COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF WH-QUESTION MARKERS IN STANDARD YORUBA AND IJESHA DIALECT

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Abstract
This paper analyses the significant similarities and differences (Major areas of convergence and disconvergence). In WH-question formation strategies in Ijesa and standard Yoruba. The objectives of the study are to discover the major areas of convergence and divergence between Wh-question formation strategies in Ijesa dialect and standard Yoruba and to identify identical question markers both in Ijesa dialect and standard Yoruba. Adequate and relevant data on basic and derived sentences were collected from adult native speakers of the two speech forms through oral interview and tape recording for the analysis. Leaning on the Government and Binding (GB) as a theoretical framework for data analysis, the study reveals that contrary to what is obtained in standard Yoruba, the attested Wh-question markers in Ijesa dialect are: *yesee* 'who', *ki* what/which, *kabii* 'where', *karugba* 'when' and *kotiiri* *'why'*. In terms of syntactic structure, the Wh-question markers in Ijesa dialect lack the peculiar focus particle 'ni' that always accompanies Wh-question markers in standard Yoruba. Whenever a subject-NP is questioned at the subject-NP position, the extraction site remained empty in Ijesa dialect, while it is always occupied by a resumption pronoun 'o' in standard Yoruba. In addition, whenever an object-NP is questioned in Ijesa dialect, the last vowel of the subject -NP is lengthened.
Keywords: Standard Yoruba, Ijesa Dialect, Question Marker, Movement Transformation.

Introduction
Scholars over the years have been urged to carry out research on various aspects of Yoruba dialects, as their findings could help solve some of the controversies that have not been solved through the standard variety of the language. Nwachukwu (1988) in Omolewu (2017) buttresses this assertion that 'linguistic theorizing in the western world cannot rest on a firm foundation without some input from African languages'. He explains further that certain structural features of Nigerian/African languages will provide crucial information that can lead to reformulation of some principles of linguistic theory in the western world. Among scholars that heed this clarion call, and have analyzed different aspect of grammar in Yoruba dialects, especially on the aspects of question formation are Omolewu (2017), Oye (2006), and Fabunmi (1998). Oye (2006) did his research on polar question. Through this work, he established the fact that the Yes/No question markers used in the dialect are nse, se, and pa-rin. He explained further that nze and se are variants to nse and se respectively, and that they do occur at pre-position(initial and media) while pa-rin has its first part occurring after the subject, while the later part do occur at sentence final position. Also Omolewu (2017) worked on Wh-question in Egba dialect. He based his analysis on the relationship between Wh-question and focusing in the dialect. His research gathered some illuminating data from which the following Wh-question markers le *e 'who'*, kii 'what', kise 'why', iyi/i-I si 'which', bi si/libi 'where', igbi 'when' were discovered.

Besides, scholarly research work on question formation in the two dialects mentioned, scholars have also carried out research on other aspects of syntax in Ijesa dialects, few among them are Fabunmi (1998) whose work entitled *'Tense, Aspects and Functional Category in Ijesa dialect'* examined how this functional categories function in the dialect. Fabunmi (2005) also carried out studies on *'High Tone Syllable Structure in Ijesa Dialect.* All these works have contributed in one way or the other to the development of the Yoruba language and the grammar of its dialects.

Ijesa Dialect

Ijesa dialect is spoken in six different local government areas of Osun State, which are Oriade, Obokun, Ilesa East, Ilesa West, Atakumosa East and Atakumosa west local government Areas. According to the findings, it was discovered that Ijesa dialect spoken in all aforementioned local governments are similar according to their mode of speaking, even though there are slight differences discovered between them phonologically and syntactically. Yoruba dialectologists like Oyelaran (1977), Akinkugbe (1978), Awobuluy (1998) and Adeniyi (2005) classified Ijesa dialect under the central Yoruba dialect group.

