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Aboh, E.

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The left periphery in the Surinamese creoles and Gbe: on the modularity of substrate transfer

Enoch Aboh

1. Introduction

This chapter investigates the left periphery in the clausal and nominal domains of the Gbe languages and the Surinamese creoles (Sranan, Saramaccan) and shows that substrate transfer is not a unitary syntactic phenomenon that could correspond to a strict one-to-one match between the relevant substrate languages and the creole. I show that substrate transfer can be selective and may target a set of features only, as well as the morphosyntax associated with it. In this case, the creoles and substrate languages manifest striking parallels with respect to the morphosyntax of only certain functional elements. Such parallels, I argue, cannot be attributed to independent development prompted by UG. For instance, the discussion in the first part shows that the Gbe languages and Saramaccan display a rich left periphery of the clause that provides room for discrete functional projections whose specifiers host distinct fronted elements (e.g. focus-phrases, wh-phrases, topic-phrases, questioned constituents, etc.) and whose heads host the C-type markers. These markers are the morphological realisations of the features [Force], [interrogative], [topic], [focus], [specific], [injunctive/deontic mood] that are associated with the left periphery, that is Comp. Assuming substrate influence, this would mean that Saramaccan exhibits a left periphery that is parallel to the Gbe left periphery in many respects. Accordingly, the distribution of *fú*, the presence of the focus marker *wɛ* (also realized as *wɛ̃* in Gungbe and Fongbe), the properties of verb focusing, and the presence of a sentence-final question marker in Saramaccan are regarded as strong evidence for morphosyntactic inheritance. In the second part, I show that substrate transfer may consist of just a set of features. In such a situation, the morphosyntax, or the formal licensing conditions associated with that set of features, may be determined under the pressure of the superstrate language. For instance, the analysis of the determiner system indicates that the function of the determiners in Sranan is comparable to that of the

determiners in the Gbe languages.¹ In all these languages, determiners express a specific versus non-specific opposition that distinguishes them from Germanic or Romance types of articles, which encode definite versus indefinite distinction. However, Sranan differs from Gungbe in that the specificity marker in this language exhibits syntactic properties that are found in Romance and Germanic languages, but not in the Gbe languages. This leads me to propose that the observed pragmatic/semantic parallels are due to substrate transfer where the appropriate features are retained but not their syntax. The latter is determined on the basis of the superstrate language (i.e. English). Following earlier works on Saramaccan and Gbe, I assume that Gbe and Saramaccan are of the type SVO.² Under Kayne (1994), this would mean that all structures are of the type spec-head-complement and contexts where the complement precedes the head must result from movement of the complement to a position higher than that targeted by the head (see Aboh 2004a, 2006a for discussion).

2. Complementation in Gbe and Saramaccan

Not much work has been done on the left periphery of the clause (or the complementizer system) in Saramaccan.³ Under universalist approaches to creole genesis, it is often assumed that categories, such as complementizers, are lost during pidginization, but may be reconstructed in the course of creolization (Bickerton 1984, Byrne 1987). With this approach in mind, studies on complementation in Saramaccan often argue for an analysis in terms of verb serialization, assuming that Saramaccan does not have a proper complementizer. The so-called *verba sentiendi et declarandi* (e.g. say) are used to introduce a second verb (or a proposition). But as the language evolves, such verbs may grammaticalize into full complementizers that are first merged in Comp (Byrne 1987, Veenstra

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1. In this paper, I use the term “determiner” as a cover term for article-like elements in Gungbe and the Suriname creoles which apparently correspond to English determiners such as “the” and “a”. It is important, however, to keep in mind that the particles described here do not have the same distribution and semantic properties as their assumed English equivalents.
 2. See Clements (1972), Capo (1991), Aboh (2004a), and references cited there for Gbe, and Byrne (1987), Sebba (1987), Veenstra (1996), Damonte (2002), and references cited there for Saramaccan.
 3. In this chapter, I use the expressions left periphery of the clause and complementizer system interchangeably.

