Negation in Defoid Languages

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INTRODUCTION

- Preliminary report on the research that examines negation in the Defoid languages of Niger Congo language classification;

- Defoid made up of Akokoid (Ondo State, Nigeria), Ayere-Ahan (Kogi and Ekiti States, Nigeria), and Yoruboid languages respectively (Lewis & Adigun 2011, Eberhard, Simons & Fennig 2019);

- Research aims to provide an in-depth analysis of the system of negation of the Defoid languages and provide a basis for a cross-linguistic empirical analysis, comparison and pattern;

- Negation is a universal phenomenon with variations in types, markers, scope, polarity, etc. across languages and dialects.

METHODS AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

- Purposive designed questionnaire, data from native speakers;

- Yoruba resources on the Afranaph database serve as elicitation documents; other secondary data also used;

- This study has a descriptive approach but generative in orientation;

- NegP hypothesis used for analysis; NegP hypothesis asserts that negative particles head their own functional projections (Pollock 1989, Kayne 1989, Chomsky 1991, Haegeman 1995, Dechaine 1995, Ouallala 1999, Ilori 2010, Fabunmi 2013)

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

Typologies of Defoid Negative Constructions

- Most affirmative constructions in Defoid languages can be negated at both lexical and syntactic levels.

- Negation transcends different categories and constituents.

- Lexical, clausal and non-clausal negation are attested in Defoid languages.

Defoid Negative Markers

- Negation is expressed in these languages with the use of clitics, affixes, particles and tonal variations in different positions (Arokoyo 2018a,b Dahl 1979, Payne 1985, Dryer 2005, 2011a,b);

- *kè; kàá; mè* and *úkwèdi are the* four negative markers of Ayere;

- *àà ri; àa; aà; ma; ètìma-* negative markers of Ahan (Ogunmodimu 2015)

- *kà ~ à* plus HTS – *Arigidi (Akokoid)*

- *- ń* and *má* plus a high tone syllable are the negative markers of Igala;

- *; kò ~ ò ; kì í; kọ́; má ~ máà; àì* are negative markers in Yoruba;

- *yá ~ á, mọ́, éé, yá se..... kọ́, àì* are the negation markers used in Owé.

- **Standard Negation:** Basic way of negation of main clause in languages.

- Negative markers in different positions along with tonal modifications.

1. Olú **kò** je isu. (YB) 2. Adé **àa** gbà mi sá lọ. (AH) 3. Adé **á** wá nóòní. (Olùkùmi)
   Olu NEG eat yam   Ade NEG make me run go   Ade NEG come today
   'Olu did not eat yam.'   'Ade did not make me escape.' 'Ade will not come today.'

4a. Ọ̀bà**là** nmọ ómi.   4b. Ọ̀bà**lá** nmọ ómi **ń**. (Igala)
    Cat drink water   Cat- NEG drink water not
    'The cat drank water.'   'The cat did not drink water.'

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS CONTINUED

Markers could be one **(single negation)** or two **(multiple negation)** in a clause, exemplifying single, discontinuous or affirmative.

5. ì **má** gbà **ń**, ẹ mun du wa. (Igala)
   3sg NEG accept NEG 2pl take-3sg bring come
   'If s/he did not accept (it), you return it here.'

6. Olú **kè** kú ṣì nî̀ **mè** dá. (Ayere) 7. Ò̀Jó á kà vè. (Arigidi)
   NP NEG can do Comp NEG go   Ojo HTS NEG go
   'Olu cannot do without going.'   Ojo did not go.

Imperatives: imperative negators (also verbal negators in most of the languages) are added at sentence initial position in Defoid languages.

8a. Húré! 8b. Mè húré! (AY) 9a.Wá! 9b. Má wá! (YB) 10a. Fọ̀fọ̀! 10b.Má fọ̀fọ̀! (OL)
   run   NEG run   come NEG come   talk   NEG talk
   'Run! 'Don't run!'   'Come!' 'Don't come!' 'Talk!' 'Don't talk!'