Theoretical Framework

The theory adopted for this study is the Government and Binding Theory, which was later modified as the Principles and Parameters theory. It is a theory of Universal Grammar which emanated from the work of Chomsky (1981) entitled "*Lectures* on *Government and Binding*". Chomsky (1986, 7*)* sees Universal Grammar as 'some system of principles common to the species and available to each individual prior to experience'. Cook (1988,p.1) states that 'Universal Grammar holds that speakers know some set of principles that vary within clearly defined limits from languages to another'.

According to Chomsky (1981) Government and Binding theory consists of interacting sub-systems which can be studied from two different perspectives. These are the rule systems of grammar and sub-systems of principles (modules of grammar).   The sub-components of rule systems are the lexicon which specifies the peculiar features of a word.   These include its morphological, syntactic, categorical and contextual features. The categorical and syntactic components are said to constitute the base component. Guided by the base rules, words are inserted into nodes in the D-structure and these are mapped to the S-structure, there is always a trace of movement as well as co-indexing of anaphors with their antecedents.

Chomsky theory's definition and assertion about GB theory show that it is a modular theory which interacts together through a general rule of transformation known as move alpha. According to Chomsky, this theory has two levels of syntactic structure, which are the deep structure and the surface structure, the elements have been moved. These two structures are mapped together through the move alpha rule, which is the aspect of GB theory that is adopted for this analysis.

Move-alpha as a module under Government and Binding theory explains how Noun Phrases (NP's) are moved from the extraction site to the landing site. Cook (1988, p.20), explains what move alpha entails, when he says, 'Move alpha is the movement of a target category into matching empty category. It is the move-alpha rule that maps the d-structure on to the surface structure'. Black (1998,p.2) also defines move alpha as simple rule basically allowing anything to move anywhere, since the system of constraints is responsible for correctly restricting the movement'. Cowper (1992) in Lamidi (2008, p.51) also explains the function of move alpha within a sentence, when he says 'Move alpha rule move anything anywhere that is, it can move an NP or a WH phrase from its original position (extraction site to another position (landing site) in accordance with the structure permitted in the language'.

In GB theory, every sub-theory has a rule governing it. The rule that governs move alpha is called constraint, and the way this rule operates differs from one language to another. Constraint is therefore very important to movement; it is the rule that guides grammatically and ungrammatically in languages.

Defining Question

Question can be referred to as a statement or message seeking enquiry about unknown information. According to Temitope (2015, p.109), questions are statements or sentences which seek information and for which an appropriate response is expected. Haegeman (2006, p.21) sees interrogative sentences as 'sentences employed as questions'. Crystal (2002, p.218) says questions fall into three main types depending on how such questions are constructed. These are Yes/No questions (polar questions), Wh-questions (content word questions), and alternative questions. Wh-questions require a content response from wide range of possibilities, while alternative question requires a response which relates to options in the interrogative sentence. Wh-questions according to Temitope (2015, P.7), are items that start with

'wh'. They include *who, when, what, why, where and how*.   All these are English Wh-question formatives, and they are also known as Wh-makers. Many other languages like French, Chinese, Yoruba and Igbo have their own peculiar interrogative or content word questions.

Awobuluyi (1978 and 2001) Bamgbose (1990), Yusuf (1995), Ajiboye (2012), and others have identified Wh-element in Standard Yoruba to include: Kíni, taani, ìgbàwo when'. In Ijesa dialect, the Wh-question markers are; yèséè 'who', kí 'what/which/how', kàábi 'where', kótiírí, 'why', élòó 'how much' and kàrúgbà 'when'. The above listed Wh-phrases are used in enquiring into; who is the agent of an action, manner at which an action was performed, location at which an action was performed, and also reasons for the action. However, all these will generate interrogative sentences/Wh-questions such as yesee 'who' for subject-NP movement, *kini* what' for object of the verb movement and kabi 'where' for object of preposition movement, kotiri 'why' and karugba 'when' which replaces temporal PPs and NPs respectively. In this work, our attention will be on comparison between Wh-Question (Content word question) formation in Ijesa dialect and Standard Yoruba.