1996).⁴ A similar analysis has been made for complementation in Gbe (Kinyalolo 1993).

According to Smith (1987), Arends (1989), and much related work, the Gbe languages are potential substrate languages for Saramaccan. Building on this, one could argue for substrate transfer and suggest that complementation in Saramaccan develops from a Gbe substrate. This would mean that even though the diachronic analysis that implies a development from serial verb constructions to proper complementizers could be maintained for the Gbe languages, this need not be the case for Saramaccan. Such a view is compatible with Arends' (1999) analysis that complementizers are established in early Saramaccan. In this perspective, Aboh (2002, 2003a, 2005c, 2006a) shows that Saramaccan and Gungbe manifest striking parallels, for instance, the presence of distinct topic, focus, and question markers, which may have scope over a constituent inside the proposition or over the proposition as a whole. These markers, therefore, attract various constituents that are fronted to the sentence left periphery.

In this chapter, it is argued that such parallels are best understood in terms of substrate transfer.⁵ In this regard, Section 2.1 suggests that the so-called complementizer-like *fú* and the quasi-modal *fú* are the Saramaccan counterparts of the Gbe *ní*-type₁ and *ní*-type₂ complementizers that delimit the left periphery of the clause upward and downward, respectively (Aboh 2006a, 2007b). The discussion further suggests that the topic-focus articulation projects between these complementizers. Section 2.2 deals with striking parallels between Saramaccan and Gungbe with respect to verbal focusing. The conclusion reached there is that Saramaccan adopts the morphosyntax of the Gungbe-type languages. Similarly, section 2.3 indicates that, unlike topic and focus markers, which typically occur to the left edge, yes-no question markers in Gbe and Saramaccan surface to the right edge because they take scope over the proposition, which is displaced to the left. In this framework, the question marker encodes the head of a functional projection located within the left periphery and the fronted

4. Damonte (2002) analyzes the Saramaccan data in terms of the split-C hypothesis and further suggests that the development (or reconstruction) of the Saramaccan complementizer system could be attributed to a natural evolution that reflects the properties of UG.

5. The reader is referred to Rizzi (1997) for discussion on the complementizer system and to Aboh (2004a) for a comparative study of Gbe complementizer system.

proposition realises its specifier position (Aboh & Pfau 2010). Section 2.4 summarizes the proposed analysis.

2.1. *fu*-type₁/*fu*-type₂ versus *ní*-type₁/*ní*-type₂

The following examples indicate that, in Saramaccan and Gungbe, the left periphery of the sentence may host distinct elements. The sentences in (1) contain an embedded clause introduced by the complementizers *taa/dò* followed by a preposed topic, which in turn precedes the focus in a pre-subject position.⁶

- (1) a. *Mi sabi taa di pingo de hen we Sema suti.* Sar
 1SG know that DET pig TOP 3SG-S FOC Sema shoot
 ‘I know that, as for the pig, Sema shot it.’
- b. *Ûn sè dò dân éhè ló yà éò wè Kòfí hù.* Gun
 1SG hear that snake DEMDET TOP 3SG-S FOC Kofi kill
 ‘I heard that, as for this snake, Kofi killed it.’

The data in (1) are empirical evidence that topic and focus occur in a space delimited to the left by the declarative complementizers and to the right by the subject. The topic-focus articulation manifests the fixed hierarchy topic > focus. The sentences in (2) further indicate that focus- and wh-phrases surface in the same position immediately to the left of the focus marker *wè*. Accordingly, I can attribute the sequencing in (2c) to the left periphery of the clause in Saramaccan and Gungbe (Aboh 2006a, 2007b).

