic and a dislocated or aboutness topic. The former requires explicit alternatives whereas the latter does not. In the latter case, contrast may be introduced by the speaker in the discourse, and this is shown by the fact that the speaker may insist on continuation that involves contrast between the aboutness topic which is the discourse referent and another entity introduced in the discourse setting. The speaker may want the aboutness topic to be more salient or prominent in relation to other possible entities.

That left dislocated/aboutness topics may be associated with a contrastive topic interpretation is attested cross-linguistically. In her analysis of the Clitic Left Dislocation (CLD) in Czech,

Sturgeon (2006:7-8) argues that this construction (clitic left dislocation) is associated with a contrastive topic interpretation. Speakers generally insist on continuation that involves CLD in Czech. For instance, in a context such as (28) below, there is a contrast between the ‘bags’ *bought by Hana and Jana*. According to the author, from a prosodic point of view, the presence of the clitic left dislocation construction implies in the hearer’s mind that there exist alternatives to the contrasted constituent, namely the first conjunct *modrou tašku* ‘blue bag’.

(28)

Modrou tašku_{CT} tu si koupila Hana_F, ale *Zloutu_{CT}*, tu si koupila Jana_F.
 blue bag.acc that.acc refl-cl bought Hana but yellow.acc that.acc refl-cl bought Jana
 ‘A blue bag_{CT}, Hana_F bought one and a yellow one_{CT}, Jana_F bought one.’

Note that in (28), focus is marked as **F** and contrastive topic as **CT**. The result obtained is such that contrastive topics are followed by an intonational break (represented by a comma). The constituent *modrou tašku* ‘blue bag’ is contrasted with *Zloutu* ‘yellow one’. Given that contrastive topic constructions involve foci, the focus parts here are *Hana* and *Jana*. It is demonstrated by the author that if the first conjunct *modrou tašku* is uttered in a specific discourse situation in Czech, the hearer expects some continuations such that the conjunct produced be contrasted with some other discourse entities. Sturgeon adds that contrastive topic marking in Czech indicates that if the question ‘Who bought a blue bag?’ is activated in the discourse, one should expect alternative questions such as ‘who bought a yellow bag?’. These facts indicate that the presence of a dislocated constituent in a given context implies that there exist(s) in the universe of discourse some implicit alternative/s to the dislocated constituent. In addition to the pragmatic properties and the fact that dislocated constituents occupy the left edge of the clause in Basáá, there exist some other syntactic characteristics which are also attested cross-linguistically as discussed in the following section.

7.1.3.1 Syntactic properties of aboutness/dislocated topics

It should be recalled that aboutness topics in this work are what is known in many other languages under the term (Critic) Left Dislocation (CLD). Clitic Left Dislocation, or simply Left Dislocation is attested in languages such as Catalan (López 2009), Czech (Sturgeon 2006), German (Frey 2004), Italian (Cinque 1977, Rizzi 1997 *inter alia*). The question whether (clitic) left dislocation involves movement or is base-generated in sentence initial position has been raised in a wide range of literature by a good number of authors. For some, CLD involves a movement operation whereby the dislocated constituent initially originates sentence internally

before raising to the left periphery of the sentence (Cinque 1977; Rizzi 1997; Villalba 2000; Grohmann 2003; Sturgeon 2006; etc.). Other researchers postulate that clitic left dislocation involves a base-generation process whereby the dislocated constituent merges in the complementizer domain and gets connected to a clitic such that both the dislocated element and the clitic form a binding chain or a movement chain which involves movement of the clitic or some other operator. The latter approach is pursued by authors such as Cinque (1990), Iatridou 1995; Anagnostopoulou (1997), Frascarelli 2000, 2004 etc). This section provides evidence in support of a movement approach by means of binding effects and syntactic islands.

First of all, aboutness topics in Basaa display connectivity effects in the matrix and embedded contexts as illustrated in (29a-b).

(29)

a. *Quantifier binding in matrix clauses*

maɔɔk méé_{i/j} mɔ̄-ø, híkií ñken_i a- ní- lóna mɔ́ í ñgand
6.wine his/her 1-TOP each 1.guest 1.SM-FUT1-bring 6.them LOC 7.party
'Intended: Every guest_i will bring [his/her_{i/j} wine] to the party.'

b. *Quantifier binding in embedded clauses*

maɔɔk méé mɔ̄-ø, me ý-hóŋól lé mawándá mêm má ñ- kâl lé híkií
6.wine his_{i/j} 6-TOP I PRS-think that 6.friends 6.my 6.SM-PST1-say that every
ñken_i a- gá- nɔ́ mɔ́ í ñgand
1.guest 1.SM-FUT2-drink 6.them LOC 7.party

'Intended: I think that my friends said that [every guest]_i will drink [his_i wine] at the party.'

c. **biɓangá gwéé_{i/j} þí mámbót gwɔ̄-ø, Ewas_i a- ní- djowá gwɔ́_{i/j} híkií**
8.true 8.his 8.GEN 6.clothes 6-TOP 1.Ewas 1.SM-PRS-wash.HAB 8.them every
ñgwa nɔ́y
3.day 9.rest

Lit: '[His_{i/j} true clothes], Ewas_i washes them every Sunday.'

d. **mámbót méé_i nyémédé_i mɔ̄-ø, híkií mut_i a- ní- téédá mɔ́**
6.clothes 6.his/her 1.him/herself 6-TOP every 1.people 1.SM-PRS-keep 6.them
í ñkúú
LOC 3.suitcase

Intended: 'Everyone keeps one's clothes.' Lit: '**One's_i own clothes**, everyone_i keeps **them**.'

As can be seen above, co-reference between a possessive contained in a dislocated constituent and a quantifier within the main and embedded clause is possible in (29a-b). The possessive *méé_{i/j}* 'his/her' binds the quantifier phrase *híkií ñken_i* 'every guest' in both contexts. This is prima facie evidence that the left dislocated constituent reconstructs in clause internal-position. Sentence (29d) shows that the reflexive *nyémédé_i* 'himself' and the possessive *méé_{i/j}* are c-commanded by their antecedent 'everyone' at a given stage of the derivation, namely at LF in

conformity with Condition A of Binding Theory (BT). If reconstruction did not occur in these cases, then the grammaticality of these sentences would not have been possible.

In addition to binding connectivity effects as arguments in favour of a movement analysis of aboutness topics, it is important to note that these constructions are subject to island effects. The sentences below show that aboutness topics are sensitive to the Sentential Subject Constraint (30b), the Coordinate Structure Constraint (30c), as well as the factive/Non-Bridge Verb constraint (30d). As expected, topic fronting out of a complex noun phrase is grammatical as in (30a) because topics are non-quantificational. In this case, extraction of a topic out a structure dominated by a quantificational element cannot fail given that topics are not quantificational. In Rizzi's (2004) terminology, only elements of the same featural-make up act as interveners.

(30)

a. *Complex NP island*

- maɔɔk mɔ̄-ø**, me m- bómá báken bá- bí- lóná mó í ñgand
6.wine 6.TOP I PST1-meet 2.guests 2.SM-PST2-bring 6.them LOC 7.party
'As for the wine, I met the guests who brought it to the party.'

b. *Sentential Subject island*

- * **maɔɔk mɔ̄-ø**, lé báken bá- n- jó mó (hála) a- ye lóŋgé
6.wine 6-TOP that 2.guests 2.SM-PST1-drink 6.them 1.that 1.SM-be good
'As for the wine, that the guests drank it is good.'

c. *Coordinate Structure*

- * **maɔɔk mɔ̄-ø**, báken bá- bí- lóná makebla mápé ni mó
6.wine 6-TOP 2.guests 2.SM-PST2-bring 6.presents 6.other and 6.them
'*As for the wine, the guests brought it and other presents.'

d. *Factive /Non-Bridge Verb island*

- * **maɔɔk mɔ̄-ø_i**, me bí- tám lé Ewas a- bí- tí mó báken
6.wine 6-TOP I PST2-regret that 1.Ewas 1.SM-PST2-give 6.it 2.guests
'*As for the wine, I regretted that Ewas gave *it* to the guests.'

It emerges from connectivity effects and island sensitivity that aboutness topics are derived, that is the left dislocated constituent is not base-generated in sentence initial position. The following section discusses another left peripheral construction which is more or less similar to the different topic types already discussed. This construction is the hanging topic.

7.1.4 Hanging topics (HTs)

Hanging topic (henceforth HT) constructions are another instance of leftward preposing strategy that is attested cross-linguistically. This topic type construction appears to raise two main issues that constitute a common ground among researchers. From a pragmatic point of view, HTs are said to be a topic promotion strategy, that consists in promoting a discourse referent to a topic status while it was not a topic in a previous discourse. The term *hanging topic* in the literature is

probably due to Cinque (1977:406) who borrowed it in turn from A. Grosu (n.d). In Cinque's terms, a hanging topic 'exemplifies a construction that mainly serves to promote an NP to topic status at a point in the discourse when it was not a topic.' Hanging topics are said to differ from left dislocation (LD) from a pragmatic viewpoint in that the former involves a topic promotion device while the latter requires that the dislocated constituent be old or shared information/knowledge already mentioned in the discourse. Syntactically, it is almost widely said that HTs are not part of core syntax while clitic left dislocation is. Put another way, clitic left dislocation is said to be subject to syntactic constraints that are not attested in a hanging topic construction, although both are located in the clausal left periphery. Before discussing hanging topics in Basáá, it is deemed necessary to have an in-depth view on the distinction between a clitic left dislocation construction and a hanging topic construction from a crosslinguistic viewpoint prior to giving an insight into the Basáá empirical data.

7.1.4.1 (Clitic) left dislocation versus hanging topic

The distinction between clitic left dislocation and hanging topic is broadly addressed in the literature of intonational languages. Many authors including Cinque (1977, 1990) Anagnostopoulou (1997), Gregory & Michaelis (2001), Grohmann (2003), Frey (2004), Sturgeon (2006), López (2009) etc. have largely analysed left dislocation and hanging topic.

With respect to African languages, Aboh (2004) seems, to the best of my knowledge, to be the only author who has tackled the phenomenon of left dislocation and hanging topic in light of Gungbe (Kwa). Aboh demonstrates that topicalization in Gungbe involves a construction which intersects with hanging topic and clitic left dislocation in Italian (Aboh 2004:311).

In Czech (Slavic), the first noticeable distinction between both categories (CLD & HT) is case matching, that is, case correspondence between a left peripheral antecedent and a co-referent pronoun or demonstrative. Secondly, while a dislocated constituent is able to reconstruct in clause-internal position, there appears to be no reconstruction effects with a hanging topic. Sturgeon (2006) shows that in case of clitic left dislocation, case matching is required between the left dislocated constituent and a co-referent demonstrative whereas one has case mismatching between the hanging topic and the demonstrative.

(31) Clitic Left Dislocation (Sturgeon 2006: ex.6-7)

- a. **Svého nejlepšího přítele₁, toho má Honza₁ rád.**
self's best friend.acc that.acc has Honza joy
'His₁ best friend, Honza₁ likes him.'

- b. **Svého nejlepšího přítele₁, toho má každý₁ rád.**
 self's best friend.acc that.acc has every joy
 'One's₁ own best friend, everyone₁ likes him.'

As one can notice, the bold-printed dislocated constituent *Svého nejlepšího přítele* 'his best friend' and 'one's best friend' in (31) and the corresponding left peripheral demonstrative *toho* 'that' bear the same case (here accusative case), and the left dislocated constituent can reconstruct sentence-internally. In other words, in (31b), the reflexive pronominal element *Svého* 'self' successfully binds the quantified element *každý* 'everyone' in sentence-internal position.

This is an illustration that at some stage of the derivation (prior to spellout), the reflexive *Svého* 'self' is c-commanded by the quantifier *každý* 'everyone' so as to comply with Principle C of Binding Theory (BT). Based on these case matching and binding effects, Sturgeon concludes that the dislocated element is moved rather than base-generated in the left periphery. However, the same results are not obtained with hanging topic constructions in Czech. The author shows that the lack of case matching and reconstruction effects provide evidence in support of a base-generation analysis of hanging topics in Czech:

(32) Hanging Topics (Sturgeon 2006 ex.8-9).

- a.* **Svoje₁ sestřenice Anička, tu má Honza₁ rád.**
 self's cousin Anna.nom that.acc have Honza joy
 'His₁ cousin Anna, Honza₁ likes her.'
- b. ***Svuj₁ nejlepší přítel, toho má kazdy₁ rád.**
 self's best friend.nom, that.acc has every joy
 'One's₁ own best friend, everyone₁ loves them.'

It is shown in (32) that the hanging topic *Svoje sestřenice Anička* 'his cousin Anna' (32a) does not share the same case morphology with the demonstrative *tu* 'that'. The former bears nominative case while the latter bears accusative case. Co-reference between the reflexive *Svoje* 'self' and the subject *Honza* is not possible. Similarly, in (32b), the reflexive *Svuj* 'self' cannot bind the quantifier phrase *kazdy₁ rád* 'every joy'. This state of affairs shows that the hanging topic *Svuj nejlepší přítel* 'one's own best friends' cannot reconstruct sentence-internally. Case mismatching between the left peripheral constituent *Svuj nejlepší přítel* 'one's own best friend' (nominative case) and the demonstrative *toho* 'that' (accusative case) provides further evidence that the hanging topic is base-generated. In light of case mismatching and the lack of

reconstruction effects, Sturgeon concludes that clitic left dislocation in Czech involves a movement process because case matching and reconstruction effects are attested while hanging topic constructions involve a base-generation analysis due to case mismatching and the absence of reconstruction effects. From a pragmatic point of view, she argues that clitic left dislocation conveys a contrastive topic interpretation while hanging topic is a topic promotion device (cf. Sturgeon 2006 for more detail).

That clitic left dislocation and hanging topic constructions involve two different phenomena pragmatically and syntactically is also discussed in Roman languages such as Catalan, Spanish Italian, among others. In Spanish for instance, López (2009) shows that case matching appears to be a distinguishing factor between clitic left dislocation and hanging topic. In (33a) below, the left dislocated constituent *Maria* bears the same dative case as the clitic *le* in sentence-internal position. In (33b) on the contrary, the same constituent *Maria* with a hanging topic interpretation bears nominative case and is resumed by a strong pronoun; here *elle* ‘she’.

(33) Spanish (López 2009:3-4).

- a. A María no le enviaré ningún paquete. *CLLD*
 DAT Maria NEG Cl.dat send.1st.fut no package
 '(To) Maria I won't send (her) a package.'
- b. María, ella sí sabe jugar al tenis *HTLD*
 Maria she indeed knows play.inf at.the tennis
 'Maria, she can also play tennis.'

In addition, as pointed out by López, left dislocation and hanging topic also differ in that while the former does not licence epithet NPs sentence-internally, the latter do. In other words, in case of clitic left dislocation, the dislocated constituent cannot be described ‘downstairs’ (sentence internally) by another NP (34a) whereas a hanging topic can (34b). So, by the term epithet, it is meant the fact that an NP describes/qualifies in some sense a previous NP antecedent in the sentence.

(34) Spanish Lopez (2009:4).

- a. *A María, hace tiempo que no veo a esa **sinvergüenza** *CLLD*
 A Maria does time that NEG see.1st A that shameless
 Intended: ‘**Maria**, I haven’t seen **that shameless woman** in a long time.’
- b. A María, hace tiempo que no veo a esa **sinvergüenza** *HT*
 A Maria does time that NEG see.1st A that shameless
 ‘**Maria**, I haven’t seen **that shameless woman** in a long time.’

Another distinguishing factor between both constructions is that almost any maximal projection can undergo left dislocation whereas only specific indefinite or referential definite DPs/NP can

act as hanging topics. This is also attested cross-linguistically as the following examples from Catalan and Italian show. López argues that ‘every argument of the clause can be dislocated’ apart from ‘functional elements of the extended verbal projection’.

(35) Catalan (López 2009:4-5).

- a. **D'històries**, jo no **en** vull sentir cap. *Dislocated PP*
of stories I NEG CL.part want.1st hear any
'I don't want to hear any stories.'
- b. **Intelligent**, no **ho** és *Dislocated AP*
intel.ligent NEG CL.neut is
- c. **Que el Joan es intel.ligent**, ja **ho** vaig dir jo. *Dislocated CP*
that the Joan is intelligent already Cl.neut PAST.1st say.inf I
'I already said that Joan was intelligent.' Lit: 'That Joan is intelligent, I have already said it.'

Quoting Cinque (1990), Aboh (2004:304) shows that in Italian, almost any XP category can be left dislocated as illustrated in the following examples in (36).

(36) Cinque (1990) cited by Aboh (2004:304).

- a. **Al mare**, ci siamo già stati *Dislocated PP*
'To the seaside there-(we)-have already been.'
- b. **Bella**, non **lo** è mai stata *Dislocated AP*
'Beautiful not-it-(she) ever was.'
- c. **Messa da parte**, non lo è mai stato *Dislocated VP*
'Got out of the way not-it-he ever was.'
- c. **Tutti**, non li ho visti ancora *Dislocated QP*
'All not-them-(I) have seen yet.'
- d. **Che bevi**, lo dicono tutti *Dislocated CP*
'That (you) drink it says everybody.'

It is worth mentioning that in Italian, the difference between clitic left dislocation and hanging topic also depends on the typology of pronouns. Like in Spanish, Italian left dislocation makes use of a clitic (here the clitic *gli* 'him' in (37a)) while hanging topic makes use of a strong pronoun (here the pronoun *lui* 'him' in (37b)).

(37) Italian (Cinque 1990 cited by Aboh 2004:304).

- a. **A Georgio**, sono sicuro che non **gli** ho mai scritto *Critic Left Dislocation*
'To Georgio, I am sure that I have never written to him.'
- b. **A Georgio**, sono sicuro che non ho mai scritto a **lui** *Hanging Topic*
'To Georgio, I am sure that I have never written to him.'

Apart from reconstruction and case mismatching effects, epithet constructions and the nature of fronted elements, hanging topic and clitic left dislocation also differ on the basis of syntactic islands. It is well known that hanging topics are not sensitive to syntactic islands (38b) while

extraction out an island for clitic left dislocation purposes triggers ungrammaticality (38a). (38) *Extraction out of a coordinate structure* (Cinque 1977:408-9).

a. *Clitic Left Dislocation*

* **Di quel libro**, [mi son seduto in poltrona e ne ho letta una metà, ieri]

‘**Of that book**, [I sat in the armchair and read half of it yesterday].’

b. *Hanging Topic*

Quel libro, [mi son seduto in poltrona e ne ho letta una metà, ieri]

‘**That book**, [I sat in the armchair and read half of it yesterday].’

Moreover, clitic left dislocation can operate beyond clause boundaries (39b) while such an operation is not possible with a hanging topic (39a). This is tantamount to saying that a hanging topic construction is not subject to the sentence-building rules while such rules govern the applicability of clitic left dislocation.

(39) *Clause unboundedness* in Spanish (Lopez 2009:5).

a. * **Al arbitro**₁, el muy tonto₁ dice que el jugador no lo₁ vio

b. **El árbito**₁, el muy tonto₁ dice que el jugador no lo₁ vio

‘The referee, that idiot says that the player didn’t see him.’

The last aspect to discuss about the distinction between a hanging topic construction and a clitic left dislocation is that the former is restricted to root clauses while the latter can operate in both main and embedded clauses. The following Italian sentences taken from Cinque (1977:410) show that only clitic left dislocation constructions are licensed in embedded contexts (40a-b). As for hanging topics, they are completely disallowed in the same contexts (41a-b).

(40) *Clitic Left Dislocation*

a. Ho paura che **a Giorgio**_i, Marco **gli**_i abbia già scritto

‘I fear that to Georgio_i, Marco him has already written to him_i.’

b. Ho sentito che **di Piero**_i, non **ne**_i parlano più.

‘I heard that of Piero_i, they don’t talk-of-him_i (clitic) anymore.’

(41) *Hanging Topic*

a. * Sono sicure che **Mario**_i, **lui**_i vuole andare al mare

‘I am not sure that Mario_i, he_i (nonclitic) wants to go to the sea.’

b. * Ho l’impressione che **Paolo**_i, sappiata benissimo chi **gli**_i ha scritto

‘I’ve got the impression that Paolo_i, you know very well who wrote to him_i.’

The data discussed so far, among many other arguments that the reader can find in the mentioned literatures, reveal that clitic left dislocation is derived syntactically because it is constrained by sentence-grammar rules whereas hanging topic seems not to be part of core syntax due to its insensitivity to the rules that govern sentence-building mechanisms such as binding effects, island sensitivity, clause unboundedness etc. The two phenomena are attested cross-linguistically and appear to give credit to a movement approach analysis a base-generation one depending on whether one is concerned with clitic left dislocation or hanging topic.

7.1.4.2 An investigation of hanging topics in Basáá

The discussions on Basàá aboutness/dislocated topics in section 6.1.4 have shown that they are derived syntactically on the basis of syntactic diagnostics such as connectivity and island effects. A look at Catalan, Czech Italian, and Spanish in section 6.1.4.1 allowed to realize that even in these languages, clitic left dislocation constructions, or what is called aboutness/dislocated topics in Basáá display the same a syntactic process in the sense that they take part in the building of core grammatico-pragmatic rules.

This section examines hanging topics in Basáá and shows that contrary to what is attested in the intonation languages, hanging topics display hybrid properties. More precisely, hanging topics share some properties with left dislocation and other topic types already studied. They also share other properties that make them behave like syntactic ‘outsiders’⁵⁷. In this case, they behave like their counterparts in Catalan, Czech, Italian and Spanish.

Hanging topics in Basáá involve the preposing of the targeted constituent and obligatory resumption in sentence internal position of the topicalized constituent in case it is the object as illustrated in the following context in (42).

- (42) A: me bí- ný́ yáání lé **Bíkún** a- bí- ned mákekse...,
 I PST2-hear 1.yesterday that 1.Bikun 1.SM-PST2-pass 6.exams
 ‘I heard yesterday that Bikun passed the exams...’
- B: óó!! **híl̥yá** ↓hí, malêt a- gá- tí *(hýs) ḷgandak makebla
 Excl. 19.boy 10.that 1.teacher 1.SM-FUT2-give 19.him a lot of 6.presents
 ‘Oh! **that boy**, the teacher will give **him** the presents.’
- C: # óó! malêt a- ga- tí **híl̥yá** ↓hí ḷgandak makebla
 Eξχλ. 1.teacher 1.SM-FUT2-give 19.boy 19.that a lot of 6.presents
 ‘The teacher will give that boy the presents.’

From a discourse perspective, Basàá hanging topic presents two important properties. First of all, a hanging topic is in fact a continuation topic (as indicated by the suspension marks ‘...’) which is made more prominent in the sentence and needs to be old or shared information already activated in the mind of the hearer and speaker. Secondly, as already demonstrated cross-linguistically by previous researchers such as Cinque (1977), Gundel (1988), Prince (1998b), Gregory & Michaelis (2001), Sturgeon (2006) etc. hanging topics in Basáá also involve, from a pragmatic point of view, a topic promotion process which consists in making an already available, but non salient/prominent, discourse referent a topic by fronting it to the sentence

⁵⁷ This simply means they seem not to be derived in the syntax as they are not sensitive to syntactic constraints

initial position. In this case, the hanging constituent is less prominent/salient in a preceding discourse, but, for prominence purposes, a speaker can decide to make it more prominent by promoting it to the status of topic and getting rid of what was in fact the topic of the discussion. As a result, one ends up with a topic shift mechanism which consists in leaving the topic of the sentence (here topic is what the sentence is about) and highlighting another discourse referent (which was not prominent in a previous discourse).

A first characteristic of a hanging topic is presented in the micro-discourse setting in (42) above whereby the bold-printed subject constituent ‘**Bíkún**’ constitutes in fact the topic under discussion. In other words, speaker A’s statement is about ‘**Bíkún**’ and the predication is the event ‘passed the exams’. In speaker B’s statement, the DP/NP *hílýá↓hí* ‘that boy’ stands for ‘**Bíkún**’ and is made salient/prominent by being preposed to sentence initial position.

Only B’s sentence with the preposed NP *hílýá ↓hí* ‘that boy’ is felicitous as a follow up to (42A). As for the statement in (42C), it cannot be felicitous in the context under discussion because it does not involve leftward fronting. This shows that a hanging topic is not licensed in-situ, it must always undergo fronting to the left periphery of the sentence and must be resumed downward by a strong pronoun in case the topicalized constituent is the object. Prosodically, it must be followed by an intonational break (graphically represented here by a comma).

The sentence in (43B) shows that a hanging topic in the subject position does not resume overtly. However, it is bound to the a null *pro_i* which is bound in turn by the subject marker (here the italicized subject marker *hí*-) that helps recover the semantic content of the dislocated subject. It is even attested cross-linguistically that subjects do not generally resume overtly, but covert resumption is possible. Here again, like with other topic types previously discussed, because the topicalized element is the subject, no intonational break is attested.

- (43) A: me bí- nóy yáání lé **Bíkún** a- bí- ned mákekse
 I PST2-hear 1.yesterday that 1.Bikun 1.SM-PST2-pass 6.exams
 ‘I heard yesterday that Bikun passed the exams.’

- B: Mε ní- yí lé **hílýá_i** **hí** **pro_i** *hí*- gá- kosná ḥgánday makebla
 I PRS-know that 19.boy 19.that pro 19.SM-FUT2-receive a lot of 6.presents
 ‘I know that that boy will receive a lot of presents’

It seems a bit hard to demonstrate on the surface that the subject in (43b) is fronted because topic movement in this case is vacuous. The topicalized constituent is the subject of the sentence, and there is an overlap between the subject of the sentence and the hanging topic. Put differently, as

compared to (42B) where the hanging topic is the object, and given that it is easy to say that the hanging object *hílógá hí* ‘that boy’ does not occupy its original theta position, a construction like (43B) constitutes a real overlap between the subject of the sentence and the hanging topic. This is reminiscent of the vacuous movement attested in subject fronting in wh-questions and focus constructions in many languages where it is not easy to determine whether the subject wh-question of focus has been subject to movement (e.g. *who bought this pen?*). In this case, there exists some overlap between the thematic subject and the wh-subject in Spec-CP/FocP. Only the context can enable one to understand that in fact the constituent *hílógá hí* ‘that boy’ in (43B) does not really occupy a theta position, but rather a hanging topic position at the left periphery of the clause. Another argument in support of the fact that the hanging topic subject *hílógá hí* ‘that boy’ in (43B) does not occupy the subject position comes from tone realization. When used as the subject or the direct object of the sentence, the same constituent bears a low tone on the first syllable as will seen shortly in (47). It is well known that topics are generally definite, that is, only definite or specific constituents can function as topics. It is the reason why clitic left dislocation is said to be a topic construction because only definite or specific constituents (DPs PPs, APs, and CPs) can be left dislocated. As for hanging topics, they are generally said to involve specific indefinite or referential definite DPs. Because of this state of matters, hanging topics are therefore often said to be derived by other factors that are not linked to core syntax.

In Gungbe (kwa), where topic is also morphologically marked, Aboh (2004) shows that definite DPs function as topics while indefinite ones are excluded from becoming topics. The sentences below indicate that Gungbe has an indefinite marker, namely the particle *dé* and a definite marker which is the particle *lɔ́*. Only nominals modified by the definite marker *lɔ́* can be topics (44a), while nominals modified by the indefinite marker *dé* cannot be as shown in (44b).

(44) Gungbe (Aboh 2004:308)

- a. [vi lɔ́] yà é bí xúgán wéxòmè-ví lé kpó
child Spf_[+def] TOP 3sg intelligent than school-child Num all
'As for the [specific] child, he is more intelligent than all the pupils.'
- b.*[vi dé] yà é bí xúgán wéxòmè-ví lé kpó
child Spf_[-def] TOP 3sg intelligent than school-child Num all
'As for a certain child, he is more intelligent than all the pupils.'

Like many other African languages, Basaá does not have articles and the distinction between definite and indefinite nominals relies on the use of demonstratives and the invariant definite

marker *í* the so-called augment in African linguistics. Like in Búlu, Etón, Ewóndo and many other Bantu languages, this so-called augment is invariable in Basaá. In other words, it does not change in relation to noun classes. Only nominal elements associated with a demonstrative and the definite marker *í* can function as hanging topics (45a). In the absence of the definite marker, the hanging nominal bears a high tone on its first syllable (43b). This high tone bearing is a remnant of the definite marker *i* and expresses definiteness. Similarly, if both the definiteness marker and the demonstrative are dropped altogether, the sentence becomes illicit (45c). The ungrammaticality of (45d) is due to the absence of either the definiteness marker before the nominal *hilýá* ‘boy’ or the absence of tone realization on the topicalized nominal. In other words, the nominal *hilýá* ‘boy’ in (45d) should either bear a high tone on its first syllable or be preceded by the definiteness marker *i*.

- (45) Context: mɛ bí- nóy yáání lé **Bíkún** a- bí- ned mákeksɛ
 I PST2-hear 1.yesterday that 1.Bikun 1.SM-PST2-pass 6.exams
 ‘I heard yesterday that Bikun passed the exams.’

- a. í **hilýá** ↓hí, malêt a- gá- tí *(hyó) ḷgandak makebla
 DEF 19.boy 10.that 1.teacher 1.SM-FUT2-give 19.him a lot of 6.presents
 ‘**That boy**, the teacher will give **him** the presents.’
- b. **hilýá**↓hí, malêt a- gá- tí *(hyó) ḷgandak makebla
 19.boy 10.that 1.teacher 1.SM-FUT2-give 19.him a lot of 6.presents
 ‘**That boy**, the teacher will give **him** the presents.’
- c. * **hilýá**, malêt a- gá- tí *(hyó) ḷgandak makebla
 19.boy 1.teacher 1.SM-FUT2-give 19.him a lot of 6.presents
 ‘**That boy**, the teacher will give **him** the presents.’
- d. ***hilýá** hí, malêt a- gá- tí *(hyó) ḷgandak makebla
 19.boy 19.that 1.teacher 1.SM-FUT2-give 19.him a lot of 6.presents
 ‘**That boy**, the teacher will give **him** the presents.’

Note that the lexical tone on the nominal *hilýá* ‘boy’ in (45a-b), is a low tone, so the high tone which is assigned on it is a syntactic/grammatical tone. This is exemplified in (46a-b) where the same nominal is used in the subject and direct object positions without any high tone on the first syllable.

- (46)

- a. **hilýá** hí- bí- sómb-ól máwándá méé makúβé yaaní
 19.boy 19.SM-PST2-buy-OBL 6.friends 6.his 6.bananas 1.yesterday
 ‘A certain boy bought bananas to his friends yesterday.’

b. malêt a- bí- séþl-éné bágwâl **hìlýá**

1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-call-BEN 2.parents 19.boy

‘The teacher called a certain boy for (the benefit of) the parents.’

There seems to be an interesting issue about the illicitness of the preceding sentences in (45c) and (45d). First of all, in a contrastive topic context whereby relevant alternatives are known or given in the context, (45c) would be perfectly correct even in the absence of a contrastive topic marker as shown in (47). (47) Context: *What will the teacher give to the girl and the boy?*

a. **hìlýá (hyó-ø)**, malêt a- gá- tí *(hyó) ñgandak makebla
19.boy 19-TOP 1.teacher 1.SM-FUT2-give 19.him a lot of 6.presents

‘As for **the boy**, the teacher will give **him** the PRESENTS.’

b. hìngonda (hyó-ø), malêt a- gá- tí *(hyó) þífbásí

19.girl 19.TOP 1.teacher 1.SM-FUT2-give 19.her 8.bangles

‘As for **the girl**, the teacher will give **her** bangles.’

As for the ungrammaticality of (45d), it can be rescued iff the prosodic break (a comma) is dropped and if the resumptive pronoun *hyó* ‘him’ is also omitted. In this case, (45d) will become a kind of relative clause with a presentative/’presentational’ reading i.e. it will be interpreted as ‘this is/there is a boy the teacher is giving the presents to’.

The second pragmatic property of hanging topics in Basàá as mentioned consists in promoting a previously less prominent discourse referent to the status of topic while it was not a topic before. In this context, one obtains a topic shift strategy because the interlocutor gets rid of what was the topic of discussion and picks up a less salient discourse referent to promote it to the status of topic. In the following context, the conversation is about *baúdú* ‘the students’, (48A) and can be called the theme/subject of conversation.

(48)

A. **baúdú** bá- bí- tí bálêt màkebla yaaní

students 2.SM-PST2-give 2.teachers 6.presents 1.yesterday

‘The **students** (*sentence topic*) gave the teachers the presents yesterday.’

B. **mákebla** mâ, me ní- yí lé bálêt bá- gá- téédá (mó)

6.presents 6.those I PRS-know that 2.teachers 2.SM-FUT2-keep 6.them

‘That presents (the presents in question), I know that the teachers will keep them.’

Although other sentence constituents, namely the ditransitive verb *tí* ‘give’, the indirect object *bálêt* ‘teachers’, the direct object *makebla* ‘presents’ and time adjunct *yaaní* ‘yesterday’, are also part of the presupposition, they are in fact less salient as opposed to the subject of the sentence *baúdú* ‘students’. In most languages, the sentence topic precedes the its predication/comment. In the sense of Chafe (1976) and Reinhart (1981), one can consider that the subject *baúdú* ‘students’ is the sentence topic and that the material following it is the comment about it. With

this in mind, it can be realized that in (48B), the speaker, for prominence purposes, decides to highlight the direct object *makebla* ‘presents’ by promoting it to the status of topic. By the same token, the speaker gets rid of the subject *báúdú* ‘students’ (48A) which was previously considered as the sentence topic and applies topic-shift by topicalizing the direct object *makebla* ‘presents’ in (48B) instead. Note also that in (48A), the direct object *makebla* ‘presents’ bears its lexical tone which is a low on the first syllable. However, when promoted to the status of hanging topic in (48B), it bears a syntactic high tone on its first syllable and is followed by a demonstrative. This high tone assignment, combined with the use of the demonstrative determiner *mâ* ‘those’ enable the topic to be definite, and since topics are definite objects, there is no doubt that the direct object *makebla* ‘presents’ (48B) becomes a topic.

At this juncture it has been shown that hanging topics in Basáá are prosodically marked. If the referent is an object, it should be followed by an intonational break. If the discourse referent is the subject, there is no intonational break separating the hanging topic and the whole clause. Rather, the hanging subject can bear a high tone so as to become quite different from the grammatical subject of the clause. As was mentioned in previous sections, hanging topics in Basáá are not quite the same as the one encountered in intonational languages.

First of all, indefinites can hardly function as hanging topics in Basáá. From a pragmatic point of view, hanging topic constructions behave in two ways. On the one hand, the topicalized constituent can be old/familiar or shared information by both the speaker and hearer in the discourse. On the other hand, a previously non salient/prominent constituent in the discourse can be promoted to the status of topic to the detriment of a constituent that previously functioned as the sentence topic. Below are some some syntactic characteristics of hanging topics.

(49)

- a. *Extraction out of a coordinate structure with resumption of the fronted constituent*

* **bikaat**, malêt a- bí- sómb pém ni **gwó**
 8.books 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-buy 9.chalk and 8.them
 Lit: ‘**Books**, the teacher bought chalk and **them**.’

- b. *Extraction out of a coordinate structure with resumption before the coordinating conjunction ni ‘and’ of the fronted constituent*

bikaat, malêt a- bí- sómb **gwó** ni pém
 8.books 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-buy 8.them and 9.chalk
 ‘***Books**, the teacher bought chalk with **them**.’

- c. *Left Branch Condition (LBC)*

* **bikaat**, malêt a- n- tí báúdú *(***gwó**) bí mínsɔŋgí
 8.books 1.teacher 1.SM-PST1-give 2.students 8.them 8.GEN 4.mathematics
 ‘***Books**, the teacher gave the students **them** of the mathematics.’

d. *DP Pied-piping*

bikaat bí mínsɔŋgí, malêt a- n- tí *(gwɔ́) báúdú
 8.books 8.GEN 4.mathematics 1.teacher 1.SM-PST1-give 8.them 2.students
 ‘*As for mathematics **Books**, the teacher gave them to the students’

Extraction of an indefinite out of an island gives rise to ungrammaticality if the resumptive pronoun which co-refers with the hanging topic follows the first conjunct in a coordinate structure (49a). However, if the resumptive pronoun precedes the second DP/NP conjunct, no ungrammaticality arises (49b). Extraction of the topmost element of an NP/DP gives rise to a violation of the Left Branch Condition (Ross 1967) as illustrated in (49c). In the latter context, only pied-piping of the entire DP is allowed as the grammaticality of (49d) shows. In fact, the grammaticality of (49d) is expected because the fronted DP *bikaat bí mínsɔŋgí* ‘mathematics books’ is specific.

The following sentences show that a definite DP/NP with a hanging topic interpretation is insensitive to islands effects. Extraction out of an island involving a wh-operator is perfectly allowed as illustrated in sentence (50). This state of affairs amounts to saying that topics, as opposed to foci, are non-quantificational. This explains why their movement cannot be influenced by an intervening wh-operator.

(50)

a. *Complex NP island*

híl̥yá hí_i, me bí-bɔmá [málêt a- ní- níiyá hyɔ́_i mínsɔŋgí]
 19.boy.DEF 19.that I PST2-meet 1.teacher 1.SM-PRS-teach 19.him 4.mathematics
 ‘That boy_i (the boy in question), I know the teacher who teaches him_i mathematics.’

b. *Wh-island*

híl̥yá hí_i, me ní- yí bé [njéé a- bí- somb-ól hyɔ́_i bítámb]
 19.boy 19.that I PRS-know NEG 1.who 1.SM-PST2-buy-OBL 19.him 8.shoes
 ‘That boy_i (the boy in question), I don’t know who bought him_i the shoes.’

c. *Adjunct island*

híl̥yá hí_i, me ye maséé ínyuúlé malêt a- n- tí hyɔ́_i makebla
 19.boy 19.that I be joy because 1.teacher 1.SM-PST1-give 19.him 6.presents
 ‘That boy_i, I am happy because the teacher gave him_i the presents.’

The fact that hanging topics are not sensitive to the sentence-building rules proves that they are not dependent on syntax constraints. Such facts are attested crosslinguistically and show that hanging topics are part of other language components such as pragmatics or phonology.

However, if the discussion were to be stopped at this level, one would certainly live a happy life by thinking that hanging topics, as broadly claimed in the literature are extra-clausal elements that have no direct access to syntax because they are insensitive to syntactic constraints. The following data clearly show that hanging topics in Basaá remain troublesome or puzzling

constructions because in addition to being insensitive to some syntactic locality constraints as displayed above, they exhibit reconstruction effects that constitute one of the hallmarks of movement in syntax. The sentences in (51) show that a left peripheral pronominal (reflexive and possessive) found inside a hanging topic can appropriately bind a noun inside the clause (51a). This clearly shows that hanging topics obey Principle C of Binding Theory (BT). In (51b), the possessive *jéé* ‘his’, contained in the hanging topic [*liwándá jéé_i Ewas*]_j ‘his friend Ewas’ appropriately binds the subject *Bíkún* inside the clause. Finally, quantifier binding is attested in (51c) where a left peripheral possessive *gwéé* ‘his’ and the reflexive *nyé-medé_i* ‘himself’ perfectly bind the quantifier *hikií mut* ‘everyone’ in the subject position.

(51)

a. *Principle A and C*

bikaat gweé hyó-medé_i/_j hilýá ↓hí_i hí- bí-nujúl gwó_i
 8.books 8.his 19-REFL 19.boy 19.that 19.SM-PST2-sell 19.them
 ‘Lit: “[The books of himself_i]_j, that boy_i sold them_j.’

b. *Principle C*

[*liwándá jéé_i Ewas*]_j, *Bíkún_i a- bí- somb-ol jí_j litówá*
 5.friend 5.his 1.Ewas 1.Bikun 1.SM-PST2-buy-OBL 5.him 6.car
 ‘His_i friend Ewas, Bikun_i bought him a car.’

c. [Bikaat *gwéé_i*, *nyé-medé_i*]_i [*hikií mut*]_i a- íj- *gwés gwó_i*
 8.books 8.his 1-REFL every people 1.SM-PRS-like 8.them
 ‘His_i books, everyone_i likes them.’

The grammaticality of the sentences in (51) provides evidence that at some point of the derivation, the fronted topic is c-commanded by its antecedent. If c-command did not hold at this level, it would be impossible to obtain grammatical sentences. Such results allow one to postulate that at a certain stage of the derivation, the hanging topic is first merged inside the clause prior to movement to sentence initial position. These facts suggest that hanging topics in Basaá are neither left dislocation nor hanging topics in the manner of Roman or Germanic languages. They seem to be hybrid constructions which combined some properties of left dislocation (the presence of connectivity effects) some properties of hanging topics à la Romance and Germanic (insensitivity to islands).

