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Aspects of Syntactic Focus Constructions in Igbo

Syntactic focalization in Igbo is a process that requires movement of the focused element to a focus domain (Focus Projection). This paper provides a descriptive analysis of focus constructions in Igbo within the cartographic framework. The data for the analysis were drawn mainly by elicitation from the Ngwa dialect of Igbo which the authors speak with native speakers' competence. The findings of this paper reveal that focus strategy in Igbo is in most cases realized by the use of the specific focus marker **kà** which encodes the focus information. Igbo constructions that contain focused constituents manifest syntactic, semantic and phonological characteristics that distinguish them from other non-derived constructions. It has been observed that focused constituents in Igbo move in overt syntax in order to reach a spec-head configuration ([Spec, FocP]) where they check off their [+F(ocus)] features in a spec-head relation with the focus head (Foc), which also encodes the feature [+F]. It has also been revealed that focus in situ strategy is not allowed in Igbo and focused constituents may involve categories of different types.

1. Introduction

Semantically, focus speaks to a choice among alternatives. It is that part of the clause that provides the most relevant or most salient information in a given discourse situation which the speaker assumes the hearer does not share with him/her. There are basically two types of focus: information focus and contrastive focus. While information focus provides *new* information, for instance, by providing an answer to a non-clefted wh-question (such as what did he buy?), contrastive focus considers *alternatives* more explicitly while at the same time counters hearer's expectation especially in terms of the

unexpectedness of the value compared with possible alternative values (Aissen 2015). Focus can be expressed prosodically, morphologically and syntactically. In this paper, we have examined syntactic focus.

Focus as a syntactic process typically involves movement of constituents to the left periphery (Cinque 1990; Culicover 1992; Puskas 1995, 1996; Rizzi 1997, 2001, 2004a, 2004b, 2013a, 2013b; Ndimele 2003, Aboh 2004, Radford 2004, Bassong 2014). As a functional category, focus can be indicated in a number of structural ways: it can be indicated phonologically (by stress, tone or intonation), morphologically/ lexically (by special focus marking particles, clitics or other markers), or syntactically (by word order and especially the so-called ex-situ strategies) or, by a combination of these different strategies. In addition, the structures used to mark focus are not necessarily independent, but may also be related to other sentence constructions (wh questions, relative clauses, copular sentences). Many languages exhibit a focalization process that requires leftward movement of the focused element to the left adjacent position of a morphologically realized focus marker overtly or covertly (Aboh 2004, Rizzi 1997).

Studies in Igbo syntax have shown that focus is very pervasive in Igbo. Nwachukwu (1995) for instance notes that focus is discourse feature which has definite syntactic coding. Aboh (2004, 2007, and 2010), Bassong (2010, 2014), etc have discussed focus constructions in other African languages within the framework of cartographic approach. The present paper examines syntactic focus in Igbo within the cartographic framework (Rizzi 1997, Shlonsky 2010). Following Aboh (2004), we propose that Igbo exhibits a focus process that triggers leftward movement of the focused category (i.e. a maximal projection or a head) to a specific focus position. Like Gungbe (Aboh 2004), sentences that contain a focused category exhibit a number of syntactic, semantic and phonological characteristics that distinguish them from other non-derived Igbo sentences as shown in (1a-c) where (1a) contains no focused element while (1b) contains a focused direct object NP **akwukwo** immediately preceding the focus marker *kà*. Also sentence (1c) contains a focused indirect object NP **Èmekà** which occurs also immediately after the focus marker *kà*.

- (1a) Àda nzùùlà Èmekà akwukwọ
 Ada PRE.buy.PERF. Emeka book
 ‘Ada bought Emeka a book’

- (1b) **Akwụkwọ** **kà** Àda òzùlà Èmekà < **akwụkwọ** >
 BOOK FOC Ada PRE.buy.PERF Emeka
 ‘Ada bought Emeka a book’
- (1c) **Èmekà** **kà** Àdá òzùlà <**Èmekà**> akwụkwọ
 Emeka FOC Ada PRE.buy.PERF book
 ‘Ada bought EMEKA a book’

The sentences in (1b & c) are focused sentences since they contain focused constituents and those that do not include focused elements such as (1a) are known as neutral/underived sentences. Since focusing involves the movement of a maximal projection like an NP in Igbo, we follow ideas put forward by Rizzi (1997) and Aboh (2004) to note that the focus strategy in the language requires leftward movement of the focused category in the specifier or head position of a functional projection, FocP whose head Foc is specified as [+F]. We further propose that Igbo focused constituents like Gungbe (Aboh 2004) are subject to a licensing condition, which is satisfied in overt syntax. Igbo requires that every category that is specified as [+F(ocused)] should be in spec-head configuration with a [+F] head. In such a symmetrical checking relation, the focused phrase must raise in overt syntax to check its focused features (Aboh 2004; Rizzi 1990, 1997; Brody 1990, 1995a, 1995b; Chomsky 1995). The focused constituents in (1b) and (1c) both which appear in displaced positions on the left edge of the neutral sentences left behind empty traces at the extraction site which are theta-governed by their respective verbs that subcategorized them. The traces are also antecedent governed by the focused constituents as shown in (2a) and (2b) respectively.