6. Topic and focus constructions are common to Gbe even though the languages may vary with respect to whether the topic marker is overtly realized or not. For instance, while Gungbe and Gengbe/Ewegbe have overt topic markers *yà* and *la* respectively, Fongbe resorts to a pause between the topic phrase and the rest of the sentence. On the other hand all the Gbe languages involve a focus marker that occurs with focused phrases and wh-phrases (cf. Hazoumè, 1990). Similarly, it has been reported to me that Pamaka (another creole spoken in Surinam) involves the topic marker *dati* as shown in the following example. I thank B. Migge for providing these examples.

- (i) *M'án bii, nefi dati án de ye.*
 ‘I don’t think so, as for this knife, it does not exist!’
Mi dati án de a ini.
 ‘As for me, I am not part of it.’

- (2) a. *Andi wɛ Sema suti?* Sar
 what FOC Sema shoot
 ‘What did Sema shoot?’
- b. *été wè Kòfí hù?* Gun
 what FOC Kofi kill
 ‘What did Kofi kill?’
- c. *[dɔ̃/taa] > Topic [yà/dɛ] > Focus/Wh [wɛ]*

In addition, Saramaccan displays two instances of *fu* (*fu*-type₁ and *fu*-type₂), which I assume to be the equivalents of the Gungbe forms *ní*-type₁ and *ní*-type₂ that delimit the complementizer system upward and downward (Aboh 2003a, 2006b). The sentences in (3) indicate that *fu*-type₁ may be selected by inceptive and desiderative verbs (3a), or introduce purpose clauses (3b).

- (3) a. *Amato ke fu/(*taa) Ayawa kisi di ogifoó a matu.* Sar
 Amato want fu/ taa Ayawa catch DET owl LOC jungle
 ‘Amato wants Ayawa to catch the owl in the jungle.’
- b. *Amato boi di gania fu nyan.* Sar
 Amato cook DET chicken fu eat
 ‘Amato cooked the chicken to eat.’ (Prepositional comp)

According to Damonte (2002) verbs that select *fu*-type₁ (e.g. *da taanga* ‘encourage’, *duingi* ‘force’, *paamisi* ‘promise’, *da piimisi* ‘give permission’, *bigi* ‘begin’) require a complement with an irrealis meaning. This would mean that the complementizer *fu*-type₁ encodes the feature [irrealis] contrary to the declarative complementizer *taa*, which selects complements understood as realized.

On the other hand, the Gungbe *ní*-type₁ occurs in sentence-initial position, where it encodes conditional (4a), functions as time setting morpheme (4b), or introduces embedded yes-no questions (4c).

- (4) a. *Ní Kòfí sigán wá fí é ná víví ná mì.* Gun
ní-type₁ Kofi can come here 3SG FUT nice for mi
 ‘I will be happy if Kofi can come here.’
- b. *Ní Kòfí wá mì yrò è ná mì.* Gun
 when Kofi come you call 3SG for me
 ‘When Kofi comes, call him for me’
- c. *Ùn kànbíó ní Kòfí sigán wá fí?* Gun
 1SG ask *ní*-type₁ Kofi can come here
 ‘I asked if Kofi could come here.’

In both Saramaccan and Gungbe, *fu*-type₁ and *ní*-type₁ precede topic and focus phrases, suggesting that they merge under Force, in the functional projection ForceP.

- (5) a. *Amato ke fu di ogifou de*
 Amato want *fu*-type₁ DET owl TOP
Ayawa kisi en a matu. Sar
 Ayawa catch 3SG LOC jungle
 ‘As for the owl, Amato wants Ayawa to catch the it in the jungle.’
- b. *Ûn kànbíó ní àkwékwè ló yà*
 1sg ask *ní*-type₁ banana DET TOP
Kòfí wè sîgán òù í? Gun
 Kofi FOC can eat 3SG
 ‘I ask if, as for the banana, Kofi could eat it.’

In addition, the Gungbe example in (6) indicates that the declarative complementizer *dò* ‘that’ and *ní*-type₁ are in complementary distribution. Sentence (6a) shows that, like *ní*-type₁, the complementizer *dò* must precede topic phrases, as well as focus-, and wh-elements. The ungrammatical sentence (6b) indicates that *ní*-type₁ and the complementizer *dò* cannot co-occur.