Another striking issue which constitutes a demarcation line between Basaá and Indo-European languages is that while hanging topic constructions are allowed in both the matrix and embedded contexts in the former, they are restricted to the sole root context in the latter. The following examples lend support to this arguments.

(52)

- * Sono sicuro **che** Mario_i, lui_i vuole andare al mare *Italian* (Cinque 1977:410)
 ‘I am sure that Mario_i, he_i (nonclitic) wants to go to the sea.’

(53)

- a. **Ewas ni Bapack** bá- ɪ- kâl málêt lé u n- sómb-ól bé ɓ́
 1.E and 1.B 2.SM-PST1-tell 1.teacher that you PST1-buy-OBL NEG 2.them
 βikaat
 8.books
 ‘Ewas and Bapack told the teacher that you did not buy them the books.’

b. *Clause unboundedness*

- í ɓ́ɔɔŋgé ɓâ, mε n- yí lé mε n-somb-ól ɓ́
 DEF 2.children 2.those I PRS-know that I PST1-buy-OBL 2.them 4.books
 Lit: ‘*Those children* (Ewas and Bapack)_i, I know that I bought *them_i* the books.’

c. *Root context*

- í ɓ́ɔɔŋgé ɓâ, mε n-somb-ól ɓ́
 DEF 2.children 2.those I PST1-buy-OBL 2.them 8.books
 ‘*Those children* (Ewas and Bapack)_i, I bought *them_i* the books.’

d. *Embedded context*

- mε n- yí lé í ɓ́ɔɔŋgé ɓâ, mε n-somb-ól ɓ́
 I PRS-know that DEF 2.children 2.those I PST1-buy-OBL 2.them 8.books
 Intended: ‘I know that *those children* (Ewas and Bapack)_i, I bought *them_i* the books.’

In (52), the Italian embedded clause is headed by the lexical complementizer *che* ‘that’ and *Mario*, the hanging topic, is resumed downward by the strong pronoun *lui* ‘he’. Considering (53a) as the basic sentence in Basaá, it is clear that in this language, a hanging topic construction is unbounded (53b) and can occur in matrix (53c) and embedded (53d) contexts.

The data reveal that if topics are generally said to be confined to root clauses in Indo-European languages as discussed in the literature, (e.g. Emonds (1970, 1976, 2004), Hooper & Thompson (1973), Maki & al. (1999), Haegeman (2002), Heycock (2006), etc. this is not the case in Basaá if one considers simply the fact that hanging topics are part and parcel of the clausal array due to a number of syntactic diagnostics which hanging topics in Basaá comply with. Even in Indo-European languages, Bianchi (2010) shows that topics are not always restricted to root clauses. According to her, under certain discourse circumstances, topics can occur in embedded contexts.

It should be recalled that the fact that Basaá hanging topics display properties of clitic left dislocation and hanging topics as attested in Romance and Germanic is not a new phenomenon in the literature.

As an illustration to this, note that Aboh (2004) discusses the same effects in Gungbe. He shows that Gungbe topics are found in-between Romance and Germanic left dislocation and hanging

topic constructions. For a cross-linguistic understanding of the phenomenon and for the sake of illustration, I will delineate some of his findings.

To begin with, Aboh shows that topics in Gungbe can occur in root and embedded contexts as shown in (54a-b), can undergo long extraction (54c) and are sensitive to the subject island (54d).

(54) *Gungbe* (Aboh 2004:310-11).

- a. móto ló yà Kòfí xò-è
car Spf_[+def] TOP Kofi buy-Perf-3sg
'As for the specific car, Kofi bought it.'
- b. ùn sè dò móto ló yà Kòfí xò-è
1.sg hear-Perf that car Spf_[+def] TOP Kofi buy-Perf-3sg
'I heard that as for the specific car, Kofi bought it.'
- c. móto ló yà ùn sè dò Kòfí xò-è
car Spf_[+def] TOP 1.sg hear-Perf that Kofi buy-Perf-3sg
'As for the specific car, I heard that Kofi bought it.'
- d. Kòfí yà [é ní yì yòvótòmè má jró mì]
Kofi TOP 3sg Inj go Europe Neg please 1sg
'As for Kofi, that he should go to Europe pleases me.'

The Gungbe data above militate in favour of a movement analysis of topics in this language. However, as already mentioned and in conformity with Aboh himself, there are some topic constructions in Gungbe that counter a movement approach. If one only deals with such constructions, s/he would undoubtedly infer that Gungbe topics are base-generated in the left periphery of the sentence rather than being moved there.

First of all, Gungbe topics are not sensitive to the Complex NP Constraint (55a) and the wh-island (55b).

(55)

a. *The Complex NP island*

- [DP xwé ló] yà ùn mòn dawè dě gbé é ná Kòfí
house Spf_[+def] TOP 1sg see-Perf man that_[Rel] build-Perf-3sg for Kofi
'As for the specific house, I saw the man who built it for Kofi.'

b. *Wh-island*

- [DP xwé ló] yà ùn kanbió dò ménù wè gbé é ná Kòfí ?
house Spf_[def] TOP 1sg ask-Perf that who FOC built-Perf-3sg for Kofi
'As for the specific house, I asked who will build it for Kofi.'

The investigation of hanging topics shows that there appears to be a language 'conspiracy' between Basaá and Gungbe. Both languages allow for topic extraction out of islands and also allow for topicalization in root and embedded contexts alongside long-distance topic extraction. As a result, it can be observed that the view according to which hanging topics are invisible to

core syntax needs to be revisited and that the distinction between clitic left dislocation and hanging topics might have other sources than what is largely discussed in the literature. The behaviour of hanging topics reveals that they do not allow for a unified study due to their controversial status that place them in-between syntax and ‘metasyntax’, i.e beyond the syntactic boundaries. One can infer from Basàá and Gungbe data that, topics in these two African languages, because they are not quantificational, cannot be influenced by intervening wh-operators which, are quantificational elements. As a result, under Rizzi’s ‘sameness’ terminology, and given that topics do not have the same featural make-up as wh-phrases or focused items, the movement of the former cannot be blocked by the latter.

7.1.5 Frame setting topics

Also known as scene setting topics (cf. Benincà & Poletto 2004), frame setting topics are special topics in the sense that they do not constitute old, known or presupposed information in the discourse as their counterparts examined in previous sections. In this vein, a frame setting topic is not associated with the notion of ‘aboutness’, i.e. what a sentence is about (cf. Reinhart 1981 and related works). As discussed in chapter one, the role of frame settlers is to set the frame or context in which a certain statement is held to be true so much so that the realization of a given proposition is dependent on the frame settler. More specifically, frame settlers in a given sentence restrict the application of the proposition expressed by the rest of the sentence in a certain domain (cf. Jacobs 2001).

Although frame-settings may be limited in number in Basàá, there exist, some linguistic expressions which help delimit the propositional content of sentences. Just like in German and Korean (cf. chapter two), frame settlers are not old information in the discourse setting. They do not have to be what the sentence is all about. In the following contexts, it is true that the frame settlers *ni sombol* ‘by God’s grace’ and *iβálē pro_i bá-* *ń-níYil* *ŋgándaY* ‘if they study hard’ restrict each, the meaning of the proposition in which it is contained.

(56) *Context*

- a. Q: lihaa lí- ý- kε láá
5.family 5.SM-PRS-go how
'How is the family?'
- A: **ni sombol** Nyámbê, bot bóbáso bá- yé mbóó
Loc 7.will 1.God 2.people 2.all 2.SM-be.PRS 3.health
'By God's grace everybody is fine.'
- b. Q: báá báúdú bá- gá- něd mákekse è
Pol 2.students 2.SM-FUT2-pass 6.exams Pol
'Will the students pass the exams?'

A: *íbálê pro_i bá-i- níñYîl ñgándaY*, pro_i bá-i- gá- něd
 if pro 2.SM-PRS-study a lot pro 2.SM-FUT2-pass
 'If they study hard, they will pass.'

(56) shows that a frame settler in Basàá can be a phrase (56aA) or a whole proposition (56bA). As can be observed, the prepositional phrase *ni sombol* 'by God's grace' in (56aA) and the proposition *íbálê pro_i bá-i-níñYîl ñgándaY* 'if they study hard' are neither about 'God's grace', nor about the fact of 'studying' or 'studying hard'. None of them is old information in the discourse. Instead, the prepositional phrase *ni sombol* 'by God's grace' in (56aA) is new information with respect to the question under discussion (Q) and restricts /limits the family state to 'God's grace' without which they may not be fine. In like manner, the conditional proposition *íbálê pro_i bá-i-níñYîl ñgándaY* 'if they study hard' simply restricts/limits the accomplishment of the event 'passing the exams' to a condition (studying hard). These examples show that a frame setting topic occupy the sentence initial position and is separated from the following proposition by an intonation break (a comma in writing). Like hanging topics, frame setting topics are not marked morphologically. Frame setting topics differ from other kinds of topics in that while the latter do not constitute old information in the discourse, and delimit /restrict the propositional content of the following clause, the former need to be old information in the discourse.

In partial conclusion, five types of topics have been examined hitherto in Basaá. They include the additive/equative topic, the contrastive topic, the aboutness topic, the hanging topic and the frame setting topic. The study revealed that virtually all these topic constructions are syntactically encoded. However, hanging topics slightly differ from their counterparts because the former are endowed with some properties that place them in-between syntax and 'metasyntax'. This state of affairs amounts to saying half way that just like focus fronting, topic fronting in most cases is syntax-driven, i.e it has direct access to syntax. Furthermore, as opposed to focus fronting, topic fronting has prosodic effects when the topic is an object and resumption is possible. Contrary to other types of topics, hanging topics and frame setting topics are not morphologically marked. Additive topics involve a visible bimorphemic element that separates them with the entire clause whereas contrastive and aboutness/left dislocated ones require only an agreeing morpheme and an implicit topic marker. This complex item also separates the corresponding topic from the whole clause. Frame setting topics, as opposed to other topic types, are not old information in the discourse. Although they also occur in sentence initial position and display intonationl patterns, (phonological break), as other types of topics, frame setting topics are information introduced in the discourse and restrict the propositional content of the following

clause. In the following section, I discuss an interesting topic construction in the language. This grammatical aspect is also attested in some Bantu languages. Topic-drop constructions are examined under close scrutiny in the following section.

7.2 Topic-drop constructions

One of the main characteristics of Basaá is that in addition to being a pro-drop and focus-drop language, it also licenses topic-drop constructions. There are onstructions whereby a topic constituent can be omitted/dropped altogether without any resulting illicitness. Such constructions are referred to as topic-drop. Just like pro-drop and focus-drop, topic-drop constructions are dependent on the availability of rich agreement morphology in the language and the recoverability of a discourse referent in the discourse setting. Where agreement morphology is absent, one cannot obtain a topic-drop construction. To the best of my knowledge, if pro-drop has already been attested in the literature of African languages, topic-drop in addition to focus-drop, on the contrary, have not yet been mentioned.

Quoting Huang (1984), Erteschik-Shir (2007:23) argues that pro-drop is different from topic-drop on the basis of agreement morphology. While the first one is dependent on rich agreement morphology, topic-drop, on the contrary, is recoverable from the discourse. To illustrate his view on this issue, Erteschik-Shir provides the following examples from Huang (1984:537) in (57) below where *e* stands for the omitted/dropped topic pronoun. ‘The translation of *e* as he/him is only one possibility: the pronominal reference is derived from the context’ according the Huang (1984) as reported by Erteschik-Shir (2007).

- | | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| (56) a. <i>e</i> lai-le
come-LE
‘[He] came.’ | <i>topic-drop with the subject</i> |
| b. Lisi hen xihuan <i>e</i> .
Lisi very like
‘Lisi likes [him] very much’ | <i>topic-drop with the object</i> |

As Erteschik-Shir points out, German is another language that uses topic-drop constructions. There exists a subject-object asymmetry in the realization of topic-drop. As for the subject, and according to the author, only the first, second and third persons can be dropped as opposed to the object which only licenses third person in topic-drop. According to Schulz (2005), dropped topics must be recoverable. She continues by arguing that ‘in order to induce a breakdown in communication, a necessary prerequisite for such recoverability seems to be that the dropped constituent be a continued topic.’ In her opinion, third person objects are easier to recover than first and second person objects because the third person is the unmarked case for continued topic

objects. Overall, the idea is that topic-drop are linked to continued/continuation topics as discussed by a number of authors such as Erteschik-Shir (2007), Wexler (1998) among others.

In Basaá, just like pro-drop and focus-drop, topic-drop is dependent on two factors: (i) rich agreement morphology and (ii) availability of the referent in the discourse as shown in the following examples in (58-60). In (58A), the focused NP *malêt* ‘teacher’ is overt whereas it is left out altogether in (58B) where recoverability is possible due to the presence of the complex item *nyé-n* (made up of the agreement marker and the focus marker).

(58) Q: Njéé a- bí- sómb lítowa

1.who 1.SM-PST2-buy 5.car
‘Who bought a car?’

A: **Malêt *(*nyé-n*)** a- bí- sómb lítowa *Subject focus*

1.teacher 1-FOC 1.SM-PST2-buy 5.car
‘The teacher bought a car.’

B: **nyé-n** a- bí- sómb lítowa *Subject focus-drop*

1-FOC 1.SM-PST2-buy 5.car
‘HE/The TEACHER bought a car.’

Similarly, in (59A), the additive topic *bituyúl* ‘toys’ is overtly realized whereas it is omitted in (59B) where recoverability is possible thanks to the complex item *gwɔ-k* which encodes gender-specific and topic information. In this case, the presupposition is that ‘the parents bought various presents’. The speaker wants to know if ‘the toys’ were also bought among other things.

(59) *Context* (question under discussion)

Mε ní- yí lé bágwâl bá- bí- sómb-ól báóngé **makebla** yaaní
I PRS-know that 2.parents 2.SM-PST2-buy-BEN 2.children 6.presents 1.yesterday
ndí me ní- yí báéé tɔ́ bá- bí- sómb yaY **bituyúl**

but I PRS-know NEG if 2.SM-PST2-buy also 8.toys
‘I know that the parents bought the *presents* for the children. But I don’t know if they bought *the toys* too.’

A: ijí, **bituyúl *(*gwɔ-k*)**, bágwâl bá- bí- sómb-ól *(***gwɔ***) báóngé *additive topic*
yes, 8.toys 8-TOP 2.parents 2.SM-PST2-buy-BEN 8.them 2.children
‘As for the toys, the parents also bought them to the children.’

B: ijí, **gwɔ-k**, bágwâl bá- bí- sómb-ól *(***gwɔ***) báóngé *topic-drop*
yes, 8-TOP 2.parents 2.SM-PST2-buy-BEN 8.them 2.children
‘*As for them (the toys), the parents also bought them to the children.’

(60) below is an instance of a contrastive topic construction in which the DP/NP *bituyúl* ‘toys’ and *mambót* ‘clothes’ are members of the set ‘presents’. The DPs/NPs *bituyúl* ‘toys’ and

mambót ‘clothes’ are contrasted. As expected, both topics in A’s statement are followed by morphological markers, namely the items *gwó* and *mó* respectively with a silent topic marker. Statement B in (60) shows that topic-drop is also possible like in (58-59) above, but with a slight difference. The difference is that what is morphologically realized in (60B) is the gender-specific morpheme *gwó*. As for the topic marker, it remains silent. Note also that in (59-60), the topics are resumed by a pronoun sentence internally and are prosodically marked (a comma).

(60) Context (question under discussion).

Kíí u m- bón-ól mákebla u bí- kosná yáání
 9.what you.3sg PST1-do-OBL 6.presents you.2sg PST2-receive 1.yesterday
 ‘What have you done with the presents you received yesterday?’

- A: **bituyúl** *(**gwó**), me η- kâb *(**gwó**) **mambót** *(**mó**), me n- téédá *(**mó**)
 8.toys 8-TOP I PST1-share 8.them 6.clothes 6.TOP I PST1-keep 6.them
 ‘I shared the toys, as for the clothes, I kept them’
- B: **gwó**, me η- kâb *(**gwó**) bccngé **mó**, me n- téédá *(**mó**)
 8.TOP I PST1-share 8.them 6.clothes 6.TOP I PST1-keep 6.them
 ‘I shared them [toys], as for them [clothes], I kept them.’

(61) Null subject (*pro-drop*)

- a. **malèt_i** a- níÍYá baúdú minsɔŋgí yaaní *Overt subject*
 1.teacher 1.SM-teach.PST1 2.students 4.mathematics 1.yesterday
 ‘The teacher taught the students mathematics yesterday.’
- b. **pro_i** a_i- níÍYá baúdú minsɔŋgí yaaní *Null subject/pro-drop*
 1.teacher 1.SM-teach.PST1 2.students 4.mathematics 1.yesterday
 ‘He taught the students mathematics yesterday.’

Topic-drop is also possible with aboutness topics. Recall that aboutness topics and contrastive ones have the same morphological marking. They only differ contextually and on the fact that the former require implicit alternatives as compared to the latter that require explicit alternatives in the discourse setting. The context below shows that the topic under discussion *maccY* ‘wine’ but the speaker can make explicit the fact that there are also alternatives to the sentence topic *maccY* ‘wine’ (under discussion) even if these alternatives remain implicit. In (62B), the aboutness topic *maccY* ‘wine’ is overtly realized while B’s sentence represents a topic-drop construction.

(62) *Context:*

A :Di n̄- lamá k̄é l̄en í n̄gánd, ndí m̄e n̄- yí b̄éé t̄ó maɔɔY má
we PRS-should go 1.today LOC 7.party but I PRS-know NEG if 6.wine 6.SM
m̄-bá j̄óo

FUT1-be there

‘Today we are invited to a party, but I don’t know if there shall be wine to drink there.’

B: **maɔɔY m̄-ø** má- n̄- lá b̄é háj j̄óo, βéβêY ȳm̄ íp̄é yaá
6.wine 6-TOP 6.SM-PRS-can NEG lack there maybe 9.thing 9.other yaá
‘Intended: People cannot lack wine there.’

B': **m̄-ø** má- n̄- lá b̄é háj j̄óo, βéβêY ȳm̄ íp̄é yaá *Topic-drop*
6-TOP 6.SM-PRS-can NEG lack there maybe 9.thing 9.other yaá
‘Intended: People cannot lack wine there may be something else.’

As focus-drop, topic-drop is not the sole property of Basaá, it is also attested in other Bantu languages as can be seen in (63) and (64). According to Georges Parfait Eloundou (pers.com) and Olivier Moussa Loumpata (pers.comm) our Etón and Ewondo informants respectively, the position of the focus and topic can be left empty if the referents are clearly understood/recoverable from the discourse and iff the dropped constituents are able to be recovered by agreeing morphemes. According to them, focus-drop constructions are felicitously interpreted in the contexts below. A’s statements indicate constructions with overt focused constituents while B’s statements are instances of focus-drop.

(63) a. **Etón** (Eloundou pers.comm) .

Q: *What do the girls cook?*

A: **Kwas ȳɔ** biŋgá b̄e- t̄e- dʒam *object focus*
9.fish 9.FOC 2.girls 2.SM-PRS-cook
‘The girls cook FISH’

A': **ȳɔ** biŋgá b̄e- t̄e- dʒam *focus-drop*
9.FOC 2.girls 2.SM-PRS-cook
‘The girls cook IT (fish)’

b. **Ewondo** (Moussa Loumpata pers.comm).

Q: *Who do the children love?*

A: **miníŋgá nȳɔ** b̄óŋgá b̄e- a-diŋ *object-focus*
1.woman 1.FOC 2.children 2.SM-PRS-love
‘The children love the WOMAN’

A': **nȳɔ** b̄óŋgá b̄e- a-diŋ *focus-drop*
1.FOC 2.children 2.SM-PRS-love
‘The children love HER (the woman)’

The following include instances of topic-drop constructions. In A's statements the topicalized elements are overtly realized whereas in A prime's statements these topic are dropped.

(65) a. **Etón** (Eloundou pers.com)

Q: Why did you buy clothes and shoes?

A: **biyé ndé** mə tə-́ ñè **byé**, **ŋgop ndé** mə tə-́və-́ móŋé
4.clothes 4.TOP I PRS-keep 4.them 4.shoes 4.TOP I PRS-give 1.child
'As for the clothes, I will keep them, the shoes, I will give them to the child.'

A': *(**ndé**) mē té-ñè **byé**, *(**ndé**) mē té-vé móŋá

4.TOP I PRS-keep 4.them 4.TOP I PRS-give 1.child
'The clothes, I will keep them; as for the shoes I will give them to the child.'

b. **Ewondo** (Moussa Loumpata pers.com)

Q: *What do the people do?*

A: **bóŋgó bə́**, bə-́ a- kə-́ á sikúlu, **Esíá nyá** a- a- ké
2.children 2.TOP 2.SM-PRS-go LOC 9.school 1.father 1.TOP 2.SM-PRS-go
á mákíd
LOC 6.market

'The children go to school, as for the father, he goes to the market.'

A': **bə́ bə-́** a- kə á sikúlu, **nyá** a- a- kə á mákíd
2.TOP 2.SM-PRS-go LOC 9.school 1.TOP 2.SM-PRS-go LOC 6.market

'They (children) go to school, as for him (father), he goes to the market'

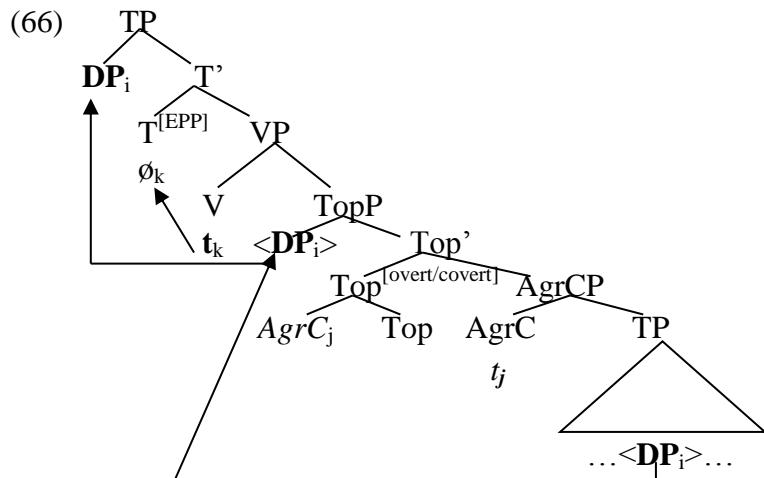
The above data seem to provide interesting results from a cross-linguistic point of view. Focus-drop and topic-drop constructions are attested in some Bantu languages due to the richness of agreement morphology and the availability of the referents in the discourse setting. It is also important to note that from a morphosyntactic perspective, only information structure-related devices endowed with morphological marking allow for topic-drop. This uncontroversially means that hanging and frame setting topics cannot license topic-drop because they have no morphological marker. In other words, drop-constructions are dependent on two factors: the availability of discourse referents and morphological marking. This is proved to be true in null subject, focus and topic constructions. The following section is concerned with the theoretical implications that uphold the syntax of topic fronting in Basaá.

7.3 Theoretical assumptions

The preceding discussions revealed that topic marking in Basaá involves a morphosyntactic operation combined with prosodic properties. This state of affairs suggests that a fine-grained study of the left periphery should be conducted in line with the cartography framework. At this juncture, it can be claimed that the clausal left periphery in Basaá can host not only fronted foci but also topicalized constituents. The morphemes that make up topic morphology are

sensitive to noun class as far as the additive, the contrastive and the aboutness topics are concerned. Only the additive topic makes use of an overt topic marker. Other types of topics do not have overtly realized topic markers. In line with the cartographic approach to syntactic structures, I argue that the clausal make-up of the clause in Basáá topic constructions also comprises different functional heads that encode not only a topic interpretation but also complementizer agreement. In this chapter, the main claim, which has also been argued for in the analysis of the focus structure, is that the gender-specific morphemes that precede the topic markers (explicit or implicit) are instances of phi-features which project in the syntax. This is explained by the fact that these morphemes encode class and number features. Like the focus marker, the topic markers (explicit or implicit) encode the discourse-related device of topic in all its subcomponents. It is simply argued that the gender-specific morpheme is the head of the Agreement Complementizer Phrase (AgrCP) following Shlonsky (1994). Given that the topicalized constituent exhibits agreement morphology, it is proposed that for spellout purposes, both the agreeing morpheme in AgrC^0 and the topic morpheme in TOP^0 need to incorporate (Baker 1988) after head movement. Just like it is the case with focus fronting, I argue that topic fronting involves two successive movement operations: (i) movement of the topicalized constituent into the Specifier position of the topic phrase (TopP) for topic requirements, (ii) phrasal movement of the same constituent into the matrix TP for the EPP purposes. This line of analysis is quite different from Bassong's (2010) analysis which, following Brody (1990), Horvath (1986), Biloa (1992, 1995), Aboh (2004, 2007), among others, proposes that there is only one functional head in Basáá topic constructions, and that topicalized constituents simply move into the specifier position of the topic phrase in order to comply with the topic-criterion.

Sidestepping Bassong's (2010) approach, I propose two different approaches for the analysis of topic constructions. The first one is similar to the one adopted for the syntax of focus (non-wh focused) while the second one is simply similar to Bassong's (2010) analysis. In concrete terms, the analysis proceeds as follows: additive, aboutness, and contrastive topics are derived by moving the agreeing morpheme from AgrC^0 to Top^0 (overt or silent) for spellout purposes, followed by phrasal movement into the matrix TP via an embedded Spec-TopP. Like focus fronting, topic fronting is said to involve a two probes-one-goal relationship in the sense that the embedded Top head and the matrix T head simultaneously probe over the same target for topic and EPP requirements as depicted in the following template in (66).

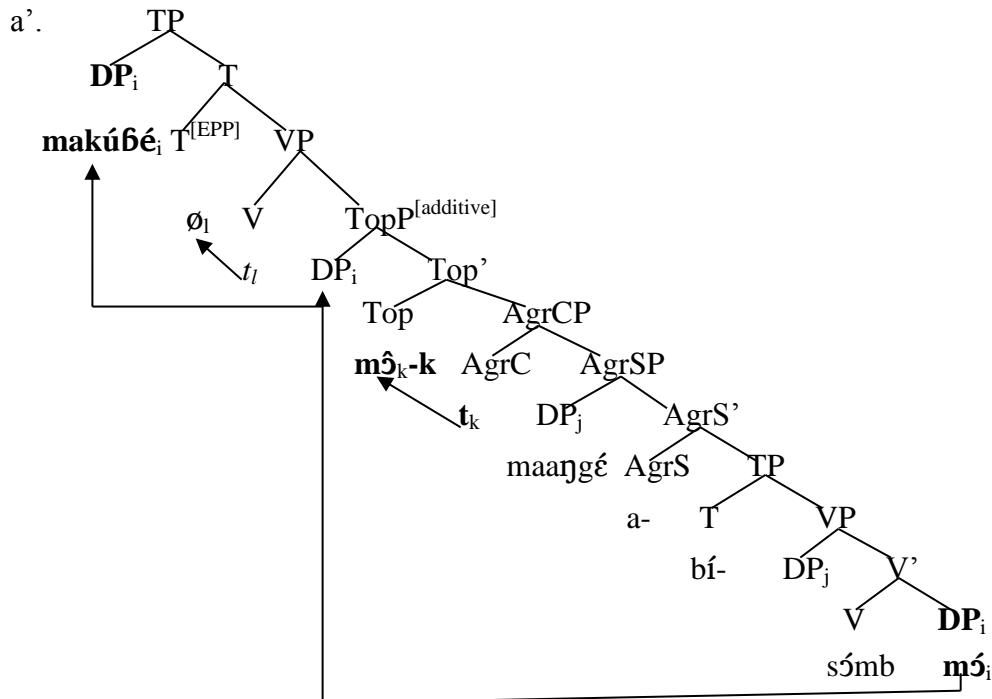


The configuration proposed in (66) helps to derive additive (67a), contrastive (67b) as well as abouteness (67c) topics using a null copula hypothesis. In this vein, sentence (67a), which conveys an additive presupposition, will be derived as in (68). Its counterparts (67b) and (67c) are derived in a similar manner. The little difference is that the topic marker remains silent in the case of contrastive and abouness topics. Since resumption is required in the case of object topicalization, it is assumed that resumption is a consequence of PF. In other words, resumption occurs in object topicalization as a spellout requirement i.e. as a PF mechanism that helps repair or circumvent an otherwise ungrammatical sentence.

(67)

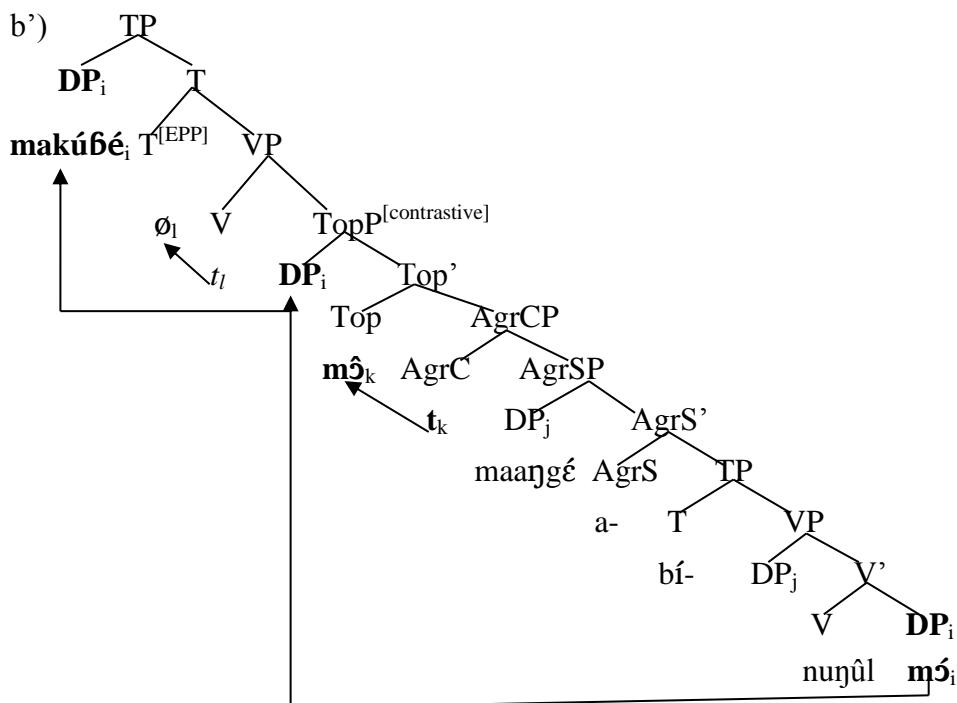
Context 1: The child bought a variety of food /supplies. He bought bread, meat...

- a. makúbé m̩-k, maanjé a- bí- sómb *(m̩) Additive /equative topic
 6.bananas 6.TOP 1.child 1.SM-PST2-buy 6.them
 ‘As for the bananas, s/he bought them too (e.g. as s/he bought bread...).’



Context 2: The child had different kinds of fruits. He kept the oranges...

- b. **makúþé m̥-ø**, maanjé a- bí-nuŋjúl *(m̥s) *Contrastive topic*
 6.bananas 6.TOP 1.child 1.SM-PST2-sell 6.them
 ‘As for *the bananas*, s/he sold *them* (as opposed to the bananas).’

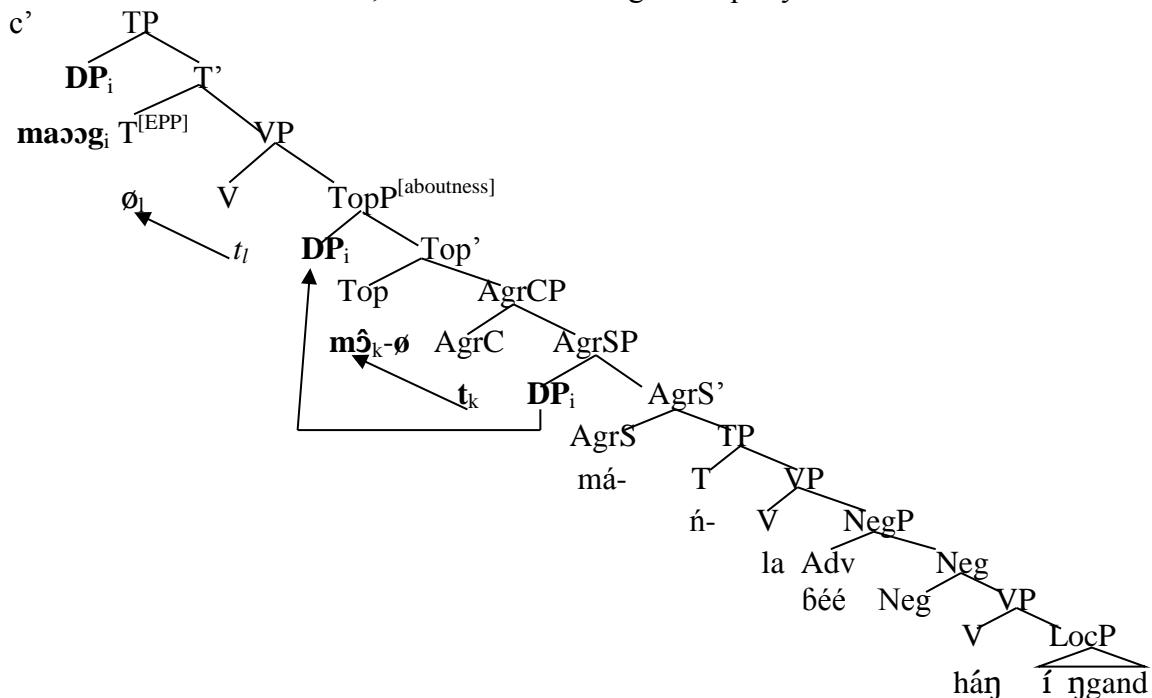


Context 3: Talking about wine at the party...

c. **maɔɔg** Y **mó-ø** má- ní- la bée háj í ñgand Aboutness topic

6.wine 6-TOP 6.SM-PRS-can NEG miss LOC 7.party

'Intended: As for wine, it cannot be missing at the party.'



In line with the cartographic framework and the Extended Projection Principle implemented in this work, I argue that just like in the derivation of focus fronting, the gender-specific morpheme as well as the topic markers (silent or overt) get access to the syntactic derivation in the form of two distinct formal features encoding each a specific information. The topic marker *-k* used in additive topic constructions as well as its silent counterparts used in contrastive and aboutness topics constitute lexical entries taken from the numeration and merged in the derivation as as syntactic heads. The noun class agreeing marker also enters the derivation in the form of a functional head heading a left peripheral agreement projection. Top is assumed to be endowed with uninterpretable topic features that need to be checked so that the derivation can converge in the syntax. To this end, after head movement from AgrC^0 to Top^0 applies for spell out purposes, the topic head probes over the topicalized constituent which is subsequently lured into Spec- TopP for the topic-criterion. In like manner, since topic fronting in the base cases is similar to focus fronting, I argue that after the topic requirements are met, the constituent raises higher in the matrix TP to comply with the Extended Projection Principle. Topic fronting in Basáá does not involve expletive subjects that would satisfy the EPP, as a result, the fronted constituent is probed over by T the head of the root clause to enable it to have a syntactic subject.

It is assumed that although the topic head may be implicit in some cases like in many languages (Italian, English, German etc.), it is part of the C_{HL} and enters the derivation in the form of a formal feature at the early stage of the derivation. If this analysis holds along the lines, it becomes obvious that just like focus, topic is part of core syntax and is encoded in the mind of the Basaá speaker as a rule just like other features such as tense, aspect, and the like.

The preceding discussions revealed that hanging topics are troublesome constructions because they exhibit properties that obey the principles that govern syntax on the one hand, and on the other exhibit insensitivity to syntactic constraints. This has been proved true by the means of a good number of tests. It has been shown that hanging topics are insensitive to syntactic islands such as the complex NP island, the adjunct island and the wh-island. However, under the assumption that topics are non-operators, they cannot be sensitive to locality constraints involving operators elements such as wh-phrases. With such diagnostics, it is plausible that hanging topics are indeed integrated into the sentential backbone because they do obey the rules that govern sentence building. Similarly, the fact that hanging topics exhibit reconstruction effects in addition to their sensitivity to some syntactic island such as the Left Branch Condition and the Coordinate Structure Constraint to some extend provides evidence that they are part of the sentential frame. The proposal made in this work is that although they are silent, that is devoid of any visible morphological markers, hanging topics are derived from the syntax. This enables to bring out an almost uniform analysis for all the topic constructions attested in Basaá.

Another salient difference between hanging and scene-setting topics and other topics is that the former are simply derived by a simple topic fronting into the topic field, without any matrix clause. That hanging topics and frame setting topics in Basaá are not morphologically realized is interesting not only in terms of language internal variations, but also from a crosslinguistic perspective. In other words, on the one hand some languages exhibit implicit information structure-related syntactic heads (Italian, English, German etc), others, on the other hand, use specific markers (e.g. Gungbe (Aboh 2004, 2010)). Besides these two language groups, Basaá appears as a mixed language which a mixed strategy by making use of overt syntactic heads and covert ones.

I propose that hanging and scene setting topics (69a) and (70a) are derived like in Italian (Rizzi 1997) by simple A-bar movement into Spec-TopP as shown in (69a) and (69b) respectively. I further consider that resumption in the case of a hanging topic construction is a PF repair

phenomenon which helps the derivation not to crash at the PF component (\emptyset stands for the silent topic marker).

(69) *Context*

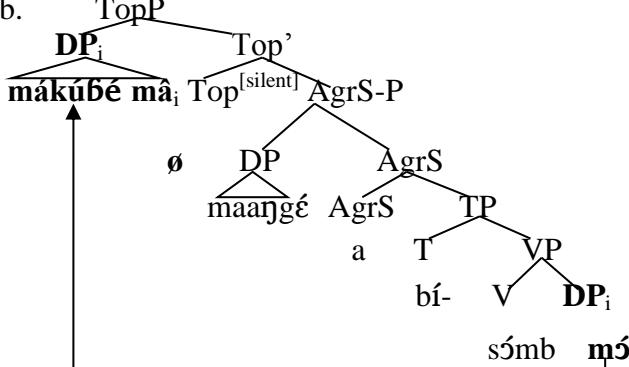
Mé n- nôg lé maangé_i a- bée pro_i a- beegá ñgandag makúbé yaaní
 I PST1-hear that 1.child 1.SM-be.PST pro 1.SM-carry.PST.PROG INDF 6.bananas 1.yesterday
 ‘I heard that the child was carrying a lot of bananas yesterday’

- a. **mákúbé** mâ, maangé a- bí- sómb mós

6.bananas._{DEF} 6.those 1.child 1.SM-PST2-buy 6.them

‘As for those bananas, the child bought them.’

b.

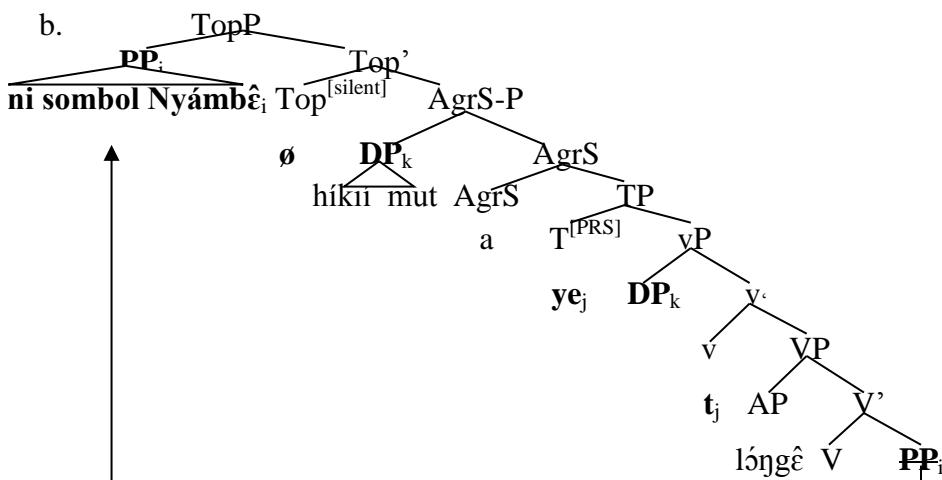


(70) *Context: lihaa lí- íj- kε láá*

5.family 5.SM-PRS-go how

‘How is the family?’

- a. **ni** sombol Nyámbé_i, híkií mut a- ye lóngé_i
 with/by 9.will 1.God every 1.person 1.SM-be.PRS good
 ‘By God’s will, everybody is fine’



Partially summarizing, hanging and frame setting topics involve substitution of interpretable topic constituents for Spec-TopP where topic requirements are met in a Spec-Head configuration with a silent topic head endowed with uninterpretable topic features. As frame setting topics are PP categories, no resumption takes place like in other topic contructions.