Wh-movement in Ijesa Dialect and Standard Yoruba
The term Wh-movement according to Ndimele (1992-p.7), comes from generative grammar, where a Wh-word at the D-structure begins at the final clause position and moves to the initial/overt clause position. This syntactic phenomenon is also refers to as Wh-fronting or Wh-preposing. Maduagwu (2012, p.24) recognizes two types of Wh-movement, which are Syntactic Wh-movement and Logical Form (LF) Wh-movement. Syntactic wh-movement involves a situation whereby a linguistic unit is moved from one syntactic position (extraction site) to another (Spec-CP), leaving behind a trace, which can be indicated by 't' the 'copy' marking the point at which the word in question is moved from. Lamidi (2008, P.52) explains that 'this said 'copy' can be used as an indicator that an element has moved out of that position'.

According to Yusuf (1998, p.94), by employing Wh-movement rule, different types of sentences can be generated, and one of such, which is even the most typical is the interrogative content word question. This question type according to him, is labeled after the English spelling of the marker of questions which is WH-words <u>excepts</u> (*how)*, they are: 'who, what, where, when and why'. This, as a result of the motivation from the English Language and which cross-linguistically, all content-word questions have adopted.

Apart from Spec-CP node, which is for Wh-element, any other landing site is not allowed. Nevertheless, another important principle is the trace of movement. Here, all moved constituents must carry along with them the grammatical properties associated with them at their original extraction site; therefore a moved element must enter into a bound with its trace at the original extraction site. This is necessary so that inherent grammatical features can be easily transmitted between the moved element and its trace. This means that the moved Wh-elements and its trace must be co-indexed. Examples below clearly corroborate our assertion.

(1).   Adé ra   isu ní ojà
          Ade ra   usu li oja
          Ade bought yam at market
          'Ade bought yam in the market'.
b).   Tani ó ra   isu ní ojà
         yèséè   ra   usu lí ojà
         who buy yam at market
         'who bought yam in the market?

According to sentence (1b), the question is directed at the Subject-NP in the sentence, and the extraction point of the moved Subject-NP (Ade) remains empty in Ijesa dialect, unlike in standard Yoruba, where a resumptive pronoun 'o' usually replaces the moved subject-NP. It must therefore be known that the same transformational process that involves movement in example (1) above is also applied where a

question is directed at the object of verb in the sentence in Standard Yoruba. Our data from example (2) also buttress this assertion.

(2).a   Ajíbólá ra   eran ni ojà
         Ajibola   buy goat at market
         'Ajibola bought meat in the market'

Wh-question can also be formed in Ijesa dialect by directing question to the direct-object of a verb and preposition respectively. See the example (2b) below as derived from example (2a):

b).   Kíni Ajíbólá ra   ni ojà
       what be Ajibola buy at market
       'What was Ajibola bought in the market?

c).   Ibo   ni Ajíbólá ti   ra   eran
       where be Ajibola   has buy meat
       'Where did Ajibola buy the yam?