- (6) a. *Ûn kànbíó wè dò dâwè éhè yà*
 1SG ask 2SG that man DEM TOP
ménù wè ná òì xó étòn? Gun
 who FOC FUT believe word 3SG-POSS
 ‘I asked you that, as for this man, who would believe him?’
- b. **Ûn kànbíó wè dò ní*
 1sg ask 2sg that *ní*-type₁
Kòfí wè òì xó éné? Gun
 Kofi FOC believe word that
 ‘I asked if Kofi believed that?’

A possible interpretation of these facts is that the two complementizers *dò/taa* and *ní/fu*-type₁ compete for the same position (see Aboh 2004a, 2006a). This could be regarded as partial evidence for the common origin of *ní*-type₁ and *fu*-type₁. Despite the diverse functions that *ní*-type₁ and *fu*-type₁ play in the Gungbe and Saramaccan grammars, I conjecture that

conditional is a sub-label of a class of syntactic features (e.g. future, prospective, counter-factual) that relate to irrealis modality. If this is the right characterization, we can further conclude that *fu*-type₁ developed from *ní*-type₁ under the pressure of substrate influence. Put more generally, the source of the Saramaccan *fu*-type₁ would be the Gbe *ní*-type₁.⁷

A piece of evidence supporting this view is that both Saramaccan and the Gbe languages display an homophonous element—referred to as *fu*-type₂ and *ní*-type₂—that encodes deontic mood (7a-b) or functions as a subjunctive complementizer (7c-d). Note from these examples that *fu*-type₂ and *ní*-type₂ occur to the right of the subject, where they precede tense and aspect markers.⁸

- (7) a. *Amato fu ta boi di gania.* Sar
 Amato *fu*-type₂ PROG cook DET chicken
 ‘Amato should/must be cooking the chicken.’
- b. *Kòfí ní nò jì hàn.* Gun
 Kofi *ní*-type₂HAB sing song
 ‘Kofi should sing a song habitually.’
- c. *I taki taa fu a naki di dagu.* Sar
 2SG say that *fu*-type₂ 3SG hit DET dog
 ‘You told him to hit the dog.’ (Veenstra 1996 :156)
- d. *À dḡ dḡ yḡkpó lé ní nyàn àvún ló.* Gun
 2SG say that child PL *ní*-type₂chase dog DET
 ‘I said that the children should chase the dog.’

7. In most Gbe languages, this marker involves a nasal alveolar *n*- followed by a vowel. For instance, Fongbe displays *ní*, and Ewegbe *ne* (Kluge 2000, Aboh 2001b, 2004a).

- (ii) a. *Ní Kòkú má dḡ àsón ó à é ná glé* Fon
ní-type₁ Koku NEG cook crab DET NEG 3SG FUT rotten
 ‘If Koku does not cook the crab, it will get rotten.’
- b. *Ne me-kpḡ Ama la m-a-yḡ-e* Ewe
ne-type₁ 1SG-see Ama TOP 1SG-POT-call-3SG
 ‘If I see Ami I will call her.’

8. Certain authors (e.g. Wijnen & Alleyne 1987, Damonte 2002) suggested that Saramaccan does not have a deontic mood marker. They proposed that the Saramaccan examples under (7) should be analyzed as instances of subordinate clauses, where *fu* is selected by a deontic (null) verb within the matrix clause. However, as Aboh (2006b, 2007) shows, such analysis is perfectly compatible with an approach where *fu*-type₂ is analyzed as a complementizer that merges under Fin.