7.4 Feature-perlocation and topic pied-piping

Chapter four talks about focus pied-piping and it was shown that when an element contained a syntactic island is simultaneously probed over by the embedded Foc and the matrix T head, this element triggers generalized pied-piping of the whole structure containing it in order to evade island violation and *Criterial Freezing* effects. This kind of operation is favoured by a principle the *Feature-Perlocation Principle* redefined in (71) below for convenience.

(71) *Feature-Perlocation Principle*

- a. *If a head X probes over a c-commanded goal YP contained within an island ZP,*
- b. *YP-features perlocate across ZP*
- c. *Feature-checking takes place*
- d. *YP pied-pipes ZP into Spec-XP*

Principle (71) above does not only apply to focus fronting as previously analyzed in chapter four, but it also nicely applies to topic fronting. More specifically, an element contained in a syntactic island can be simultaneously probed over by the embedded Top⁰ and the matrix T head (hanging and scene setting topics are excluded), causing massive/heavy pied-piping (Ross 1969; Nkemnji 1995) of the whole island into the matrix TP via the embedded Spec-TopP. To see how this works with topics, let us consider the following sentences in (72).

- (72) a. Mudaá a- bí- keβél bákén mboŋgóó péé
 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-serve 2.guests 7.mboŋgóó 7.viper
 ‘The woman served the guests a mboŋgóó (typical) of viper’.
- b. í bákén (bá) mudaá a- bí- keβél mboŋgóó péé
 DEF 2.guests 2.Rel 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-serve 7. mboŋgóó 7.viper
 ‘The guests to whom the woman served a mboŋgóó⁵⁸ of viper meat’.

As already mentioned in chapter four, relativized constituents are derived by movement into the C-domain, that is relativization does not involve base-generation. The relativized constituent *bákén* ‘guests’ in (72b) is preceded by the definiteness marker *í* and is followed by a nounlass agreeing relativizer, namely the morpheme *bá*. That the relativized DP/NP *bákén* ‘guests’ gets to the left periphery by movement is explained by the fact that it is sensitive to island constraints such as the complex NP island (73a), the adjunct island (73b) and the wh-island (73c). Besides, sentences (73d) and (73e) show that relativization licenses parasitic gaps even in the presence of a resumptive pronoun. In the same vein, relativization is unbounded, that is, it can operate

⁵⁸ Mboŋgóó is a typical Basáá sauce.

beyond clause boundaries. The relativized noun *bakēn* ‘guests’ is strikenthrough in its original position to indicate movement.

(73)

a. *Complex NP island*

*í ~~bakēn~~ (**bá**) mε bí- bōmá [_{NP} í mudaá (**nú**) a- bí- keβél ~~bakēn~~
DEF 2.guests 2.Rel I PST2-meet DEF 1.woman 1.Rel 1.SM-PST2-serve 2.guests
mboŋgóó péé]
7. mboŋgóó 7.viper

‘*The guests whom I met the woman who served a mboŋgóó of viper meat.’

b. *Adjunct island*

*í ~~bakēn~~ (**bá**) mε ye maséé [ínyuúlé mudaá a- bí- keβél ~~bakēn~~
DEF 2.guests 2.Rel I be 6.joy because 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-serve 2.guests
mboŋgóó péé]

7. mboŋgóó 7.viper

‘The guests to whom I am happy because the woman served a mboŋgóó of viper meat.’

c. *Wh-island*

*í ~~bakēn~~ (**bá**) mε bí- yí bé ~~njéé~~ a- bí- keβél ~~bakēn~~ mboŋgóó
DEF 2.guests 2.Rel I PST2-know NEG 1.who 1.SM-PST2-serve 2.guests 7. mboŋgóó
péé
7.viper

‘The woman to whom I don’t know who served a mboŋgóó of viper meat.’

d. *Parasitic gaps*

í ~~bakēn_i~~ (**bá_i**) mudaá a- bí- keβél ~~bakēn~~ mboŋgóó péé ηgi
DEF 2.guests 2.Rel 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-serve ~~2.guests~~ 7. mboŋgóó 7.viper without
yeYa (**bá_i**)
greet 2.them

‘The guests to whom the woman served a mboŋgóó of viper without greeting (them).’

d. *Clause unboundedness*

í ~~bakēn~~ (**bá**) mε bí- hóŋj̩l lé mudaá a- bí- keβél ~~bakēn~~ mboŋgóó
DEF 2.guests 2.Rel I PST2-think that 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-serve ~~2.guests~~ 7.mboŋgóó
péé
7.viper

‘The guests to whom I think that the woman served a mboŋgóó of viper.’

After it has been proved once more that relativization involves a movement operation, in the following section, it shall be demonstrated to what extent principle (71) is implemented. All the cases in (74) below are instances of topicalization of constituents embedded in a relative clause. Sentence (74a) is an instance of subject topicalization with an additive presupposition, sentence

(74b) object topicalization with a contrastive interpretation and (74c) object topicalization with an aboutness interpretation. Object topics are expectedly resumed.

(74)

a. *Additive topic*

Context: I know that *Ewas* and *Hiol* speak Basáá. But what about [the guests to whom the woman served a mboŋgóó of viper meat?]

[í **bakén_i** (**bá**)_i mudaá a- bí- keβél mboŋgóó péé]_i **bɔ́-k** bá-
DEF 2.guests 2.Rel 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-serve 7. mboŋgóó 7.viper 2-TOP 2.SM-
mí-pót básaá
PRS-speak Basáá

'Lit: As for [the guests to whom the woman served a mboŋgóó of viper meat]_i, they_i speak Básáá too.'

b. *Contrastive topic*

Context: There were many people at the party last week. At the end of the party, you saw *Ewas* and *Hiol*, but what about [the guests to whom the woman served a mboŋgóó of viper]?

[í **bakén_i** (**bá**)_i mudaá a- bí- keβél mboŋgóó péé]_i **bɔ́-ø**, me bí-téhé
DEF 2.guests 2.Rel 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-serve 7. mboŋgóó 7.viper 2-TOP I PST2-see
bé *(**bɔ́**)_i.
NEG 2.them

'Lit: As for [the guests to whom the woman served a mboŋgóó of viper]_i, I did not see them_i

c. *Aboutness topic*

Context:

A: *I heard that the woman served a mboŋgóó of viper to the guests.*

B: Mε n̄- yí lé [í **bakén_i** (**bá**)_i mudaá a- bí- keβél mboŋgóó péé]_i
I PRS-know that DEF 2.guests 2.Rel 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-serve 7. mboŋgóó 7.viper
bɔ́-ø, u bí- bɔ́má *(**bɔ́**)_i
2-TOP you.2sg PST2-meet 2.them

'Lit: I know that as for [the guests to whom the woman served a mboŋgóó of viper]_i, you met them_i.'

It is obvious that all the above cases are instances of movement operations. That topic constructions are derived and not base-generated has also been proved a while ago. The question which requires an answer is to what extent the topic marker happens to agree with the bold-printed relativized DP/NP *bakén* 'guests' which is contained in a whole sentential chunk, namely the bracketed relative clause. In addition, cases like these apparently constitute a major

challenge to the *Criteria-Freezing Principle* in (75) which rules out further movement of a previously displaced category.

(75)

- a. An element moved to a position dedicated to some scope-discourse interpretative property, a criteria position, is frozen in place (Criteria-Freezing). Rizzi (2003).
- b. Classical EPP, the requirements that clauses have subjects, can be restated as a criteria requirement, the Subject Criterion, formally akin to the Topic Criterion, the Focus Criterion, the Q or Wh-Criterion, etc. (Rizzi 1996, 1997).

According to (75), the ungrammaticality of sentence (76a) is expected because the constituent *baken* ‘guests’ is first relativized by moving to a higher Relative Phrase position in order to satisfy what is informally referred to as the *Rel-Criterion*. After the *Rel-Criterion* is fulfilled, any further movement of the relativized constituent above RelP becomes problematic because such a movement operation makes the derivation to crash.

(76)

a.

*[_{TOPP} **bakén** [TOP⁰ **ɓâ-i-ø**] me bí-ɓomá[_{RelP} **i** — **bakén**₂ [Rel⁰ (**ɓâ**)_i mudaá a- bí-kebél **bakén**₁ mboŋgóó péé]_i serve **2.guests** 7. mboŋgóó 7.viper]

Lit: ‘*As for the guests, I met [_{NP} the-guests to whom₂] the woman served a mboŋgóó of viper meat [to whom₁].’

b.

[**i** **bakén**_i (**ɓâ**)_i mudaá a- bí- kebél mboŋgóó péé]_i **ɓâ-i-ø**, me bí-ɓomá DEF 2.guests 2.Rel 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-serve 7. mboŋgóó 7.viper 2-TOP I PST2-meet *(**ɓâ**)_i.

2.them

‘Lit: As for [*the guests to whom the woman served a mboŋgóó of viper meat*]_i , I met *them*_i .’

In order to evade *Criteria-Freezing* effects, the relativized constituent, by virtue of being topicalized after it has been relativized, must percolate its topic features across the whole clausal chunk containing it. After topic-features percolation has been effective, the relativized constituent subsequently pied-pipes the clausal chunk (RelP) containing it into the matrix TP via the embedded topic position for the satisfaction of the topic and EPP requirements as shown in (76b).

The following structures in (77a-b) provide sketchy representations of the ungrammatical sentence in (76a) and its grammatical counterpart in (76b) respectively.

- (77) a.

RelP (Rel-criterion): freezing effects(frozen DP)

- b.

RelP (Rel-criterion): freezing effects(frozen DP)

To explain the movement operations in (77a-b) above, note that structure (77a) is ruled out because it clearly shows that when the relativized category moves into Spec-RelP, it is frozen in place because RelP is a criterial position. By so doing, moving it furthermore into the topic domain then into the matrix TP triggers a crash like in (76a). Conversely, when the relativized category moves into Spec-RelP, it reaches a criterial position, that is it cannot be moved furthermore. However, since the category is simultaneously probed over by the Top and T heads for topic and EPP purposes, this targeted category, which is already inactive or frozen is unable to move in isolation. Being unable to move because it is found inside a syntactic island (here a relative clause), this constituent percolates its topic and EPP features across the whole

island containing it. After features percolation is achieved, the whole relative clause is pied-piped into the matrix TP via Spec-TopP. Pied-piping of the whole relative clause occurs as a last resort strategy without which the derivation cannot converge.

In partial conclusion, the discussion in this section revealed that just like focus constructions, topic structures can involve not only smaller constituents, but also larger ones. Topic fronting can target complex chunks like relative clause. This is possible thanks to feature-percolation which works hand in hand with heavy pied-piping. The following section discusses the interaction between focus and topic in terms of hierarchical structure.

7.5 Focus-topic interplay and the mapping of the left periphery

Since Rizzi's (1997) seminal paper on the fine-grained study of the structure of the left periphery, a good way has been paved towards better understanding of the clausal left edge and its internal make-up. Based on the Italian empirical material, Rizzi (1997) proposed that the C-domain in Italian is closed upward by the Force Phrase (ForceP), the highest projection in clause structure and downward by the Finiteness Phrase (FinP) the left periphery projection which is the interface between the inflectional domain and the complementizer layer. The overall picture of Rizzi's original work illustrated in (78a) below shows that topics are recursive and focus can be surrounded by topics. In his (2001 & 2004b)'s works, Rizzi furthermore refined the Italian clause structure by providing additional projections, namely the Interrogative Phrase (IntP) which hosts interrogative elements and the Modifier Phrase (ModP) which hosts a certain class of fronted adverbs. Besides these, he includes relative operators which are said to occupy the specifier of the Force Phrase in relative clauses. All these mappings are briefly provided in (78) (cf. Rizzi 1997, 2001, 2004 for more detail).

(78)

- a. [ForceP Force⁰ [TopP Top⁰[FocusP Foc⁰[TopP [Top⁰ [FinP Fin⁰[IP...]]]]]]] Rizzi (1997)
- b. [ForceP Force⁰[TopP Top⁰[InterP Inter⁰[TopP Top⁰[FocP Foc⁰[ModP Mod⁰[[TopP Top⁰ [FinP Fin⁰[IP...]]]]]]]]]] Rizzi (2001a,b)
- c. Rel...Top...Foc...Top...Mod...Top...Fin..IP Rizzi (2004b)
- d. Rel...Top...Foc... Mod...Top...Fin...IP Rizzi (2004b)

Rizzi's account of the Italian left periphery shows that only one position is dedicated for focus while topic can be iterative. However, Rizzi's account was later on criticized by a number of scholars such as Beninca & Poletto (2004) and Benincà (2006) as regards the relative order of the left peripheral functional heads. According to the latter, there should exist no topic phrase

below the focus phrase as shown in (78a). The authors establish a distinction between focus and topic not only on the basis of their semantic interpretation, but also on the basis of the fields they occupy in the C-domain in a strictly ordered fashion. The authors provide a typology of topics and foci and propose a new mapping of the left periphery in Italian as represented in (79) whereby the topic area comprises two different sub-areas, namely Frame and Theme. The *Frame* domain which dominates the *Theme* hosts scene setting adverbials like the English '*Health-wise*' and German *Gesundheitsmäßig* (cf. Jacobs 2001 for the origin of scene setting adverbs) and hanging topics (HT) respectively in an articulate way.

(79)

[ForceP]{*Frame*[*Scene SetP*][HT]}{*Theme*[LD][List P]}{Foc[I FocP][II FocP]}[FinP].

(80) [A **Giorgio**]_{CF} [questo libro]_{NIF}, devi dare. (Beninca & Poletto 2004:61).

On the other hand, the *Theme* hosts sentence-level topics of two kinds, namely *Left Dislocated* (LD) topics and *List Topics* also called contrastive topics. As for focus, they argue that the focus domain hosts two different foci, namely a contrastive focus (I FocP) and new information focus (II FocP) as can be seen in (79) and depicted in (80).

According to Benincà & Poletto, focus can be recursive as opposed to Rizzi who thinks that there is only one focus position in the C-domain. In Rizzi's terms, focus obeys the *Uniqueness Principle* according to which only one structural position is dedicated to fronted foci. Recall that in light of the cartographic approach, the force phrase is the highest projection which encodes the illocutionary force of the sentence. In declarative sentences, the head Force⁰ of this projection is occupied by the lexical complementizer *che* 'that' in Italian.

The Basaa left peripheral layer hosts a good number of syntactic heads that co-occur in a given order. Remember also that there exists in the language a lexical complementizer *lē* which is the English counterpart 'that' and which is used in embedded declarative clauses. This lexical complementizer always precedes topics and foci. As shown below, the lexical complementizer *lē* 'that' precedes the focus (81a), additive /equative topic (81b), contrastive topic (81c) aboutness topics (81d) and the hanging topic (81e). In sentence (81f), the complementizer *lē* 'that' precedes the frame setting topic. The lexical complementizer *lē* 'that' occupies the head of force phrase in Basaa as shown (Bassong 2010)

(81)

a. *ForceP > FocP*

Mudaá a ŋ- kâl lé **bikaat gwó-n** hiŋgonda hí- bí- sómb
 1.woman 1.SM-PST1-say that 8.books 8-FOC 19.girl 19.SM-PST2-buy
 ‘The woman said **that** the girl bought the BOOKS.’

b. *ForceP > TopP_{additive}*

Mudaá a ŋ- kâl lé **bikaat gwó-k** hiŋgonda hí- bí- sómb **gwó**
 1.woman 1.SM-PST1-say that 8.books 8-TOP 19.girl 19.SM-PST2-buy 8.them
 ‘The woman said that as for *the books*, the girl also bought *them*’

c. *ForceP > TopP_{contrastive}*

Mudaá a ŋ- kâl lé **bikaat gwó-ø**, hiŋgonda hí- bí- sómb **gwó**
 1.woman 1.SM-PST1-say that 8.books 8-TOP 19.girl 19.SM-PST2-buy 8.them
 ‘The woman said that as for *the books* (as opposed to the pens e.g.) the girl also bought *them*’

d. *ForceP > TOPP_{aboutness}*

Mudaá a ŋ- kâl lé **maɔɔY mɔ-ø** má- ní- la béeé háŋ í ŋgand
 1.woman 1.SM-PST1-say that 6.wine 6-TOP 6.SM-PRS-can NEG lack LOC 7.party
 ‘Lit: The woman said that as for *wine* (talking about wine), *it* cannot lack at the party.’

e. *ForceP > TopP_{hanging}*

Mudaá a ŋ- kâl lé **bikaat**, hiŋgonda hí- bí- sómb **gwó**
 1.woman 1.SM-PST1-say that 8.books 19.girl 19.SM-PST2-buy 8.them
 ‘The woman said that *the books*, the girl bought *them*’

f. *ForceP > TOPP_{Scene-setting}*

Mudaá a ŋ- kâl lé **ni sombol Nyámbê**, bot bəbásó bá- yé lóŋgê
 1.women 1.SM-PRS-say that by 7.will 1.God 2.people 2.all 2.SM-be.PRS well
 ‘The woman thinks that by God’s grace everybody is fine.’

Although the left edge of the clause can host a certain number of projections at the same time, it is important to note that this ordering of syntactic categories is subject to some restrictions such as the *Uniqueness Principle*. This principle requires that every phrase (especially the focus phrase) is a projection of one and only one head (see Rizzi 1997; Brody 1998 a.o). The *Uniqueness Principle* is applicable for both focus and topic in Basáá. In (82a), only one focus can be fronted at the left periphery. Multiple focus fronting is totally disallowed as can be seen in the illicit sentence in (82b).

(82) *Uniqueness of focus per clause*a. **Minsowá mɔ-n** mudaá a- bí- lámb yáání

4.ripe plantains 4-FOC 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-cook 1.yesterday
 ‘The woman cooked RIPE PLANTAINS yesterday.’

b.* **Yaaní nyé-n mínsowá mɔ-n** mudaá a- bí- lámb

1.yesterday 1-FOC 4-ripe plantains 4-FOC 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-cook
 ‘*The woman cooked RIPE PLANTAINS YESTERDAY’

Basaá offers an exceptional case in terms of topic fronting and brings novel data that significantly modify Rizzi's (1997 and subsequent work). Multiple topic fronting is allowed, not in the sense of Rizzi (1997) but in line with Benincà & Poletto (2004). The condition on topic fronting is that fronted topics must belong to different classes. In other words, topics of the same interpretation cannot be simultaneously fronted because of the violation of the *Uniqueness Principle*.

(83)

a. $\sqrt{\text{Hanging topic-Additive topic}}$

í **bikaat** bî, malet nyé-k a- bí- sómb gwó
 DEF 8.books 8.those 1.teacher 1-TOP 1.SM-PST2-buy 8.them
 'The books (in question), the *teacher* (in question) bought them *too*'

b. $\sqrt{\text{Hanging topic-Contrastive topic}}$

i **bikaat** bî, **malet** nyé-ø a- bí- sómb gwó
 DEF 8.books 8.those 1.teacher 1-TOP 1.SM-PST2-buy 8.them
 '*The books (in question), as for the *teacher*, *he* bought them.'

c. $*\text{Hanging topic-Hanging topic}$

* **í malêt nû**, í **bikaat bî**, a- bí- sómb gwó
 1.teacher 1.that 8.books 1.SM-PST2-buy 8.them

d. $*\text{Contrastive topic-Contrastive topic}$

* **malêt** nyé-ø, **bikaat** gwó-ø, a- bí- sómb gwó
 1.teacher 1-TOP 8.books 8.TOP 1.SM-PST2-buy 8.them

e. $\sqrt{\text{Aboutness topic-Additive topic}}$

Bikaat gwó-ø, **malêt** nyé-k a- bí- tí gwó baúdú
 8.books 8-TOP 1.teacher 1.TOP 1.SM-PST2-give 8.them 2.students
 'As for the books, the **teacher** (in question) gave them to the students **too**.'

f) $\sqrt{\text{Hanging topic- Frame setting topic-Additive topic}}$

í **ñcc̄ngé** bâi, ni sombol í Nyámbê, **malêt** nyé-k a- Yá-sayáp
 DEF 2.children 2.those by 7.will 7.GEN 1.God 1.teacher 1-TOP 1.SM-FUT2-bless
 bâi
 2.them

Lit: '**Those children**, by God's will, the *teacher* (in question) will bless them *too*.'

g) $\sqrt{\text{Frame-setting topic-Hanging topic-Additive topic}}$

ni sombol í Nyámbê, í **ñcc̄ngé** bâi, **malêt** nyé-k a- Yá-sayáp
 by 7.will 7.GEN 1.God DEF 2.children 2.those 1.teacher 1-TOP 1.SM-FUT2-bless
 bâi
 2.them

Lit: 'By God's will, **those children**, the *teacher* (in question) will bless **them too**.'

h) *Frame setting topic-Hanging topic-Additive topic-focus*

ni sombol í Nyámbé, í bɔɔŋgé bâ_i, malêt nyé-k makebla mó-n
 by 7.will 7.GEN 1.God DEF 2.children 2.that 1.teacher 1-TOP 6.presents 6-FOC
 a- gá- tí bó_i
 1.SM-FUT2-give 2.them

Lit: 'By God's will, those children, the teacher (in question) will give **them** the PRESENTS too.'

The above examples reveal that topics of the same class are banned from fronting in the same clause, while topics of different classes can be simultaneously fronted. This amounts to saying that the *Uniqueness Principle* is not limited to focus, but can be extended to topic. It can be assumed, in light of these facts, that topic as well as focus fronting is sensitive to natural classes or what Rizzi (2004b) refers to as 'sameness'. Constituents with the same discourse-related features cannot be fronted simultaneously in the same clause because of a clash of features and because only one position is dedicated to the fronted constituent for features checking/valuation. Only elements with different discourse-features are allowed to front. In Basaá, focus and topic constructions can be preceded by the lexical complementizer *lé* 'that' in declarative sentences. In (84) below, the embedded clause is introduced by the lexical complementizer *lé* 'that' followed by a hanging topic *bijék* 'foods', which is followed by a focused object *baken* 'the guests'. The focused constituent is in turn followed by an additive/equative topic *mudaá* 'the woman.

(84) [ForceP [Force⁰[TopP_{HANGING} [Top[FocP[Foc⁰[TopP_{ADDITIVE}[Top⁰[AgrSP[...]]]]]]]]]
 me n-yí **lé** **bijék**, **baken** **bó-n** **mudaá** **nyé-k** a- bí- kebél **gwó**
 I PRS-know that 8.food 2.guests 2-FOC 1.woman 1.TOP 1.SM-PST2-serve 8.them
 'I know that the foods, the *woman* served them to the GUESTS too'

The ungrammaticality of (85) is an indication that a hanging topic cannot be preceded by an additive topic and/or a focus. However, an additive/equative topic can felicitously precede a focus, while an equative topic and a focus must be preceded by a hanging topic (86).

(85). *[ForceP [Force⁰ [FocP[Foc⁰[TopP_{ADDITIVE}[Top⁰ [TopP_{HANGING} [Top [AgrSP[...]]]]]]]]]

*me n-yí **lé** **baken_j** **bó-n** **mudaá_k** **nyé-k** í **bijék** **bî**, pro_k a- bí-
 I PRS-know that 2.guests 2-FOC 1.woman 1.TOP DEF 8.food 8.those pro 1.SM-PST2-
 kebél **gwó_i**
 2.them 8.them

Lit: * 'I know that the GUESTS as for the *woman_j*, as for *those food_k*, she/jwill serve *them_k*'

(86) $\sqrt{[\text{ForceP}[\text{Force}^0[\text{TopP}_{\text{HANGING}}[\text{Top}[\text{TopP}_{\text{ADDITIVE}}[\text{Top}^0[\text{FocP}[\text{Foc}^0[\text{AgrSP}[\dots]]]]]]]$

me n̄-yí l̄é i **bijék b̄i**, mudaá nyé-k, baken b̄ó-n pro_i a- bí-
I PRS-know that DEF 8.food 8.those 1.woman 1.TOP 2.guests 2-FOC pro 1.SM-PST2-
kebél **gw̄ó**
serve 8.them

Lit: ‘I know that as for the foods, the *woman* (in question) served them to the GUESTS *too*’

Although a contrastive topic and its aboutness counterpart share the same morphological marking, note that the topicalized direct object *bijék* in (87) below simply conveys an aboutness interpretation and never a contrastive one. This is explained logically if one considers that communication operates in a logical way. For instance if the topicalized object *bijék* ‘foods’ is contrasted with another member of the same set (e.g. *mäɔɔk* ‘wine’), the idea according to which ‘the **woman** gave the food (contrastive topic) to the guests **too**’ will be contradictory or even nonsensical.

(87)a. [ForceP[Force⁰[TopP_{ABOUTNESS}[Top⁰[TopP_{ADDITIVE}[Top⁰[FocP[Foc⁰[AgrSP...]]]]]]]]

b.

me n̄- yí l̄é **bijék gw̄ó-ø**, mudaá nyé-k, baken b̄ó-n a- bí- kebél
I PRS-know that 8.food 8-TOP 1.woman 1-TOP 2.guests 2-FOC 1.SM-PST2-serve
gw̄ó
8.them

Lit: ‘I know that as for the foods, the *woman* (in question) served them to the GUESTS *too*’

This is explained because it can never be the case that ‘the **woman**’ (additive topic) gave ‘the foods’ (contrastive topic) to the guests (focus) *too*. This will be contradictory if she gave them ‘wine’ at the same time. Under this view, ‘foods’ and ‘wine’ cannot be contrasted because they will share the same value (*they will be served to the guests*). But if talking about the ‘foods’ (aboutness topic) for instance, it can the case that some individual X different from ‘the **woman**’ gave them to ‘the guests’. In this case, ‘foods’ is the sentence topic because it will be the subject of conversation and therefore activated as a topic. In this perspective, the question (tell me about *the woman*, didn’t *she* give the food to the guests *too*?) will be felicitous. In this context, the constituent ‘*bijék* ‘foods’ will be already mentioned in the discourse and will be evoked here as being what the sentence is about (Reinhart 1981) or, better still, will be the sentence topic. Furthermore, the contrasted NP *mudaá* ‘woman’ will be a topic but with an additive interpretation. By so doing, with the constituent *bijék* ‘foods’ as an aboutness-topic, *mudaá*

‘woman’ as an additive one, and *baken* ‘guests’ as the focus, the sentence in (87b) will be felicitously computed and accommodated with the architecture in (87a).

The ungrammaticality in (88) is an indication that an aboutness-topic cannot be preceded by an additive topic and the focus. This state of affairs is quite expected because our discussion showed that hanging topics are like ‘hybrid’ objects, as they display not only syntactic properties but also are insensitive to syntactic some constraints.

(88) a.

- *[ForceP[Force⁰ [TopP_{ADDITIVE}[Top⁰[FocP[Foc⁰[TopP_{ABOUTNESS}[Top⁰[AgrSP...]]]]]]]
- b.
- * me n̄-yí **lé** mudaá nyé-k, *baken* b̄-n **bijék** gw̄-ø, a- bí- kebél
I PRS-know that 1.woman 1.TOP 2.guests 2-FOC 8.food 8.TOP 1.SM-PST2-serve
gw̄
8.them

In (88), the subject *mudaá* ‘woman’ is an additive topic, the indirect object *baken* ‘guests’ is the focus and the direct object *bijék* ‘foods’ is an aboutness-topic. Hanging topics are expected to dominate (precede) other fronted materials such as fronted foci, left dislocated topics, contrastive topics, additive topics etc. which easily pose no problem to the syntactic analysis. More precisely, hanging topics should always dominate other left peripheral constructions because they former are generally said not to be sensitive to constraints that govern core syntax crosslinguistically. Consequently, they occur in a position where they c-command other left peripheral-related constructions which in most, if not all cases, are syntax-dependent.

The following sentence shows that hanging and frame setting topics can co-occur with an additive topic, contrastive topic and a focus. Note that a hanging topic can precede or follow its scene setting counterpart.

- (89) ✓ [ForceP[TopP_{Scene-setting}[TopP_{Hanging}[TopP_{Hanging}[TopP_{Additive}[TopP_{Aboutness}[FocP[AgrS-P...
Me j̄- hój̄ol l̄é (*ni sombol Nyámbé*), í mut_i n̄û, (*ni sombol Nyámbé*),
I PRS-think that with 7.will 1.God DEF 1.man 1.that with 7.will 1.God
baúdú_i b̄-k makebla_k m̄-ø, yaaní nyé-n pro_i a- gá- tí b̄_j m̄_k
2.students 2-Top 6.presents 6-Top 1.tomorrow 1-FOC pro 1.SM-FUT2-give 2.them 6.them
Lit: ‘I think **that** (by God’s will), **that man** (by God’s will), as for **the students**, as for the presents, **he** will give **them** to **them** TOMORROW.’

The above mappings provide a fine-grained cartography of the Basaá clause and provide new insights into the syntax of the left periphery. It is worth mentioning that the fact that even topics obey the *Uniqueness Principle* in Basaá is not an isolated case. Similar proposals have been

made in the literature by Benincà & Poletto (2004). As a matter of fact, the Basáá empirical data corroborate previous predictions made by many scholars against the background of cartography (e.g. Frascarelli 2007; Frascarelli & Hinterholzl 2007; Frascarelli 2012 among others) who propose that the left periphery of the sentence can host a variety of topic constructions of different semantic interpretations.

Conclusion

Conclusively, this chapter provided not only an inventory of topic constructions attested in the language in terms of interpretation, but also in terms of syntactic distribution. Five topic types have explored, namely the additive topic, the contrastive topic, the aboutness topic, the hanging topic and the frame setting topic. All these topics occur in sentence initial position and almost all of them are sensitive to locality constraints. The fact that topics are insensitive to the complex noun phrase constraint and the wh-island constraint was explained by the fact that topics are non-operators. In this vein, that is they are not quantificational. Under the assumptions that only elements of the same natural class can act as interveners, and since topics are not operators, their movement cannot be blocked by intervening wh-phrases which are operators. In addition, the analysis provided further support to the cartographic approach to syntactic structures. The analysis revealed that in Basáá, like in many other languages, topic, as an information structure-related device, also works in tandem with agreement (overt or covert) when movement may take place in the syntax. Topic as well as agreement markers can be overt or silent in the form of formal features that are visible to the C_{HL}. The investigation of the different types of topics analyzed in this chapter has proved that any theory which does not consider topic as a syntactic device is inadequate in some sense and require refinements. As a result, information structure has direct access to syntax. The analysis showed that Basáá is an intermediary or a mixed language, that is a language which is found in-between languages which overtly express syntactic heads and languages which express these categories silently. The novelty of the Basáá language is that just like focus fronting, topic fronting in most cases is triggered by both the topic-criterion and the EPP, two syntactic principles that work simultaneously, so much so that any topic that is marked morphologically should move into a matrix TP for EPP and via the embedded TopP for topic requirements. Taken as a whole, Cartography and Minimalism work hand in hand in accounting for the syntax-information structure interface of the Basáá empirical material.

CHAPTER VIII
SLUICING

Introduction

This chapter attempts to provide novel data from a Bantu, and to some extent an African linguistics perspective to the study of ellipsis. To the best of my knowledge, linguistic inquiries have not yet been considerably conducted in the field of elliptical constructions in African languages at large, and Bantu languages in particular. It is the aim of this chapter, to examine, under close scrutiny, one type of ellipsis in Basàá, namely sluicing, and demonstrate to what extent this elliptical construction feeds the interaction between sound and meaning and examine how it contributed to the mapping of the left peripheral spine of the Basàá sentence. The theoretical framework adopted is due to Merchant's (2001, 2003, 2004, 2008 a.o) ellipsis approach according to which a fragmentary utterance such as sluicing has a fully-fledged sentential syntactic structure which is subject to ellipsis. Ellipsis is briefly understood as a process by which some linguistic material goes missing at the PF component at a given stage of linguistic representations. Globally, the discussion shows that sluicing, i.e. a construction whereby everything of a content question goes missing except for the wh-question/question word, involves wh-movement followed by PF-deletion of the remnant part out of which extraction has been early applied. Many arguments such as connectivity and island effects, morpho-syntactic properties, as well as phonological patterns provide strong support to the discussion. Overall, it is proposed that the fact that the evidential(ity) marker may be overtly realized is attributed to Merchant's (2001) *Sluicing-COMP generalization* which requires that only operator materials may appear in COMP. This generalization seems to be attested in Gungbe (Kwa) as analysed in recent works by Aboh (2010) and (Lipták & Aboh).

The chapter is framed as follows: § 8.1 provides an introduction to sluicing with reference to previous works in the literature and presents some evidence in support of the PF-deletion approach (§ 8.1.1). This section on the whole discusses connectivity effects as salient evidence in favour of the PF-deletion approach to ellipsis in order to familiarize the reader with the topic under discussion. These connectivity effects include case matching (§ 8.1.1.1), subcategorization (§ 8.1.1.2), number agreement (§ 8.1.1.3), extraposition (§ 8.1.1.4) and island effects (§ 8.1.1.5). § 8.2 introduces properties of Basàá sluicing by discussing the nature of the ‘definitizer’, a gender-specific morpheme which is instrumental in the analysis of ellipsis in Basàá. § 8.2.1 to section 8.2.1.1 handles sluicing as part of full propositions on the basis of morphological factors and selectional requirements. In addition, class and number agreement are discussed as another property of sluicing in Basàá in § 8.2.1.2 while § 8.2.1.3 discusses morphosyntactic properties of sluicing. § 8.2.1.4 talks about sluicing with non-linguistic antecedents. § 8.2.1.5 is concerned with argument/adjunct (a)symmetry by demonstrating that arguments and referential adjuncts

successfully license a left-to-right relation with the definitizer also referred here to as evidential(ity) marker. As for non-referential adjuncts on the contrary, they do not license any agreeing definitizer/evidential(ity) marker due to the fact that they are devoid of noun class features. The last crucial issue is in § 8.2.1.6 and is concerned with island repair under sluicing. It is demonstrated that island violation is circumvented iff the island site (AgrS-P/TP) undergoes PF-deletion after leftward movement of the sluiced has applied.

In § 8.3, the discussion revolves around the PF-theory of sluicing in relation to the so-called [E]-feature. The analysis shows that the [E]-feature has phonological, semantic as well as syntactic properties. Phonologically, the [E]-feature instructs non-pronunciation of the layer out of which previous movement has applied, so that it (the [E]-feature) instructs PF not to parse the node in which extraction has applied. Syntactically, the [E]-feature endowed with uninterpretable wh- and Q-features triggers movement of the extracted sluiced bearing the same featural make-up (interpretable wh and Q-features). From a semantic perspective, the [E]-feature ensures that the material under elision/ellipsis/deletion is contextually given, familiar, known, presupposed or implied in the discourse. By this token, the Basàá data come out as being novel in the sense that the so-called [E]-feature which is responsible for ellipsis can be overt/visible as opposed to English-like languages where such a feature is abstract. In this vein, the discussion shows in section 8.3.1 that the feature responsible for ellipsis in sluicing in Basàá is the definitizer, a gender-specific morpheme which encodes evidential interpretation. This morpheme encodes not only morpho-syntactic properties, but also phonological and semantic ones. By so doing, the Basàá definitizer also exhibits class and number agreement morphology with the displaced sluiced on its left. Semantically, this morpheme ensures that the material under ellipsis is given or implied in the discourse. Syntactically, it is the instigator of movement so much so that the displaced sluiced on its left must match with it in terms of featural make-up. § 8.4 is concerned with island insensitivity and the PF-theory of sluicing in Basàá. The fact that sluicing is insensitive to islands is due to the fact that there is at the PF component, deletion of the entire island out of which movement has taken place. In other words, sluicing is island-insensitive because everything gets deleted at PF after movement of the sluiced in the left periphery. As for the ‘definitizer’, the proposal is that it projects a functional projection called Evidential Phrase (EvidP) and its specifier is occupied by the displaced wh-item. Overall, Basaá sluicing is said to be an instance of focus movement of the wh-item into Spec-EvidP via a lower Spec-FocP position. The section also provides a fine-grained architecture of the left periphery in Basàá by showing that the clausal left edge in sluicing gives rise to a variety of functional projections such as the force phrase (ForceP), the interrogative phrase (IntP), the evidential(ity) phrase (EvidP),

the focus phrase (FocP) and the wh-phrase (Wh-Phrase), all of them ordered in a hierarchical way. The last section is the conclusion.

8.1. What is sluicing?

This section deals with sluicing, an elliptical construction in which all of a constituent question goes missing except for the wh-phrase as in the English construction in (1) adapted from Merchant (2004:664). What is interesting about sluicing is that the fragment wh-phrase ‘what’ in (1a) conveys the same semantic interpretation as the full CP in (1b) although the content of IP in (1a) and (1c) ends up unpronounced.

(1) Merchant 2004:664

- a. Jack bought **something**, but I don’t know **what**?
- b. Jack bought **something**, but I don’t know [CP **what**₁ [IP Jack bought **t**₁]]
- c. Jack bought **something**, but I don’t know [CP **what**₁ [~~IP Jack bought **t**₁~~]]

It is widely known in the terminology of elliptical constructions in general and sluicing in particular that in a micro-context such as (1), the wh-phrase ‘what’ is called the *remnant*. As for the part of the IP constituent which is struck through, notably ~~Jack bought **t**₁~~, it is referred to as the *target*. Taken altogether, both the *remnant* (here the wh-phrase ‘what’) and the *target* (here the deleted/unpronounced IP string ~~john bought **t**₁~~) form what is known as a *sluice* (cf Riemsdijk 1978 a.o.). One of the major properties of sluicing is that both the *remnant* and its *correlate* must be identical in some sense. Either way, in sluicing, the antecedent clause may contain an overt constituent corresponding which corresponds to the *remnant* wh-phrase. In a context like (1), the antecedent clause contains an indefinite namely the quantifier ‘something’ which is the *correlate* and corresponds to the fragment wh-phrase ‘what’. Since Ross’s (1969) seminal paper, the study of sluicing has been the subject of linguistic investigations from different guises (Chao 1987; Chung et al. 1995; Ginzburg & Sag 2000; Lasnik 2001; Lobeck 1991, 1995; Merchant 2001, 2004; 2008; Nakao et al. 2006; Riemsdijk 1978; Temmerman 2013; Toosarvandani 2007; Van Craenenbroeck & Lipták 2006; Vlachos 2012) to name only a few. It is important to mention that since Ross (1969), there exist to the best of my knowledge at least three competing lines of analysis within the framework of the IP-ellipsis.

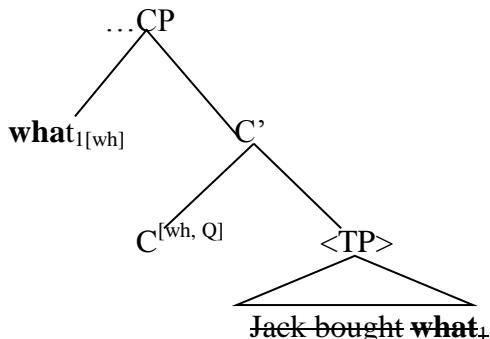
First of all, the defenders of the movement plus deletion analysis include Lasnik (2001), Merchant (2001, 2004, 2008, 2013 etc.), Ross (1969) himself, Temmerman (2013), Van Craenenbroeck & Lipták (2006) among others argue that the wh-fragment in a context such as (2a) arrives at the left periphery of the sentence derivationally i.e. via wh-movement. In addition,

they provide a wide range of arguments against any analysis which tackles ellipsis in general and sluicing in particular as involving a base-generation process.

(2)

- a. Jack bought **something**, but I don't know **what**?

b.



In concrete terms, it is argued by these authors that sluicing involves a movement plus deletion operation whereby a wh-phrase moves out of its canonical position within the clause (IP/TP/AgrSP) to the clause left peripheral area. This A-bar movement of the wh-phrase is later on followed by the PF deletion of the IP/TP/AgrSP out of which the wh-phrase has been extracted. For instance, in a sentence like ‘Jack bought **something**, but I don't know **what**’, in (1a) and repeated as (2a), is derived as in (2b) (adapted from Merchant 2004:665) where the IP/TP constituent in angle brackets gets unpronounced at the end of the derivation.

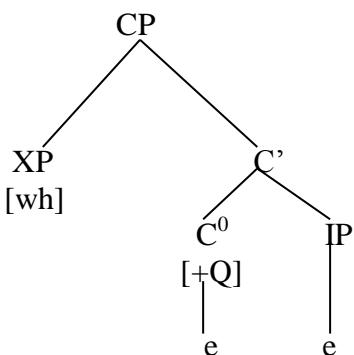
Under a movement plus deletion view, the sluicing construction in (1a) and repeated as (2a) involves a full clause in the same way as its counterpart in (1b). However, the sole difference between them is that the sentential complement ~~John bought~~ of the wh-fragment ‘what’ in (1a/2a) is unpronounced because of a deletion rule.