Looking at the sentences in (2b&c) above, we realized that the question were directed to the object of the verb in (2b), and to the object of the preposition in example (2c). Therefore, both the object of the verb and preposition were moved to the pre-subject position in (2b &c) respectively, where they surfaced as Wh- marker. In a nutshell, wh- question cannot be realized in Standard Yoruba and Ijesa dialect without the movement of the NP that the question is been directed to, to pre-subject position. In the two speech forms, whenever a Subject-NP, a direct object of the verb or preposition is questioned, there is movement of the affected NP to pre-subject position. The various stages at which WH-movement occur, which produces WH-questions are analyzed as follows:
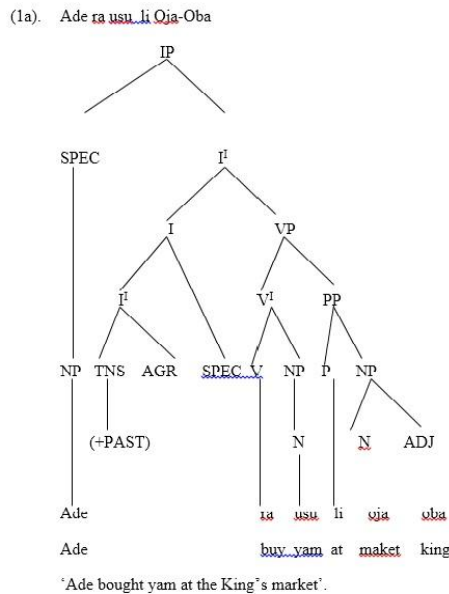
Subject-NP Movement
Yusuf (1997, p. 8) and Arokoyo (2013, p.23), in their view refer to noun phrase as the lexical category that codes the participants in the events or state described by the verb. A noun or pronoun can stand as an NP. It may also consist of sequence of words which is grammatically equivalent to a single word that serves as the keyword. A noun phrase can occur at the subject position, object of verb or preposition, and the nominalized verb, as shown in data (3 & 4), of our analysis.

(3)a.   Ìsòlá ra   usu lí ojà   Oba.
         Isola buy yam at market King
         'Isola bought yam at the King's market'
 b.   Yèséè ra usu   lí ojà   oba
         who buy yam at market king
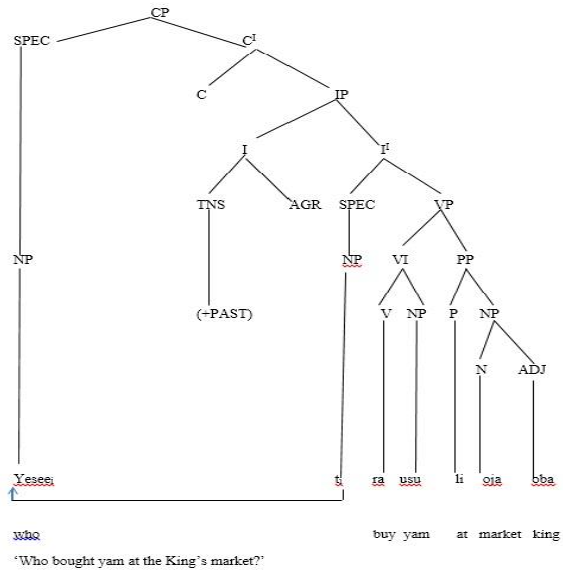   'who bought yam at Kings market?'

(4)a.   Àjàyí fé   àbá rè yéye
         Ajayi like father his seriously
         'Ajayi love his father passionately'.
 b.   Yèséè fé àbá rè yéye
         who like father his seriously
         'Who loves his father passionately?'.
     The above examples are analyzed through phrase marking like this:

(1a). Ade ra usu li Oja-Oba   (b).Yesee ra usu li Oja Oba

Looking at the example in figure (1b) above, we realized that the focus particle 'ni' that usually accompanies the moved subject-NP in Standard Yoruba does not occur in front of the moved subject-NP in Ijesa dialect. Also, the extraction site of the moved subject-NP is usually empty, and the trace at the extraction site is a clear proof that movement has already taken place.

Object-NP Movement
WH-questions in Ijesa dialect are also formed through the movement of NP from the object of a verb or preposition to pre-subject. The WH-question markers that replaces the moved object-NP at both the object of a verb or preposition positions respectively are 'ki' 'what' and 'kabi' 'where' in Ijesa dialect. In the dialect, whenever a question is directed at a direct-object of a verb, the last vowel of the Subject-NP in Ijesa must be lengthened. Examples in (5a&b) give credence to this assertion.

(5a).   Solá   bí omo   hi ulé
         Sola   born   child to house
         'Sola gave birth to a baby in his house'
b.   Kíi   Sola   bi   ?
         Wh-marker   Sola   born
         'what did Sola gave birth to?
(6a).   Solá bí   Omo   hí ulé
         Sola born child at house
         'Sola gave birth to a baby at her home'.
b.   Kàábi Sola bí omo hí?
         Wh-marker   Sola born baby to
         'Where did Sola gave birth to a baby?'