- (2a) **Akwụkwọ_i** **kà** Àda òzùlà Èmekà t_i
 BOOK FOC Ada PRE.buy.PERF Emeka
 ‘Ada bought Emeka a book’
- (2b) **Èmekà_i** **kà** Àdá òzùlà t_i akwụkwọ
 Emeka FOC Ada PRE.buy.PERF book
 ‘Ada bought EMEKA a book’

However, in this paper, we have treated the movement of the focused constituents as a process of copying the same constituent into a focused position, thus deleting the phonological features of the moved constituent in its extraction site while preserving all the features in the landing site. The deleted

phonological features of a moved and focused constituent have been indicated throughout this paper by enclosing them within the ‘less than’ and ‘greater than’ symbols (< >). As has been stated earlier, the Igbo sentences in (1b-c and 2a-2b) exhibit a syntactic process that moves the focused constituent to the left periphery of the clause. Thus, the focused maximal projections (i.e. the NP constituents of the type XP), occur to the left-adjacent position to the morpheme *kà* and leaves a copy in the TP-internal position, as in (2). The occurrence of focused maximal projections to the left-adjacent position to the morpheme *ka* is analyzed as evidence that Igbo focused constituents may not always be analyzed in terms of cleft constructions. The Igbo focus constructions are equivalent to focus constructions in Gungbe (Aboh 2004), Italian (Rizzi 1997), Hungarian (Brody 1990), Basaa (Bassong 2014) because these manifest the same left peripheral structure.

This paper is organized as follows: section 1 is the introduction while section 2 provides the characteristic features of focus in Igbo. Section 3 highlights the interaction between focus and wh-movement in Igbo, while section 4 examines the constituents that can be focused in Igbo. Section 5 discusses focus in Igbo as movement to the [spec, FocP]. In section 6, we examine focus in relative clauses in Igbo. While Section 7 examines focus projection recursion and simultaneous focus in Igbo, section 8 is the conclusion. The high tone has been left unmarked through this paper.

2. Characteristics of Focus in Igbo

Sentence (1a) is a neutral sentence; it displays the SVO pattern and contains no focus marker. Sentences (1a, 1b, 2a and 2b) are instances of sentences with focused constituents. The direct object *akwụkwọ* ‘book’ in (1a and 2a) has moved leftward to the position immediately to the left of *ka* and the word order is object *kà* subject verb (O-*kà*-S-V) in (1b) In example (1b and 2b), the indirect object (IO) *Èmekà* has also moved immediately to the left of *kà* giving rise to the word order IO- *kà*- S- V. In all the cases (1b-1c, 2a-2c) the focused constituent received a focus interpretation and the movement in each is seen as salient. The ungrammatical sentence (3a) shows that the focus marker *kà* cannot precede the focused constituent *akwụkwọ* ‘book’ while (3b) shows that constituent focusing cannot occur in the absence of *kà*. Also, the ungrammatical (3c) shows that multiple focusing of NP objects in simple clauses is prohibited in Igbo.

- (3a) *kà akwụkwọ Àda òzùlà Èmekà <akwụkwọ>
 FOC book Ada PRE-buy.PST.PERF Emeka
- (b) *Akṵkwọ Àda òzùlà Èmekà <akwụkwọ>
 book Ada PRE.buy.PST. PERF Emeka
- (c) *Akṵkwọ Èmekà Àda òzùlà <Èmekà> <akwụkwọ>
 book Emeka Ada PRE.buy.PST.PERF

Sentences (4a-b) clearly indicate that Igbo does not allow focus in situ strategy at object position because no focus interpretation can be given to *Èmekà* (indirect object) or *akwụkwọ* (direct object) in such constructions (4a) and (4b) respectively.. In addition, unlike the English case '*PETER eats everyday*', whereby the focused subject PETER bears focal stress (cf. Culicover 1992), no prosodic mechanism arises in the Igbo focus strategy for the object position. Focusing is realized only through movement of the focused object NP constituent to the left- adjacent position to *kà*, as shown by examples (1a-b, 2a-b).

- (4a) *Àda òzùlà ÈMEKA akwụkwọ
 Ada PRE.buy.PST.PERF Emeka book
- (b) *Àda òzùlà Èmekà AKWUKWỌ
 Ada PRE.buy.PST.PERF Emeka book

Similarly, focusing of constituents at subject position in Igbo with or without the focus marker *kà* is not a possible grammatical option. This accounts for the following ungrammatical constructions in (4c) compared with (1a) on one hand and with (1b-c) on other hand.

- (4c) * Àda kà òzùlà Èmekà akwụkwọ
 Ada FOC PRE.buy.PST.PERF Emeka book

The impossibility of subject focusing in Igbo may be due to the fact that the subject position is pragmatically and syntactically unmarked focus position and therefore, requires no further raising for focus checking purposes. As can be seen from the sentences in (5), focus movement is also available in subordinate

clauses. Example (5a) is a neutral subordinate clause which does not contain focused constituent and does not receive the interpretation of a focus phrase. On the hand, sentences (5b-c) are instances of embedded focus sentences. In (5b) the direct object *akwukwọ* has moved to the position immediately to the left of *ka*, while in (5c) it is the indirect object *Èmekà* that has moved to the focus position.