The second line of thought is the ‘interpretative analysis’ defended by scholars such as Ginzburg (1992), Riemsdijk (1978 etc). As for this line of thought, the wh-fragment ‘what’ in the context of (1a/2a) is base-generated, or better still, is in-situ in the postverbal position. In other words, it is directly selected by the transitive predicate ‘know’. Therefore, it is not derived by movement as argued by the proponents of the ‘movement plus deletion’ approach. In this perspective, the wh-phrase ‘what’ in (1a/2a) appears simply as an internal argument of the verb ‘know’ because of an interpretative rule. So, what obtains in (1a/2a) is a structure like (3) below whereby the wh-fragment ‘what’ gets selected directly by the transitive predicate ‘know’. As a result, instead of arguing that the wh-fragment ‘what’ arrives at the left periphery via wh-movement followed by IP/TP-deletion, it is crucial to say that there is no CP structure in cases like (1a/2a), rather, the wh-fragment ‘what’ appears as an internal argument selected in the syntax by the transitive verb ‘know’.

(3) But I don't know [DP **what**]

Ultimately, there is the LF-copying approach to sluicing defended by Chung, Ladusaw & McCloskey (1995). These authors, following a traditional interpretative analysis of ellipsis (Chao 1987; Wasow 1972 & Williams 1977) argue that even if sluicing involves an elided IP structure as defended by the proponents of ‘the movement plus deletion’ approach. The elided IP is simply copied from the antecedent clause at the LF level although it has no access in the syntax. Put in a different way, Chung & al. (1995) argue that in a sentence like (1a/2a), there exists an elided IP in the post wh-fragment position, but the content of the antecedent IP ‘Jack bought something’ is simply copied into the unpronounced IP at LF via what they call a ‘recycling process’ (pp. 242). Borrowing from Lobeck (1991), a sluice construction ‘consists of an interrogative CP’, the specifier of which is occupied by the moved wh-operator but whose head C^0 and IP subconstituents are null (empty) as schematized in (4) below (cf. Chung et al 1995:242).

(4)



Globally, the LF-copying approach to ellipsis is a mixed strategy in the sense that it assumes an IP structure of sluicing as it is the case with the ‘movement plus deletion’ approach. It is also similar to the ‘interpretative approach’ in that the content of IP is invisible in the syntax (cf. Chung et al 1995 for more details). Below, are some evidence in favour of the ‘movement plus deletion’ approach to ellipsis as discussed by previous authors. Keep in mind that all along, the analysis of Basáá data will be conducted in light of the movement plus deletion approach.

8.1.1 Some evidence for the PF-deletion approach

There are a number of arguments in favour of the PF-deletion approach to sluicing. Ross (1969) is undoubtedly the very first scholar to propose that sluicing involves a clausal structure whereby there is elision/deletion of an entire clause prior to wh-movement of a wh-fragment to the left edge of the sentence. In Merchant (2001, 2004, 2008)’s , Ross (1969)’s, terms, there exists a deletion rule which derives a sentence like (5a) from the embedded question in (5b).

(5) (Ross 1969:252)

a.

They claim that they had settled on **something**, but it wasn’t clear [**what**]

b.

They claim that they had settled on something, but it wasn't clear [**what**₁ they had settled on **t**₁]

For the derivation of sentence (5a), two things are to be mentioned. First of all, according to the PF-deletion analysis, the sluiced wh-fragment 'what' is not simply a DP/NP as it seems to be. Rather, it involves a silent clausal structure i.e. an IP/TP. Secondly, the wh-phrase 'what' undergoes leftward movement just like in the corresponding non-elliptical embedded clause in (5b) namely '**what**₁ they had settled on **t**₁?'. Based on these and other arguments as will be discussed thoroughly, Merchant (2001, 2004, 2008), Ross (1969) among others argue against any interpretative analysis of ellipsis.

8.1.1.1 Case-matching

Case-matching is one of the arguments advanced by the advocates of the PF-deletion approach to show that sluicing involves an underlying clausal structure even though the clause in question is silent in overt syntax. In languages with overt case morphology, it has been demonstrated that there is always a case-matching relationship between the wh-phrase in sluicing and the indefinite DP/NP in the antecedent clause. In other words, whenever the indefinite DP/NP in the antecedent bears a given case, that case must be borne by the wh-fragment in the sluiced construction. Whenever case-matching fails, the corresponding sequence is ruled out. To illustrate how case-matching works out, let us consider the following sentences from German (Merchant 2004:665-666) and Greek (Vlachos 2012:121), two languages with overt case morphology.

(6) *German: dative-dative correspondence* (adapted from Merchant 2004:665-666).

a.

Er will jemandem schmeicheln, aber sie wissen nicht {*wer /*wen /wem}
 he wants someone.DAT flatter but they know not who.NOM/who.ACC/who.DAT
 'He wants to *flatter someone*, but they don't know **who**'

b. Sie wissen nicht {*wer /*wen /wem} er schmeicheln will
 they know not who.NOM/who.ACC/who.DAT he flatter want
 'They don't know **who** he wants to flatter.'

(7) *German: accusative-accusative* (adapted from Merchant ibid).

a. Er will jemanden loben, aber sie wissen nicht {*wer /wen /*wem}
 he wants someone.ACC praise but they know not who.NOM/who.ACC/who.DAT
 'He wants to *praise someone*, but they don't know **who**'

b. Sie wissen nicht {*wer /wen /*wem} er loben will
 they know not who.NOM/who.ACC/who.DAT he praise want
 'They don't know **who** he wants to praise.'

As can be seen in these German examples, the sluicing constructions in the (a) examples convey the same interpretation as their non-elliptical counterparts in (b).

These examples clearly show that the predicates *schmeicheln* ‘flatter’ and *loben* ‘praise’ assign two different cases, namely dative case and accusative case respectively so much so that whichever case is assigned to the indefinite DP/NP ‘someone’ in the antecedent clause must automatically be assigned to the wh-phrase in the sluicing construction. That case matching must be respected in sluicing constructions is further supported by the fact that the nominative wh-phrase *wer.NOM* ‘who’ and the accusative *wen* ‘who.ACC’ in (6) are completely ruled out as a result of case-assignment. In other words, the predicate *schmeicheln* ‘flatter’ only assigns dative case. Neither a nominative nor an accusative wh-phrase is selected by this predicate in the elliptical sentence (6a) as well as in its non-elliptical counterpart (6b). In like manner, the predicate *loben* ‘praise’ is an accusative-assigning verb. The fact that the nominative wh-phrase *wer* ‘who.NOM’ and its dative *wem* ‘who.DAT’ counterparts are ruled out in (7) is straightforwardly expected from a case-matching approach. So, as the verb *loben* ‘praise’ is an accusative-assigning verb, it assigns accusative case to the indefinite DP/NP *jemanden* ‘someone’ in the antecedent clause. For case-agreement purposes, the wh-phrase in the sluicing must also be assigned accusative case and no other case.

The same phenomenon is attested in Greek as illustrated below.

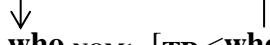
- (8) *Greek: nominative-nominative correspondence* (Merchant 2001:47 cited by Vlachos 2012:121-122)

- a. **Kapjos** pire tilefono ala dhen ksero **pjos/ *pjōn**
someone-NOM took-3SG telephone-ACC but NEG know-3SG who-NOM/who-ACC
'Someone called but I don't know **who**.'
- b. **Kapjos** pire tilefono ala dhen ksero [CP **pjos** [IP pire tilefono-<**pjos**>]]
someone-NOM took-3SG telephone-ACC but NEG know-3SG who-NOM took-3SG telephone-ACC
'Someone called but I don't know **who** called.'

It is clearly shown in (8) that the indefinite DP/NP *kapjos* ‘someone’ bears nominative case as its corresponding wh-phrase *pjos* ‘who.NOM’ in both the elliptical (8a) and non-elliptical (8b) constructions. Based on case-agreement, the correlation between the indefinite in the antecedent clause and the wh-phrase in sluicing is expected under a PF-deletion analysis.

Globally, given that the sentence in sluicing is deleted under identity with an indefinite DP/NP in the antecedent clause, the German sentence (7b) and its Greek counterpart in (8b) can be given the following underlying structures in (9a) and (9b) respectively whereby there is PF-deletion of the TP after case assignment of the wh-fragment by the predicate ‘praise’ and ‘call’ and after wh-movement of the same wh-fragments to the C-layer.

(9)

- a. but they don't know [CP **who.ACC** [TP **he wants to praise <who.ACC₁>**]]

- b. but I don't know [CP **who.NOM₁** [TP <**who.NOM₁**> **called**]]

It is obvious from the German and Greek examples above that sluicing involves a clausal structure at a certain stage of the derivation. It is in fact at this stage of the derivation that case-assignment between the predicates and their corresponding DP/NP takes place. After case-assignment has been fulfilled, the wh-fragment gets moved to the left periphery followed by PF deletion of TP. This state of matters shows that it would be difficult for any interpretative analysis of sluicing to account for why the wh-fragment must bear the same case as the indefinite DP/NP in the antecedent clause. This can only be very plausible if one adopts a PF-deletion approach to sluicing.

Merchant (2001) among many other researchers has examined case-agreement as one of the powerful arguments for the PF-deletion approach to sluicing in many world languages. The results show that case-matching is attested cross-linguistically as it is encountered in a variety of languages including Basque, Czech, Finnish, Hindi, Hungarian, Polish, Russian, Slovene etc.

8.1.1.2 Subcategorization

Another relevant argument advanced by Merchant (2001, 2004), Ross (1969) and others in support of the PF-deletion analysis is subcategorization. Superficially, sluicing appears as being a complement of predicates which do not select for DPs/NPs. Either way, it happens that at S-structure, a given DP/NP shows up as a complement of a verb which does not subcategorize for a DP/NP. For instance, a verb such as ‘wonder’ in English is very well known as a sentential complement predicate i.e. it only subcategorizes for a sentential complement and never for a DP complement as shown in the following examples.

(10)

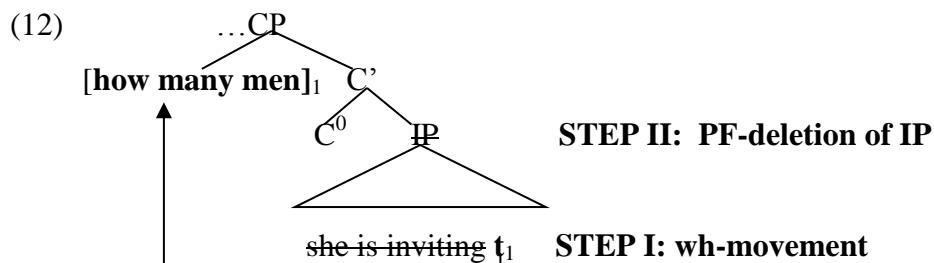
- a. I wonder **whether** [IP the generative syntax students understood the lecture]
 b. *I **wonder** [DP John/the competition]

Nevertheless, it happens that the verb ‘wonder’ in slucing constructions successfully occurs side by side with a DP/NP as exhibited in the following example.

(11) From Ross (1967:257).

- a. She says she is inviting some men. I **wonder** [DP **how many men**]
 b. *I **wonder** [DP **those men**]

Cases like (11) raise the following question: why is (11b) ungrammatical since the predicate ‘wonder’ which is used in (11a) is the same used in (11b)? Such a striking question can be elegantly answered if one appeals to a PF-deletion analysis of ellipsis. In other words, assuming that there exists an underlying clausal structure in (11a), the DP ‘how many men’ is in fact subcategorized by an underlying predicate, namely the transitive verb ‘invite’. After the selectional requirements are attained, the DP ‘how many men’ raises to the left periphery of the embedded clause ‘she is inviting’ followed by PF-deletion of this IP as in (12) below.



Partially summarizing, one realizes that the fact that the DP/QP ‘how many men’ surfaces as the complement of the verb ‘wonder’ in (11a) is simply apparent. There underlyingly exists a clausal structure namely ‘she is inviting’ whose transitive predicate ‘inviting’ subcategorizes for the DP/QP ‘how many men’ at a certain stage of the derivation prior to ellipsis. With this in mind, it can also be understood that (11b) is ungrammatical because it involves no elliptical construction, and besides, the predicate ‘wonder’ is not a DP/QP complement verb.

8.1.1.3 Number agreement

Another argument in favour of the PF-deletion approach is number agreement. In fact, this is attested when a sluiced clause is the subject of a bigger sentence like in (13) below (adapted from Ross (1969:256)).

(13)

- a. He's going to give us **some old problems** for the test, but **which problems** isn't clear
- b. *He's going to give us **some old problems** for the test, but **which problems** aren't clear

At first sight, it looks as if (13a) is illicit and that (13b) is correct. However, under close scrutiny, one realizes that the DP ‘which problems’ is part of a bigger clausal subject namely ‘(that) he’s going to give us some old problems’ so much so that the underlying non-elliptical structure is ‘(that) *he's going to give us some old problems isn't clear*’. In this vein, it becomes clearer that the DP ‘which problems’ first moves from the clausal subject ‘(that) he’s going to give us some old problems’ to the C-domain followed by PF-deletion of the remnant subject as illustrated in (14) below.

(14) ..but [CP **which problems**₁ [IP *he's going to give us which problems*₄]] isn't clear.

In fact, if the sluiced wh-phrase *which problem* in the subject position were simply a DP, then the copula verb would be ‘*aren’t*’ and not ‘*isn’t*’. Under a well-known view that sentential subjects always exhibit singular agreement with the verb, then it is unquestionable why the copula verb ‘be’ in (13a) exhibits singular agreement instead of a plural one (13b). As a result, the fact that the copula in (13a) exhibits singular agreement automatically boils down to the idea that sluicing involves an underlying clausal structure, the PF realization goes missing. Ross (1969:257) provides further examples with sentential subjects such as ‘that Bill left **is/*are** tragic’, ‘why he did it **is/are** a puzzle’.

8.1.1.4 Extraposition

Ross (1969:259) uses extraposition as an additional evidence in support of a PF-deletion analysis. Ross observes that when a wh-fragment in sluicing occupies the subject position, that wh-phrase can be successfully extraposed as in (15). In (15a), the wh-phrase fragment ‘what’ is the subject of the copula ‘isn’t’ while in (15b) it is extraposed in sentence-final position.

- (15) a. We know that he was eating, but **what** isn’t clear
- b. We know that he was eating, but **it** isn’t clear **what**

Ross derives (15b) from (15a) via an extraposition rule whereby a sentential subject undergoes rightward movement, leaving an expletive subject as in (16) below.

- (16) a. [That John is a genius] is clear
- b. **It** is clear [that John is a genius]

Ross convincingly argues that only a sentential subject can be subject to extraposition, that is, ordinary wh-phrases cannot undergo extraposition as in (17) where the wh-phrase ‘who’ gets extraposed in sentence-final position.

- (17) a. **Who** is hoarse?
- b. *It is hoarse **who**?

In light of the above, Ross concludes that the wh-phrase ‘what’ in (15) is a clause while its counterpart ‘who’ in (17) is a simple DP category.

8.1.1.5. Islands effects

Since Ross (1967) it has become customary to realize that there are some syntactic environments out of which movement is strictly banned, i.e. cannot be applied. Such areas, called islands in technical terms, are thus said to be opaque to extraction. In this guise, it is necessary to show how relevant is the PF-deletion approach to ellipsis when it comes to the analysis of sluicing. Either way, if it is the case that sluicing involves a movement operation, then it should obey locality constraints such as islands effects. Based on his judgments, Ross (1969:276) provides a piece of evidence based on the Coordinate Structure Constraint (CSC) to show that sluicing is

sensitive to island constraints. According to him, sentence (18b) below is marginally degraded. Based on this marginal degradation of (18b), he argues that sluicing involves wh-movement to the left edge of the sentence.

(18)

- a. *Irv and someone were dancing together, but I don't know who Irv and were dancing together
- b. ??Irv and someone were dancing together, but I don't know who ~~Irv and were dancing~~

Recall that (18a) is completely ruled out because of a violation of the Coordinate Structure Constraint. Although a good number of authors including Merchant (2001), think that (18b) is perfectly acceptable, Ross on his part treats it as being marginally degraded, hence his argument that sluicing is sensitive to island constraints.

Note that it is argued by most researchers that *sluicing*, as opposed to *fragment* (to be discussed in the last chapter) is insensitive to islands. So, for those authors, sentence (18b) is an instance of ‘island repair’ mechanism. Given that there are some areas out of which extraction is banned, resumption (resumptive pronoun insertion) or PF-deletion of the whole island helps circumvent ill-formedness or island violation.

At this level, I have reviewed some arguments advanced in the literature in favour of the ‘movement plus deletion’ approach to ellipsis with focus on sluicing as initiated by Ross (1969) and developed later on by other scholars such as Merchant (2001, 2004, 2008), Nakao (2009) Temmerman (2013), Vlachos (2012) etc. It is important to recall that other arguments such as ‘pied-piping’ and ‘preposition stranding’ are also advanced in the literature by the above-mentioned authors. In the chapter dedicated to fragment answers, I will provide some evidence as developed in the literature to show how well pied-piping and preposition stranding accommodate the ellipsis analysis. The reader is simply requested to consult the above mentioned works for further understanding. The following section is dedicated to sluicing in Basàá.

8.2 Properties of Basàá sluicing

This section aims at discussing properties sluicing in Basàá. As expected from any elliptical analysis, the Basàá empirical data show that Basàá sluicing constructions are remnants of fully-fledged sentential structures which are subject to ellipsis. These properties demonstrate that the sluicing mechanism is preceded by leftward movement of a question word out of the ellipsis site. Before addressing the sluicing issue itself, a point needs to be made on the nature of the

distribution of what shall be referred to as the ‘definitizer’ and the demonstratives in Basàá since they constitute key instruments to the understanding of ellipsis in the language.

8.2.1 On the ‘definitizer’ and the expression of evidentiality

Before proceeding in the discussion, it is necessary to point out that there exists in Basàá a specific morpheme which encodes definiteness, identity/identification, or simply it a kind of specification or evidentiality in the proper sense of the term. This morpheme is sensitive to noun class i.e. it always displays class and number agreement with the noun (nominal) it specifies/identifies in the context. It is also homophonous with the demonstrative, and, at first sight, one may be inclined to say that it is in fact a demonstrative. However, it is not excluded that this morpheme be in fact a demonstrative which has been subject to some sort of desemantization over time. For the time being, and given that the ‘definitizer’ encodes evidential interpretation in the language, it is simply considered as a ‘marker of evidentiality (glossed thorough as EVID) by virtue of the fact that it helps a nominal to be specific/definite/finite or, better still, to be identified in a given context. When used in the discourse, it denotes the obviousness/evidence/evidentiality of the event. In other words, it shows that the event at issue is obvious or certain. It is also a discourse-anaphoric marker in the sense that it looks into a proper identification a given element in the discourse.

The examples delineated in (19) below are instances of noun phrases with a demonstrative determiner depending on the position of the speaker and hearer and depending on the noun classes (here only class 1 and class 2 are illustrated). The demonstratives used in (19e-f) denote not only the fact that the discourse referent is distant from both the speaker and hearer, but also that the referent is unseen of both of them. In the latter case, the referent is salient, known, familiar or simply presupposed in the context but is out of reach.

- | | |
|--|--|
| (19) a. núnú maaŋgé | b. báná bɔɔŋgé |
| 1.DEM.PROX 1.child | 2.DEM.PROX 2.children |
| ‘This child (here).’ | ‘These children (here).’ |
| c. núú maaŋgé | d. báá bɔɔŋgé |
| 1.DEM.DIST 1.child | 2.DEM.DIST 2.children |
| ‘That child (over there).’ | ‘Those children (over there).’ |
| e. nû maaŋgé | f. bâ bɔɔŋgé |
| 1.DEM.DIST 1.child | 2.DEM.DIST 2.children |
| ‘That child (the one we are talking about) | ‘That children (the ones we are talking about)’. |

The sentences in (20) are some cases of definite/finite/specified/or identified nominals in question-answer pairs whereby Q stands for question and A for answer. (Qa) matches with (Aa) while (Qb) matches with (Ab).

(20) Q: a. njéé núnú

1.who DEM._{PROX}

'Lit. 'Who is this/it/

Intended: 'Who is s/he?'

A: a. malêt wêm nû

1.teacher 1.my 1.EVID

'My TEACHER/This is my teacher'

b. bɔnjéé bána

2.who DEM._{PROX}

'Lit. 'Who are they?'

Intended: 'Who are they?'

b. balêt bêm bâ

2.teachers 2.my 2.EVID

'My TEACHERS/These are my teachers'

A': a. malêt wêm bê nû

1.teacher 1.my NEG 1.EVID

'This is not my teacher'

b. balêt bêm bê bâ

2.teachers 2.my NEG 2.EVID

'There are not my teachers'

What is interesting with evidential constructions is that they are verbless i.e. they contain a null verbal copula. This state of affairs is supported by the fact that the positive answers in (Aa) and (Ab) can be negated as shown in (20A'). The use of negation in the prime examples constitutes a strong evidence in support of a null copula/verbless construction. The English translation is simply indicative. Note that *nû* and *bâ* are felicitous definitizers or identificational markers used in (20Aa) and (20Ab) respectively. As a matter of fact, (20Qa) and (20Qb) cannot be felicitously answered as (21Aa) and (21b) respectively. In other words, never can the demonstrative in the question and the definitizer in the answer be identical. In this vein, the illicitness attested in (21) is due to the fact that the definitizers or identificational markers in the answers are identical to the corresponding demonstratives in the questions.

(21) Q: a. njéé núnú

1.who DEM._{PROX}

'Lit. 'Who is this?'

Intended: 'Who is s/he?'

A: a. #malêt wêm núnú

1.teacher 1.my 1.DEM._{PROX}

Intended: 'My TEACHER/It is my teacher' Intended: 'MY TEACHERS/it is my teachers'

b. bɔnjéé bána

2.who DEM._{PROX}

'Lit. 'Who are they?'

Intended: 'Who are they?'

b. #balêt bêm bána

2.teachers 2.my 2.DEM._{PROX}

What is interesting is that (21Aa) and (21Ab) above are acceptable in contexts that are different from (21). For instance, in 'presentative constructions', or as an answer to a question denoting place/location, both (21Aa) and (21Ab) are correct as can be seen below.

(22) Q: a. malêt wɔŋ a ye héé
1.teacher 1.your 1.SM be where
'Where is your teacher?'

A: a. malêt wêm núnú

1.teacher 1.my 1.DEM._{PROX}

'This/here is my teacher.'

b. balêt bɔŋ a yé héé
2.teachers 2.your 2.SM be where
'Where are your teachers?'

b. balêt bêm bána

2.teachers 2.my 2.DEM._{PROX}

'These/here are my teachers.'

The focus of the discussion is on the definitizer as used in (20A-A') above because it has direct implications on the analysis of ellipsis⁵⁹. No further analysis will be provided on the demonstrative(s). So, only the lexical entries in (20A-A') will built up the discussion.

8.2.1.1 Sluicing as part of a full proposition: morphological marking and selectional requirements

The data discussed in this section provide further support to Ross's (1969) and Merchant's (2004:662) line of thought that sluicing conveys 'the same propositional content and assertoric force as utterances which are uncontroversially full sentential structures'. From a morpho-syntactic point of view, note that unlike in English and English-like languages, in Basàá sluicing involves not only a question word, but also a definitizer, which is a specific morpheme with an identificational/specification reading and which always occurs on the right of the question operator. As illustrated in (23) and (24), the sluicing constructions in (23a) and (24a) have no lexical material at the PF component after the question operators *njéé* 'who(m)' and *kíí* 'what' and the agreeing definitizers *nû* and *î* respectively. On the contrary, in their non-elliptical counterparts in (23b) and (24b) the question operators and the agreeing definitizers are followed by full propositions.

(23)

- a. **ŋim** **mùt** i- ñ- táYbé háná, mε ñ- yí bé mέ yɔ, ndí mε m-batbá
INDEF man SM-PST1-pass here I PST1-know NEG I.EMPH him but I PRS-wonder
lé tòó **njé(é) nû**
that whether/if 1.who 1.EVID
'Someone passed here, I did not know **him**. But I wonder **who**'

- b. **ŋim** **mùt** i- ñ- táYbé háná, mε ñ- yí bé mέ yɔ, ndí mε m-batbá
INDEF man SM-PST1-pass here I PST1-know NEG I.EMPH him but I PRS-wonder
lé tòó **njé(é) nû** a- ñ- táYbé háná
that whether/if 1.who 1.EVID 1.SM-PST1-pass here
Lit: 'Someone passed here, I did not know him, but I wonder who passed here'

(24)

- a. maanjé a- m-mil **ŋim** yɔm, mέ ñ- yí bé mέ yɔ, mε m- batbá
1.child 1.SM-PRS.swallow INDEF 9.thing I PRS-know NEG I.EMPH it I PRS-wonder
lé tòó **kíí** **î**
that whether/if 9.what 9.EVID

Lit: 'The child has swallowed something. I don't know it, but I wonder what it is'

- b. mε m- batbá lé tòó **√kíí** **î** **pro_i** a_i- m- mil **√kíí** ***î**
I PRS-wonder that whether/if 9.what 1.EVID pro 1.SM-PST1-swallow 9.what 9.EVID
'I wonder what he has swallowed.'

⁵⁹ The same morpheme is used in fragment answers as will be discussed in chapter nine

Note also that to express indefinites such as the English ‘someone/somebody’ or ‘something’, one makes use of the indefinite quantifier *ŋim* which literally means ‘some’, but is glossed throughout as INDEF (inite) followed by the nominal/noun, namely *mut* ‘person for humans and *yʃm* ‘thing’ for non-humans. As the reader can see, the evidential marker cannot occur when the wh-phrase is in-situ. This is an indication that the evidential marker only occurs when the wh-item has been extracted from its base.

Besides, another striking characteristic of Basàá sluicing has to do with selectional requirements. For instance, the remnant, also called sluiced (i.e. the wh-fragments) in (23a) and (24a) are preceded by two lexical complementizers, namely the declarative *lē* ‘that’ encoding the declarative or assertoric force of the proposition and the interrogative *tɔ́* ‘whether/if’ which encodes the interrogative force of the same proposition. This shows that the matrix predicate *batbá* *wonder/ask* selects for full clauses. Note also that under no circumstances should the interrogative *tɔ́* ‘whether/if’ precede the declarative *lē* ‘that’ as the following ungrammatical sentences in (25) demonstrate. This amounts to the fact that the internal structure of the clause is subject to selectional requirements so much so that categories occur in a strict and hierarchical order via selection. In sluicing, the declarative lexical complementizer *lē* ‘that’ precedes its interrogative counterpart *tɔ́* ‘whether/if’ which in turn precede the sluiced or a full proposition.

(25)

- a. *ndí me mí- batbá ***tɔ́*** ***lē*** ***njé(é)*** ***nû*** a- n- táYbé háná
but I PRS-wonder whether/if that 1.who 1.EVID 1.SM-PST1-pass here
- b.* me mí- batbá ***tɔ́*** ***lē*** ***kíí*** ***î*** ***pro_i*** a_i- m̄- mil
I PRS-wonder whether/if that 9.what 1.EVID pro 1.SM-PST1-swallow

From the preceding discussion, it is obvious that sluicing in Basàá is a subsentential constituent which functions like a full proposition, but a subpart of which undergoes PF-deletion or ellipsis at some point. This state of matters straightforwardly pertains to the fact that a sluicing constructions conveys the same interpretation as its non-elliptical counterpart.

Another argument in favour of a PF-deletion analysis of sluicing in Basàá is that it occurs in an ex-situ position in the vicinity of lexical complementizers, which, as discussed at length in previous chapters, are hosted in the left peripheral domain of the clause. The following examples show that lexical complementizers always select for clauses and not DP/AdvP as complements.

- (26) a. mε ń- yí béeé tɔ́ ńcɔŋgé bá- bí- sómb bíkaat yaaní
 I PRS-know NEG whether/if 2.children 2.SM-PST2-buy 8.books 1.yesterday
 'I don't know if the children bought the books yesterday.'

- b. mε ý- kăl lé ńcɔŋgé bá- bí- sómb bíkaat yaaní
 I PRS-say that 2.children 2.SM-PST2-buy 8.books 1.yesterday
 'I say that the children bought the books yesterday.'
- c. Mε m-batbá lé tɔ́ ńcɔŋgé bá- bí- sómb bíkaat yaaní
 I PRS-wonder that if 2.children 2.SM-PST2-buy 8.books 1.yesterday
 'I wonder if the children bought the books yesterday.'
 Lit: '*I wonder that if the children bought the books yesterday.'

(27)

- a. *Mε m- batbá báúdú
 I PRS-wonder 2.students
 '*I wonder the students.'
- b. #Mε m-batbá lé njéé [...]
 I PRS-wonder that 1.who
 Intended: 'I wonder who', Lit: '*I wonder that who?'
- c. # Mε ń- yí béeé tɔ́ báúdú / njéé [...]
 I PRS-know NEG if/whether 2.students / 1.who
 Lit: '*I don't know whether/if the students/who'
- d. #Mε m- batbá lé tɔ́ njéé [...]
 I PRS-wonder that if/whether 1.who
 Intended: 'I wonder who', Lit: '* I wonder that if/whether who'

In terms of subcategorizatio or selectional requirements, the verb *-batbá* 'wonder' cannot select for a DP complement, just as the lexical complementizers does not allowed for complements that are not full clauses. The unacceptability of (27b-d) is due to the fact that there is no complement clause after the wh-phrase *njéé* 'who' and/or the DP *báúdú* 'students'. Sentences (27b-d) are felicitous under specific discourse contexts, i.e. when the complement clauses are implied or known in the discourse as indicated by the suspension marks in bracktes. More precisely, the complement clause can be elided if it is known or presupposed. These examples lend support to the idea that sluicing involve fully-fledged clauses, the PF component of which goes missing via a deletion rule after wh-movement.

The following section provides evidence from class and number agreement/matching which show that sluicing in Basàá is a result of a movement plus deletion mechanism.

8.2.1.2 Class and number agreement

Another characteristic of sluicing in Basàá is that there is noun class and number matching between the sluiced question operator and the indefinite NP in the antecedent clause. Whenever class and number mismatching arises between the sluiced and its antecedent, ungrammaticality occurs. In (28), (29) and (30) below, the elliptical (a) sentences convey the same propositional meaning as their non-elliptical counterparts in (b).

(28)

- a. Mε n- nɔY lé Ewas a- ñ- sómb **míntómbá**, mε mí- ɓatbá
 I PST1-hear that 1.Ewas 1.SM-PST1-buy 4.sheep I PRS-wonder
lē tòsí mímbê mí
 that whether/if 4.which ones 4.EVID
 'I heard that Ewas has bought sheep, I wonder which ones.'
- b. Mε bí- nɔY lé Ewas a- ñ- sómb **míntómbá**, mε mí- ɓatbá
 I PST2-hear that 1.Ewas 1.SM-PST1-buy 4.sheep I PRS-wonder
lē tòsí mímbê mí (míntómbá) Ewas a- ñ- sómb
 that whether/if 4.which 4.EVID 4.sheep 1.Ewas 1.SM-PST1-buy
***mímbê míntómbá**
 4.which 4.sheep
 'I heard that Ewas has bought sheep, I wonder which ones he has bought'
- c. * Mε n- nɔY lé Ewas a- ñ- sómb **míntómbá**, mε mí- ɓatbá
 I PST1-hear that 1.Ewas 1.SM-PST1-buy 4.sheep I PRS-wonder
lē tòsí ɓámbê bâ
 that whether/if 2.which ones 2.EVID
 Intended: 'I heard that Ewas has bought sheep, I wonder which ones.'

(29)

- a. Bíkûn a- bí- lɔná **líwándá** jé jádá makebla yaaní, mε mí- ɓatbá
 1.B 1.SM-PST2-bring 5.friend 5.his 5.one 6.presents yesterday I PRS-wonder
lē tòsí límbê lí
 that whether/if 5.which one 5.EVID
 'Bikun brought the presents to one of his friends, I wonder which ones'
- b. Bíkûn a- bí- lɔná **líwándá** jé jádá makebla yaaní, mε mí- ɓatbá
 1.B 1.SM-PST2-bring 5.friend 5.his 5.one 6.presents yesterday I PRS-wonder
lē tòsí límbê lí (líwándá) Bíkûn a- bí- lɔná mákebla
 that whether/if 5.which one 5.EVID 5.friend 1.B 1.SM-PST2-bring 6.presents
 'Bikun brought the presents to one of his friends, I wonder which one he has brought the presents.'
- c. * Bíkûn a- bí- lɔná **líwándá** jé jádá makebla yaaní, mε mí- ɓatbá
 1.B 1.SM-PST2-bring 5.friend 5.his 5.one 6.presents yesterday I PRS-wonder
lē tòsí númbê nû
 that whether/if 1.which one 1.EVID
 Intended: 'Bikun brought the presents to one of his friends, I wonder which ones'

(30)

- a. ɳane a- gá- náŋá **ńódàá ńásámal** yaaní í ɳgand mε mí- ɓatbá
 1.chief 1.SM-FUT2-invite 2.women 2.six tomorrow LOC 7.party I PRS-wonder
lē tòsí ɓámbê bâ
 that whether/if 2.which ones 2.EVID
 'The chief will invite two women tomorrow to the party, I wonder which ones'

b. ɳane a- gá- náŋá **bódàá** **básámal** yaaní í ɳgand, me mí- ɦatbá
 1.chief 1.SM-FUT2-invite 2.women 2.six tomorrow LOC 7.party I PRS-wonder
lē tòs bámbê bâ (bódàá) ɳane a- gá- náŋá yaaní...
 that whether/if 2.which ones 2.EVID 2.women 1.chief 1.SM-FUT2-invite tomorrow
 'The chief will invite two women tomorrow to the party, I wonder which ones the chief will invite...'

c.* ɳane a- gá- náŋá **bódàá** **básámal** yaaní í ɳgand, me mí- ɦatbá
 1.chief 1.SM-FUT2-invite 2.women 2.six tomorrow LOC 7.party I PRS-wonder
lē tòs imbê i
 that whether/if 7.which one 7.EVID

Intended: 'The chief will invite two women tomorrow to the party, I wonder which ones'

As predicted, the sluiced wh-phrases *múmbê* 'which ones' (28a) *límbe* 'which one' (29a) and *bámbê* 'which ones' (30a) and their respective antecedent DPs/NPs *mintómbá* 'sheep', *liwándá* 'friend' and *bódàá* 'women' in the antecedent clauses display class and number agreement.

Conversely, since there is class and number mismatching between the sluiced wh-phrases *bámbê* 'which ones' (28c), *númbê* 'which one' (29c), and *imbê* 'which one' (30c) and the DPs *míntómbá* 'sheeps' (26c), *liwándá* 'friends' (27c), and *bódàá* 'women' (28c) in the corresponding respective antecedent clauses, ungrammaticality arises. Note also that the interrogative quantifier *mbéé* 'which' is sensitive to noun class since it undergoes morphological agreement triggered by the nominal it modifies. As can be seen in the non-elliptical (b) sentences, the definitizer/evidentiality marker can occur in-between the sluiced and the nominal it modifies. However, as shown by the brackets, the presence of the nominal in the post-definitizer position is optional. So, its absence does not have any effects for the well-formedness of the sentence.

As previously mentioned, ungrammaticality arises in the (c) sentences in (28-30) because agreement fails to hold between the sluiced (the wh-fragments) and their respective antecedents. In fact, what fails in (28c) and (29c) is class agreement while in (30c) the source of illicitness is number and class agreement. This is straightforwardly explained given that in almost, if not all noun class languages, singular classes are the ones with odd numbers while plural classes bear even numbers. In this vein, in (28c) the DP *mintómbá* 'sheep' contained in the antecedent clause belongs to class 6 in the Basàá noun class system whereas the sluiced (the wh-fragment) *bámbê* 'which ones' bears class 2 agreement morphology. Although classes 2 and 6 are plural, there is a

problem at the level of class. In like manner, the antecedent DP *líwándá* ‘friend (29c) belongs to class 5 while the corresponding sluiced *númbê* ‘which one’ bears agreement morphology of class 1. Although both classes are singular, agreement differs due to class mismatching. Finally, the ungrammaticality of (30c) stems from two sources. First of all, the antecedent DP category *bódàá* ‘women’ belongs to class 2 which is a plural class while the corresponding sluiced *imbê* ‘which one’ carries agreement morphology of class 7 which is a singular class. In light of these observations, it becomes clear that sluicing in Basàá is sensitive to class and number agreement/matching between the sluiced and its antecedent.

As discussed in the preceding lines, the sluiced and the nominal it modifies can be separated by the definitizer/evidential marker. Nevertheless, although the nominal in the post-definitizer position is optional, never can both the sluiced and the nominal precede the definitizer. In (32) below, it is shown that while the sequence *sluiced-definitizer-nominal* is allowed, the sequence *sluiced-nominal-definitizer* is completely degraded (*) while the sequence *nominal- sluiced-definitizer/evidential marker* is marginally degraded (??) (recall that whereas all speakers can judge (32b) as strongly ungrammatical, some of them may tolerate (32c) as being acceptable in this context.

(32)

- a. \checkmark *sluiced-definitizer-(nominal)*

Bíkún a- bí- lɔná **líwándá** jé jádá makebla yaaní, me mí- batbá
 1.B 1.SM-PST2-bring 5.friend 5.his 5.one 6.presents yesterday I PRS-wonder
lé tɔ́́ límbê lí (líwándá) Bíkún a- bí- lɔná mákebla
 that whether/if 5.which one 5.EVID 5.friend 1.B 1.SM-PST2-bring 6.presents
 Lit: ‘Bikun brought the presents to one of his friends, I wonder which one he has brought the presents to’

- b. **sluiced-nominal-definitizer*

Bíkún a- bí- lɔná **líwándá** jé jádá makebla yaaní, me mí- batbá
 1.B 1.SM-PST2-bring 5.friend 5.his 5.one 6.presents yesterday I PRS-wonder
*lé tɔ́́ *límbê líwándá lí* Bíkún a- bí- lɔná mákebla
 that whether/if 5.which one 5.friend 5.EVID 1.B 1.SM-PST2-bring 6.presents

Intended: ‘Bikun brought the presents to one of his friends, I wonder which one he has brought the presents to.’

c. ??nominal-sluiced-definitizer

Bíkún a- bí- ləná **líwándá** jé jádá makebla yaaní, mε mí- batbá
 1.B 1.SM-PST2-bring 5.friend 5.his 5.one 6.presents yesterday I PRS-wonder
lē tɔ́j ?? **líwándá límbê** lî Bíkún a- bí- ləná mákebla
 that whether/if 5.friend 5.which one 5.EVID 1.B 1.SM-PST2-bring 6.presents

Intended: ‘Bikun brought the presents to one of his friends, I wonder which one he has brought the presents to’

Similarly, the sequence nominal-definitizer-sluiced is disallowed as illustrated in (33) below. I shall discuss the theoretical implications that upholds the sequence *sluiced-definitizer-nominal* in subsequent sections.

(33) * nominal-definitizer-sluiced

Bíkún a- bí- ləná **líwándá** jé jádá makebla yaaní, mε mí- batbá
 1.B 1.SM-PST2-bring 5.friend 5.his 5.one 6.presents yesterday I PRS-wonder
lē tɔ́j * **líwándá límbê** Bíkún a- bí- ləná mákebla
 that whether/if 5.friend 5.EVID 5.which one 1.B 1.SM-PST2-bring 6.presents

8.2.1.3 Morphosyntactic evidence

There is a morphosyntactic syntactic evidence that sluicing in Bantu involves wh-movement of the sluiced (wh-item) followed by ellipsis/PF deletion of the proposition that previously contained it. The non-elliptical sentence in (34a) is the counterpart of the elliptical sentence in (34b) whereby AgrS-P undergoes ellipsis after the question item *kíi* ‘what’ has been moved to the left of the evidential marker. On the contrary, the non-elliptical sentence (34c) which is the ungrammatical counterpart of (34a) is illicit because the evidential marker *i* occurs when the question item ‘what’ is in-situ.