Structural asymmetry between negatives and affirmatives

- Symmetry: Negative markers simply added to affirmatives (see 1, 8-10);

- Asymmetries: Instances of extraction, reordering, lexical changes, e.g.

11a. Òmì dẹ. 11b. **í** che òmì **ń.** (Igala) 12a. Olú ra ewe **ni.** 12b. Olú ù ra ewe. (OL)
   1sg be   3sg-neg be 1sg Neg   Olu buy book a   Olu NEG buy book
   'It is me.' 'It is not me.'   'Olu bought a book.' 'Olu did not buy book.'

13a. Mò **re** ọjà.   13b. Má **yùn** ọjà. (Owé)
    1SG-NOM go market   1SG-NOM-NEG go market
    'I went to the market.'   'I did not go to the market.'

14a. Ó ti dé.   14b. Kò tî dè. (YB)
    3SG-NOM PERF come   NEG PERF-NEG come
    'S/He has come.'   'S/He has not come.'

- Negative markers cliticize to weak pronouns, auxiliaries and other grammatical markers (see 15 (Owé), also examples 5, 11,13,14). Tonal changes noted in the subjects, perfective, auxiliaries and verbs (see data 13-15). Interactions with tense, aspect and modals also.

15a. Mò **re**. 15b. Má **yùn**. 15c. Má tú **yùn**.
   1SG-NOM go   1SG-NOM-NEG go   1SG-NOM-NEG NEG-MOD go
   'I went.   'I did not go.'   'I did not go anymore.'

- **Negative Polarity/ Scope**

- Polarity could be negative or positive; parametric for each language;

- Negation not always denials, rejections or reversal of affirmatives;

- Some have positive meanings and reinforcements (double negation).

16. Mi ò sọ pé kò lè lọ. (YB)   17. Èèghó awọn nó bí mi.(OL)
   1SG-NOM-NEG NEG say that NEG can go   NEG-be them that-RP birth me
   'He/ she can go.'   'They are not my parents.'

DERIVATION OF DEFOID NEGATIVE SENTENCE

- Negation is an operator and the NegP hypothesis asserts that negative particles head their own functional projections;

- Assuming that each of the Neg morphemes identified in the Defoid languages originates in NegP; but argues against a fixed parameterized position in syntactic structure.

18. NegP
    Spec   Neg¹   Posits multi-locus strategies for coding negation (Whaley 2012 & Alqassas 2019).
          Neg VP

MORE DATA

18a. Mo rò pé kò lè lọ. (YB) 18b. Mi ò rò pé ó lè lọ.
    1SG-NOM think that NEG can go   1SG-NOM-NEG think that PRN can go
    'I thought he cannot go.'   'I thought he cannot go.'

19. Olú jẹ isu. (YB)   20. Adé **gb**à mi sá lọ. (AH)
   Olu eat yam   Ade make me run go
   'Olu ate yam.'   'Ade made me escape.'

21. Adé wá nóòní. (OL)   22. Mo sọ pé kò lè lọ. (YB)
   Ade come today   1SG-NOM say that NEG can go
   'Ade will come today.'   'I said that he cannot go.'

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

- Instances of affixation, and double negation noted in Defoid languages;

- Most affirmative constructions can be negativised at syntactic levels; lexical negation also permitted by all the languages but Ayere;

- Position of negative markers differ across the languages;

- Weak pronouns sometimes extracted/cliticized to negative morphemes;

- Cases of dislocation of constituents are also found in the languages;

- Varying morphosyntactic, morphophonological, tonal variations found.

- Some negative markers appear as clitics, affixes and tonal variations in different positions, the HTS syllable is also noted in the languages.

- Features for reinforcing negation and negative transport (NEG-raising) are discovered (see data 18);

- Various functions of negation viz. *rejection, non-existence, prohibition* and *denial* are attested;

- We propose multiple strategies to account for the negation of Defoid languages;

- We conclude that syntactic and morphosyntactic variations are very strong interacting features in the negation of Defoid.

- **Abbreviations:** NEG: negation, SG: singular, NOM: nominative, PERF: perfective, MOD: modal, RP: resumptive pronoun, YB: Yoruba, OL: Olùkùmi: AH:

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