(5a) Echè m̀ nà Àda òzùùl̀à Èmekà akwukwọ
 PRE.think I that Ada PRE.buy.PST. PERF Emeka book
 ‘I think that Ada bought Emeka a book’

(b) Echè m̀ nà **akwukwọ** kà Àda òzùùl̀à Èmekà <akwukwọ>
 PRE.think I that book FOC Ada PRE.buy.PST.PERF Emeka
 ‘I think that Ada bought A BOOK for Emeka’

(c) Echè m̀ nà **Èmekà** kà Àda òzùùl̀à <Èmekà> akwukwọ
 PRE.think I that Emeka FOC Ada PRE.buy.PST.PERF book
 ‘I think that Ada bought a book for EMEKA’

The examples so far presented in (2-5) show that focusing in Igbo requires the leftward movement of the focused constituent to a specific position, the focus site, a position which is immediately to the left of the low tone morpheme *kà*, the focus marker, the morphological realization of the focus feature [+F] (cf. Aboh 2004).

3. Focus and Wh-Questions in Igbo

Sentences (6a-b) show that the Igbo movement of the wh-phrase to the left periphery of a clause in wh-question formation is very similar to the focus process involving non-wh elements in (7a-c), as it involves movement of the wh-phrase to the left position of the FM *kà*.

(6a) **Gini** kà Àda òrĩrĩ <**gini**>
 What FOC Ada PRE.eat.PST <what>
 ‘WHAT did Ada eat?’

(b) **Ònye** kà Ezè nkwùrù <**onye**>
 Who FOC Eze PRE.talk.PST
 ‘WHO did Eze talk about?’

- (c) **Èbee** kà Ngozi ngàrà <**èbee**>
 WHERE FOC Ngozi PRE.go.PST
 ‘Where did Ngozi go to?’
- (7a) **Ùwe** kà Àda nzùùlà Obìnnà <**ùwe**>
 Cloth FOC Ada PRE-buy-PERF Obinna
 ‘Ada bought Emeka A CLOTH’
- (b) **Egō** kà nnà ya nnyèrè Òbi <**egō**>
 money FOC father his PRE.give.PST Obi
 ‘His father gave Obi SOME MONEY’
- (c) **Òbi** kà nnà ya nnyèrè <**Òbi**> egō
 Obi FOC father his PRE.give.PST money
 ‘His father gave OBI some money.’

However, unlike in languages like the English language where the movement of the wh-element is obligatory (compare (7d) with (7e)), the movement of the wh-phrase in wh-questions to the position immediately to the left of the FM *kà* is not obligatory in Igbo because Igbo also allows wh-in situ strategy in which case the wh-elements can remain at their base-generated object positions as shown in (7f-7h) or at their base-generated subject position as in (7i -7j). Wh-in situ strategy however, is not within the scope of the present paper.

(7d) ? He likes eating **what**?

(7e) **What_i** does he like eating t_i?

(7f) Àda nrịrị **gịnị** ?
 Ada PRE.eat.PST what
 ‘WHAT did Ada eat?’

(7g) Eze nkwùrù **ònye** ?
 Eze PRE.talk.PST who
 ‘WHO did Eze talk about?’

(7h) Ngozi ngàrà èbee ?
 Ngozi PRE.go.PST where
 ‘WHERE did Ngozi go to?’

(7i) Ònye mbiara ?
 who PRE.come.PST
 ‘WHO came?’

(7j) Gini mmere?
 What PRE.do.PST
 ‘What happened?’

It is observed from sentences in (6a-c) that the wh-phrases *gini*, ‘what’ *ònye* ‘who’ and *èbeē* ‘where’ occur before the FM *kà*, in the same way, the focused non-wh elements *ùwe* ‘cloth’, *egō* ‘money’, and *Òbi* also occur before the FM *kà* in (7a-c). A much closer look at the data in (6a-c) and (7a-c), raise the question of whether it is possible for a focused non-wh- category *ágwó* as in (8a) to co-occur with a wh-phrase *gini* as in (8b) in a focused position within the same clause. This is however, not possible as shown by the ungrammatical (8c & 8d).

(a) Agwọ kà Ezè nhùrù <agwọ>
 snake FOC Eze PRE.see.PST
 ‘Eze saw A SNAKE’

(b) Gini kà Ezè nhùrù <gini>?
 what FOC Eze PRE-see-PST
 WHAT did Eze see?

(8c) * Agwọ kà gini kà Ezè nhùrù <agwo> <gini>
 Snake FOC what FOC Eze PRE.see.PST

(d) * Gini kà agwọ kà Ezè nhùrù <gini> <agwọ>
 What FOC snake FOC Eze PRE.see.PST

In the ungrammatical (8c), the focused object *agwọ* ‘snake’ occurs to the left, adjacent to the FM *kà* and precedes the wh-phrase *gīnī* ‘what’ which also occurs at the left position, adjacent to the FM. In (8d) the order is reversed but the sentence is still ungrammatical. However, sentences (8a-b) are grammatical because it is only the non-wh constituent *agwọ* or *gini* that is focused, without a preposed wh-phrase in the same clause. We therefore, conclude that the Igbo focused non-wh constituents and the preposed wh-phrases compete for the same focus site which lies immediately to the left of the FM *kà* (cf. Aboh 2004).

4. What Constituents can be Focused in Igbo?

Like some other languages, focusing in Igbo apart from affecting wh-elements may involve constituents of different types, as clearly indicated by the sentences in (1a-b), (2), (5b-c), (7a-c), and (9-12). In sentences (9a-c), the bracketed elements at the edge of the constructions show that the target of focus movement is generally NPs (DPs).