(34)

a. Maanjé_i a- m- mîl **ŋgim jɔ́m**, mε n- yí bē mē **jɔ**,

1.child 1.SM-PST1-swallow INDF 7.thing I PRS-know NEG I.EMPH 7.it
 mε mí-mbat-bá *lē tɔ́j* **kíi₁** *i* [AgrS-P pro_i a- m- mîl **kíi₁**]
 I PRS-ask-RFM that if/whether 9.what 9.EVID pro 1.SM-PST1-swallow 9.what
 ‘The child has swallowed something, I don’t know it. Look what has he swallowed’

Lit: ‘The child has swallowed something, I don’t know it. Look, what has he swallowed?’

b. Maanjé_i a- m- mîl **ŋgim jɔ́m**, mε n- yí bē mē **jɔ**,

1.child 1.SM-PST1-swallow INDF 7.thing I PRS-know NEG I.EMPH 7.it
 mε mí-mbat-bá *lē tɔ́j* **kíi₁** *i* [AgrS-P pro_i a- m- mîl **kíi₁**]
 I PRS-ask-RFM that if/whether 9.what 9.EVID pro 1.SM-PST1-swallow 9.what
 ‘The child has swallowed something, I don’t know it. Look what has he swallowed’

Lit: ‘The child has swallowed something, I don’t know it. Look, what’

c. *Maaŋgé_i a- m- mîl **ŋgim jɔ́m**, mε n- yí bē mē **jɔ**,

1.child 1.SM-PST1-swallow INDF 7.thing I PRS-know NEG I.EMPH 7.it

me m-mbat-bá lē tó [AgrS-P pro_i a- m- mîl kíí *í]
I PRS-ask-RFM that if/whether pro 1.SM-PST1-swallow 9.what 9.EVID

Based on (34a) and (34c), it comes out that evidentiality marking is only attested when the wh-item has been extracted from its base (34a-b). As a result, the data above lend futher support to a movement plus deletion approach to sluicing.

8.2.1.4 Sluicing with non-linguistic antecedents

One of the main properties of sluicing is that it can license non-linguistic antecedents, that is in some discourse settings, the sluiced has no corresponding linguistic antecedent. This is even one of the arguments advanced by the proponents of the interpretative approach to ellipsis in general and sluicing in particular (cf. Hankamer & Sag (1976), Riemsdijk (1978) among others). These authors distinguish between ‘Surface Anaphora’ and ‘Deep Anaphora’ and argue that the former is derived by deletion and does not license non-linguistic-antecedents as opposed to the latter which, in their opinion, is base-generated anaphora and whose meaning is retrieved in semantics. Based on this, Riemsdijk argues that sluicing involves no deletion mechanism as proposed by Ross (1969). Rather, in his opinion, sluicing, as stripping, another form of ellipsis is derived in the same fashion, that is, both sluicing and stripping are base-generated anaphora (cf. Riemsdijk 1978; Sag & Hankamer 1976 etc.).

In Basaá, sluicing is possible in a context whereby there appears no overt linguistic antecedent in a preceding discourse as illustrated in (35) and (36) below where the sluiced *kíí* ‘what’ and *njéé* ‘who’ have no antecedent correlates even though the meaning of the missing unit is implied in the context. For instance, it is obvious that the meaning conveyed by each sluicing in the (b) and (e) sentences is the same as its non-elliptical counterpart in (c) and (d).

(36) *Context*

- a. *Someone is knocking at the door*
- b. **njéé nû** 1.who 1.EVID
 ‘Who/who is it?’
- c. **njéé_i nû a_{i-} ñ- kòòdè** 1.who 1.EVID 1.SM-PRS-knock
 ‘Who is knocking/who is it that is knocking?’
- d. **mε m- ðatbá lé tòó njéé nû** I PRS-wonder that whether/if 1.who 1.EVID
 Intended: ‘I wonder who/who it is.’
- e. **mε m- ðatbá lé tòó njéé_i nû a_{i-} ñ- kòòdè** I PRS-wonder that whether/if 1.who 1.EVID 1.SM-PRS-knock
 Intended: ‘I wonder who is (it that is) knocking.’

Based on (35) and (36), it can be realized that the sluiced in (b) and (d) sentences have the same syntactic structure as their counterparts in (c) and (e) sentences and that these sluiced have been subject to a movement operation which evacuates them from the sites prior to PF deletion of the sentential domains out of which they have been extracted. Although devoid of antecedent correlates, there is no doubt that sluicing with a non-linguistic antecedent occurs side by side with a neighbouring fully-fledged propositions which are implied or understood in the context.

8.2.1.5 Argument/ referential adjuncts/non-referential adjuncts (a)symmetry

Although arguments and adjuncts can successfully occur in sluicing, they display a morpho-syntactic disparity in the sense that while the arguments and referential adjuncts can be morphologically marked by the definitizer or the evidentiality marker, non-referential adjuncts on the contrary, exhibit noun class morphological marking with the definitizer. Put differently, non-referential adjuncts, do not occur with the definitizer on their right. The following examples demonstrate that the presence of the definitizer is ruled out with non-referential adjunct sluicing.

Note that (38a) in which the sluiced *kélkíi* ‘when’ is followed by the definitizer *nû* can be accepted by some speakers (see %) while the presence of the definitizer in a post-adjunct position causes severe illiciteness as shown in (38b) below (see * before the definitizer **nû*).

(37) *Argument sluicing*

- a.
- Maaŋgé a- ñ- yámbáá ñgim yâm, ðenŋé [CP tòó kíí₁ i**
 1.child 1.SM-PRS-chew INDF 9.thing look whether/if 9.what 9.EVID
 [*AgrS-P maangé a- ñ- yámbáá kíí₁]]*
 1.child 1.SM-PRS-chew 9.what
 Intended: ‘The child is chewing something, look, what!’

b.

Mε ñ- nōY lē maanjé a- ij- kósná mákebla, kâl lē mε,
 I PST1-hear that 1.child 1.SM-PST1-receive 6.presents tell.INJ a bit me
 [cp mámbê₁ mā [AgrS-P maanjé a ij kósná mámbê₁]]]

6.which ones 6.EVID 1.child 1.SM-PST1-receive 6.which ones
 Intended: 'I heard that the child received the presents, tell me, which ones?'

(38) *Referential-adjunct sluicing*

a. Mε ñ- yí lē bccngé bá- ñ- lámá bódôl süklu, ndí mε m- batbá
 I PRS-know that 2.children 2.SM-PRS-should start 7.school but I PRS-wonder
 lē tòj kélkíi (% nû) [AgrS-P bccngé bá ñ lámá bódôl süklu kélkíi]
 that whether/if 1.when 1.EVID 2.children 2.SM-PRS-should start 7.school 1.when
 'I know that the children should resume classes, but I wonder when'

b. Mε n-nög lē bccngé bá- ij- ké ŋgim h̄omá yaaní mε m- batbá
 I PST1-hear that 2.children 2.SM-FUT1- go INDF 1.place 1.tomorrow I PRS-wonder
 lē tòj héé (nû) [AgrS-P bccngé bá ij ké héé]
 that if 1.when 1.EVID 2.children 2.SM-FUT1-go 1.where
 'I heard that the children are going to **some place** tomorrow, I wonder **where**'

(39) *Non-referential-adjunct sluicing*

a. bccngé bá wándá bá- m- bená bē kē í bāse,
 2.children 2.GEN 3.youth 2.SM-PRS-be used to NEG go LOC 9.church
 mε ñ- yí bē ínyuúkíi₁ [AgrS-P bccngé bá wándá bá m- bená
 I PRS-know NEG why 2.children 2.GEN 3.youth 2.SM-PRS-be used to
 bē kē í bāse ínyuúkíi₁-]]
 NEG go LOC 9.church why
 'Young people are not used to go to church, but I don't know why.'

b. Mε n- nög lē baúdú bá- m- pód-ós málêt ntén, mε ñ- yí bēé
 I PST1-hear that 2.students 2.SM-PRS-speak-OBL 1.teacher 3.manner I PRS-know NEG
 tòj léláá₁ [AgrS-P baúdú bá m- pód-ós málêt léláá]
 if/whether how 2.students 2.SM-PRS-speak-OBL 1.teacher how
 'I heard that the students talk to the teacher in a certain manner, I don't know how'

Sentences (38-39) show that the sluiced originally take roots within a fully-fledged proposition. The fact that it occupies the sentence initial position after the lexical complementizer(s) and before the evidential(ity) marker is straightforwardly accounted for under the assumption that it has been extracted from its canonical position within AgrS-P/IP which subsequently undergoes PF deletion. Now, a striking question to be answered is why referential adjunct may be followed by the evidentiality marker while non-referential adjuncts must not? In other words, why do referential adjuncts may occur with the definitizer while their non-referential counterparts do not? The answer seems to be straightforward if one assumes that adjuncts are adverb-like categories and that adverbs in a sense bear nominal features, or better still are nominals in the

extended sense of the term. Based on these assumptions, and as can be seen, non-referential adjuncts cannot occur with the definitizer because they do not have any corresponding noun class as opposed to referential adjuncts that do. For instance, the referential adjuncts *kélkíi* ‘when’ (38a) and *héé* ‘where’ (38b) correspond to noun class 1 while their non-referential counterparts *ínyuúkíi* ‘why’ and *léláá* ‘how’ in (39a) and (39b) respectively do not have a corresponding noun class. As result, given that evidential(ity) marking is sensitive to noun class, sluicing with non-referential adjuncts cannot license evidential(ity) markers. The following examples in (40) show that in a micro-discourse situation (between A and B), the referential adjuncts *kélkíi* ‘when’ and *héé* ‘where’ successfully occur with an agreeing definitizer.

(40)

- a. A:[bɔɔŋgé bá wándá bá- bí- lóná bágwâl_i bâp makebla malâm
2.children 2.GEN 1.youth 2.SM-PST2-bring 2.parents 2.their 6.presents 6.nice
ínyùú li-tí bó_i mayega]_j
for INF-give 2.them 6.thanks
‘Young people brought nice presents to their parents to express their gratitude.’
- B: **kélkíi** **nû** [AgrS-P ... **kélkíi**...]
1.when 1.EVID
‘When?’
- b. A: *Same context as (35a)*
- B: **héé** **nû** [AgrS-P ... **héé**...]
1.where 1.EVID
‘Where?’

The above examples show that the referential adjuncts *kélkíi* ‘when’ and *héé* ‘where’ correctly exhibit class (class 1) and number (singular) agreement with the definitizer *nû*. The fact that the definitizer can co-occur with referential adjuncts in a micro-discourse setting such as (40) above and that it yields marginal degradation in (38a) seems to be a puzzling issue. However, I attempt to provide explanations as far as this discrepancy is concerned.

The minor degradability of (38a) seems to have pragmatic motivations. Note that (38a) is a case where the same speaker produces the whole proposition whereas (40) involves interaction between two speakers (here A and B). The second source minor degradability of (38a) is due to the choice of verbs i.e. it is due to the presence of the modal *-lámâ* ‘should’ in the sentence. So, if first of all sentence (38a) is converted into a sort of interaction between two speakers as it is the case in the context of (40), therefore co-occurrence between the definitizer and the referential adjunct *kélkíi* ‘when’ is perfect.

The following example lends support to the idea that a referential adjunct can successfully co-occur with the evidential(ity) marker. Similarly, if the modal *-lámâ* ‘should’ is replaced by a contentful verb such as *-bodol* ‘start’ or ‘begin’, the sentence becomes grammatical.

(41)

- A: [Mε bí- hóó hú í bómá ínyuúlé bɔɔŋgé_i bá- bê pro_i bá-
I PST2-hasten go back LOC 7.meeting because 2.children 2.SM-be.PST pro ANT
bodl-ágá süklu]_i
start-ANT 7.school

‘I returned from the meeting earlier because the children had already started school’

- B: kékfí nû

1.when 1.EVID
‘When?’

It can be partially concluded that arguments and referential adjuncts can be morphosyntactically marked side by side with an agreeing ‘definitizer/identificational or evidential(ity) marker because they correspond class 1 in the Basaá noun system’. Syntactically, they are generated as parts of fully-fledged propositions and arrive in sentence initial position via a movement operation. Non-referential adjuncts on their part do not co-occur with a definitizer because they are devoid of nominal features which can help them be eligible/qualifying candidates on the left of a definitizer. Consequently, they are unable to select an agreeing definitizer or identificational marker.

8.2.1.6 Sluicing and island repair

That sluicing is insensitive to island constitutes an unquestionable and a valid argument in favour of the interpretative approach to ellipsis. It has been observed cross-linguistically that sluicing, as opposed to fragments (to be discussed in chapter nine), does not exhibit island effects. So, sluicing is considered as a repair mechanism which rescues an otherwise ungrammatical sentence (Ross 1969; Chung et al.; Hankamer & Sag 1976; Riemsdijk 1978; 1995; Merchant 2001, 2004, 2008 etc; Toosarvandani 2007; Nakao 2009; Vlachos 2012; Temmerman 2013 a.o.). Since Ross (1969), it has been unanimously accepted that extraction out of an island leads to ill-formedness as it is the case with the Complex Noun Phrase in (42a) and the Left Branch Condition in (42b) below whereby strikethrough indicates deletion.

(42)

- a. *Complex Noun Phrase Constraint*

*Which language₁ does John want to meet [someone who speak ~~which language~~₁ ?]

b. *Left Branch Condition*

*How₁ interesting did Peter see [a **how**₁ movie?]

In terms of Merchant's (2001, chap 5) theory of ellipsis, (42a) and (42b) fall within two different types of islands. According to him, (42a) is an instance of propositional island while (42b) is an instance of PF-island. So, he classifies the *Left Branch Condition* and the *Comp-trace effects* as PF-island so much so that extraction out of these domains results in ill-formedness at the PF component. As for the *Complex Island Constraint*, the *Adjunct island*, and the *Coordinate Structure Constraint*, Merchant classifies them under the label 'propositional' island so much so that extraction out of these domains results in a propositional island violation.

However, as Merchant convincingly points out, under sluicing, all the above mentioned islands are averted as the following examples demonstrate.

(43)

- a. John wants to meet [someone who speaks a **Bantu language**], but I wonder **which Bantu language** [~~IP John wants to meets someone who speaks which Bantu language~~₁]
- b. Peter saw a very interesting movie, but I don't know **how interesting**₁ [~~IP John saw a very interesting₁ movie~~]

Under the widely held view that sluicing is a repair mechanism at the PF component which deletes an IP, the PF-island and propositional island violations in case of (42a-b) above are consequently circumvented under sluicing in (43a-b).

As expected from the PF-deletion approach to ellipsis, sluicing in Basàá also ameliorates island violations. In (44a) and (44b) below, extraction occurs out a complex noun phrase island and an adjunct island, and since these domains (in square brackets) are opaque to movement operations, ungrammaticality arises.

(44)

a. *Complex Noun Phrase island*

*{mámbê máhôp míáa}₁ malêt a- ní- sombôl bômá
 6.which 6.languages 2.two 1.teacher 1.SM-PRS-want meet
 [ŋgim mut i i- m- pót {mámbê máhôp míáa}₁]
 INDF 1.man Rel 1.SM- PRS-speak 6.which 6.languages 2.two
 '*Which two languages does the teacher want to meet someone who speaks?'

b. *Adjunct island*

*{mámbê máhôp míáa}₁ Ewas_i a- ní- nôY másé [íbálê pro_i a_i m- pót
 6.which 6.languages 2.two 1.Ewas 1.SM'-PRS-feel 6.joy if pro 1.SM-PRS-speak
 {mámbê máhôp míáa}₁]
 6.which 6.languages 6.two

‘Which two languages is Ewas happy because he speaks?’

However, the ungrammaticality of (44a-b) is circumvented/averted if sluicing applies i.e., if the whole proposition (AgrS-P) containing the islands is completely deleted at the PF component as illustrated in (45a-b).

(45)

a.

Malêt a- ní- sombôl bɔmá [ŋgim mut i i- mí-pót {máhôp míáa}₁],

1.teacher 1.SM-PRS-want meet INDF 1.man Rel. 1.SM-PRS-speak 6.languages 2.two

mɛ mí-batbá lé tòó mámbê₁ mâ [AgrS-P malet a ní sombôl

I PRS-wonder that whether/if 6.which ones 6.EVID 1.teacher 1.SM-PRS-want

[bɔmá ŋgim mut i i mí pót {mámbê}₁]

meet INDF 1.man Rel 1.SM-PRS-speak speak

‘The teacher wants to meet someone who speaks two languages, I wonder which ones’

b. Ewas a- gá- nɔ́y másé [íbálê pro_i a_i mí- pót {máhôp míáa}₁]

1.Ewas 1.SM-FUT2-feel 6.joy if pro 1.SM-PRS-speak 6.languages 6.two

Mɛ mí- batbá lé tòó mámbê₁ mâ

I PRS-wonder that whether/if 6.which ones 6.EVID

[AgrS-P Ewas a gá nɔ́y másé [íbálê pro_i a_i mí pót {mámbê}₁]

1.Ewas 1.SM-FUT2-feel 6.joy if pro 1.SM-PRS-speak 6. which ones

‘Ewas will be happy *if he speaks two languages*, I wonder which ones’

In light of the constructions in (44-45), one can easily observe that sluicing comes out as a ‘last resort’ strategy without which an otherwise ungrammatical sentence becomes grammatical. Overall, the data do justice to the movement plus deletion analysis of ellipsis according to which sluicing derives from an underlying clausal structure which undergoes PF deletion at a certain stage of the derivation, precisely prior to spellout. The following section is dedicated to theoretical assumptions in favour of the PF-theory of ellipsis as discussed in the literature by a number of researchers.

8.3 The PF-theory of sluicing and the [E]-feature

The theoretical framework adopted in the study of sluicing in Basàá is due to Merchant’s (2001, 2004, 2008, etc.) PF-theory of ellipsis, adopted by many researchers such Aboh (2010), Brunetti (2003), Craenenbroeck (2010), Craenenbroeck & Lipták (2009), Gengel (2007), Lipták & Aboh (2013), Nakao (2009), Temmerman (2013), Vlachos (2012), *inter alia*. It is shown very clearly how relevant the PF-theory of ellipsis can accommodate the Basàá empirical data from a theoretical perspective. From the outset, I shall address Merchant’s proposals and then, focus on the Basàá language.

Merchant shows that sluicing involve wh-movement, and provides a number of evidence, some of which have been discussed at length in the preceding sections. At this junction, I address the proposal that there exists in the numeration a formal feature called [E]-feature (Merchant 2004:670) which is responsible for the deletion mechanism in elliptical construction. However, note that Merchant (2004:672) himself argues that the ‘theory of ellipsis’ is not to be considered as a separate module of grammar in the sense of the Binding Theory, Control Theory or Theta-Theory etc., but, what the ‘ellipsis theory’ has in common cross-linguisitically is that it is ‘regulated by global, late (perhaps even post LF) well-formedness condition that is imposed just on the structures containing ellipsis: call this condition the ellipsis condition’. Merchant proposes the [E]-feature within three main language components, namely phonology, semantics and syntax.

Phonologically, the [E]-feature instructs non-pronunciation of its complement which varies cross-linguistically. In English, the [E]-feature is realized in the C domain and instructs PF-deletion/non-pronunciation of its complement TP. So, [E] is merged in C^0 as a formal feature, above a TP sister which its complement. The role of [E] from a phonological perspective is to instruct the PF component not to parse or not to pronounce the c-commanded TP in English-like languages. The schema in (46) taken from Merchant (2004:671) portrays the phonological mechanism of [E].

(46) $\varphi \text{TP} \rightarrow \emptyset / E —$

According to Merchant, (46) is explained in terms of morphological syncope whereby the trigger is [E] and the syncopated category is TP. More precisely, (46) shows that φ TP is the phonological realization of the material dominated by the TP node, and the phonological realization of TP is null if it is the complement of [E]. In other words, TP gets deleted if it is preceded by an elliptical site dominated by [E]. Given that [E] is merged in C^0 , it instructs PF not to parse/pronounce its TP complement.

Semantically, [E] should ensure that the deleted element complies with parallelism or identification requirements of the elided material. This says, in order for a given material to be elided, it needs to be identified over a set of propositions. An element undergoes deletion if it has an appropriate antecedent, or better still, if it is given in the discourse. In the spirit of Merchant (2004:672), ‘an element E is e-given iff there is an antecedent A which entails E and which is entailed by E [...]. The following formalism shows the semantic representation of [E].

(47) *The semantics of E* (Merchant 2004:672).

$[[E]] = \lambda p: \text{e-given}(p) [p]$.

The formalism in (47) shows that the semantic composition of [E] succeeds provided its c-commanded complement TP is e-given in the discourse. An element is e-given if it has a salient antecedent. For instance, in the case of (48), the elided TP ‘~~John saw t₁ at the supermarket~~’ gets deleted because it is already mentioned/presupposed/familiar or given in the preceding discourse, namely in the first statement in (48a).

- (48) a. John saw somebody at the supermarket.

- b. I wonder **who**₁ [~~TP John saw t₁ at the supermarket~~]

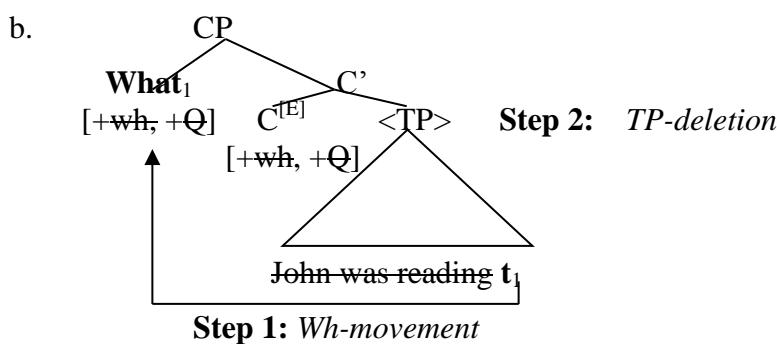
The deleted TP ‘~~John saw t₁ at the supermarket~~’ has as antecedent in ‘John saw somebody at the supermarket’ which is salient i.e. given in the discourse, and it is recoverable even though it is omitted in (48b). In this case, the wh-phrase ‘who’ is the focus of the sentence by virtue of requiring new information in the discourse while ‘John saw at the supermarket’ constitutes the background or presupposition in the sense of Rizzi (1997 and related work).

Syntactically, Merchant proposes the formalism in (49) in which the extracted wh-phrase ‘what’ in Spec-CP matches in features with the head C⁰ the host of [E]. The [E]-feature is only licensed in syntactic environments whereby the feature [E] is endowed with both an operator (+Wh/+Op) and a question (+Q) features which are uninterpretable (*u*) and strong (represented by the asterisk *). In order to be licensed, the [E]-feature has to check these features against the matching features in a local (head-to-head) configuration. This means that [E] can only occur in the C⁰ head of content questions, the syntactic featural make-up of which is [+Wh, +Q] as schematized in (50b) (~~strikethrough~~ indicates deletion/erasure).

- (49) *The syntax of Es in sluicing* (Merchant 2004:670).

$$\text{Es}[\ u\text{Wh}^*, \ u\text{Q}^*]$$

- (50) a. Abby was reading **something**, but I don’t know **what**₁ [~~Abby was reading t₁~~]



The phrase marker in (50b) shows that sluicing is obtained by a series of movement and deletion operations, namely leftward movement of the sluiced in the C-domain and PF deletion of the antecedent TP out of which extraction has applied.

8.3.1 Basàá sluicing and the [E]-feature.

The Basàá empirical seems to be very interesting as they lend strong support to the theory of ellipsis in the sense that the [E]-feature that is triggers ellipsis can be overtly realized as opposed to English-like languages. As opposed to English-like languages whereby ellipsis is triggered by an implicit feature, Basàá does not only provide strong evidence in favour of the ellipsis theory but the empirical data also show that the [E]-feature that is claimed to be covertly realized in Indo-European for instance can be overtly realized in African⁶⁰ languages. As revealed in the preceding sections, one can distinguish five properties which characterize ellipsis in the Basaá language.

First of all, the ellipsis feature/morpheme bears phonological properties in the sense that it instructs non-pronunciation of a c-commanded sister projection. Secondly, it is morphological and is sensitive to noun class and number agreement, thirdly, it is semantic in the sense that it requires in most cases that ellipsis be obtained under identity between the sluiced and an antecedent in a previous clause (overt or implied in the context). Fourthly, it is syntactic in the sense that it triggers movement of the sluiced to the left periphery. The [E]-feature, namely the definitizer/evidential(ity) morpheme occurs only when the wh-item has been extracted (51a) and never when the wh-word occurs in-situ (51b).

(51)

- a. Bíkûn a- bí- lɔná líwándá jé jádá makebla yaaní, me n- yí béeé j̪
 1.B 1.SM-PST2-bring 5.friend 5.his 5.one 6.presents yesterday I PRS-know NEG 5.him
 me m- batfá l̪é t̪ɔ́ límbê lí
 I PRS-wonder that whether/if 5.which one 5.EVID
 ‘Bíkûn brought the presents to **one of his friends**, I don’t know **him**, I wonder **which one**.’
- b. *Bíkûn a- bí- lɔná líwándá jé jádá makebla yaaní, me m- batfá
 1.B 1.SM-PST2-bring 5.friend 5.his 5.one 6.presents yesterday I PRS-wonder
 l̪é t̪ɔ́ Bíkûn a- bí- lɔná límbê lí makebla yaaní,
 that if/whether 1.B 1.SM-PST2-bring 5.which 5.EVID 6.presents 1.yesterday
 Lit: ‘Bíkûn brought presents to **one of his friends** yesterday, I wonder which friend Bikun
 brought the presents to.’

The preceding examples demonstrate that sluicing cannot be realized in-situ (51b), but is obtained through a movement plus deletion mechanism (51a). The [E]-feature responsible for ellipsis is explicitly/overtly realized and is gender-specific.

⁶⁰ It is shown by (Aboh 2010) and (Lipták & Aboh 2013) that the [E]-feature is overtly realized in Gungbe (Kwa). For additional detail on sluicing in Gungbe, the reader(s) should read these works

8.4 Island insensitivity and the PF-theory of sluicing

It was shown in the preceding sections how sluicing operates in Basàá. In this section, I attempt to discuss the theoretical account for the syntax of sluicing. I propose that there exists a formal [E]-feature that projects in the syntax of the left periphery and that is better accounted in Basàá because sluicing is not only syntactically motivated, but also morphologically. I also demonstrate that in Basàá, as opposed to English-like languages, there exists good morphosyntactic arguments in favour of the idea that the [E]-feature is projected in the syntax. The question to be answered at this stage is the following: why is sluicing insensitive to islands if and only if it is an instance of A-bar movement? In other words, why is sluicing not sensitive to locality constraints? As it can be noticed in (52), sluicing operates in the context of the Complex Noun Phrase *í malêt a- bí-nóYós báúdú bátân yaaní* ‘the teacher who punished the students yesterday’ out of which the wh-phrase *bámbê báúdú* ‘which students’ has been extracted undergoes ellipsis. On the contrary, (52b) is ungrammatical because the same complex noun phrase *í malêt a- bí-nóYós báúdú bátân yaaní* ‘the teacher who punished the students yesterday’ is realized at PF. Given that extraction out of a relative clause is banned, the sentence becomes illicit.

(52)

a. ✓ *Complex Noun Phrase Constraint under sluicing*

Mε n- nōY lé bagwâl bá- bí- bōmá í malêt nú a- bí- nōYós
 I PST1-hear that 2.parents 2.SM-PST2-meet DEF 1.teacher 1.Rel 1.SM-PST2-punish
báúdú bátân yaaní me yě ŋgi-yí bá, me m- batbá
 2.students 2.five 1.yesterday I be.PRS INC-know 2.them I PRS-wonder
 lé tóó bámbê bâ báúdú
 that if/whether 2.which ones 2.EVID 2.students
 ‘I heard that the parents met the teacher who punished five students, I have not yet known them,
 I wonder which ones.’

b.* *Complex Noun Phrase Constraint without sluicing*

Mε ñ- nōY lé bagwâl bá- bí- bōmá í malêt nú a- bí- nōYós
 I PST1-hear that 2.parents 2.SM-PST2-meet DEF 1.teacher 1.Rel 1.SM-PST2-punish
báúdú bátân yaaní me yě ŋgi- yí bá, me m- batbá
 2.students 2.five 1.yesterday I be.PRS IMPF-know 2.them I PRS-wonder
 lé tóó bámbê bâ báúdú₁ bagwâl bá- bí- bōmá
 that if/whether 2.which ones 2.EVID 2.students 2.parents 2.SM-PST2-meet
 [í malêt a- bí- nōYós t₁]
 DEF 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-punish

Lit: *‘I heard that the parents met the teacher who punished five students, I have not yet known them, I wonder which ones the parents met the teacher who punished.’

(53)

a. *√Sluicing and the Coordinate Structure Constraint*

Mε ñ- nɔ́Y lé mudàá a- m̄- bómá [málêt ni ŋgim báúdú].

I PST1-hear that 1.woman 1.SM-PST1-meet 1.teacher and INDF 2.students

Mε m- batbá lé tɔ́j bámbê bâ

I PRS-wonder that whether 2.which ones 2.EVID

‘I heard that the woman met the teacher and some students. I wonder which ones.’

b. **The Coordinate Structure Constraint without ellipsis*

* Mε ñ- nɔ́Y lé mudàá a- m̄- bómá málêt ni ŋgim báúdú.

I PST1-hear that 1.woman 1.SM-PST1-meet 1.teacher and INDF 2.students

Mε m- batbá lé tɔ́j bámbê₁ bâ [mudàá a- m̄- bómá málêt

I PRS-wonder that whether 2.which ones 2.EVID 1.woman 1.SM-PST1-meet 1.teacher

ni bámbê₁]

and 2.which ones

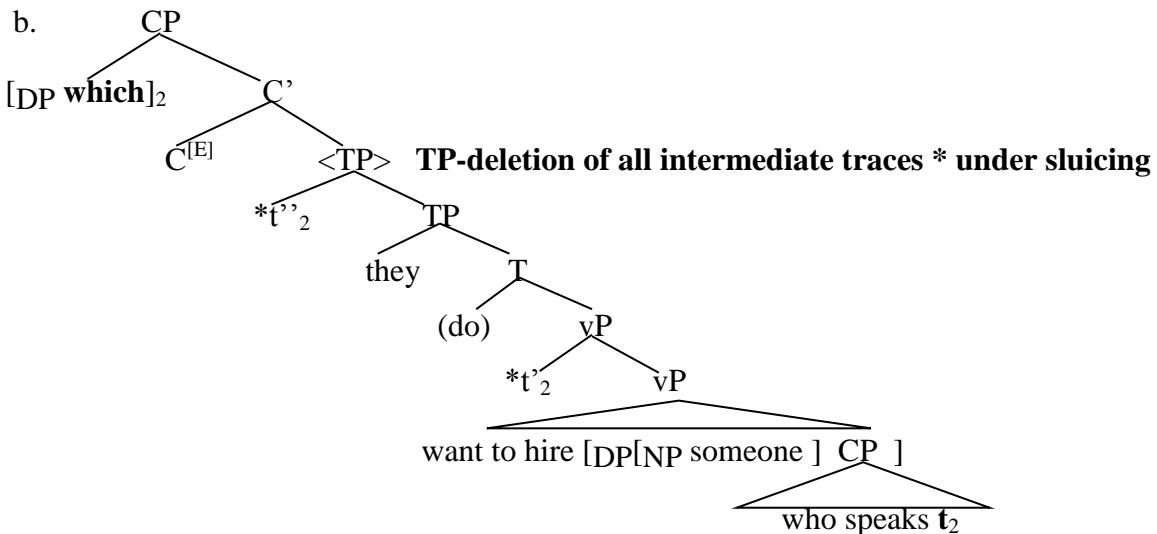
Lit: ‘I heard that the woman met the teacher with some students. I wonder **which ones**₁ the woman met the teacher and **which ones**₁].’

Globally, if PF deletion is to be conceived of as a repair strategy, i.e. a strategy without which ungrammaticality results, and under the assumption that sluicing involves A-bar movement followed by clausal ellipsis, then the ungrammaticality of (52b) and (53b) is expected because the islands out of which extraction has applied are pronounced at PF. Conversely, in (52a) and (49a), ungrammaticality is circumvented because the islands have undergone ellipsis or PF deletion.

Following Merchant’s (2004:706) proposal, I argue that island insensitivity in sluicing boils down to the absence in the syntactic derivation, of a PF uninterpretable feature called ‘*’ (cf. Chomsky 1972; Fox & Lasnik 2003; Lasnik 2001; Merchant 2001; 2008; Kennedy & Merchant 2000; Ross 1969; Uriagereka 1999. Merchant (2004) proposes that the defective marker ‘*’ is a PF-uninterpretable feature at the intermediate traces/silent copies above the island such that island violations occur if and only if this defective feature resists/persists after ellipsis has taken place. Under this view, TP-ellipsis under sluicing yields a well-formed structure because everything is eliminated, including the defective marker ‘*’.

To illustrate how this works out with sluicing, Merchant proposes that in a sluicing sentence like (54), the wh-phrase ‘which’ moves cyclically through intermediate maximal projections (here vP, and TP) on its way to Spec-CP as in (54b).

(54) a. They want to hire someone who speaks a Balkan language, but I don’t know **which**



As shown in (54b) all -*marked traces, namely t'_2 in Spec-vP and t''_2 in Spec-TP undergo PF deletion, and the resulting sluicing structure is well-formed. I propose, following Merchant (2001, 2004, 2008 etc.), Temmerman (2013) *inter alia* that sluicing in Basaa deletes all intermediate -*marked traces on its way to the C-layer. In addition, I proposed that the Basaa sluicing offers two different results. More precisely, what is interesting in Basaa sluicing is that the [E]-feature responsible for ellipsis can be overt or covert depending on the nature of the question item i.e. depending on whether the wh-fragment is an argument/referential adjunct or a non-referential adjunct. In the first case (sluicing with arguments and referential adjuncts), Basaa sluicing differs from English-like languages while in the second case (sluicing with non-referential adjuncts) Basaa looks like these languages. However, whether it involves arguments, referential adjuncts or non-referential adjuncts, the target of PF-deletion in Basaa sluicing is a finite proposition, i.e. an AgrS-P or simply a TP projection. In addition, it is shown that even in the context of a split-sluiced, the target of ellipsis is always the same (i.e. AgrS-P/TP).

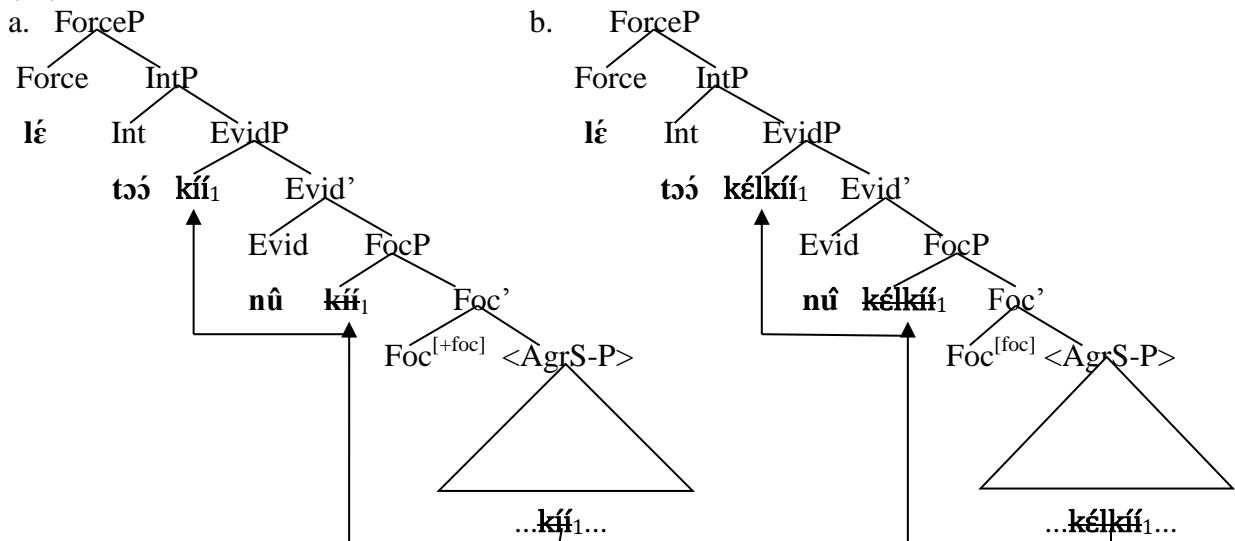
As opposed to English whereby sluicing is said to involve wh-movement of the sluiced into Spec-CP for feature-checking purposes (Merchant 2001, 2004, 2008 etc.), Basaa sluicing rather offers different outcomes. Basaa sluicing involves successive A-bar movement of the wh-fragment into Spec-EvidP via a lower Spec-FocP.

More precisely, when sluicing targets an argument or a referential adjunct like in (55a-b) below, the wh-item lands into the specifier position of a functional Evidential Phrase, the head of which is occupied by the evidential(ity)/ identificational marker as shown in (56a-b) respectively.

(55)

- a. maanjé a- m- mél ɳgim yšm, ndí me n- yí bé mé yɔ
 1.child 1.SM-PST1-swallow INDF 9.thing but I PRS-know NEG I.EMPH 9.it
 Mε n- batbá lé tɔ́ kíí í
 I PRS-wonder that whether/if 9.what 9.EVID
 Lit: ‘The child has swallowed something, I don’t know it. I wonder what it is’
- b. Ewas a- ij- kal lé proi ai- bē- ɳgim hɔmá yaaní, Mε m- batbá
 1.E 1.SM-PRS-say that proi 1.SM_i.be.PST2 INDF 1.place 1.yesterday I PRS-wonder
 lé tɔ́ héé nû
 that whether/if 1.where 1.EVID
 ‘Ewas says that he went to **some place** yesterday, I wonder **where**.’

(56)



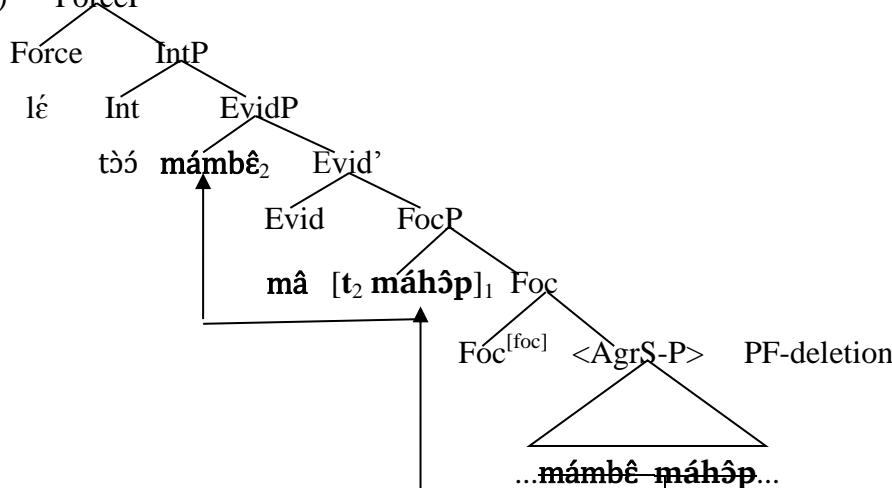
The derivations in (56) show that Basaá sluicing gives rise to a prolific left periphery made up of distinct functional projections, such as the force phrase, the interrogative phrase, the evidential phrase and the focus phrase. All of these projections co-occur in a hierarchical order, in line with the cartographic framework. As can be seen, the wh-items in (56) move cyclically on its way to EvidP. I assume that by moving the wh-item into the intermediate FocP position, movement does not only comply with locality requirements but it is also motivated by feature-checking or criteria requirements. The wh-item first moves into the focus domain to satisfy the focus requirements, then moves into EvidP where it can check the evidential(ity) features in a Spec-Head configuration with the evidential(ity) marker in Evid. This line of reason pertains to the idea that wh-movement is focus movement when the targets of movement are arguments and/or referential adjuncts (cf. chapter six). The template in (56) enables to account for the derivation of split sluiced such as (57) where the quantifier phrase *mámbé máhɔp* ‘which languages’ is split, giving rise to a discontinuous structure *mámbé mā máhɔp* whereby the wh-item *mámbé* ‘which’ is separated from the noun *máhɔp* ‘languages’ by the evidential marker *mā*. Using the

templates in (56), it is proposed in order to obtain a split sluiced such as the one in (57), quantifier phrase *mámbê máhôp* ‘which languages’ is first moved into the lower focus field for the focus requirements, followed by subextraction of the wh-item *mámbê* from Spec-FocP into the specifier position of EvidP in a Spec-Head configuration with the evidential(ity) marker *mâ* as depicted in (58).

(57)

- Ewas a- gá- nóY másé [íbálê pro_i a_i mí- pót **máhôp** míáa₁]
 1.Ewas 1.SM-FUT2-feel 6.joy if pro 1.SM-PRS-speak 6.languages 6.two
 Me mí- batbá lé tòó **mámbê₁** mâ **máhôp**
 I PRS-wonder that whether/if 6.which ones 6.EVID 6.languages
 ‘Ewas is happy because the speaks two languages, I wonder which languages.’