According to the data in (5b) needless the last vowel of the subject-NP is lengthened when a question is directed to object of the verb and preposition respectively. The examples in data (6a & b) can be analyzed through phrases marking rule like this:

(6a). Sola bi omo hi ule.   (6b) Kabi Sola bi omo hi?.

'Sola gave birth to a baby in her home'.

'Where did Sola give birth to a baby?'
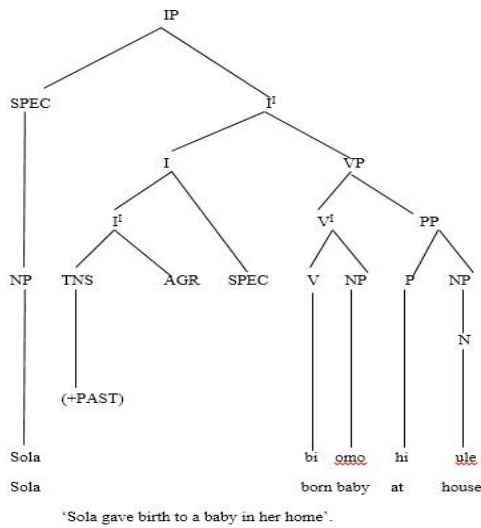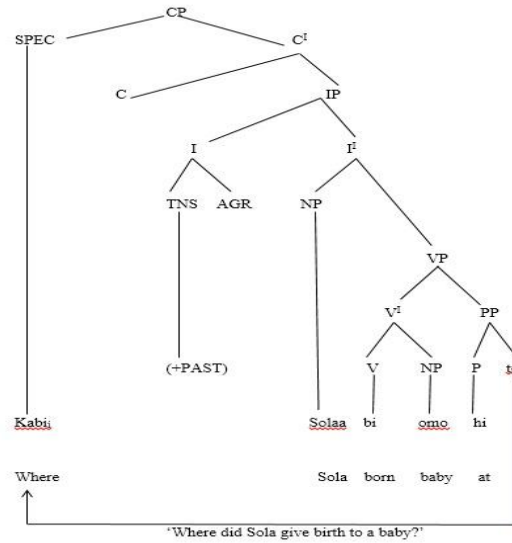
The example in (6a) definitely shows that the place where the NP was moved from is empty, and a trace of movement is put in place.

Adjunct Movement
According to Crystal (2009,p.14), adjunct is primarily an adverb which modifies an action performed by a verb in a sentence. It can also be referred to as a group of items whose function is to specify the mode of action of the verb. According to Radford (1998, p.48) other than the head, all the remaining words in a phrase are dependent. The remaining words or dependents can either be adjuncts or complements. Complements are frequently obligatory, whereas adjuncts are always optional'. Most of the time, adjuncts could be prepositional phrase, adverbial phrase or adjectival phrase. Let us consider some adjuncts movement from Ijesa dialect.

(7)a.   Ìsòlá   sùn   hí   orúpò
          Isola   sleep   at   room
          'Isola   is sleeping   inside the bed-room'.

b.   Àlàló já òdòdó pupa
         Alao cut flower red
         'Alao has red flower'

c.   Àjàlá je usu lígbì é ri odó mú gún usu
          Ajala eat yam when not see pestle take pound yam