- (9a) **Akwụkwọ** kà Àda òzùùlà Èmeka <**akwụkwọ**>
 book FOC Ada PRE-buy-PERF Emeka
 ‘Ada bought a BOOK for Emeka’

- (a) **Èmeka** kà Àda òzùùlà <**Èmeka**> akwụkwọ.
 Emeka FOC Ada PRE.buy.PERF book
 ‘Ada bought a book for EMEKA’

The copies of the focused /moved constituents which lack phonological representations are highlighted in bold prints in (9a-b). Focusing in Igbo can also affect adverbial phrase (10a-b), adjectival phrases (11a-b) and prepositional phrases (12a-b).

- (10a) **ntàkiri-ntàkiri** kà Èzè nrùrù ụlò ya <**ntàkiri ntàkiri**>
 small-small FOC Eze PRE.build.PST house his
 ‘Eze GRADUALLY built his house’

- (b) **Ùnyiahù** kà Àda ògàrà ahia <**ùnyahù**>
 yesterday FOC Ada PRE.go.PST market
 ‘Ada went to the market YESTERDAY’

(11a) **Mpekele** kà Àda_i ndị <**mpekele**> m̀gbè ọ_i b̄àrà n'ụlò anyị
 little FOC Ada PRE.be when 3SG come.PST PREP-house our
 'Ada was YOUNG when she came to our house'

(b) **Ogologo** kà Àda ndị <**ogologo**>
 tall FOC Ada PRE.be
 'Ada is TALL'

(12a) **n'ùtùtù** kà Àda ngàrà ahia <**n'ùtùtù**>
 PREP-morning FOC Ada PRE.go.PST market
 'Ada went to the market IN THE MORNING'

(b) **n' ụlò** kà Àda òdòtèrè àkpà ya <**n' ụlò**>
 PREP-house FOC Ada PRE.keep.PST bag her
 'Ada kept her bag IN THE HOUSE'

The data in (9-12) suggest that the focus position in Igbo is not specified for a unique type of constituent, since it can host any focused XP. This is strong evidence that focus movement is not case-driven even though the focused movement so far examined in Igbo involves only non-verbal categories, which appear to the position immediately to the left of the morpheme *kà*.

5. Focusing in Igbo as Movement to [Spec FocP]

So far, we have shown that Igbo focus strategy involves a syntactic process that necessarily triggers movement of the focused phrase to a preverbal position immediately to the left of FM *kà*. In Igbo, like some other languages like Italian (Rizzi 1997, 2004), Hungarian (Puskas 1996) Gungbe (Aboh 2004), Baasa (Bassong 2014), etc. the landing site for focused constituents is unique and cannot be considered to be [Spec-force P]. Note from (5b-c) that the focused elements occur in a position right to the complementizer *nà* 'that', which is traditionally regarded as occurring in Force (13a). Similarly, the focus site cannot be associated with the I-system because focused elements are realized in a pre-subject position to the left of the FM *kà* (13b-c).

(13a) Echè m̀ nà ụlò_i kà Èze òrùrù Àda <**ụlò**>
 PRE.think I that house FOC Eze PRE.build.PST Ada
 'I think that Eze built A HOUSE for Ada'

- (b) **Ulò** kà Èze òrùrù <**ulò**> Àda
 house FOC Eze PRE.build.PST Ada
 ‘Eze built A HOUSE for Ada.’

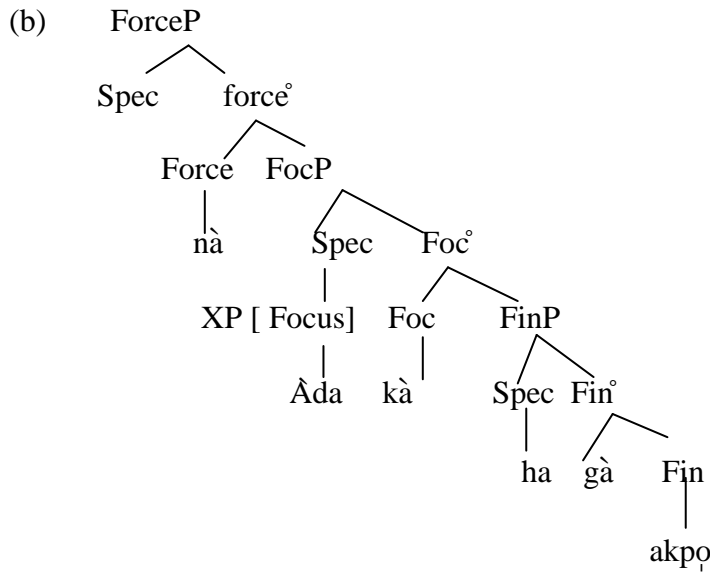
- (c) **Àda** kà Èze òrùrù <**Àda**> ulò
 Ada FOC Eze PRE.build.PST house
 ‘Eze built ADA a house’

Following Rizzi (2004a & b) and Aboh (2004), we argue that Igbo focus constructions are manifestations of the left periphery. The focus domain corresponds to a projection, the FocP that is integrated to the C-system. Since focused categories require the FM, we suggest that FocP is present in the structure only when there is a focus category to be sanctioned by spec-head requirement. The Foc hosts the [+F] feature which is morphologically realized in Igbo as *kà*. On the other hand, [spec- FocP] (i.e. the position immediately to the left of the FM *kà*) is assumed to be the focus site, a position which is not involved in case assignment and can therefore contain any focused element (Aboh 2004, Rizzi 1997; Brody 1990, Puska 1995). This means that the focused category is in [spec FocP] and Foc⁰ expressed by the FM *kà*, are in spec-head configuration, and no other constituent should intervene between them. Any intervening constituent will lead the derivation to crash as can be observed from the ungrammatical (14) where the constituent *ùnyiahụ* intervenes between the focused constituent *ulò* and the FM *kà*.