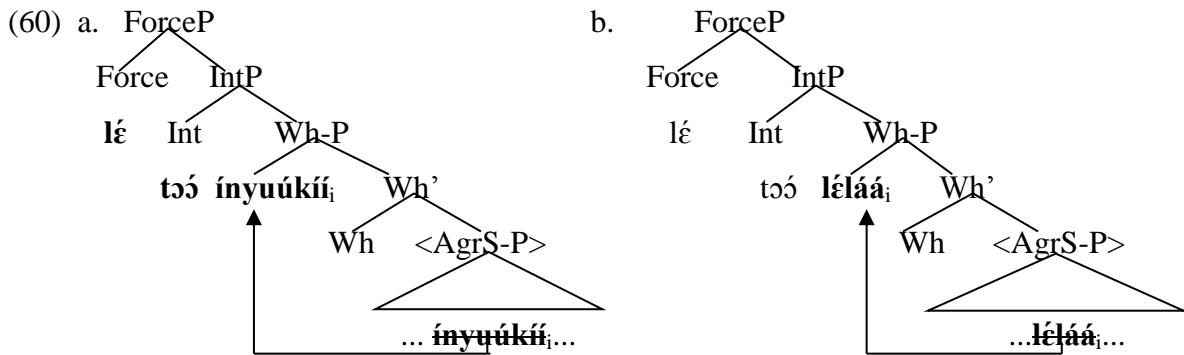
(58)



On the other hand, when the target of sluicing is a non-referential adjunct, the moved question item lands in Spec-WhP (cf. chapters six). Recall that it was argued in chapter six that non-referential adjuncts in Basáá are not focused, but they rather move into the specifier position of a functional WhP, the head of which is silent. In this vein, sluicing with non-referential adjuncts like in (59a-b) are derived via A-bar movement of the wh-item into Spec-WhP followed by ellipsis of the complement clause as schematized in (60).

(59)

- a. Mε ní-nóY lé bodàá bá- ní- jé bē péé, mε mí-batbá *lé tòó ínyuúkíí*
 I PRS-hear that 2.women 2.SM-PRS-eat NEG 9.viper I PRS-wonder that if why
 ‘I hear that women do not eat viper, I wonder why.’
- b. Bíkún a- mí- bená tíβíl lítowa jéé ni ñgim libây, mε mí-batbá
 1.Bikun 1.SM-PRS-be used to repair 5.car 5.his with INDF 5.manner I PRS-wonder
lé tòó léláá
 that if how
 ‘Bikun usually repair his car in a certain manner, I wonder how.’



Overall, it can be concluded from the preceding discussions, that clause structure under sluicing in Basaá is prolific, very articulate and made up of a variety of distinct functional discourse-related projections which are hierarchically organized and associated with specific scope-discourse interpretation as schematized in (61).

(61) a. *Sluicing with arguments and referential adjuncts*

ForceP > IntP > EvidP > FocP > AgrS-P

b. *Sluicing with non-referential adjuncts*

ForceP > IntP > Wh-P > AgrS-P

The fact that overt lexical material may be spelled out in the complementizer domain in sluicing can be attributed to two related factors: (i) the evidential marker in Evid, the head of EvidP is out of the target of ellipsis (cf. Baltin 2010), namely AgrS-P (TP), (ii) the overt realization of Evid directly boils down to Merchant's (2001) *Sluicing-COMP generalization* defined (62) below.

(62) Sluicing-COMP generalization (Merchant 2001, cite by Lipták & Aboh 2013:115, fn3).

In sluicing, no non-operator material may appear in comp.

In light of (62), it can be assumed that in cases like (56) where Evid is overtly realized, the evidential marker acts as an operator. The overt realization of lexical material in sluicing in the realm of African linguistics is not specific to Basaá. More recently, Aboh (2010) and Lipták & Aboh 2013 have claimed that the E-feature responsible for ellipsis is overtly realized in Gungbe (Kwa) as illustrated in the following example.

(63) Kofi na yró mɛ dɛ bó un kanbió dɔ́ mɛnu wɛ (Lipták & Aboh 2013:103)

Kofi fut call person IND but/and I ask that person.Q FOC

'Kofi will call someone and I wonder who'

Lipták & Aboh (2013:115) attribute the overt realization of the focus marker in (63) to the generalization in (62) and argue that focus markers are operators.

Conclusion

This chapter was concerned with sluicing as an instance of elliptical construction which has not yet been significantly explored within the framework of African linguistics. The discussion

revealed that sluicing is well accounted for in light of a restrictive theory of phonology-morphology-syntax and semantics interfaces and the division of labour between these interfaces. The empirical material discussed lent strong support to the ellipsis approach according to which sluicing involves A-bar movement of a wh-item in the complementizer domain, followed by PF-deletion of the structure out of which the material has been previously extracted. Globally, the outcomes showed that contrary to what is commonly attested in many natural languages, Basàá sluicing can be triggered by an overt feature, which projects a syntactic projection called Evidential(ity) Phrase (EvidP). Sluicing in this African language gives rise to a prolific and articulate left periphery made of distinct scope-discourse projections such as the force phrase, the interrogative phrase, the evidential(ity) phrase, the focus phrase and the wh-phrase, each of them associated with a specific scope-discourse semantics. As a result, the Basaá empirical material does not only lend further support to the ellipsis approach, but it also provides novel data that are amenable to enrich comparative syntax and contribute to our understanding of ellipsis in particular and the syntax and semantics of the left periphery at large from a crosslinguistic perspective.

CHAPTER IX
FRAGMENT ANSWERS

Introduction

This chapter focuses on fragment answers as another instance of ellipsis. Fragments are subsentential maximal projections which are direct answers to wh-questions. Fragment answers, as opposed to sluicing, have no linguistic antecedents, and are proposed in the literature to have fully sentential syntactic structures subject to ellipsis (cf. Merchant 2001, 2004, 2008; Brunetti 2003; Temmerman 2013 a.o.). In order for ellipsis to apply in the context of fragment answers, there should be A-bar movement of the fragment answer to the left edge of the clause followed by PF-deletion of the proposition out of which extraction has early applied. Based on a number of diagnostic tests such as connectivity and island effects, and morpho-syntactic evidence such as evidential marking, it is demonstrated that, just like sluicing, Basàá fragment answers are well accounted for by adopting an articulate syntax-information structure account which combines with the PF-deletion approach.

§ 9.1 introduces fragment answers as an instance of elliptical construction as discussed in the literature. It discusses the different theoretical approaches with special focus on Merchant's ellipsis approach. In order to familiarize the reader with the phenomenon of fragment answers, section 9.1.1 discusses arguments in favour of the ellipsis theory as discussed in the literature. These arguments include connectivity effects such as preposition stranding/pied-piping, case-matching, binding and island effects. § 9.2 provides an introduction to Basàá fragment answers by showing that they can be realized in both information and contrastive foci contexts. § 9.2.1 handles properties of Basàá fragment answers such as class and number agreement/matching, the root/embedded symmetry, island as well as binding connectivity effects. In addition, arguments such as clausal dislocation, the distribution of negative polarity items and the position of the 'definitizer/evidential(ity) marker' are discussed as evidence in support for the view that Basàá fragment answers are derived by focus movement followed by PF-deletion of the remnant proposition. § 9.2.2 talks about the PF-theory of fragment answers. It is shown in this section that, just like it is the case with sluicing, the feature responsible for ellipsis in fragment answers is an [E-]feature (where E stands for ellipsis, elision or erasure). It is shown that this feature bears phonological, semantic as well as syntactic properties. 9.2.3 discusses the [E-]feature in Basàá and shows that in addition to the widely known properties (semantic and syntactic) that characterize the [E-]feature crosslinguistically, the [E-]feature responsible for ellipsis in fragment answers can be morphologically realized just like in sluicing constructions. More specifically, it is argued that there exists in the Basàá grammar an evidential marker, a gender-specific morpheme which only occurs when the fragment answer has been subject to movement.

In § 9.2.4, focus is on islands effects. It is shown that, as opposed to sluicing which is insensitive to syntactic islands, fragment answers exhibit island effects. Based on Merchant's (2004) predictions, the proposal is that there is an extra CP layer in the clausal left periphery, which, when activated bears a PF-uninterpretable *-marked trace which resists PF-deletion. The presence of this *-marked trace in the derivation after ellipsis causes the derivation to crash. Section 9.2.5 is concerned with the syntactic derivation of fragments. It is argued that fragment answers are derived in the same way as focus fronting, that is, the fragment answer in most cases moves into a matrix TP projection headed by a null verbal copula. This movement is followed by PF-deletion of a functional FocP projection. The rare case whereby a fragment NPI is not focus marked, the target of ellipsis is rather an AgrS-P/TP projection like in the sluicing case. In this case, the fragment NPI is said to move into a Spec-FocP position with no matrix TP.

The last section, namely § 9.2.6, provides a unified account of the so-called in-situ and ex-situ foci based on fragment answers. The discussion reveals that, under purely minimalist assumptions, linguistic computations should be minimized/reduced as much as possible. So, the in-situ/ex-situ focus dichotomy can be eschewed so as to derive both information and identificational foci in light of the PF-theory of ellipsis. By so doing, it is proposed that information focus and its identificational (contrastive) counterpart are derived by A-bar movement followed by PF-deletion of the proposition out of which they have been extracted. According to this analysis, full propositional answers are redundant, costly and heavy in terms of spell-out. Overall, it is proposed that the Basaa clause structure in the context of fragment answers can contain a force phrase, an evidentiality phrase, an intermediate FP hosting a strong *-marked trace that evades ellipsis and an elided FocP. However, there seems to be a little similarity between sluicing and fragments in that in some contexts where the fragment answer is an NPI, the target of ellipsis is an AgrS-P/TP projection and not a FocP as usual. The last section is the conclusion.

9.1 Fragment answers crosslinguistically

Fragment answers are attested crosslinguistically and exhibit almost the same patterns (cf. Brunetti 2003; Merchant 2004; Temmerman 2013 a.o.). They are subsentential XP-answers to content questions such as (1-2), the meaning of which is the same as fully-fledged propositional answers. In other words, the answers in (1b) and (2b), are fragment answers which convey the same semantic interpretation as their non-elliptical counterparts in (1c) and (2c).

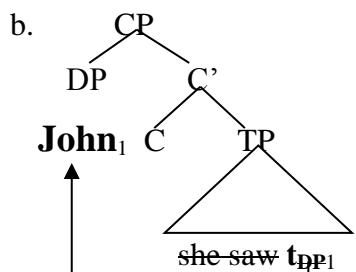
- (1) & (2) Merchant (2004:673).
- a. Who did she see?
 - a. What's left for me to eat?
 - b. JOHN.
 - b. Some turkey
 - c. She saw John.
 - c. There's some turkey

As can be observed, (b) sentences and their (c) counterparts convey the same meaning, but differ in that the former are fragment answers while the latter are full sentences.

Like sluicing, fragment answers are subject to divergent discussions in the sense that they also raise at least the following two striking research questions. (i) are the answers in (b) base-generated in-situ or (ii) they are derived by movement? In other words, are fragments semantic objects of prepositional type although devoid of any full IP/TP content as in (3a)? or, do they arrive in their position via syntactic movement which is in turn followed by PF deletion of the IP constituent as shown in (3)?

(3)

- a. [IP e(mpty)... DP John]



The above two research questions have at least two opposing lines of thought, namely the ‘direct interpretation’ approach defended by authors such as (Barton 1990), Ginzburg & Sag (2000), Stainton (1998) a.o. and the ellipsis analysis defended by scholars like Hankamer (1979), Merchant (2003, 2004, 2008), Morgan (1973) *inter alia*. Although the discussion is not going to be made concerning the ‘direct interpretation’ approach, there is a clear issue which requires much understanding. This issue has to do with how one can account for non-pronunciation of part of the proposition (IP) in (3) since everything is silent except the DP constituent ‘John’. As Merchant (2004) and many researchers point out convincingly, only full constituents can undergo deletion or can be omitted, deletion of non-constituents is not allowed. In other words, it is unanimously accepted that the DP constituent ‘John’ in (3) at some point of the derivation is part of the full TP which later on goes missing, while the remnant DP ‘John’ is spelled out. In this vein, explaining how part of the TP preceding ‘John’ (i.e. *she saw*) gets deleted remains puzzling since deletion will target only a subpart of a bigger constituent (here TP).

9.1.1 Arguments in favour of the ellipsis approach

In this work, an account of fragment answers is based on the ‘ellipsis’ approach Merchant (2001, 2003, 2004), Brunetti (2003), Temmerman (2013) and related works. There are a number of arguments namely ‘preposition stranding’, island sensitivity, complementizer deletion, case-matching, and connectivity effects such as principle A, B, and C of Binding Theory (BT) which provide strong support to the ‘ellipsis approach’ to fragment answers. In the following lines, I provide some illustrations which account for the ‘ellipsis approach’ (the reader can read the cited references for more details).

First of all, Merchant (2004) observes that in English-type languages where preposition stranding in normal wh-questions is optionally allowed, fragment answers license it optionally as well. On the contrary, German-type languages which do not allow preposition stranding in content questions do not also allow it in fragment answers. Simply put, as German-type languages only allow pied-piping in content questions, so do they in the context of fragment answers as can be seen below (adapted from Merchant 2004:685-686).

- (4) *English-type languages*
- A. *English* a. (**with**) **Who** was Peter talking **with** ?
 b. (**with**) Mary
- B. *Danish* a. (**med**) **Hvem** har Peter snakket **med** ?
 (with) who has Peter talked with?
 b. (**med**) Mary
- (5) *German-type languages*
- A. *German* a. **Mit wem** hat Anna gesprochen (***mit**)?
 with whom has Anna spoken? with
 b. **Mit dem Hans/*Dem Hans**
 with the Hans/*the Hans
- B. *Greek* a. **Me pjon milise i Anna** (***me**)
 with whom spoke the Anna with
 b. **Me ton Kosta/*ton Kosta**
 with the Kosta/*the Kosta

Secondly, in languages with overt case morphology, there is case-matching/correspondence between the fragment and the corresponding DP (or PP) in the non-elliptical sentence. Whenever case-matching fails to hold between the fragment and the DP/PP in the full sentence, the sequence becomes illicit (see *).

- (6) *Merchant (2004:676-677).*

- German* a. **Wen** sucht Hans?
 who.ACC seeks Hans
 ‘Who is Hans looking for?’
- b. **Den Lehrer/* Dem Lehrer**
 the.ACC leader/ he.DAT leader
 ‘The leader.’

- c. Er sucht **den** Lehrer/***dem** Lehrer
 He._{NOM} seeks the._{ACC} leader/*the._{DAT} leader
 ‘He is looking for the leader.’
- Greek*
- a. **Pjon** idhe i Maria ?
 who._{ACC} saw the Maria._{NOM}
 ‘Who did Maria see?’
 - b. **Ton** Giannis/ ***O** Giannis/*
 the Giannis._{ACC} the Giannis._{NOM}
 - c. I Maria idhe **ton** Giannis/ ***O** Giannis
 the Maria._{NOM} see the Giannis._{ACC}/***O** Giannis._{NOM}
 ‘Maria saw Giannis.’

Thirdly, as opposed to sluicing, fragment answers are sensitive to island constraints. This constitutes another strong evidence that fragment answers involve A-bar movement followed by PF deletion of the remnant IP containing the silent copy of the extracted fragment. Although the diagnostic for island sensitivity in fragment answers is hard to carry out as widely attested in intonation languages such as Dutch, English, Italian etc. (cf. Brunetti 2003 ; Merchant 2003, 2004; & Temmerman 2013 respectively), there exist at least two possibilities which help test for island sensitivities in these languages.

Borrowing from Morgan (1973), Merchant (2004), among other scholars propose that the first step to identify island sensitivity in fragment answers consists in asking a yes-no question with rising intonation on a particular sentence constituent: in this case, the question becomes an implicit wh-question where the wh-phrase replaces the stressed constituent. When the accented constituent is located inside an island, the sentence becomes illicit as in the following dialogues in (7-8) below (capitals indicate accentuation).

(7) *Adopted from Merchant (2004:688)*

- a. Does Abby speak Greek fluently?
- b. No, ALBANIAN.
- c. No, she speaks ALBANIAN fluently.

(8)

- a. Does Abby speak [Complex NP the same language that BEN speaks]?
- b. *No, CHARLY.
- c. No, she speaks the same language that CHARLY speaks.

The following example in (9) shows that a fragment answer to a content question within an adjunct island is severely ruled out.

(9) *Merchant (2004: 688)*

- a. Did Ben leave the party because ABBY wouldn’t dance with him?
- b. *No, BETH.

c. No, he left the party because BETH wouldn't dance with him.

From the preceding examples, the ungrammaticality of (b) sentences are straightforwardly accounted for if one assumes that the fragment answers undergo leftward movement prior to ellipsis of the IP containing their traces. In addition, if the above fragments in the (b) sentences derive from their counterpart in (c) respectively, then it becomes obvious that their movement has applied across islands and that is why ungrammaticality results in the former.

The fourth argument that lends support to the ‘ellipsis approach’ comes from Binding Theory (BT), and more precisely, form principles A, B, and C. Merchant (2004:679-680) observes that binding connectivity effects hold between the fragment and its correlates in non-elliptical sentential equivalents as can be seen in (10-12).

(10) *Principle A effects*

- | | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|---|
| A. a. Who does John ₁ like? | b. himself ₁ | c. John ₁ likes himself ₁ |
| B. a. Who do they ₁ like? | b. Each other ₁ . | c. They ₁ like each other ₁ . |

(11) *Principle B effects*

- | | | |
|---|------------------------------|--|
| a. Who did John ₁ try to shave? | b. * Him ₁ | c. * John ₁ tried to shave him ₁ . |
|---|------------------------------|--|

(12) *Principle C effects*

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| a. What does John ₁ think? | | |
| b. *That the bastard ₁ is being spied on. | | |
| c. * John ₁ thinks that the bastard ₁ is being spied on. | | |

These data drawn from Merchant (2004:679-680) indicate that Condition A of Binding Theory is satisfied in (10A) and (51B) because the anaphors ‘himself’ and ‘each other’ are respectively bound by their antecedent DPs ‘John’ and ‘they’. This is also held true for fragment answers in (b) as well as for their full sentential equivalents in (c). Under Merchant’s ‘ellipsis analysis’, given that the underlying antecedents ‘John’ and ‘they’ are present in the elided structures in both (10Ab) and (10Bb), as a result Condition A is respected.

Similarly, since the pronominal ‘him’ is not free (it is bound by the R-expression *John*), i.e. such binding is not allowed, the resulting structures in (11b) and (11c) are ruled out. Once more, it is obvious under Merchant’s approach that there exists an underlying antecedent DP (here *John*) in the fragment answer in (11b) which automatically binds the pronominal ‘him’. It is the reason why illicitness arises as a consequence Condition B of Binding Theory.

Finally, given that the R-expression ‘John’ in (12b-c) is not free (it binds the epithet ‘bastard’), ungrammaticality arises because of a violation of Condition C of BT. In the same vein, the fact that the fragmentary utterance in (12b) is illicit as its non-elliptical counterpart in (12c) is

tantamount to saying that there exists an underlying antecedent DP ‘John’ like in (12b) which binds the epithet ‘bastard’.

Last, but not the least, Merchant also presents ‘complementizer deletion’ as another evidence in favour of the ‘ellipsis approach’. This piece of evidence still remains very challenging, or better still, puzzling for some researchers who argue against the ‘ellipsis analysis’. Summarily, it is shown that complementizer deletion is unsuccessful when a fragment answer is a CP. It is well known that deletion of the lexical complementizer ‘that’ in English embedded clauses is optional as in (13a). However, when an embedded clause undergoes left dislocation as in (13b), complementizer deletion is impossible, otherwise, the construction becomes illicit.

(13) Merchant (2004:691).

- a. It became obvious (**that**) he opposes us after the election.
- b. *(**That**) he opposes us after the election became obvious.

The unavailability of complementizer deletion clearly establishes the direct matching that existing between a fragmentary CP and a dislocated CP in fully-fledged propositions like (14).

(14) Merchant (2004:690-691).

Q: What was believed (at that time)?

A: a. *(That) he would resign.

b. It was believed (that) he would resign (at that time).

The unavailability of complementizer deletion in left dislocation and CP fragments constitutes the earmark of the movement plus deletion analysis advocated by Merchant and related work.

Partially summarizing, the arguments advanced by Merchant (2003, 2004) strongly support the view that fragment answers, like sluicing, involve leftward movement followed by PF deletion of the remaining structure containing the silent copy of previously extracted materials. The following section investigates fragment answers in Basàá by providing further support to the movement plus deletion analysis.

9.2 Basàá fragment answers

Fragment answers in Basàá are non-wh XPs constituents which correspond to immediate content questions. From a semantic point of view, fragments in Basàá convey either new, non-presupposed, unfamiliar information or contrasted information. In the latter case, the fragment answer is associated with identificational or exhaustive focus interpretation in the sense of É. Kiss (1998). In the question-answer pairs below, the informational partitioning of the question matches with that of the answer as can be seen in (14) and (15). What is also interesting with Basàá fragments such as in (14a) and (15a) is that they convey exactly the same propositional content as their non-elliptical counterparts in (b) and (c).

(14) *Information focus*

Q: **Kíí** mudáá_i a- bí- sómb-ól bóŋgé ?
 9.what 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-buy-BEN 2.children
 ‘What did the woman buy for the children yesterday?’

A: a. **makala**

- 6.doughnuts
- ‘DOUGHNUTS.’
- b. pro₁ a₁- bí- sómb-ól bó **makala**
 pro 1.SM-PST2-buy-BEN 2.them 6.doughnuts
 ‘She bought them DOUGHNUTS.’
- c. **makala mó-n** pro₁ a₁- bí- sómb-ól bó
 6.doughnuts 6-FOC pro 1.SM-PST2-buy-BEN 2.them
 ‘She bought them DOUGHNUTS.’

(15) *Contrastive focus*

Q: báá mudáá_i a- bí- sómb **mákala** à
 Pol 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-buy 6.doughnuts Pol
 ‘Did the woman buy DOUGHNUTS?’

A: a. tó, **bitámb**

- no 8.shoes
- ‘No, SHOES.’

- b. tó, pro₁ a- bí- sómb **bitámb**
 no pro 1.SM-PST2-buy 8.shoes
 ‘No, she bought the SHOES (as opposed to doughnuts)
- c. tó, **bitámb gwé-n** pro₁ a- bí- sómb
 no 8.shoes 8-FOC pro 1.SM-PST2-buy
 ‘No, she bought SHOES (as opposed to doughnuts).’

These examples confirm the predictions made in previous chapters (three, four and five) that focus interpretation does not depend on its structural position. It is shown in (14-15) that both information and contrastive focus can be realized in-situ and ex-situ. Another interesting fact concerning the above examples is that the focused elements in the non-elliptical (c) sentences are morphosyntactically marked as opposed to their in-situ counterparts in (b).

9.2.1 Properties of Basàá fragments

Basàá fragment answers exhibit a good number of characteristics which do justice to the ‘ellipsis analysis’.

To begin with, it is important to note that there is a symmetrical relationship between sluicing and fragments in Basàá in the sense that like the former, the latter also exhibits number and class matching/agreement. In concrete terms, the wh-item in the content question and the corresponding fragment answer should share the same class and number agreement, otherwise, the sequence is ungrammatical. In like manner, as shown below, the elliptical answer in (16a) conveys the same meaning as the full sentences in (16b) and (16c).

(16)

- Q: **Makebla máŋén** mudàá_i a- bí- sómb yáání
 6.presents 6.how many 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-buy tomorrow
 ‘How many presents did the woman buy yesterday?’

A: a. **Másámal/*bísámal/*minsámal**

6.six 8.six 4.six

‘SIX (presents)’

b. pro_i a- bí- sómb **másámal/*bísámal/*minsámal**

pro 1.SM-PST2-buy 6.six 8.six 4.six

‘She bought SIX (of them)’

c. **Másámal mó-n *(pro_i a- bí- sómb)**

6.six 6-FOC pro 1.SM-PST2-buy

‘She bought SIX OF THEM (presents).’

A look at (16) enables to see that the question operator *máŋén* ‘how many’ agrees in class (class 6) and number (plural) with the head noun *makebla* ‘presents’, and it is the same agreement pattern that is attested between the question operator *máŋén* ‘how many’ and the numeral fragment *másámal* ‘six’. If this agreement between the question operator and the fragment answer fails, ungrammaticality arises. Given the fact that both (16a) and (16b-c) have the same propositional content, one can infer that the former would derive from the latter via a movement plus deletion mechanism à la Merchant.

Note that the answer in (16c) is grammatical if and only if the bracketed sentence is pronounced. In case only the focused numeral *másámal* ‘six’ and the morpheme occur, ungrammaticality arises because the focus marker is banned from stranding. So, one obtains either a fragment answer (16a), a fully-fledged proposition with an in-situ focus (16b), or a fronted focus followed by a full proposition (16c). In fact, (16b) differs from (16c) in that in the former, the focused element *másámal* ‘six’ is postverbal while it is left peripheral in the latter. Later on, it will be shown that in a question-answer pair like (16), a fragment answer is preferable and more economical while fully-fledged sentences are redundant and costly from a phonological point of view.

Another characteristic of Basàá fragment answers is that they do not exhibit root-embedded asymmetry, i.e. fragments are licensed not only in root contexts such as in (15-16) above, but also in embedded ones (17).

(17)

- Q: **Kíí hilígá_i hí- ý- kal lé malêt a- bí- tí báúdú**
 9.what 19.boy 19.SM-PRS-say that 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-give 2.students
 ‘What does the boy say that the teacher gave the students?’

A: a. pro_i hí- ý- kal *(lé) **makebla**

pro 19.SM-PRS-say that 6.presents

‘He (the boy) said the PRESENTS.’

b. mε ń- hóŋjól *(lé) pro_i hí_i- ń- kal *(lé) pro_j a_j- bí- tí bó makebla
 I PRS-think that pro 19.SM-PRS-say that pro 1.SM-PST2-give 2.them 6.presents
 'I think that he (the boy) says that he (the teacher) gave them the PRESENTS.'

c. mε ń- hóŋjól *(lé) makebla mó-n *(pro_i hí_i- ń- kal lé pro_j a_j- bí- tí
 I PRS-believe that 6.presents 6-FOC pro 19.SM-PRS-say that pro 1.SM-PST2-give
 'I think that he (the boy) says that he (the teacher) gave them the PRESENTS.'

bó)

2.them

Recall that just like in (16), all the answers in (17a-c) convey the same interpretation in the sense that they are all felicitous to the content question under discussion in (17). However, superficially, in (17a) the propositional site (here AgrS-P) on the right of the fragment answer is silent as opposed to (17b-c) where the full proposition is overt at the PF component. Furthermore, sentences (17b) and (17c) are different as far as the position of the focused constituent *makebla* ‘presents’ is concerned. The focus is in-situ in the postverbal position in (17b) while it is ex-situ in (17c). As expected, when the focused constituent is ex-situ, the parenthetical proposition is mandatory, otherwise, the sentence is ungrammatical because the focus marker cannot strand. In terms of economy of pronunciation, it is obvious that the fragment in (17a) is more economical than its non-elliptical counterparts in (17b-c).

The Basàá case study constitutes a contribution to the domain of ellipsis in general and fragment answers in particular from a cross-linguistic perspective. Basàá is similar to Dutch to some extent because the latter also licenses fragments in embedded contexts as the following Dutch example illustrates (Temmerman 2013:243; see also Barbiers 2000, 2002; Corver & Thiersch 2001).

(18) Q: Wie dacht Carl dat de wedstrijd zou winnen ?

who thought Carl that the contest would win

'Who did Carl think would win the contest?'

A1: Hij had gedacht Kim A2: Hij had Kim gedacht A3: Hij dacht Kim
 he had thought Kim he had Kim thought he thought Kim

* 'He (had) thought Kim.'

'Intended: 'He had thought that Kim would win the contest.'

According to the authors, the asterisk (*) in the English translation shows that the answer is infelicitous in English since the latter is said not to license embedded fragments. Although it is well known in the literature that English fragments are unembeddable, Morgan (1973:732), cited in (Temmerman 2013:243) argues that the embedded fragments in (19) are not unanimously accepted among the English speakers. In this vein, some English speakers judge fragments in (19) as felicitous while others have different intuitions about the same answers (they think the fragments are infelicitous).

- (19) a. Q: How did Nixon eat his tapioca?

A: I think **with a fork**.

- b. Q: What does a Nazi Indo-Europeanist have on his bumper?

A: I believe **a schwa sticker**.

Temmerman (2013:244) argues from her investigations on the English speakers he consulted that fragments in (19) seems to show ‘parenthetical-like properties’ (cf. Ebert et al 2003; Rooryck 2001; Temmerman 2013; Valmala 2007; etc. for more on English fragments).

Another property which shows that Basàá fragments involve A-bar movement is that they are sensitive to islands. It is known that island-sensitivity provides strong evidence in support of a movement approach. The following ungrammatical sentences which violate the Complex Noun Phrase Constraint (20) and the adjunct island constraint (21) respectively support Merchant’s ‘ellipsis’ approach. As expected, the distinguishing factor between sluicing and fragment answers is that the latter, as opposed to the former ,is island-sensitive.

(20)

Q: báá bá m̄- bómá [í mut (nú) a- bí- tí báúdú makúbé] è
 Pol they PST1-meet DEF 1.man 1.Rel 1.SM-PST2-give 2.students 6.bananas Pol
 ‘Did they meet the man who gave bananas to the students?’

A1: tò bá m̄- bómá [í mut (nú) a- bí- tí báúdú bikààt
 no they PST1-meet DEF 1.man 1.Rel 1.SM-PST2-give 6.students 8.books
 ‘No, they met the man who gave BOOKS to the students.’

A2: *tò, bikààt
 no 8.books
 * ‘No, BOOKS’

(21)

Q: báá mudàáí aí- m̄- wëmlá [ínyùúlé proi aí- ñ- téhé máwándá méé] è
 Pol 1.woman 1.SM-PRS-smile because pro 1.SM-PST1-see 6.friends 2.her Pol
 ‘Does the woman smile because she has seen her friends?’

A2:tò, proi aí- m̄- wëmlá [ínyùúlé proi aí- ñ- téhé bón bée]
 no pro 1.SM-PRS-smile because pro 1.SM-PST1-see 2.children 2.her
 ‘No, she smiles because she has seen her children.’

A2: *tò, bón bée
 no 2.children 2.her
 *‘No, her CHILDREN.’

The illicitness of (20A2) and (21A2) are well accounted for under the assumption that the fragment answers first get extracted from the bracketed islands *í mut (nú) a-bí-tí báúdú bikààt* ‘the man who gave the children the books’ and *ínyùúlé proi aí-ñ-téhé máwándá mé* ‘because she has seen her children’ respectively prior to their PF-deletion. So, in the spirit of Merchant’s account of ellipsis, cases such as (20A2) and (21A2) are instances of propositional islands. However, if one assumes that island deletion after extraction of a given constituent is an island repair phenomenon, one would expect (20A2) and (21A2) to be well-formed contrary to facts. As it shall be explained in the section dedicated to theoretical assumptions, it will be shown that

although sluicing and fragment answers involve leftward movement followed by ellipsis, the latter case (fragments) involves an additional or extra movement to a position above the elided site, and that is why the silent copy above the elided site remains unelided/undeleted, hence the source of ungrammaticality. For the time being, note that there is a salient between Basàá sluicing and fragment answers in the sense that the former remains island-insensitive while the latter are island-sensitive.

Basàá fragments also exhibit connectivity effects in the sense that they are subject to principles A, B, and C of Binding Theory.

- (22) Q: njéé Ewas_i a- íj- gwêš
 1.who 1.Ewas 1.SM-PRS-like
 ‘Who does Ewas_i like?’
- A1: pro_i a_i- íj- gwêš nyé-médé_i /* nyé_i
 pro 1.SM-PRS-like him-RFM /him
 ‘He likes himself_i /*him_i
- A2: nyé-médé_i /* nyé_i
 him-RFM / *him
 ‘Himself_i /*him_i

As it can be seen in the non-elliptical answer in (22A1) and in the fragment in (22A2), only the anaphor *nyé-médé* ‘himself’ is licensed as a felicitous answer to the question under discussion namely, *njéé Ewas_i a-íj-gwêš* ‘who does Ewas like?’ even though there appears to be no visible antecedent DP/NP to bind this anaphor in (22A2). Binding connectivity is thus successful between the reflexive anaphor and the DP/NP in both cases. Under Merchant’s theory of ellipsis, the subject DP/NP *Ewas* is also present underlyingly as the antecedent of the anaphor *nyé-médé* ‘himself’ in (21A2), as a result, Condition A of BT holds. If it were not the case that the anaphor *nyé-médé* ‘himself’ binds its antecedent subject DP/NP *Ewas* underlyingly, one would not explain the grammaticality of (21A2). The co-indexed pronominal *nyé* ‘him₁’ is not licensed because it is not free, and consequently, one ends up with a violation of Condition B of BT.

As shown in (23) below, binding between the antecedent subject *Ewas₁* and the epithet R-expression *i ntɔnba* û₁ ‘that bandit₁’ is unacceptable in both the full sentence in (23A1) and the fragment CP *lé i ntɔnba* û₁ ú-íj-gwêš bódàá ñgandaY ‘that that bandit likes women a lot’ in sentence (23A2).

- (23)
- Q: Kíí Ewas₁ a- íj- hóñjôl
 what 1.Ewas 1.SM-PRS-think
 ‘What does Ewas₁ think?’

A1:

- * Ewas₁ a- ï- hójôl lé i ntɔnba û₁ ú- ï- gwêṣ bódàá ñgandaY
 Ewas 1.SM-PRS-think that DEF 3.bandit 3.DEM.DIST 3.SM-PRS-like 2.women a lot
 *‘Ewas₁ thinks that that bandit₁ likes women a lot.’

A2:

- *lé i ntɔnba û₁ ú- ï- gwêṣ bódàá ñgandaY
 that DEF 3.bandit 3.DEM.DIST 3.SM-PRS-like 2.women a lot
 *‘That that bandit likes women a lot.’

The fact that the CP fragment *lé i ntɔnba û₁ ú-ï-gwêṣ bódàá ñgandaY* ‘that that bandit likes women a lot’ is ungrammatical like the fully-fledged ungrammatical sentence in (23A1) suggests that the R-expression *i ntɔnba û₁* ‘that bandit’ has a binder i.e. Ewas₁ in the underlying structure. In this vein, the source of illicitness the fact that the R-expression, namely the epithet DP *i ntɔnba û₁* ‘that bandit’ is not free required by Condition C of Binding Theory. In the spirit of Merchant’s deletion analysis, it is proved true that at a certain stage of the derivation, there is an underlying sentence where binding conditions are satisfied prior to ellipsis.

An additional argument in favour of the deletion analysis comes from clausal dislocation. In Basàá, clausal dislocation is possible in content questions as can be seen in the folowing examples.

(24)

- Q: Kíí mǎàŋgéi a- ñ- lí- bəŋ
 9.what 1.child 1.SM-PST1-come INF-do
 ‘What has the child come **to do**?’

A1: pro_i a- ñ_i- lí lí-sómb makala
 pro 1.SM-PST1-come INF-buy 6.doughnuts

A2: li-sómb makala
 5.INF-buy 6.doughnuts
 Lit. ‘(to) BUY DOUGHNUTS’

A3: li-sómb makala jý- n pro_i a_i ñ- lâ
 5.INF-buy 6.doughnuts 5.INF-FOC pro 1.SM-PST1-come
 Lit. ‘*(to)BUY DOUGHNUTS he has come.’

Intended: ‘He has come to BUY DOUGHNUTS.’

(25)

- Q: ínyùúkíí u ï- kón máséé
 why you PRS-be sick 6.joy
 ‘Why are happy?’

A1: Mε ï- kón máséé ínyùúlé me ñ- nêd mákekse
 I PRS-be sick 6.joy because I PST1-pass 6.exams
 ‘I am happy **because I passed the exams**.’

A2: ínyùúlé me ñ- nêd mákekse
 because I PST1-pass 6.exams
 ‘Because I passed the exams.’

A3: (ínyùúlé) **me ñ- nêd mákekse, jó-n** me ñ- kɔn máséé

because I PST1-pass 6.exams 5.INF-FOC I PST1-be sick 6.joy

Lit. '(I passed the exams, that is why I am happy.' Intended: 'I am happy because I passed the exams.'

(26)

Q: mudaá; a- bí- kâl lé kíí A2: **lé bɔɔŋgé bá- bí- lɔná nyé makebla**
1.what 1.SM-PST2-say that 9.what that 2.children 2.SM-PST2-bring 1.her 6.presents
'What did the woman say?' 'That the children brought her the presents'

A1: pro_i a- bí- kâl **lé bɔɔŋgé bá- bí- lɔná nyé makebla**
pro 1.SM-PST2-say that 2.children 2.SM-PST2-bring 1.her 6.presents
'She said the the children brought her the presents.'

A3: [**lé bɔɔŋgé bá- bí- lɔná nyé makebla**]_j, **hála_j nyε-n** pro_i a- bí- kâl **t_j**
that 2.children 2.SM-PST2-bring 1.her 6.presents 1.that 1-FOC pro 1.SM-PST2-say
Lit: 'That the children brought her the presents, (is what) she said.'

The above examples show that a content question can be answered by a fully-fledged proposition in-situ as in the ((A1) sentences), by a fragment ((A2) sentences or by a fronted focused clause ((A3) sentences). It is clear from the above answers that fragment answers such as the (A2) sentences derive from their (A1) counterparts via a movement plus deletion analysis. This state of affairs shows that a clausal fragment behaves like a dislocated one in the sense that they convey the same meaning although from a phonological point of view the former lacks a PF realization as opposed to the latter which contains a phonological content. Note also that CP dislocation like in (25A3) and (26A3) requires a phonological break (a comma) and may require a kind of discourse anaphorical element (26A3).

There is another argument which demonstrates that the deletion analysis of fragments is valid. This argument comes from the distribution of negative polarity items (NPIs). In fact, there exists a cross-linguistic variation in the distribution of NPIs, and Merchant (2004:691) attempts to make predictions from a cross-linguistic perspective. He shows that in languages where NPIs are banned from dislocation, it is impossible to obtain a fragment answer to a content question. On the contrary, in languages where these items can be fronted, fragment answers are allowed as well. For instance, the following examples in (27) show that just as the negative polarity item *anything* fails to occur as a fragment in (27b), in like manner, it is ruled out in a dislocated position (28b).

(27) English (Merchant 2004:691).

a. What didn't Max read?

b. ***Anything.**

(28)

a. Max didn't read **anything**

b.***Anything**, Max didn't read.

As opposed to English, Merchant (2004:691-692), quoting (Giannakidou 2000) and McCloskey (1996), shows that Greek emphatic NPIs and Irish ones can be fronted, as expected, they can occur as fragment answers:

- (29) *Greek NPIs left dislocation* (Merchant 2004:691-692).

- a. **TIPOTA** dhen idha
n-thing.emphatic not I.saw
'I didn't see anything.'
- b. **LEKSI** dhen ipe!
word not he.said
'He didn't say a word!'

- (30) *Greek fragments* (Merchant 2004:692).

- | | |
|---|------------------|
| a. Q: Ti idhes? | A: TIPOTA |
| what you.saw | n-thing.emphatic |
| 'What did you see?' | 'Nothing.' |
| b. Q: Ti egine Ipe tipota oli tin nixta | A: LEKSI! |
| what happened he.said anything all the night | word |
| 'What happened? Did he say anything all the night?' | 'Not a word!' |

- (31) *Irish left dislocation* (Merchant 2004:692).

- a. **Rud ar bith** ní-or cheannaigh mé
thing any NEG [PAST] bought I
'I didn't buy anything.'

- (32) *Irish fragment answers* (Merchant ibid)

- Q: Caidé (a) cheannaigh (tú)
what C bought you
'What did you buy?'

- A: **Rud ar bith**
thing any
'Nothing.'

Similar facts hold for the distribution of fragment answers in Basàá. In (33a-b), *NPIs* are in-situ while they are dislocated in (33c-d). As expected from Merchant's predictions, the same *NPIs* successfully occur as fragment answers in (34). As shown below, NPI always occur in the presence of negation. The negative marker *béé* 'not' cannot be dropped. The sentences in (33e-f) show that when NPIs are focused ex-situ morphologically, they must occur side by side with negation, otherwise, ungrammaticality arises.