'Ajala ate his cooked yam, when he could not find a pounding machine to prepare pounded yam'.
Looking at data (7), the prepositional phrase such as *hi orupo ' inside the bed-room', pupa* 'red' which is adjectival phrase and the adverbial phrase *ligbi e ri odo mu gunyan* 'when he couldn't   find a pounding machine to prepare the pounded yam' are typical examples of an adjuncts. Each adjunct provides additional information about such thing as appearance, manner, location in which something was done. Evidence that the prepositional phrase *'hi orupo' ni* (7a) is an adjunct, comes from the fact that it can be replaced with different PPs, using virtually any head preposition such as: *pelu irora 'with pains', fun ogbon iseju'* for the thirty minutes' etc A critical look at data (7a-c) reveal that we can ask about appearance, location, qualifier of an item of manner at which an action that the verb is talking about has been done. Hence, the need for Wh-question markers such as; *'where, which, and why'* respectively. Let us consider the data below for analysis:

(8).a   Kàábi Ìsòlá sùn hí?.
        Where Isola sleep at
        'Where did Isola sleep?'

b.   kí   uru   òdòdó kí Àlàó já
        which type flower that Alao cut
        'Which type of flower did Alao get?.
c.   kótiírí kí Àjàlá je usu
        why that Ajala eat yam
        'Why did Ajala eat yam?'

The examples in data (8) can also be analyzed through phrase marking rule like this:

(8a).   Kabi Isola sun hi?   (8c).   Kotiiri kii Ajala je usu?

'Where did Isola sleep?'

'Why did Ajala eat yam?'
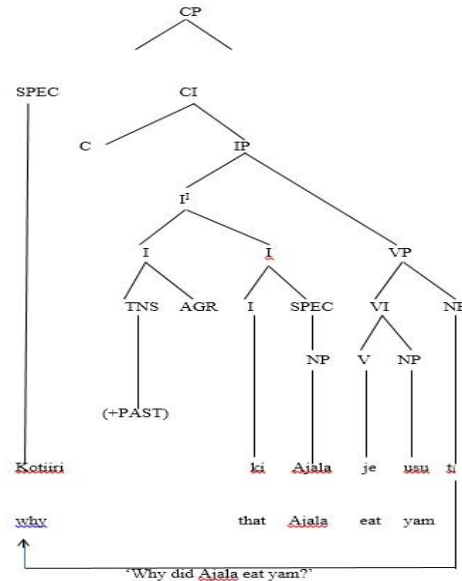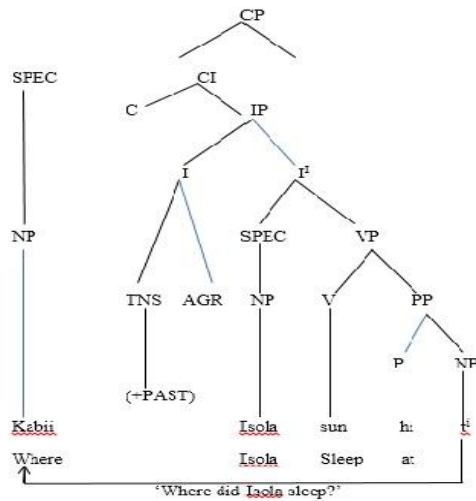
Conclusion

This paper made critical findings on the differences, as well as similarities between Wh-question formation strategies in Ijesa dialect and standard Yoruba, and it was discovered that Wh-questions statements in Ijesa sub-dialect were derived through movement of some syntactic unit, from different syntactic positions to sentence initials. Such positions include; Subject-NP position, direct-object of verb or preposition position, as well as adjunct position. According to the findings, it was also discovered that the focus particle 'ni' does not accompany Wh-question markers in Ijesa dialect, as it is used in Standard Yoruba, and some other dialects of the language where the focus particle does appear immediately after WH-question markers. It was also observed that the last vowel of the Subject-NP of a WH-question statement in Ijesa is always lengthened, whenever a question is directed at a direct-object of a verb and preposition respectively, which is not the case in Standard Yoruba. It is pertinent to also note that in dialect, whenever a question is directed at Subject-NP in a Wh-construction, the extraction point of the moved element remains empty, unlike in Standard Yoruba where a resumptive pronoun 'o' replaces the moved subject-NP. Therefore, Wh-question formation strategies in the standard Yoruba and ijesha dialect, forms have some area of similarities as well as differences.

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