- (14) ***Ulò**_i ùnyiahụ kà Èze rùchàrà t_i
 house yesterday FOC Eze complete-certain.PST

In (15a) however, which is grammatical, there is no such intervention between the focused constituent *Àda* and the FM *kà* even though the focused construction is preceded by a main clause. The FocP appears between Force⁰, expressed by *nà* ‘that’ and Fin⁰ realized by the subjunctive marker *gà*. We claim that when the FocP is triggered, it projects as the complement of Force⁰ and its head Foc⁰ takes FinP as a complement, as represented in (15b).

- (15a) **Asĩrĩ** m̀ nà Àda kà ha gà àkpo
 PRE-say.PST I that Ada FOC 3PL subj. PRE.call
 ‘I said that they should call ADA



The fact that the subject *ha* ‘they’ intervenes between the FM and the subjunctive *gà* in sentence (15a), preclude an analysis in terms of Verb- to Finite- to Focus movement. Like Gungbe, Igbo situation is compatible with the idea that the FM is base-generated or first merged in Foc° (cf. Chomsky 1995, Aboh 2004) and the focus domain should be distinguished from the ForceP and FinP in Igbo.

6. Focusing in Relative Clauses in Igbo

It is not possible to move a relativized constituent to a focus position headed by the FM *kà* in Igbo. Sentences in (16) are instances of neutral relative clauses in which the relativized constituents are the DP object *nwannē m* in (16a) and the DP subject *nne m* in (16b). The ungrammatical sentences (16c-d) clearly indicate that neither the relativized DP object nor the relativized DP subject can be focused.

- (16a) **Nwannē m** òkè Ezè nhùrù <**nwannē m**>
 sibling my that_[REL] Eze PRE.see.PST
 ‘My sibling that Eze saw.’

- (b) **Nne m** onyē <**nne m**> mbiara n'ulò
 mother my who_[REL] PRE.come.PST PREP-house
 'My mother who came to the house'
- (c) * **Nwannē m** òkè kà Èze nhùrù <**nwannē m**>
 sibling my that_[REL] FOC Eze PRE.see.PST
 'MY SIBLING that Eze saw.'
- (d) * **Nne m** onye kà <**nne m**> mbàrà n'ulò
 mother my who_[REL] FOC PRE.come.PST PREP-house
 'MY MOTHER that came to the house'

Even though the relativized DP-subject can be freely extracted outside the relative clause (but not focused with the FM *kà*) and also without leaving behind an overt resumptive pronominal trace in its base-position as in (16b), such overt resumptive pronominal trace (*o* 's/he) of the relativized NP subject is allowed in the base-position if the relativized subject NP is focused with the FM *kà* outside the relative clause as seen in the grammatical (17a). However, without the occurrence of the resumptive pronominal trace in the subject base-position, the resulting construction is ungrammatical as in (17b).

- (17a) **Nwannē m_i** òkè azù kà **o_i** hùrù n'òkù
 sibling my that_[REL] fish FOC 3SG roast.PST PREP-fire
- (17b) ***Nwannē m** òkè azù kà <**Nwannē m**> hùrù n'òkù
 sibling my that_[REL] fish FOC roast.PST PREP-fire
 'MY SIBLING that roasted the fish'

7. Focus Projection Recursion and Simultaneous Focus in Igbo

Example (18d), shows that multiple focusing is not available in Igbo; the reason being that only one specific position is available for the focusing of constituents (cf. Kayne 1994; Aboh 2004) as shown in (18b) and (18c) which are derived from (18a), showing that only the direct or the indirect object can be focused at any given time. Sentence (18e) also shows that focus recursion is not possible in Igbo.

- (18a) **Ezè** òzùlà **Àda** **akwukwò**
 Eze PRE.buy.PERF Ada book
 'Eze bought Ada a book'

- (b) **Akwụkwọ** kà **Eze** òzùlà **Àda** <**akwụkwọ**>
 book FOC Eze PRE.buy.PERF Ada
 ‘Eze bought Ada a BOOK’
- © **Àda** kà **Eze** òzùlà <**Àda**> **akwụkwọ**
 Ada FOC Eze PRE-buy-PERF book
 ‘Eze bought ADA a book’
- (d) ***Akwụkwọ** **Àda** kà **Eze** òzùlà <**Àda**> <**akwụkwọ**>
 book Ada FOC Eze PRE-buy-PERF
- (e) ***Akwụkwọ** kà **Ada** kà **Eze** òzùlà <**Àda**> <**akwụkwọ**>
 book FOC Ada FOC Eze PRE.buy.PERF

Aboh (2004) and Puskas (1995) have suggested similar analysis in Gungbe and Hungarian respectively. The impossibility of focus recursion in Igbo may be seen as deriving from interpretational constraints on focusing. Thus, if focusing is understood as selecting an entity in an identificational way in Igbo, there can be no multiple occurrence of separate focusing syntactically realized as separate focus projection (Aboh 2004). Igbo constructions exclude simultaneous focusing in the main and the embedded clause (see Rizzi 1997 for similar proposal). Compare the ungrammatical sentence (19a) to the grammatical examples (19b-c) where only one focus constituent is allowed.