- (33)

- | | |
|---|---|
| a. mààngé a- bí- sómb *(bé) tɔ-yɔm
1.child 1.SM-PST2-buy NEG no-9.thing
'The child bought nothing.' | b. Me bí- téhé *(bé) tɔ-mut
I PST2-see NEG no-1.person
'I saw nobody.' |
| c. tɔ-yɔm mààngé a- bí- sómb *(béé)
no-9.thing 1.child 1.SM-PST2-buy NEG
'The child bought NOTHING.' | d. tɔ-mut me bí- téhé *(béé)
no-1.man I PST2-see NEG
'I saw NOBODY.' |

- e. **tɔ-yɔm** (**béé**) **yɔ-n** mààngé a- bí- sómb (***béé**)
no-9.thing NEG 9-FOC 1.child 1.SM-PST2-buy NEG
Lit: ‘The child bought NOTHING’

- f. **tɔ-mut** (**béé**) **nyé-n** me bí- téhé *(**béé**)
no-1.man NEG 1-FOC I PST2-see NEG
‘I saw NOBODY/I didn’t see ANYBODY’

What is interesting about (33e-f) is that they seem to indicate that fragment answers in Basàá are copula constructions with a null verbal element. The idea that fragments are silent copula constructions is supported by the presence of negation.

The following examples show that the above NPIs can also successfully occur as fragment answers.

- (34) a. Q: Kíí mààngé a- bí- sômb
9.what 1.child 1.SM-PST2-buy
‘What did the child buy?’
- A: **tɔ-yɔm**
no-9.thing
‘Nothing.’
- b. Q: njéé u bí- téhê
1.who you PST2-see
‘Who did you see?’
- A: **tɔ-mut**
no-1.man
‘Nobody.’

Note that negative polarity items in Basàá are always licensed by the sentential negation marker *bé(é)* glossed as NEG. Whenever negative polarity items occur, the negative particle *bé(é)* must occur, otherwise ungrammaticality results (see *). Note that when used sentence finally, i.e. at the end of a phonological phrase, the negative particle *bé(é)* ‘NEG’ undergoes vowel lengthening while such a phonological process may be absent when it is followed by a lexical item.

The last argument in favour of the deletion analysis of fragment answers in Basàá is the distribution of the definitizer or the evidential marker as discussed the previous chapter on sluicing. Recall that the definitizer or evidential marker is used whenever the speaker and/or hearer are /is (supposed to be) certain about a given event. In other words, both the speaker and hearer or only one of them can have direct evidence of a given event. In this case, a given event can be true from both the speaker’s and hearer’s perspective or only from one of them. Recall that the evidential marker agrees in class and number with a preceding element. In the case of fragment answers, the XP-fragment is followed an agreeing definitizer as illustrated in the context in (35) below.

(35) Context: *Yesterday, Ewas saw his friend Bahoya carrying a huge luggage but didn’t know exactly what the luggage was. However, it was true that Bahoya was carrying something*

- Q: **Kíí** í Ewas_i a_{i-} bê- pro_i a_{i-} bëèY-á yaaní
9.what 9.EVID 1.Ewas 1.SM-be.PST pro 1.SM-carry.PROG yesterday
‘What was Ewas carrying yesterday?’ Lit. ‘What was it that Ewas was carrying yesterday?’

A1: makɔndɔ mâ

6.plantains 6.EVID
 ‘PLANTAINS’

A2: makɔndɔ_i mâ_i mɔ̄-n pro_i a_i- bê- a- bɛèYá

6.plantains 6.EVID 6-FOC pro 1.SM-be.PST-1SM-carry.PROG
 Intended: ‘He was carrying PLANTAINS.’

A3: #pro_i a_i- bê pro_i a_i- bɛèY-á makɔndɔ

pro 1.SM-be.PST pro 1.SM-carry.PROG 6.plantains
 Intended: ‘He was carrying PLANTAINS.’

A4: #pro_i a_i- bê pro_i a_i- bɛèY-á makɔndɔ mâ

pro 1.SM-be.PST pro 1.SM-carry.PROG 6.plantains 6.EVID
 Intended: ‘He was carrying PLANTAINS.’

Pragmatically, note that in a context such as (35) above, the speaker has witnessed the event, namely ‘his friend was carrying a luggage, but he didn’t know what it was’. The kind of interpretation obtained in (35) stems from the presence of the evidential(ity) marker. In this context, this marker encodes evidentiality. In concrete terms, it means that this marker indicates that the information source is obtained through direct observation by both the speaker (here ‘Ewas’) and hearer. The speaker in this context is said to have witnessed the event visually, i.e. through direct observation. He is therefore taken as an eyewitness. Semantically, the question asked in (35) is an information-seeking question since it requires new information or confirmation from the hearer.

From a morpho-syntactic perspective, it is obvious that fragments are subject to movement to the sentence initial position followed by the deletion of the focus phrase. This is justified by the fact that in the non-elliptical answer in (35A2), the focused DP/NP *makɔndɔ* ‘plantains’ and the evidential(ity) morpheme are followed by the complex focus marker *món*.

Partially concluding this section dedicated to fragment answers in Basàá, the outcomes obtained have provided strong support to Merchant’s (2003, 2004 etc) deletion approach to ellipsis. Superficially, fragment answers lack a propositional content, but the discussions have shown that they derive in fact from fully-fledged clauses which undergo PF deletion. The following section focuses on theoretical assumptions in favour of the PF-theory of ellipsis advocated by Merchant (2001, 2003, 2004, 2008 etc.), Brunetti (2003), Temmerman (2013), among others. It will be shown to what extent such assumptions accommodate the Basàá empirical data in the context of fragment answers.

9.2.2 The PF-theory of fragments and the [E]-feature

The theoretical framework adopted in the study of Basàá fragment answers is the same adopted in chapter eight on sluicing and is due to Merchant’s (2001, 2004, 2008 etc.) PF-theory of

ellipsis. The same framework has been widely adopted by researchers such as Brunetti (2003), Craenenbroeck & Gengel (2007), Lipták (2009), Nakao (2009), Craenenbroeck (2010), Vlachos (2012), Temmerman (2013), *inter alia*. As has been discussed in chapter eight, I shall demonstrate to what extent the PF-theory of ellipsis can accommodate the Basàá empirical materials in the context of fragment answers from a theoretical perspective. Before addressing the Basàá data, I will first provide some arguments based on Merchant's proposals which militate in favour of the PF-theory of ellipsis.

Merchant and some authors demonstrate that fragment answers involve PF-deletion prior to leftward movement of the fragment in the left edge of the sentence. Several arguments, some of which have been discussed at length in the preceding sections, lend support to this. The proposal made in this work is that there exists in the numeration a formal feature called [E]-feature (Merchant 2004:670) which is responsible for the deletion mechanism in elliptical constructions at large and fragment answers in particular. According to Merchant, the [E]-feature which is responsible for ellipsis has phonological, semantic and syntactic implications.

At the phonological level, the [E]-feature instructs non-pronunciation of its c-commanded complement which varies cross-linguistically. In English, the [E]-feature is realized in the C domain and instructs PF-deletion or non-pronunciation of its complement TP. So, [E] is merged in C^0 as a formal feature, above a TP sister which acts as its complement. The role of [E] from a phonological perspective is to instruct PF not to parse or not to pronounce the c-commanded TP in English-like languages. The schema in (37) taken from Merchant (2004:671) portrays the phonological mechanism of [E].

$$(37) \quad \varphi\text{TP} \rightarrow \emptyset/\text{E} \text{ ---}$$

In Merchant's terminology, (37) is explained in terms of morphological syncope whereby the trigger is [E] and the syncopated category is TP. More precisely, (37) shows that φTP is the phonological realization of the material dominated by the TP node, and the phonological realization of TP is null if it is the complement of [E]. Either way, TP gets deleted if it is preceded by an elliptical site dominated by [E]. Given that [E] is merged in C^0 , it instructs the phonological component not to parse/pronounce its TP complement.

Semantically, [E] should ensure that the deleted element complies with parallelism or identification requirements of the elided material. In this vein, in order for a given material to be elided, it needs to be identified over a set of propositions. An element undergoes deletion if it has an appropriate antecedent, or better still, if it is given in the discourse. In the spirit of Merchant

(2004:672), ‘an element E is e-given iff there is an antecedent A which entails E and which is entailed by E [...’]. The following formalism shows the semantic representation of [E].

(38) *The semantics of E* (Merchant 2004:672).

$$[[E]] = \lambda p: \text{e-given}(p) [p].$$

The formalism in (37) indicates that the semantic composition of [E] succeeds provided its c-commanded complement TP is e-given in the discourse. An element is e-given if it has a salient antecedent. For instance, in the question-answer pair below, the elided TP gets deleted in (39b) because it is already mentioned/presupposed/familiar or given in the preceding discourse, namely the content question under discussion ‘[CP what has [TP has John bought what?]]’.

(39) Q: What has John bought?

- a. He has bought a BOOK.
- b. [CP A BOOK₁. [~~TP~~ he has bought t₁]

The deleted TP ‘he has bought a book’ has as antecedent in ‘what has John has bought’ which is salient or discourse given, and it is recoverable in the discourse even though it is elided. In this case, BOOK is the focus of the sentence while ‘he has bought’ constitutes the background or the presupposition in the sense of Rizzi (1997) and related works.

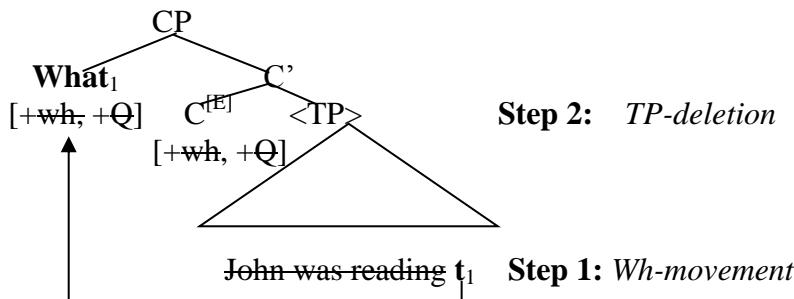
Syntactically, remember that with respect to sluicing, Merchant proposes the formalism in (40) in which the element moved to the C-domain (41b) matches in features with the head C⁰ the host of [E]. The [E]-feature is only licensed in syntactic environments in which the feature [E] is endowed with both an operator (+Wh/+Op) and a question (+Q) features which are uninterpretable (*u*) and strong (represented by the asterisk *). In order to be licensed, the [E]-feature has to check these features against matching features in a local (head-to-head) configuration. This means that [E] can only occur in the C⁰ or Foc⁰ head of content questions, the syntactic featural make-up of which is [+Wh, +Q] as schematized in (41b) where ~~strikethrough~~ indicates deletion.

(40) *The syntax of Es in sluicing* (Merchant 2004:670).

$$\text{Es}[\ u\text{Wh}^*, \ u\text{Q}^*]$$

(41) a. Abby was reading something, but I don’t know what₁ [~~Abby was reading~~ t₁]

b.



Similarly, Merchant roughly proposes the same derivation for fragment answers. However, this time around, Merchant establishes a notable difference between sluicing and fragment answers in terms of featural make-up, landing sites, and the moved items. He postulates that in context like (42) below, the fragment answer 'John' moves into the specifier of a functional projection FP which, he suggests, may be identified with Rizzi's (1997) Focus Phrase.

(42) a. Who did she see?

b. JOHN.

c. [FP JOHN₁ [F^[E] [TP She saw t₁]]].

The mechanism is approximately the same as in the derivation of sluicing in (41b) above in that the triggers of non-pronunciation of TP is the [E]-feature, although it is which merged in F⁰ rather than C⁰ as it is the case with sluicing. So, the head F⁰ of FP is uninterpreted, strong and marked as [Uf*]. The focused element in Spec-FP must match with F⁰ in the featural make-up for the derivation to be interpretable and convergent. Here again, we note that semantically, the elided TP 'She saw John' is recoverable, salient or discourse given in the content question 'who did she see?'.

The following section provides evidence in support of Merchant's theory of ellipsis in light of the Basàá empirical data.

9.2.3. Basàá fragment answers and the [E]-feature.

Basàá offers interesting data to the theory of ellipsis in the sense that in fragment answers the feature responsible for ellipsis can be overtly realized. As opposed to English-like languages whereby ellipsis is signalled by an implicit morpheme/feature namely the [E]-feature (cf. also chapter eight), Basàá provides strong evidence in favour of the ellipsis theory. One can distinguish five properties which characterize ellipsis in the language. First of all, the ellipsis feature/morpheme bears phonological properties in the sense that it instructs non-pronunciation of a c-commanded sister projection under it. Secondly, it is morphological and gender-specific in that it displays class and number agreement. Thirdly, it is syntactic in the sense that it triggers movement of the sluiced or fragment to sentence initial position. In other words, just like it is the case with sluicing, the evidential marker which triggers ellipsis only occurs when the focused

element has been extracted from its non-canonical position. Another notable disparity between sluicing and fragment answers is that while semantically, the former licenses identity between the sluiced and an antecedent in a previous clause (overt or implied in the context), the latter (fragment answers) have no linguistic antecedent in the discourse. Whenever movement to sentence initial position fails to obtain, ungrammaticality arises as the ungrammatical sentence with an in-situ focus shows.

- (43) Context: *somebody saw the teacher giving the students something yesterday, but s/he (somebody) could not know exactly what it was.*

Q:	Kíí í malêt a- bí- tí baúdú yáání 9.who 9.EVID 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-give 2.students 1.yesterday ‘What did the teacher give to the students yesterday?’ Lit: ‘What is it that the teacher gave to the students yesterday?’
A1:	makebla ₁ mâ ₁ [má-n malêt a- bí- tí bó t ₁ yáání] 6.presents 6.EVID 6-FOC 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-give 2.them 1.yesterday ‘THE PRESENTS’ Intended: ‘He gave them THE PRESENTS’
A2:	#Malêt a- bí- tí bó makebla mâ yáání 1.teacher 1.SM-PST2-give 2.them 6.presents 6.EVID 1.yesterday Intended: ‘The teacher gave them THE PRESENTS.’

The preceding examples show that evidential(ity) marking is possible iff focus movement takes place (43A1), such marking is not possible if focus movement has not taken place (43A2).

9.2.4 Island sensitivity and the PF-deletion theory of fragments

In this section, I attempt to show that there exists a theoretical syntactic asymmetry between the syntax of sluicing discussed in the previous chapter and that of fragment answers. However, the present discussion shall be confined to the sole fragment answers, given that sluicing has been largely handled in chapter eight. Just as it was proposed in sluicing constructions, it is proposed that there exists a formal [E]-feature projecting in the syntax of the left periphery in Basàá because fragment answers display not only syntactic implications, but also morphological ones. It was demonstrated that in Basàá, as opposed to English-like languages, there exists good evidence in favour of the idea that the [E]-feature is projected in the syntax. The goal of this section is to explain why fragment answers are sensitive to locality constraints.

As opposed to sluicing, fragment answers are not insensitive to syntactic islands. This is straightforwardly shown in (44A1) where the focused direct object fragment *bikaat* ‘books’ stands alone after PF deletion of the proposition has taken place. However, if the focused constituent stays in-situ, no ungrammaticality results (44A2).

(44) a.

Q: báá bá m- bómá [í mut (nú) a- bí- tí báúdú makúbé] è
 Pol they PST1-meet DEF 1.man 1.Rel 1.SM-PST2-give 2.students 6.bananas Pol
 ‘Did they meet the man who gave the bananas to the students?’

A1: *tò, **bikààt**

no 8.books

* ‘No, BOOKS’

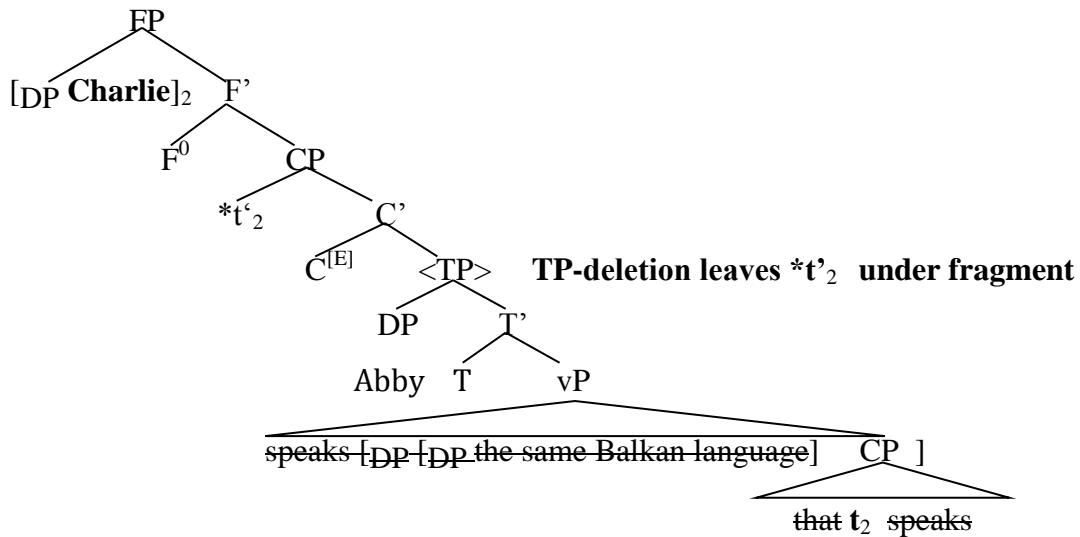
A2: tò, bá m- bómá [í mut nú a- bí- tí báúdú **bikààt**
 no they PST1-meet DEF 1.man 1.Rel 1.SM-PST2-give 6.students 8.books
 ‘No, they met the man who gave the BOOKS to the students.’

So, if PF deletion is to be conceived of as a repair strategy and under the assumption that fragment answers involve left peripheral movement followed by clausal ellipsis, why are fragment answers sensitive to conditions on A-bar movement?

Following Merchant’s (2004:706) proposal, I argue that the asymmetry attested between sluicing and fragment answers in terms of island (in)sensitivity is due to the presence in the syntactic derivation of a PF uninterpretable feature called ‘*’ (see also Chomsky 1972; Fox & Lasnik 2003; Lasnik 2001; Merchant 2001; 2008; Kennedy & Merchant 2000; Ross 1969; Uriagereka 1999 a.o.). Merchant (2004) proposes that the defective marker ‘*’ is a PF-uninterpretable feature at the intermediate traces/silent copies above the island such that island violations occur if and only if this defective feature resists/persists after ellipsis has taken place. In this vein, TP-ellipsis under fragments yields an ill-formed structure because the defective marker ‘*’ is not eliminated at the PF component after ellipsis has applied. So, contrary to what was discussed with sluicing, Merchant postulates that an extra CP layer should be projected in-between the highest FP (probably the Rizzian’s 1997 focus phrase) and the inflectional domain (IP/TP etc). Since wh-movement operates cyclically, he argues that the fragment, on its way to Spec-FP, passes via the specifier position of this extra CP where it leaves behind an undeleted *trace (*t’₂). The fact that island violation is attested in fragments according to him stems from the fact that TP deletion does not affect the intermediate *trace in Spec-CP as can be seen in (45) below.

(45) *Adapted from Merchant (2004:708)*

- a. Does Abby speak the same Balkan language that Ben speaks?
- b. *No Charlie.



From (45), one can see a notable discrepancy between the derivation of sluicing (cf. chapter eight) and the derivation of fragments. The ungrammaticality attested in (45b) is due to the presence of an uninterpretable PF *trace that resists TP-ellipsis while in sluicing, everything gets deleted and ungrammaticality is circumvented.

The sluicing/fragment asymmetry attested in Basàá is well accounted for if one adopts the theory of *-marked traces/copies. So, ellipsis under fragment answers in Basàá does not automatically delete all -*marked traces/copies. By this token, if a *trace must be present at PF after ellipsis, one obtains a fragment answer and the structure becomes illicit. On the contrary, if all -*marked traces undergo PF deletion, one obtain sluicing and the structure is well-formed. I argue, following Merchant (2001, 2004, 2008 etc.), Temmerman (2013 *inter alia*) that fragment answers in Basàá also require an extra maximal projection in the C-layer.

9.2.5 The derivation of Basáá fragments: the null copula hypothesis and the EPP

In this section, I argue that Basáá fragments are fronted foci that raise into the matrix TP for the satisfaction of the Extended Projection Principle. In other words, I opposed to sluicing, I propose that fragment answers are derived along the lines of focus fronting as discussed in chapters four and five. In this vein, it is assumed that fragment answers involve a copula construction headed by a null verbal element. By so doing, it is claimed that the fact that fragments, as opposed to sluicing are sensitive to island is due to the presence of a strong -*marked trace that resists PF deletion after EPP movement. Taken altogether, fragment answers raise in a stepwise fashion into the matrix TP via embedded FocP, ForceP, FP and EvidP positions. That fragment answers involve a null copula structure is supported negative fragments answers such as (46A1') and (46A2'). Contrary to sluicing, the target of ellipsis in the context of fragment answers is the focus phrase (FocP) as depicted in (47).

(46) Context: A woman carrying something

Q: Kíí í mudàá a- bee-Yá?

9.what 9.EVID 1.woamn 1.SM-carry-PROG

'What is the woman carrying?' Intended: 'What is it that the woman is carrying?'

A1: makúbé mâ

6.bananas 6.EVID

'The BANANAS.'

A1': t_o, makúbé béeé mâ

no 6.bananas NEG 6.EVID

'No, not the BANANAS.'

A2: makúbé_i mâ [mó-n pro_i a_{i-} bee-Yá t_i]

6.bananas 6.EVID 6-FOC pro 1.SM-carry-PROG

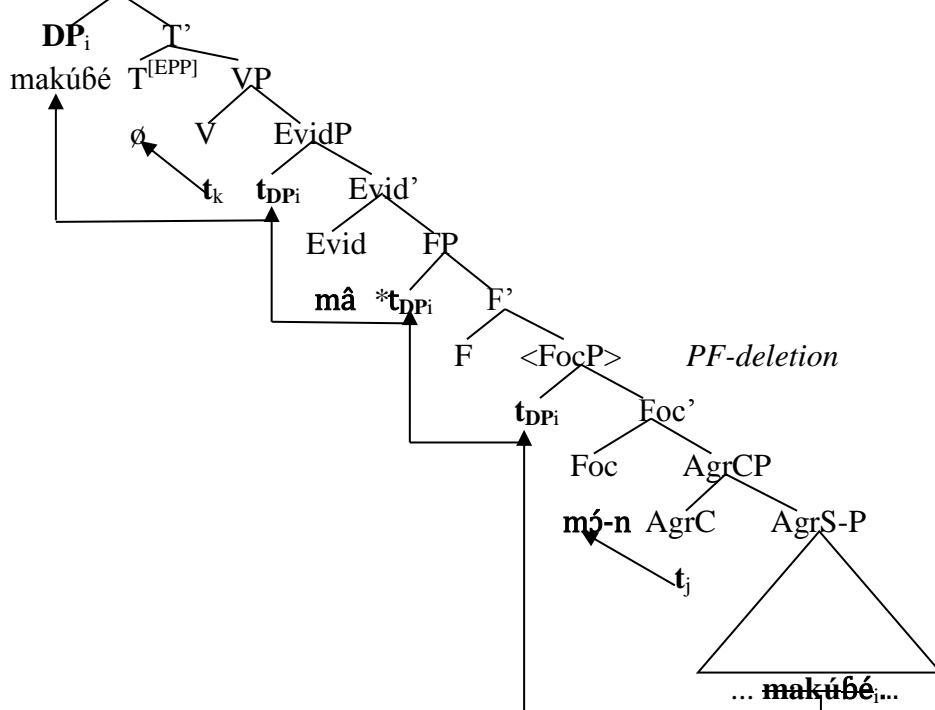
'She is carrying the BANANAS.'

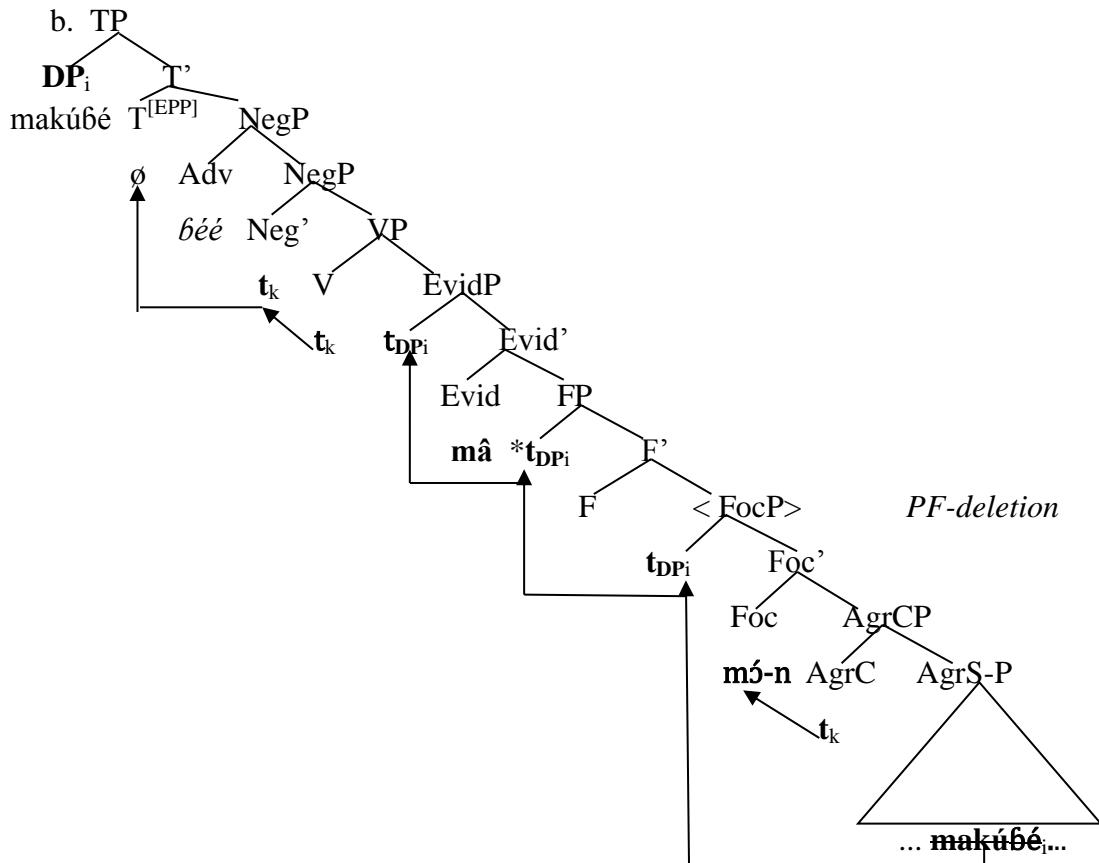
A2': t_o, makúbé_i béeé mâ [mó-n pro_i a_{i-} bee-Yá t_i]

no 6.bananas NEG 6.EVID 6-FOC pro 1.SM-carry-PROG

'No, she is not carrying the BANANAS.'

(47) a. TP



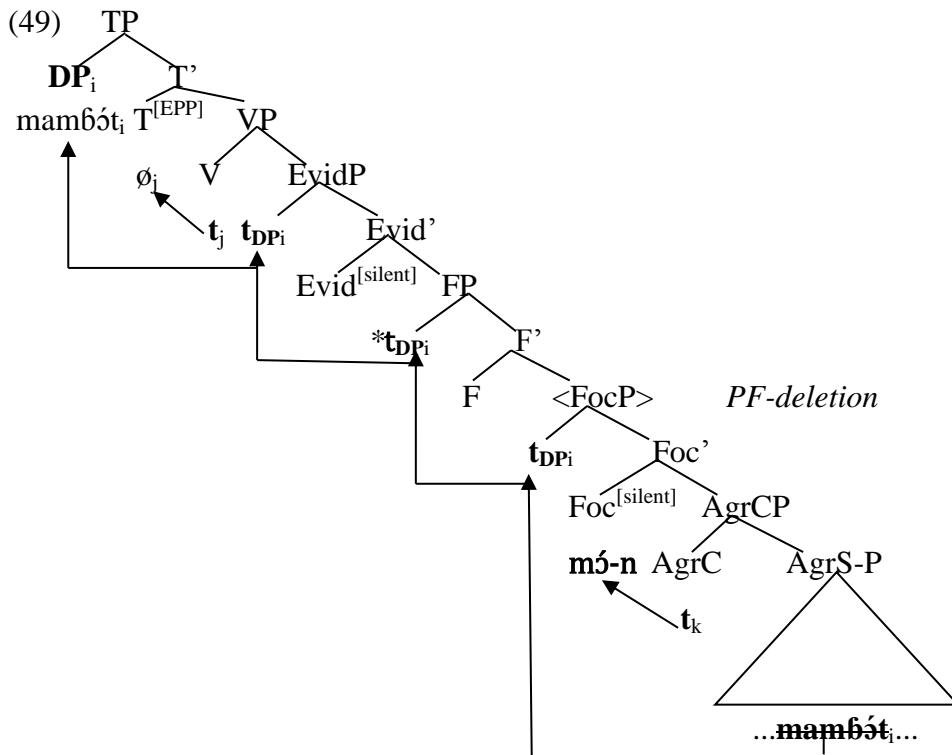


The above derivations show that fragment answers are derived almost in the same way as focus fronting. The only difference is that in regular focus fronting as analysed in chapters four and five, there is no EvidP. In order to derive a fragment, the targeted element is first moved into Spec-FocP for the focus-requirements, then into the intermediate FP position prior to moving into the matrix TP for EPP requirements. As can be observed, the fact that fragments are sensitive to island is due to the presence of a strong -*marked trace in Spec-FP which resists PF-deletion. In other words, giving that ellipsis targets the lower FocP headed by the focus marker *mó-n*. It should be noted that whether, there is an overt evidential(ity) marker or not, the target of ellipsis is always FocP although Evid can be covertly realized like in (48) derived as (49) below.

(48)

- a. Kíí u bí- sómb-ól bóóŋgé
9.what you._{2SG} PST2-buy-BEN 2.children
‘What did you buy for the students?’
- b. **mambót** [mó-n me bí- sómb-ól bóóŋgé]
6.clothes 6-FOC I PST2-buy-BEN 2.them
‘The CLOTHES.’
- d. ***mambót mó-n**
6.clothes 6-FOC

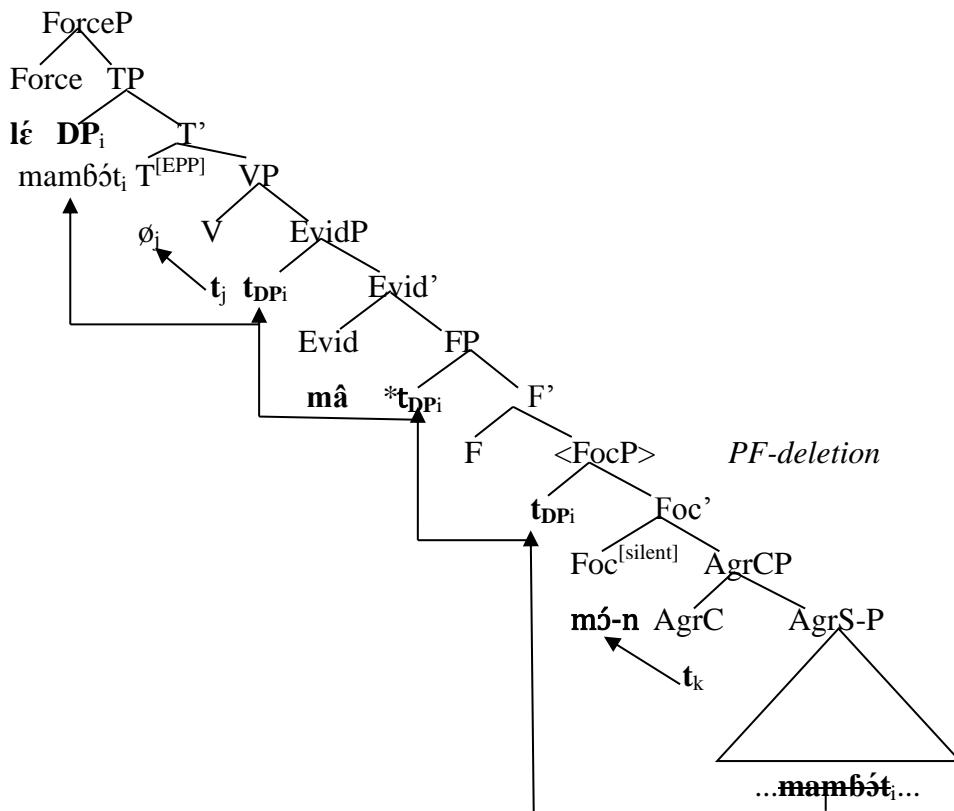
- c. **mambót mó-n** me bí- sómb-ól bóóŋgé
6.clothes 6-FOC I PST2-buy-BEN 2.them
‘I bought them the CLOTHES.’



The derivation of the elliptical sentence (48b) depicted in (49) shows that (48b) is derived from its non-elliptical counterpart in (48c). The above derivation also explains why (48d) is ungrammatical. In fact, the prediction is that the target of ellipsis in fragment answers is FocP. However, by leaving the focus morpheme stranded or spelled out in (48d), FocP fails to undergo PF-deletion, hence the ill-formedness. In other words, if Foc resists ellipsis, it won't be possible to obtain ellipsis, because of an overt Foc head. What seems to be interesting in fragment answers in Basáá is that they also give rise to an articulate and hierarchical left peripheral structure made up of a variety of functional projections. This is supported in (50b) below whereby the fragment answer is embedded i.e. it can be preceded by the declarative lexical complementizer *lé* 'that' and *tóó* 'if' which projects a functional force phrase as the higher projection in the left periphery.

- (50) a. **njéé nû** baúdú ba- mí-pód-ôs
 1.who 1.EVID 2.students 2.SM-PRS-talk-OBL
 ‘Who are the students talking to?’/who is it that the teacher is talking to?’
- b. **me íj- hóñôl lé malêt nû**
 I PRS-think that 1.teacher 1.EVID
 ‘I think the teacher’, Lit: ‘* I think that the teacher.’

(51)



9.2.6 Unifying focus constructions: Evidence from fragment answers

This last section attempts to demonstrate that the so-called dichotomy between ‘in-situ focus’ and ‘ex-situ focus’ can be avoided under the ellipsis theory, so that both foci are uniform in terms of derivation, i.e. both have the same syntax. In light of on fragment answers, the discussion shows that both focus types move to the left periphery and that the so-called ‘in-situ focus’ is redundant. However, such redundancy can be avoided for economy purposes. Recall that in chapters three, four, five and six, it was shown that focus in Basaa has three syntactic positions, namely the left peripheral position, the in-situ position and the Immediately After Verb position (IAV). The first position is dedicated to arguments, referential adjuncts and displaced non-wh constituents. The second position is the in-situ position in which the focused item remains in its canonical position. The IAV position is the locus of displaced wh-arguments and referential adjuncts. Furthermore, the analysis showed that the item *léláá* in Basaa, by virtue of denoting different lexical entries, can be moved to the IAV iff it conveys an argument interpretation, notably when it is interpreted as ‘what’. The following examples summarize the different focus positions as discussed in previous chapters.

- (52) a. Speaker A: Mε ñ- nôY lé malêt a- n- sómb mákala *Baseline*
 I PST1-hear that 1.teacher 1.SM-PST1-buy 6.doughnuts
 ‘I heard that the teacher bought DOUGHNUTS.’

- Speaker B: héní, **màmbót₁ mó-n** pro_i a_{i-} ñ- sómb **t₁** *ex-situ focus*
no 6.clothes 6-FOC pro 1.SM-PST1-buy
‘No, he bought the CLOTHES.’
- Speaker C: héní pro_i a_{i-} ñ- sómb **mámbót** *In-situ*
no pro 1.SM-PST1-buy 6.clothes
‘No, he bought the CLOTHES.’
- c. (**Kíí**) malêt a- ñ- tí (**kíí**) baúdú ***kíí** Wh- *ex-situ/IAV*
9.what 1.teacher 1.SM-PST1-give 9.what 2.students 9.what
‘What has the teacher given to the students?’
- d. √(**léláá**) malêt a- ñ- kál √(**léláá**) baúdú (***léláá**) Wh- *ex-situ/IAV*
1.what 1.teacher 1.SM-PST1-tell 1.what 2.students 1.what
‘What did the teacher tell the students?’

Without an in-depth analysis on the placement of foci/wh-phrases in the languages (cf. chapters three, four, five and six), recall that the lexical item *léláá* is polysemic and conveys a wide range of interpretations. Given that it encodes more than one lexical entry, it can mean ‘how/how come’, ‘why’ and ‘what’. In this case, it is used as an argument in (52d) above and occurs in the IAV position.

The focus of the discussion in this section is to establish a sort of uniformity between left peripheral focus (cf. speaker B’s statement in 52aB) and its in-situ counterpart (52aC). It should be noted that from a minimalist perspective, both (52ab) and (52aC) can be unified if one adopts the ellipsis approach as discussed at length in previous sections. In fact, at first sight, and based on the surface structures of (52aB) and (52aC), one can infer that both structures are different, i.e. they have two different syntactic foci, namely ex-situ and in-situ foci. Under Merchant’s theory of ellipsis one can say that both in-situ focus and its ex-situ counterpart have the same derivation. More precisely, using the movement plus deletion approach, it is postulated that since the sentences in (53) convey the same semantic interpretations, they should also exhibit the same syntactic structure, in this case, they are all derived under the ellipsis approach, namely, focus movement of the fragment answer, the PF-deletion of the proposition. The following examples in (53) and (54) furthermore confirm that focus interpretation does not depend on its structural positioning, but on the context. As result, both information and identificational focus can occur in-situ (A2) and ex-situ (A1), just as they can simply be answered by a fragment (A3) as illustrated below.

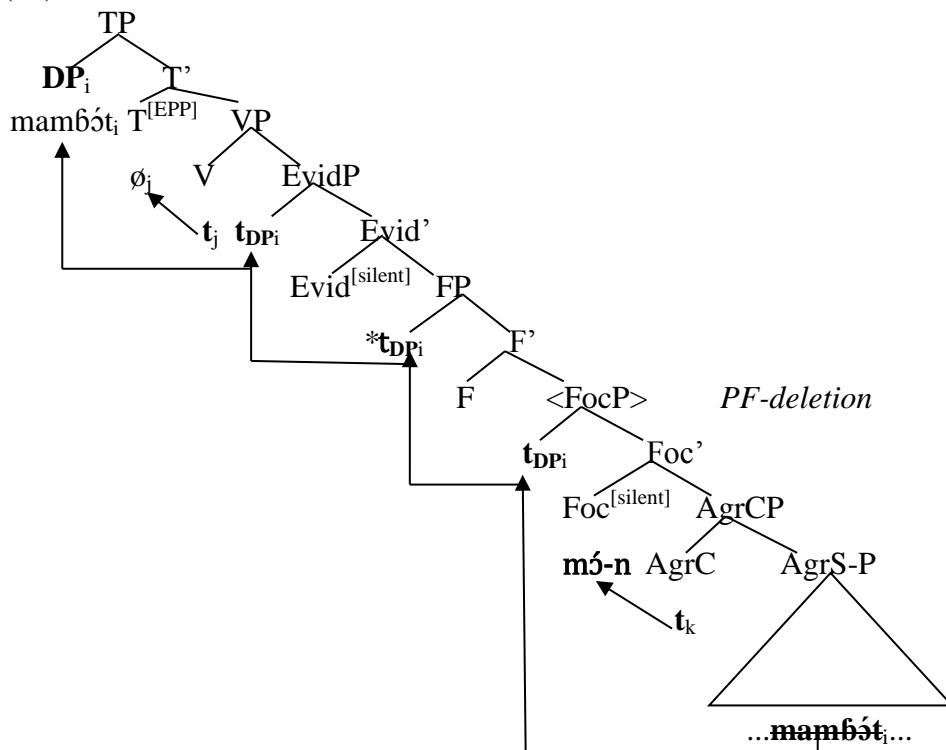
- (53) Q: **kíí** malêt a- ñ- sómb *Information focus*
9.what 1.teacher 1.SM-PST1-buy
‘What did the teacher buy?’

- A1: **màmbót₁ mó-n** pro_i a_{i-} ñ- sómb **t₁** *ex-situ focus*
6.clothes 6-FOC pro 1.SM-PST1-buy
‘He bought the CLOTHES.’