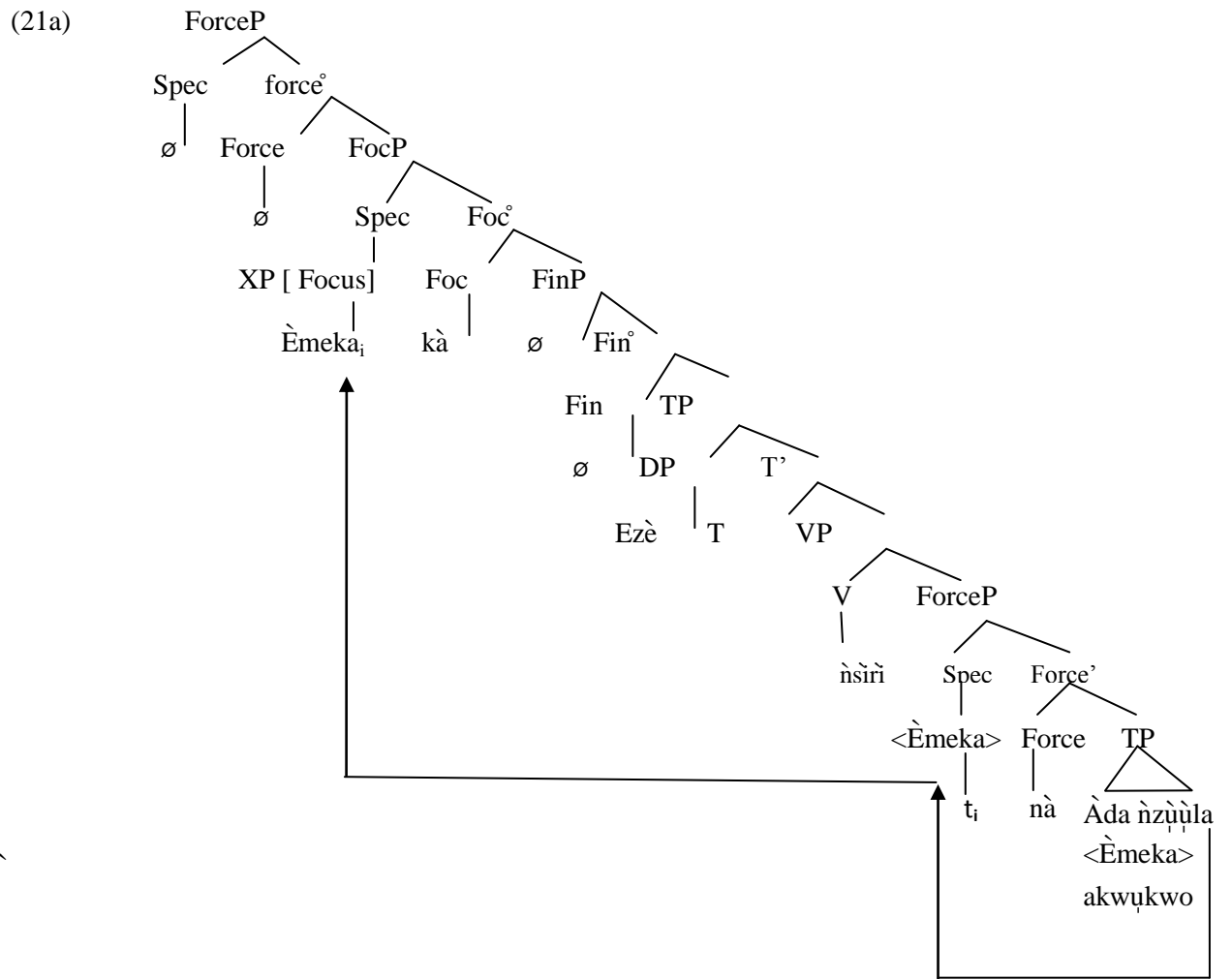
- (19a) ***Èze** kà <**Èze**> òsịrị nà **akwụkwọ** ka **Èmekà** kà Àda òzùlà
 Eze FOC PRE.say.PST that book FOC Emeka FOC Ada
 PRE.buy.PST <**Èmekà**> <**akwukwo**>
 ‘Eze said that BOOK EMEKA Ada bought’
- (b) **Eze** òsịrị nà **akwụkwọ** kà Àda òzùlà **Èmekà** <**akwụkwọ**>
 Eze PRE.say.PST that book FOC Ada PRE.buy.PST Emeka
 ‘Eze said that Ada bought Emeka A BOOK’
- (c) **Eze** òsịrị nà **Èmekà** kà Àda òzùlà <**Èmekà**> **akwụkwọ**.
 Eze PRE.say.PST that Emeka FOC Ada PRE-buy-PST.PERF. book
 ‘Eze said that Ada bought EMEKA a book’

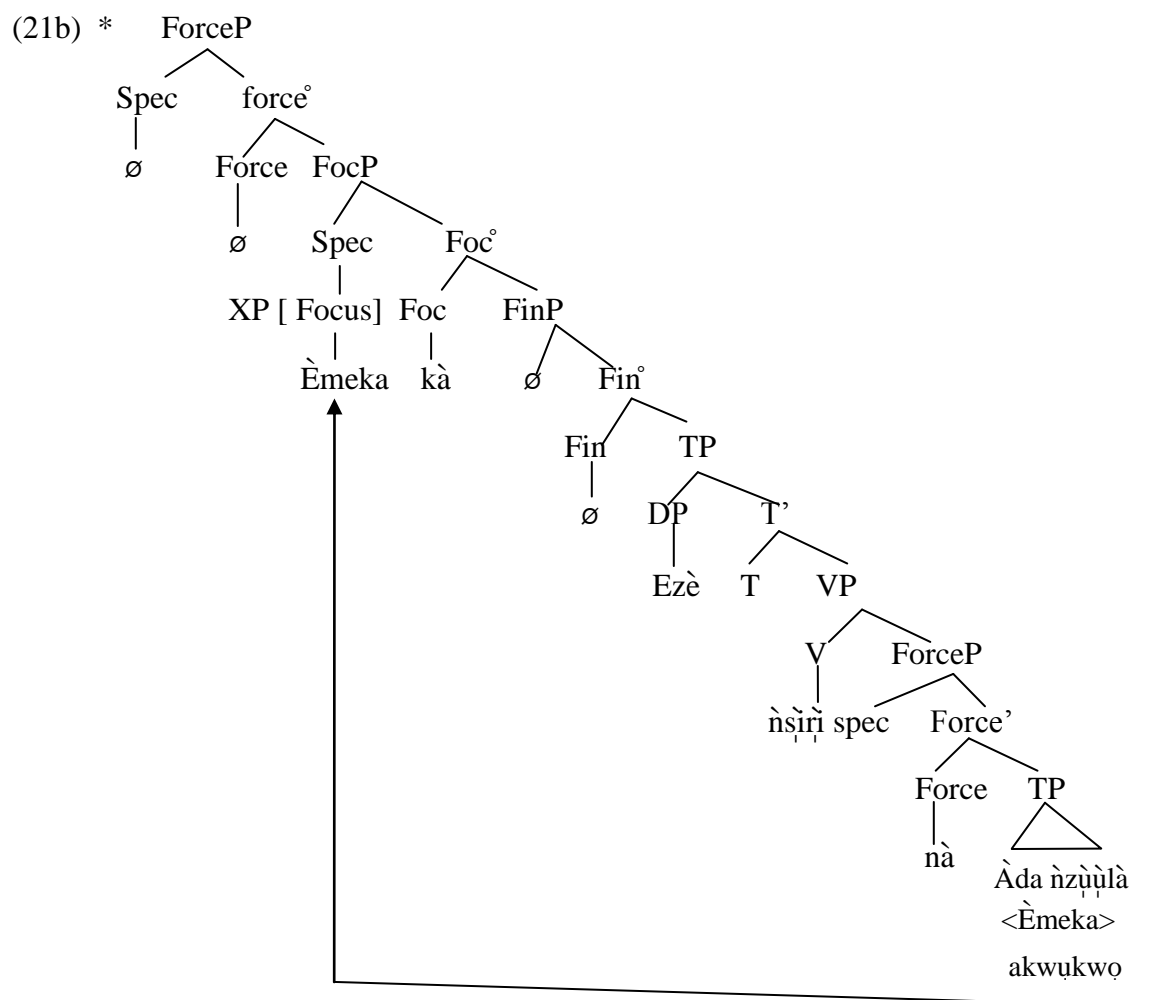
Sentence (19a) is ungrammatical because of simultaneous focusing; with a constituent focused in the matrix and another one in the subordinate clause, and this clearly shows that the position immediately to the left of the FM cannot be activated in both main and embedded clauses unlike sentences (19b-c) which do not involve simultaneous focus. In sentence (19b), the direct object *ákwúkwọ́* is focused while in sentence (19c), the indirect object *Èmeká* is focused. Sentences (20a-b) illustrate long focus-movement of the embedded objects *akwúkwọ́* ‘book’ and *Èmeká* to the main clauses respectively.

(20a) **Akwúkwọ́** kà Ezè òşĩřĩ nà Àda òzùùlà Èmeká <**akwúkwọ́**>
 book FOC Eze PRE/say.PST that Ada PRE.buy.PST.PERF Emeka
 ‘Eze said Ada bought A BOOK for Emeka.’

(b) **Èmeká** kà Ezè òşĩřĩ nà Àda òzùùlà <**Èmeká**> akwúkwọ́
 Emeka FOC Eze PRE.say.PST that Ada PRE.buy.PST.PERF. book
 ‘Eze said that Ada bought EMEKA a book.’

We observe that in long focus movement as illustrated in (20a-b), the focused objects *akwúkwọ́* and *Èmeká* of the embedded clauses did not just move from their positions to the focus site of the main clauses, rather the focused constituents passed through the internal [spec Force-P] in order to reach the main clause [spec Force-P] focus site as shown in structure (21a) Evidence that the focus movement is from spec to spec can be seen from the empty trace which is left behind at the internal spec position by the focused constituent. This is unlike in (21b) where the focused indirect object *Emeka* did not pass through the internal [spec Force-P] before raising to the main clause focus site. Skipping the internal [spec Force-P] violates the shortest move principle and causes the derivation to crash at PF.