- A2: pro_i a_{i-} ní- sómb **mámbót** *In-situ*
 pro 1.SM-PST1-buy 6.clothes
 ‘He bought the CLOTHES.’
- A3: **mámbót_i** [má-n pro_i a_{i-} ní- sómb t_i] *fragment answer*
 6.clothes 6-FOC pro 1.SM-PST1-buy
 ‘The CLOTHES.’
- (54) Q: malêt a- ní- sómb **bítámb** t_{olé} **mámbót** *Contrastive focus*
 1.teacher 1.SM-PST1-buy 8.shoes or 6.clothes
 ‘Did the teacher buy the **shoes** or the **clothes**?’
- A1: **mámbót_i** **mó-n** pro_i a_{i-} ní- sómb t_i *ex-situ focus*
 6.clothes 6-FOC pro 1.SM-PST1-buy
 ‘He bought the CLOTHES.’
- A2: pro_i a_{i-} ní- sómb **mámbót** *In-situ*
 pro 1.SM-PST1-buy 6.clothes
 ‘He bought the CLOTHES.’
- A3: **mámbót_i** [má-n pro_i a_{i-} ní- sómb t_i] *fragment answer*
 6.clothes 6-FOC pro 1.SM-PST1-buy
 ‘The CLOTHES.’

It is clear from the above contexts that a fragment answer, be it ‘informational’ or identificational/contrastive in the sense of É.Kiss (1998) is more economical than its non-elliptical in-situ ans ex-situ counterpart. From a strict minimalist, perspective, fragments answers are preferable to non-elliptical answers. Although the only difference lies at the level of spellout, all of them have the same semantics and the same syntactic structure as depicted in (55).

(55)



The above discussion have sufficiently shown that the target of ellipsis is a FocP projection. However, there is a rare case whereby, the target of ellipsis can be an AgrS-P/TP like in sluicing.

The following examples show that when a fragment NPI is not directly associated with negation in sentence initial position, it cannot be focus marked (56A4), and as a result, its complement cannot be a focus phrase like in (56A3).

- (56) Q: Kíí mudaá_i a- bí- tí wé yaaní
9.what 1.woman 1.SM-PST2-give you._{2SG} 1.yesterday
'What did the woman give to you yesterday?'

- A1: pro_i a- bí- tí bé mé **tɔ-yɔ́m**
pro 1.SM-PST2-give NEG me.1SG no-9.thing
She didn't give me anything/She gave me nothing.'
- A2: **tɔ-yɔ́m**, [pro_i a- bí- tí bé mé]
no-9.thing pro 1.SM-PST2-give NEG me.1SG
'She didn't give me anything/She gave me nothing.', Lit: *Nothing, she gave to me.'
- A3: **tɔ-yɔ́m** bé [yó-n pro_i a- bí- tí mé]
no-9.thing NEG 9-FOC pro 1.SM-PST2-give me.1SG
'Nothing'
- A4: ***tɔ-yɔ́m** [yó-n pro_i a- bí- tí bé mé]
no-9.thing 9-FOC pro 1.SM-PST2-give NEG me.1SG

The difference between (56A1), (56A2) and (56A3) is that the former is non-elliptical as opposed to the latter two which are elliptical. In (56A2), the NPI is not associated with negation in sentence initial position but the meaning is still similar to its counterpart in (A563) where the NPI is focus marked. The ungrammaticality of (A564) is due to the absence of negation in sentence initial position. In fact, unlike DPs, a focused NPI cannot reconstruct in the presence of postverbal negation. Whereas (56A2) is similarly derived as other fragment answers like in (47b), sentence (56A2) can be simply derived by a simple focus fronting mechanism, i.e. by A-bar movement into Spec-FocP like in Merchant (2008) without any copula structure. This movement will be followed by PF-deletion of the complement of FocP, namely AgrS-P/TP. Note also that as opposed to (A3), where the NPI is focused, in (56A2), it is followed by an intonation break (represented by a comma).

Partially summarizing, the outcomes reveal that the so-called in-situ focus does not really exist if one adopts the ellipsis theory and if one takes into account minimalist assumptions require economy. In fact, non-elliptical in-situ and ex-situ foci containing overt presupposition are redundant and consequently are costly because they do not comply with minimalist requirements such as the *Shortest Derivation Requirement* (SDR) and *Minimize Pronunciation* (MP) defined in (56) and (57) below.

- (56) *Shortest Derivation Requirement* (SDR)(Collins 2001:52).

Minimize the number of operations necessary for convergence.

- (57) *Minimize Pronunciation* (Trinh 2010:94).

Pronounce as little of β as possible.

The above principles are economy principles, which require that operations leading to a convergent derivation should be as small as possible i.e. reduced to a strict minimum. To establish a parallel with our discussion, (56-57) show that a structure with a fragment answer is much preferable than the one which makes use of non-elliptical materials. In the spirit of Chomsky (1998), linguistic computations, i.e. derivations and representations, should be subject to economy considerations which guarantee that they are optimal to some extent and minimize search either at LF or PF. It is therefore unquestionable that fragment answers come out as being the most economical structures in the syntactic representation and derivation of focus. Consequently, in a situation whereby fragment answers and full sentential propositions compete for the same information structure-related requirements, the former win because they are more economical. As for the latter, they are redundant, heavy and impose too much search at the PF component. Put together, they come out as being costly in terms of pronunciation, derivation and representation. It can therefore be inferred in light of fragment answers that all foci are derived alike i.e. by movement, and that there is no in-situ/ex-situ focus dichotomy per se.

Conclusion

This last chapter was another contribution to the analysis of ellipsis with special focus on fragment answers. The discussions revealed that just as sluicing, fragment answers are well accounted for under a restrictive theory of phonology-morphology-syntax and semantics interfaces and the division of labour between these interfaces. The empirical material discussed based on fragment answers provided strong support to the ellipsis approach according to which this elliptical construction involves A-bar movement of the fragment answer prior to PF-deletion. This state of affairs is true in light of connectivity and island effects, phonological, morphological, semantic and syntactic criteria. Therefore, Basàá comes out as being peculiar in the sense that it provides, in addition to the well-known and widely-spread properties attested cross-linguistically, novel evidence from morphology and phonology which do justice not only to the PF-deletion approach to fragments, but also to the syntax-semantics interface and in line with the current cartographic approach to syntactic structures. The Basaá data under scrutiny helped provide a rich, prolific and articulated architecture of the clausal left periphery. It was shown that Basàá fragment answers are fronted foci which are subject to ellipsis and that as compared to English-like languages, the E-feature responsible for PF-deletion can be overtly realized in Basaá, the target of ellipsis being a focus phrase projection (FocP) in most cases, except in some rare cases where fragment NPIs require PF-deletion of an AgrS-P/TP just as in sluicing.

Conclusion of the part

In this part, it was demonstrated that topics, sluicing and fragment answers in Basàá are derived by movement in the left periphery of the sentence. Sluicing and fragment answers were said to be well accounted for under the ellipsis approach according to which sluiced and fragment answers are derived by A-bar movement followed by PF-deletion of the propositions out of which they have been previously extracted. Sluicing is not sensitive to island constraints because ellipsis deletes everything apart from the sluiced (the remnant wh-phrase) while in the case of fragments, there is an extra layer in the C-domain with an uninterpretable *marked trace which evades PF-deletion. It was argued that the [E-] feature, which is responsible for PF-deletion and which is said to be covertly realized in Indo-European languages can be overtly realized in Basaá in the form of an evidential(ity) morpheme. Overall, it was shown that while the target of ellipsis in sluicing is an AgrS-P/TP projection, what rather deletes in the context of fragment answers is a functional focus phrase (FocP). Furthermore, as opposed to sluicing, fragments have been said to be derived via a bi-clausal structure made up of a matrix TP headed by a null verbal copula and an embedded FP projection that hosts a strong *-marked trace that resists PF-deletion. However, there has been attested an isolated case whereby a fragment NPI can have a complement AgrS-P/TP rather than a FocP as usually attested in the language. In this case, it was proposed that the target of movement is a Spec-FocP position, while the target of ellipsis is AgrS-P.

The discussion of topics has shown that five topic types are attested in the language, namely the additive topic, the contrastive topic, the aboutness topic and the frame setting/scene setting topic. It was argued that while the first three topics are derived by means of a bi-clausal structure, hanging and scene setting topics simply involve A-bar movement of the topic into Spec-TopP. It was shown that the fact that Basaá topics are insensitive to certain constraints on transformations is linked to the fact they are not quantificational elements. As a result, any constraint involving a quantification interpretation cannot block topic movement.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

The aim of this work is to contribute to the study of information structure and its relation with syntax with special focus on Basàá, a noun class and tone language of the Bantu language family spoken in Cameroon (Central Africa). The discussion is not only descriptive, but also theoretical in order to see how the language empirical data can accommodate the theoretical underpinnings of the current cartographic approach. The work consists of nine main chapters which in turn are divided into three main parts. Apart from the first two chapters dedicated to the language and the theoretical framework, the results obtained are presented as follows.

In chapter three, it is shown that the information structure device of focus in Basàá as a focus-drop language can be marked morphosyntactically when the focused constituent is ex-situ, i.e. when the focalized constituent moves in sentence initial position. When expressed in-situ, the focalized material is not marked at all, i.e. the focused element remains unchanged in its canonical position and undergoes neither a morphosyntactic marking nor a phonological alteration. When the focalized constituent is ex-situ, it displays overt agreement morphology with a complex morpheme which encodes not only focal information, but also gender information. In other words, the morpheme encoding agreement morphology is sensitive to gender. In this vein, since Basàá is a noun class language, each time a focalized element changes in class, so does the agreement morpheme. Also, thanks to its rich agreement morphology, it is demonstrated that Basàá can be characterized as a focus-drop language, i.e. a language in which the focused constituent can be omitted altogether without the sentence being illicit. The morphology of the focus morpheme helps recover the semantics of the dropped constituent. Of interest is the fact that focus interpretation in this language does not depend on its structural positioning (contra previous analyses). In this vein, the semantic interpretation depends solely on the context. The analysis also shows that apart from the in-situ and the ex-situ positions, the Immediately After Verb position (IAV) is the locus of information structure as well, given that some question items, namely arguments and referential adjuncts⁶¹ get moved there to express focal information. Semantically, left peripheral focus can be associated with an exhaustive interpretation or a non-exhaustive reading depending on the context. Subject focus, i.e. a direct answer to a wh-question is always ex-situ and is associated with an exhaustive focus reading. Object focus, when realized in-situ, can convey both a non-exhaustive and an exhaustive reading depending on the context. Focus in Basàá can also be expressed by the means of focus-sensitive particles/operators expressing negation or exclusion. These focus operators can be associated

⁶¹ The referential time adjunct *kélkí* ‘when’ does not move in the IAV unless it is the immediate complement after the verb in intransitive constructions or when used with a place adverbial (compare (i) and (ii).)

(i) Maangé a- íj- ké √*kélkí* í súklu √*kélkí* (ii) maangé a- bí-téhé **kélkí* málét √*kélkí*
1.child 1.SM-FUT1-go 1.when Loc 9.school 1.when 1.child 1.SM-PST2-see 1.when 1.teacher 1.when

with the focalized item either in-situ, ex-situ or with the trace of the fronted focused material. However, unlike negation, a postverbal exclusive focus operator cannot assign scope over a preceding subject. Given that a focus-sensitive operator can sometimes successfully associate with the trace of the extracted constituent, it is shown that the *Principle of Lexical Association* (PLA) proposed by Beaver & Clark (2008) among others, is inadequate. In other words, according to the PLA, a focus operator cannot associate with the trace of an extracted material given that the latter cannot reconstruct. The Basàá data reveal that the PLA is inadequate as extracted materials can reconstruct sentence internally. The description of verb focus shows that the latter is special in the sense that, as opposed to non-verbal focus which exhibits no doubling effects, verbal focus displays doubling effects. The focused can verb occur twice in the same sentence, the root verb being inflected for tense/aspect and the second copy undergoing nominalization.

In chapter four, the syntax of focus is explored and the results shows that Basàá is a focus-drop language as it can allow for the dropping of the focalized constituent without any resulting ungrammaticality. Focus-drop constructions are obtained thanks to the rich agreement morphology borne by the focus morpheme which helps recover the semantic content of the dropped constituent. The language distinguishes between in-situ and left peripheral foci. As opposed to the former which has no marking at all, left peripheral focus is morphosyntactically marked and the focus domain is decomposed into two main layers namely, the agreement domain hosting gender sensitive morphemes which encode gender information and the focus domain hosting the focus morpheme. This line of reasoning runs counter to Bassong's (2010) analysis according to which focus fronting in Basàá yields a single functional projection in the left periphery of the clause. In more concrete terms, the outcomes obtained reveal that what was previously considered as one focus head projection in Bassong (2010) has now exploded into two different functional projections namely, the agreement complementizer phrase (AgrCP) and the focus phrase (FocP). On the basis of movement tests, it is demonstrated that left peripheral focus is simultaneously triggered by the focus-criterion and the Extended Projection Principle. More precisely, in Basaá, focus fronting involves successive cyclic movement of the probed constituent into the embedded FocP for focus requirements and subsequent movement into the matrix TP position headed by a null verbal copula for the satisfaction of the EPP. It is argued that since Basaá lacks expletive or dummy subjects that would be merged into the matrix TP, the focalized element, after fulfilling the focus requirements, needs to raise higher above the focus field in order to comply with the Extended Projection Principle which requires that each clause should have a subject. In light of morphosyntactic, semantic and pragmatic evidence, it is shown

that focus fronting is a copula non-cleft construction. In addition, it is demonstrated that focus fronting cannot only target simple DP constituents, but also larger chunks. When a constituent is found inside a relative clause and that it is probed over by the focus head, given that relatives are opaque to extraction, the probed constituent must spread its focus features over the entire clausal chunk containing the targeted constituent, and triggering heavy pied-piping of the whole sentence into the matrix TP via the embedded Spec-FocP like in normal focus fronting cases. One of the major contribution in the chapter is the derivation of the so-called subparts of focus fronting which apparently involves a syntax-semantics mismatching. In other words, what apparently seems to be fronted in ‘all-new’ sentences and related constructions⁶² is not in fact the whole semantic focus, namely the whole sentence but a little part of it. The idea that fronting in all-new sentences is an instance of subparts of focus fronting is simply apparent. What certainly fronts in all-new focus contexts is in fact the whole sentence into the focus domain. However, given that the focus fronting work in tandem with the EPP, only a subpart of a previously fronted material (the whole sentence in FocP) moves into the matrix TP to satisfy the EPP. Given that the focus morpheme cannot be stranded after the whole sentence is moved into FocP, there should be a Foc-to-Force movement which enables the focus morpheme to c-command or precede its complement at the final stage of the derivation. It is argued that Foc-to-Force movement of the focus marker is an instance of second position effects which require that the focus item comes first, and its complement (the whole clause), second. Overall, it is claimed that focus fronting in ‘all-new’ utterances boils down to the Linear Correspondence Axiom which requires that complements be preceded by heads. Consequently, the idea that what fronts into the focus layer in all-new sentences is just a subpart of the semantic focus is simply apparent. This follows from a series of successive phrasal and head movement operations.

In Chapter five, an account of predicate focus is provided with special emphasis on verb fronting. Verb focusing in Basàá involves a four-level analysis as it involves four language components, namely phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics. At the phonological and morphological levels, predicate fronting in Basàá involves double realization of two non-identical verbal copies, namely a nominalized copy and an inflected one. Semantically, predicate fronting can be associated with new information and/or contrastive information depending on the context. Syntactically, the study shows that predicate fronting with doubling is better accounted for within the framework of the parallel chains hypothesis. According to this hypothesis, the overt realization of two verbal copies in verb focusing involves two independently related

⁶² These constructions involve cases like ‘what happened?’, ‘why are you sad?’, ‘what’s wrong?’ etc.

syntactic chains: an A-chain between the inflected verb in the Tense/Aspectual domain and a silent copy of the verb within VP/vP. An A-bar chain between the fronted verb in the focus domain in the left periphery and the null copy within VP/vP. Overall, the realization of two verbal copies in predicate fronting is simply an instance of two parallel chains that give rise to simultaneous movements of the verb into two different positions in Basàá, namely the aspect position and the main TP position. The originality of Basàá is that the fronted verb ends up in the matrix TP as expected from any focus fronting operation. However, the focused verb needs to pass via the focus field for the satisfaction of focus requirements. Overall, verb fronting in Basàá depends on three distinct factors, namely, aspect-licensing, focus-criterion and the EPP. v-to-Asp/T movement is triggered by agree/aspect licensing requirements, focus movement is required by the focus-criterion while movement into the matrix TP is motivated by the EPP. When V/v-toAsp/T movement is blocked due to some intervention or minimality effects, predicate doubling cannot be realized. In control constructions, Basàá licenses VP/TP fronting without doubling effects i.e. the whole VP/TP, after undergoing nominalization, gets fronted in the matrix TP via the focus domain leaving behind two silent copies of at the extraction site and in the focus field. The analysis of inherent complement verbs (ICV) also lends support to such movement operations. Inherent complement verbs in the language behave like English phrasal verbs in the sense that if a part of the whole complex (the inherent complement or the verb itself) making up the inherent complement verb construction is dropped, the overall meaning is lost altogether. It is possible to front an inherent complement or the sole verb, but not both the verb and its inherent complement simultaneously. In other words, a subpart of an inherent complement verb construction is allowed to front without altering the meaning of the whole construction. Basàá comes out as a language which makes use of two predicate fronting strategies on the surface. However, under close scrutiny, one ends with the conclusion that appearances are deceptive. Constructions in which the verbal copy seems to have moved rightward are easily tackled by adopting an antisymmetric approach according to which all movement operations apply to the left, and that there is no rightward movement. Either way, the fact that the verbal copy can sometimes end up in sentence final position results from leftward movement of the focused verb into the focus field followed by remnant movement of the whole sentence into the specifier of a Ground Phrase position which is higher than the focus phrase hosting the focused verb in sentence final position.

In chapter six, it is revealed that Basàá makes use of three strategies to form content questions, namely the in-situ strategy, the ex-situ strategy in the Immediately After Verb (IAV) position and in the left periphery of the clause. The in-situ strategy is generally associated with

echo-interpretation with no syntactic effects. Echo-questions in Basàá are not bona fide questions in the sense that they can only be uttered to express surprise, doubt, despair, disappointment and the like. Syntactically, the Immediately After Verb position in Basàá is the locus of information structure i.e. it is associated with focus. In this vein, it is proposed that there exists in Basàá a lower focus phrase projection in the vicinity of VP, precisely its left periphery. This position hosts focused wh-items. The fact that focalized non-wh-items cannot be fronted into the lower focus phrase in the vicinity of the VP is due to minimality conditions such as the Head Movement Constraint, or the Minimal Link Condition. More precisely, given that focused non-wh elements, when displaced, are always morphologically marked, the presence of the focus marker in the lower Foc would block the raising of the lexical verb into the inflectional domain and the derivation would crash. So, whenever there is morpho-syntactic focus marking in the lower IP layer, verb movement into the inflectional spine is blocked by the intervening focus marker and the construction will become illicit. When moved into the clausal left periphery, arguments and referential adjuncts occupy the specifier of the focus phrase while non-referential adjuncts occupy the specifier position of a maximal projection called the Wh-Phrase. It is claimed that the movement of the former wh-items is motivated by the focus-criterion while the movement of the latter is motivated by the wh-criterion. The discussion also argued against previous predictions according to which the phonology/morphology of question items in the language is context-dependent, i.e. their form depends on whether they are in-situ, ex-situ or whether they are associated with exhaustivity or not. In content questions, the morphology of the question items in the language does not change at all. In addition to content and echo-questions, Basàá also makes use of indirect and polar questions which are marked by specific morphemes. These morphemes project specific functional projections, namely the Interrogative Phrase and the Polar(ity) Phrase in the left periphery of the clause so much so that their position in sentence final position at spellout is attributed to the pied-piping of the whole sentence (the complement of these heads) into the specifier position of IntP and/or PolP.

Chapter seven is concerned with the distribution and interpretation of topics. Five topic constructions are discussed, namely the additive topic, the contrastive topic, the aboutness topic, the hanging topic and the frame setting topic. Each of these topics is unambiguously associated with a specific semantic interpretation. In most cases, topic fronting in the language goes in tandem with agreement morphology in the C-domain like in focus fronting. The discussion demonstrates that like focus, topic is syntactically encoded, that is it enters the numeration at the early stage of the derivation in the form of a formal feature in the same manner as tense, aspect, agreement and the like. Furthermore, the analysis shows that topic fronting is not restricted to

smaller constituents, bigger chunks can also be fronted via feature-percolation. For instance, it is possible to topicalize a constituent which is found inside a relative clause. However, as relative clauses are opaque to movement, when a given constituent inside the relative clause is probed over by the topic head, that constituent should spread over its topic features over the entire relative clause containing the probed constituent before subsequently provoking pied-piping of the whole relative clause into the matrix TP via the topic field. More precisely, it is proposed that like focus fronting, topic fronting in Basàá contains a matrix TP clause headed by a null verbal copula, in such a way way that the topicalized element first moves into the embedded topic field for to comply with topic requirements, then into the matrix TP for EPP requirements. This only happens in case of additive, contrastive and aboutness topics. As for hanging and scene-setting topics, they are said to occupy the specifier position of TopP without any copula construction. Basàá licenses multiple topic fronting, but only topics with different interpretations can co-occur. Just like focus fronting, topic fronting also complies with the *Uniqueness Principle* in the sense that a topic with only one semantic interpretation is allowed to front. Topics with the same semantic interpretation are not allowed to front simultaneously as there is only one topic feature to be checked for each semantic interpretation. Multiple topics are possible if and only each of them has its own semantic interpretation. The overall investigation shows that Basàá can be considered as a mixed language as seems to be in-between languages with overt functional heads and the ones with covert functional categories. For instance, in focus fronting and additive topic contexts, there are overt morphemes which encode not only focus and topic information, but also agreement morphology. Conversely, aboutness and contrastive topics display only agreement morphology with covert topic morphemes. Hanging and frame setting topics display no overt marking at all. Neither topic nor agreement morphology is overtly marked in these two cases. One major characteristic of Basàá topics is that they are not sensitive to locality constraints involving operators. In more concrete terms, given that topic fronting in the language is insensitive to locality constraints such as the CNPC and the Wh-Island constraint, it is argued that Basàá topics, as opposed to focus or relative clauses, are non-operators, i.e. non-quantificational elements. In this vein, topic fronting cannot be blocked by intervening operators such as wh-phrases since they do not share the same featural make-up. On the contrary, other locality constraints such as the Left Branch Condition, the Coordinate Structure Constraint and the Adjunct Island Constraint which do not involve operator movement, affect topic fronting. As a result, Basàá topic fronting is obtained not by a base-generation mechanism, but via movement.

Chapter eight, focuses on sluicing as one instance of ellipsis, a domain of linguistic analysis which has not yet been significantly explored in African linguistics. The discussion

reveals that sluicing in Basàá is well accounted for under the PF-deletion approach according to which sluicing is derived in the syntax. In other words, sluicing involves A-bar movement of a remnant wh-item followed by PF-deletion of the proposition out of which extraction has previously applied. Although sluicing is insensitive to locality constraints, it is proved that sluicing in Basàá is derived by movement. This is due to the fact that in this construction, Basàá makes use of a gender-specific morpheme which is always realized in the left periphery of the clause and never in-situ. The construction in which sluicing is obtained in most cases is what is referred to in this work as evidential construction, i.e. a wh-construction whereby, the speaker, asking the question, is aware of the realization of such or such event. Given that Basàá is a noun class language, the evidential marker, which agrees in class and number with the wh-item, always occurs when the fronted wh-item has a discourse reference. As a result, only arguments and referential wh-items license the evidentiality marker because they belong to a noun class (class one) which enables them to bear nominal features. Non-referential wh-items, due to their inability to bear nominal features, do not license the evidentiality marker. It is the reason why a non-referential wh-word in sluicing stands alone without any evidential marker. As a result, the investigation of sluicing in Basàá provides comparative and theoretical syntax with new empirical data in the sense that, as opposed to what has been proposed so far in the literature there exists in the Bašàá clausal left periphery a new functional projection called evidential phrase (EvidP), the head of which is occupied by the evidential marker and the specifier of which hosts extracted wh-items. This is only possible if the extracted material is an argument or a referential adjunct. Extraction of non-referential adjuncts does not trigger overt realization of the evidential marker because of agreement morphology. Overall, Basàá sluicing can be triggered by an overt E-feature and the target of ellipsis is an AgrS-P/TP projection, it also gives rise to a variety of distinct functional projections such the force phrase (ForceP), the interrogative phrase (IntP) and the evidentiality phrase (EvidP) which occur with respect to a given hierarchy at the clausal left edge.

In chapter nine, focus is on fragment answers as another instance of ellipsis. It is shown that fragment answers in Basàá are derived in the syntax i.e. fragmentary utterances are neither base-generated in their canonical position nor in sentence initial position. Adopting the PF-deletion approach to ellipsis, and on the basis, morphological, syntactic and semantic evidence, it is shown that fragment answers in Basàá is an instance of focus fronting which involves A-bar movement of the fragment in the focus field followed by a subsequent movement into the matrix TP position. These two movement are followed by PF-deletion of the proposition out of which extraction has applied. Just like it is the case with sluicing, the originality of Basàá is that

the [E]-feature which is responsible for ellipsis can be overtly realized in the form of an evidentiality marker. The distribution of constituent negation enables to realize that in evidential constructions, there is a biclausal structure whereby the matrix TP projection headed by a null verbal copula and as fragment answers are an instance of focus fronting, the fragment needs to raise stepwise, i.e. into the matrix TP via embbeded FocP and FP projections. A unified analysis of focus constructions in Basàá is carried out based on fragment answers by showing that in line with minimalist assumptions i.e. for economy purposes, there is no ex-situ/in-situ dichotomy indeed in terms of focus derivation. Given that fragment answers are felicitous in both information and identificationl focus contexts, they appear to be more economical in terms of spell-out. It is therefore proposed that both information focus and contrastive are fronted foci which are simply hidden by ellipsis. Put together, the discussion shows that as compared to sluicing, the target of ellipsis, in fragment answers is a focus phrase (FocP).

As the main goal of the cartography project is to depict syntactic configurations as precise and detailed as possible, to study their content, number and order, the following examples attempt to depict the syntactic map(s) of the complementizer domain of Basàá. The syntactic map of each (a) sentence below is provided in (b) and briefly depicted in (c). The literal translation in English translation provided in each case is simply indicative, hence preceded by 'lit' (for literal). Capitals indicate focus. It is also important to recall that whenever there is an additive topic, an aboutness topic or a fronted foci in the following examples, there is always an agreement complementizer projection, the head of which hosts the agreement morpheme prior to its movement to the respective focus or topic head (cf. chapter four, five, seven nad nine) positions. The structures are simplified and TP represents the matrix clause headed by a null verbal copula represented by the null morpheme (\emptyset). HTs, Scene-setting topics and Wh-P do not have null copula structures.

(1)

- a. Mε m- bátbá lé tò́ (ínyùúkíí) ni sombol bágwál (ínyùúkíí) báñá baúdú
 I PRS-wonder that whether why with 7.will 2.parents why 2.these 2.students
makebla mž̩ malět_k nyé-k yaaní_m nyé-n pro_i bá-i bí tí nyé_k mž̩
 6.presents 6.TOP 1.teacher 1-TOP 1.yesterday 1-FOC pro 2.SM-PST2-give 1.him 2.them
 Lit: 'I wonder that whether (why) with parents' will, (why) these children, as for the presents, as
 for the teacher, YESTERDAY, they (these children) gave them (the presents) to him (the
 teacher).

Recall that ‘Int’ stands for interrogative in indirect questions while ‘Pol’ stands for polarity in polar questions. It can be seen that the Wh-phrase *ínyùúkíí* ‘why’ can precede or follow the scene setting topic. In addition, it is discussed in chapter six that in Basàá, the non-referential adjuncts *ínyùúkíí* ‘why’ and *léláá* ‘how come’/‘why’ occupy the specifier position of the Wh-Phrase which is compatible with fronted foci as opposed to other wh-phrases which are incompatible with fronted foci. The following sentences below show that the non-referential adjunct *léláá* ‘how come’/‘why’ has the same distribution as its counterpart *ínyùúkíí* ‘why’.

(3)

- a. *Mé m- batbá lé tó* (ínyùúkíí) *ni sombol bágwál* (ínyùúkíí) *báná baúdú*
 I PRS-wonder that whether why with 7.will 2.parents why 2.these 2.students
makebla mž malět nyé-k yaaní nyé-n pro_i bá-i- bí- tí *nyé* *mž*
 6.presents 6.TOP 1.teacher 1-TOP 1.yesterday 1-FOC pro 2.SM-PST2-give 1.him 2.them

Lit: 'I wonder that whether (why) with parents' will, (why) these children, as for the presents, as for the teacher, YESTERDAY, they (these children) gave them (the presents) to him (the teacher).

For interpretative reasons, a sentence cannot simultaneously contain an indirect interrogative marker and a polarity one since the former encodes an indirect question interpretation while the latter is used in yes/no questions. So, a given question cannot be direct and indirect at the same time.

Furthermore, one can notice that there is no topic phrase projection encoding contrastive topic interpretation above. It is said in chapter seven that a contrastive topic is incompatible with its aboutness counterpart as although both have the same morphological marking, an aboutness topic also conveys a contrastive interpretation in some respect. However, the difference between a contrastive topic and an aboutness one is that alternative (s) is/are explicitly given in the context of the former case while such (an) alternative(s) remain (s) implicit in the latter one. For these reasons, both topic types are in complementary distribution. In this vein, note that if a

contrastive topic projection were to be incorporated into the clausal map in the frames (c) above, it would simply stand in the place of the aboutness topic i.e. in-between the hanging topic projection and the additive topic one as illustrated below.

(5) (i) Force > Pol > (Wh) > Top^[scene setting] > (Wh) > TopP^[Hanging] > TP..TopP^[Aboutness]

(ii) TP..[TopP^[contrastive]] > TP..[TopP^[Additive]] > ... TP..[FocP > AgrSP/TP/IP

The study of ellipsis showed that the Bassàá left periphery can host a new functional projection, the denomination of which is the evidential phrase (EvidP), and the head of which is occupied by the definitizer or the evidential(ity) marker.

(6) Context

A: *The child has swallowed something!*

B: Mε ím- batbá lé tòó kí î

I PRS-wonder that whether 9.what 9.EVID

‘I wonder what that is.’ Lit: ‘I wonder that whether what.’

C: Mε ím- batbá lé tòó kí î [maangé a- m- mîl]

I PRS-wonder that whether 9.what 9.EVID 1.child 1.SM-PST1-swallow

‘Lit: ‘I wonder that whether what is it that the child has swallowed.’

It is claimed in chapters eight that a sentence such as (6B) is an instance of sluicing i.e. a construction in which all of the content question gets deleted apart from the wh-phrase. In Basàá, sluicing involves not only a wh-item, but also an agreeing evidential marker which is only realized in wh-movement contexts. As it is shown in (6C), the bracketed sequence *maangé a-m- mîl* ‘the child has swallowed’ is missing in (6B), but both sentences convey the same meaning. The only difference is that sentence (6B) is elliptical while its counterpart in (6C) has a full propositional content at PF. The left peripheral map for (6B) is provided in (7) below whereby the declarative lexical complementizer *lé* ‘that’ precedes the indirect interrogative item *tòó* ‘whether’ which in turn precedes the moved wh-item *kí* ‘what’ in Spec-EvidP.

(7) [ForceP [Force **lé** [IntP[Int **tòó** [EVIDP **kí** [EVID î [TP...]]]]]]

that whether 9.what 9.EVID

What is interesting is that one can have much more material in the Basàá complementizer domain in the sense that the evidential phrase can be incorporated in the structure provided in (1-4) above. In (8) below, the lowest maximal projection in the left edge of the sentence is the focus phrase while the highest functional projection is the force phrase as depicted in (8b). Remember that it has been proposed in chapter nine fragment answers are focus constructions which are derived by means of a null verbal copula structure. A good piece of evidence in support of the null copular hypothesis is the position of negation in the language (cf. chapters four and nine).

(8)

a.

Mε mí- batbá lé tòó ni sombol bágwâl, báúdúí bááná, yaaní nyɛj-∅
 I PRS-wonder that whether with 7.will 2.parents 2.students 2.these 1.tomorrow 1-Top
malêt_k nyɛ̄k-k, makebla_i má Op_i má-n bó_i pro_i bá-i- bí- lóná nyéj
 1.teacher 1-Top 6.presents 6.EVID Op 6-Foc 2.Top pro 2.SM-PST2-bring 1.him
 Lit: 'I wonder that whether with parents'will, these students as for tomorrow, as for the teacher,
 the PRESENTS, they (these students) will bring to him (teacher).'

b.

[ForceP[Force lé [IntP[Int tòó [TopP^[Scene setting] ni sombol bágwâl[Top^[HT] báúdúí bááná,
 that if with 7.will 2.parents 2.students 2.these
 [TP yaaní [∅]] [TopP^[Aboutness/CT] t_i [Top nyɛ̄-∅ [AgrCP[Agrc nyɛ̄] [TP malêt_j [∅]][TopP^[Additive]
 1.tomorrow 1-Top 1.teacher
 [Top nyɛ̄-k[AgrCP[Agrc nyɛ̄] [TP makebla_i] [EvidP t_i [Evid má[FocP t_i <Foc má-n[AgrCP[Agrc má-_i [...]>
 1-Top 1- 6.presents 6.Evid 6-Foc

A simplified architecture of the Basáá clause in (8) is given in (9) below where strikethrough indicates PF-deletion.

(9) ForceP > IntP > TopP^[Scene setting] > TopP^[Hanging] > [TP]..TopP^[Aboutness/Contrastive] >
 [TP]...TopP^[Additive] [TP]...Evid P > FocP → AgrS P/TP...

So far, some predictions should be made concerning the occurrence of the different functional projections which occupy the left peripheral spine of the Basáá clause. In chapter seven, it is demonstrated that the Force Phrase is the highest maximal projection. It is followed by the Interrogative or Polar(ity) Phrase when activated. The third maximal projection is either the Wh-phrase hosting non-referential adjuncts, the hanging topic projection or the scene setting topic. A hanging topic always c-commands all other topics (apart from the scene setting topic) and the focus phrase. In fact, in a given structural configuration, the Force Phrase and the Interrogative/Polar(ity) Phrase are fixed and can be followed by the Wh-Phrase, the hanging Topic Phrase or the scene setting topic projection. This means that the order between the Wh-Phrase, the hanging topic and the scene setting phrases is not a rigid one as exemplified in (10-11) below where different structural word orders are provided.

(10) a. Mε mí- batbá lé tòó ínyuukíí ni sombol bágwâl, báúdúí bááná,
 I PRS-wonder that whether why with 7.will 2.parents 2.students 2.these
 malêt a- ní- tí bé bó makebla_i
 1.teacher 1.SM-PRS-give NEG 2.them 6.presents

Lit: 'I wonder that whether (why) with parents'will, these students, the teacher does not give them the presents.'

b. Mε mí- batbá lé tòó ni sombol bágwâl, ínyuukíí báúdúí bááná,
 I PRS-wonder that whether with 7.will 2.parents why 2.students 2.these
 malêt a- ní- tí bé bó makebla_i
 1.teacher 1.SM-PRS-give NEG 2.them 6.presents

Lit: 'I wonder that whether (why) with parents'will, these students, the teacher does not give them the presents.'

- c. Mε mí- batbá lé tòó ni sombol bágwâl, báúdú_i báná, ínyuukí
 I PRS-wonder that whether with 7.will 2.parents 2.students 2.these why
 malêt a- ní- tí bé bó makebla
 1.teacher 1.SM-PRS-give NEG 2.them 6.presents

Lit: 'I wonder that whether (why) with parents'will, these students, the teacher does not give them the presents.'

- (11) a. Mε mí- batbá lé tòó ínyuukí ni sombol bágwâl, báúdú_i báná,
 I PRS-wonder that whether why with 7.will 2.parents 2.students 2.these
 malêt a- ní- tí bé bó makebla
 1.teacher 1.SM-PRS-give NEG 2.them 6.presents

Lit: 'I wonder that whether (why) with parents'will, these students, the teacher does not give them the presents.'

- b. Mε mí- batbá lé tòó ínyuukí báúdú_i báná, ni sombol bágwâl,
 I PRS-wonder that whether why 2.students 2.these with 7.will 2.parents
 malêt a- ní- tí bé bó makebla
 1.teacher 1.SM-PRS-give NEG 2.them 6.presents

Lit: 'I wonder that whether (why) with parents'will, these students, the teacher does not give them the presents.'

- c. Mε mí- batbá lé tòó báúdú_i báná, ni sombol bágwâl, ínyuukí
 I PRS-wonder that whether 2.students 2.these with 7.will 2.parents why
 malêt a- ní- tí bé bó makebla
 1.teacher 1.SM-PRS-give NEG 2.them 6.presents

Lit: 'I wonder that whether (why) with parents'will, these students, the teacher does not give them the presents.'

The above examples show that each of the elements, namely the Wh-phrase, the hanging topic, and the scene setting topic can occupy the first, second and third position after the declarative lexical complementizers *lé* 'that' and *tòó* 'whether/if'.

As for the distribution of other topics, namely the additive, the contrastive and the aboutness topics, it was shown in chapter seven that their structural order is flexible i.e. each of them can precede or follow the others. When a fronted focus is found in the same sentence, it can either precede or follow any type of the three topics (additive, contrastive and aboutness) (cf. chapter seven). However, when there is an evidential phrase in the structure, the focus phrase must be the lowest maximal projection in the left periphery as shown in (9) above because it is the target of ellipsis in the context of fragment answers. In this vein, it can be inferred that the left periphery is made up of a force phrase, an interrogative or polar(ity) phrase which occur in a fixed order. These two functional projections (domain A) are followed by a second domain (domain B) which is made up of a Wh-phrase, the hanging and scene setting topic phrases, the order of which can vary. After this second domain, one has a third one (domain C) made of three topic types, namely the additive, the aboutness and the contrastive topics order is also flexible. The fourth domain (domain D) is dominated by the evidentiality phrase which c-commands the focus

phrase. Sentence (8b) above, repeated below as (12a) depicts the word order in the Basàá clause structure. In (12b), each of the fourth domain is represented in curved brackets {}. The TP preceding some projections represents the null copula structure.

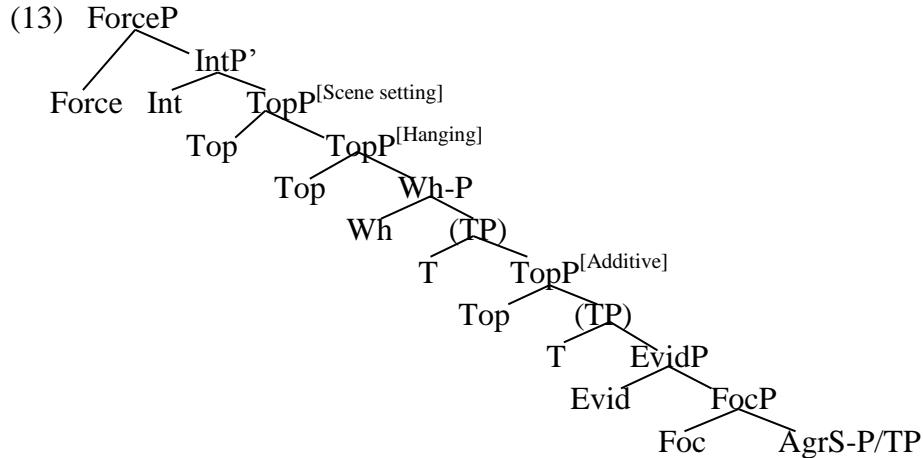
(12) a.

[ForceP[Force **lē** [IntP[Int **tòó** [TopP^[Scene setting] **ni** **sombol** **bágwâl**[Top^[HT] **báúdúi** **báná**,
that if with 7.will 2.parents 2.students 2.these
[TP *yaaní* [TopP^[Aboutness/CT] [Top *nyɛ̂-ø* [AgrCP[Agrc *nyɛ̂*] [TP..[TopP^[Additive]**malêtj** [Top *nyɛ̂-k*
1.tomorrow 1-Top 1.teacher 1-Top
[AgrCP[AgrC *nyɛ̂*] [TP *makebla/* [TP [EvidP **tí** [Evid *má* < {FocP[Foc *mé-n*[AgrCP[AgrC *má* [...]]>
6.presents 6.Evid 6-Foc

(12b).

{^{Domain A[fixed word order]} ForceP > Int > } {^{Domain B[flexible word order]} Top^[Scene setting] > Top^[Hanging] >
Wh-phrase } {^{Domain C[flexible word order]} [TP[TopP^[Aboutness/Contrastive] > [TP[TopP^[Additive] } {^{Domain D[fixed}
word order] [TP [EvidP> FocP >}AgrS-P/TP

From (12a-b) above, one obtains the following mapping (13).



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