Even though, we have noted that simultaneous focusing of more than one Object NP is not available in Igbo, it can be possible when it simultaneously involves an adverbial such as *n'ùtùtù* (*in the morning*) and an object NP *akwụkwọ* (*a book*) in complex sentence as in (23a) & (23b) and not in simple ones as in (23d-e) which are derived from the basic (23c).

- (23a) **N'ùtùtù** kà Ezè ñkwùrù <n'ùtùtù> nà **akwụkwọ** kà Àda n̄zụlụlà
 PREP.morning FOC Eze PRE.say.PST that book FOC Ada
 PRE.buy.PSTEmeka <akwụkwọ> Èmekà
 'Eze said that Ada bought A BOOK for Emeka IN THE MORN

- (b) **n'ùtùtù** kà Ezè òkwùrù <n'ùtùtù> nà **Èmekà** kà Àda òzùlùlà
 PREP-morning FOC Eze PRE.say.PST that Emeka FOC Ada PRE-
 buy.PST.PERF <Emeka> akwùkwò book
 'Eze said IN THE MORNING that Ada bought EMEKA a book'
- (c) Àda òzùlùlà Èmekà akwùkwò n'ùtùtù
 Ada PRE.buy.PST Emeka book in morning
 'Ada bought Emeka a book in the morning'
- (d) * **n'ùtùtù** kà **Èmekà** kà Àda òzùlùlà <Emeka> akwùkwò <n'ùtùtù>
 in morning FOC Emeka FOC Ada PRE.buy.PST book
- (e) * **n'ùtùtù** kà **akwùkwò** kà Àda òzùlùlà <akwùkwò> Emeka <n'ùtùtù>
 in morning FOC book FOC Ada PRE.buy.PST.PERF. Emeka

It is however, interesting to note that simultaneous focusing is impossible in Igbo when long focus movement involves an adverbial, as shown by the ungrammatical (24a & b).

- (24a) * **n'ùtùtù** kà Ezè òsìrì nà **akwùkwò** kà Àda òzùlùlà
 PREP-morning FOC Eze PRE.say.PST that book FOC Ada
 PRE.buy.PST Emeka <**akwùkwò**> <**n'ùtùtù**> Emeka
 'Eze said that Ada bought A BOOK for Emeka IN THE MORNING'
- (b) * **n'ùtùtù** kà Ezè òsìrì nà **Èmekà** kà Àda òzùlùlà
 PREP-morning FOC Eze PRE.say.PST that Emeka FOC Ada PRE
 buy.PERF <**Èmekà**> akwùkwò <**n'ùtùtù**> book
 'Eze said IN THE MORNING that Ada bought EMEKA a book'

It is important to observe that in the grammatical structures (23a&b) involving the simultaneous focusing of an adverbial and an NP object, each being focused at the pre-sentential position of a different clause. The sentences in (24a & b) provide evidence that movement of a constituent by focusing in complex structures must be from one [spec FOC] to the next right kind. Thus, the ungrammaticality (24a & b) can be explained in terms of intervention effects. The adverbials in both constructions (24a & b) did pass through the

[spec FOCp] of the internal clause before landing at the [spec FOCp] of the external clause.

8. Conclusion

In this paper, we have shown that focalization in Igbo is a syntactic process that requires movement of the focused element to a focus domain outside the minimal clause, which is the FocP. We have noted that focusing in Igbo is realized mainly through movement of the focused element to the left adjacent position to the focus marker *kà*. This requirement is satisfied in overt syntax. Focus in-situ strategy is not allowed in the language and Igbo allows for movement of only non-verbal constituents that are specified as [+F]. Thus, Igbo focused categories involve constituents of the types: DPs, adverbials, adjectivals, and PPs. We have argued that in Igbo, focused constituents must check their focus feature against the focus head in a spec-head configuration. Furthermore, we observed that multiple foci are not available in Igbo, the reason being that only one specific focused position is allowed. It is also noted that simultaneous focusing is impossible in the language except when it involves an adjuncts. When a simultaneous focusing involves an adjunct, no long construal is permitted but short one. Finally, we observed that a focused constituent and wh-element cannot co-occur in the same focused position in a clause. We, therefore, argued that focus constituents and wh-elements compete for the same position, which is the focus site that is immediately to the focus marker *kà*.

List of abbreviations and symbols

`	Low Tone
ˊ	High Tone
-	Downstepped tone
[+F]	Plus focus
1SG	First Person Singular Pronoun
3PL	Third Person Plural
3SG	Third Person Singular Pronoun
A'-chain	A-bar chain
C-system	Complementizer System
DP	Determiner Phrase
Fin P	Finiteness Projection
FM	Focus Marker
FOC	Focus
FocP	Focus Projection

ForceP	Force Projection
IP	Inflectional Projection
I-system	Inflectional System
LF	Logical Form
O kà S V	Object kà Subject Verb
PERF	Perfect
PF	Phonetic
PPS	Prepositional Phrase
PRE	prefix
PREP	Prepositional Phrase
PST	Past Tense
Spec FocP	Specifier of focus phrase
Spec-head	Specifier head
Subj.	subjunctive
SVO	Subject Verb Object
V- to Fin	Verb to finite
Verb-to-Foc	Verb to focus
XP	Any Constituent

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