In accounting for *fu*-type₁/*ní*-type₁ and *fu*-type₂/*ní*-type₂, I propose that these elements are components of the left periphery of the sentence. The irrealis complementizer *fu*-type₁/*ní*-type₁ merges in Force^o, which heads the topmost projection (ForceP). *Fu*-type₂/*ní*-type₂, on the other hand, head Fin^o, where they encode finiteness and mood features that match those of the proposition. This would mean that just like indicative, subjunctive or imperative clauses, the deontic (or injunctive) sentences described in (7) include mood specification in the left periphery and can be analyzed, on a par with imperative or subjunctive (Aboh 2004a, 2007b). Partial evidence for this analysis comes from Gungbe where the two *ní*-types may co-occur (8a). Note that *ní*-type₁ precedes the topic-focus articulation, while *ní*-type₂ follows in a post-subject position. Similarly, the example (8b) indicates that the declarative complementizer and the injunctive/subjunctive complementizer may co-occur.⁹

- (8) a. *Ūn kànbíó ní òsó éhè yà ògán wè*
 1SG ask ní-type₁ horse DEM TOP chief FOC
mí ní zé è yì ná? Gun
 1PL ní-type₂ take 3SG go give
 ‘I asked if, as for this horse, we should give it to the chief.’
- b. *É jè qò jíkùn ní jà.* Gun
 3SG suit that rain ní-type₂ fall
 ‘It would be nice if it could rain.’

It appears from these examples that *ní*-type₂ always surfaces to the right of the element functioning as the subject of the proposition. On the assumption that *ní*-type₂ realises Fin^o, I propose that such constructions require subject raising to [spec FinP]. This movement results from the fact that Fin^o defines a predication within the complementizer system, where it connects the subject and the predicate. In Gungbe and Saramaccan, such predicative articulation requires a spec-head configuration that necessitates the subject of predicate be overtly realized, hence the movement of the canonical nominative subject to [spec FinP]. Under Chomsky’s (1995) definition of the EPP, one could propose that Fin^o has an EPP feature that must be checked before spell-out. This requirement is met by movement of

9. This means that the traditional hypothesis that mood markers are limited to the I-system like tense and aspect markers should be refined. See, for instance, Durrleman (2000, 2008), Aboh (2004a, 2006b, 2007) for discussion.

the subject of predicate to [spec FinP].¹⁰ A crucial point that arises here is that [spec FinP] is not a case-related position. The following Gungbe example involving a sentence subject in pre- *ní*-type₂ position supports this hypothesis and further indicates that elements that occur in [spec FinP] must have their case checked elsewhere (Aboh, 2004a, 2006a, 2007b).

- (9) [Dɛ́xè yàkpɔ́ lé tò hàn jì dɔ́] ní má
 that child NUMPROG song sing like *ní*-type₂ NEG
 kpá cá dó wè bló yé dó gán tàùn Gun
 surprise at 2SG anymore 3PL plant force very
 ‘Don’t you be surprised by the way the children are singing, they
 have been working hard!’

This leads me to conclude that, like its Gbe substrates, Saramaccan has two instances of *fú*. Deontic (or quasi-modal) *fú*-type₂ manifests Fin° where it encodes deontic mood like its Gbe *ní*-type₂ counterpart. However, complementizer-like *fú*-type₁, is a prepositional complementizer comparable to English *for*. Like *ní*-type₁, which expresses conditional, time or yes-no questions in Gbe, *fú*-type₁ merges under Force° where it encodes the feature irrealis (Damonte 2002, Aboh 2004a, 2006a, 2007b). In this regard, Saramaccan and Gbe manifest the complementizer system in (10) where TopP and FocP are distinct projections whose specifiers host the fronted topic- and focus-elements, while the heads encode the topic and focus features under Top° and Foc°, respectively. Following Cinque (1990), Rizzi (1997), and much related work, I propose that topic phrases move to [spec TopP] in order to check their topic features against the topic head, leaving a resumptive pronoun inside the inflectional domain. On the other hand, focus- and wh-phrases move to [spec FocP] to check their focus feature against the focus head, leaving a gap inside IP. Under this approach, the difference between focus and topic constructions with respect to the element inside the IP domain derives from the fact that focus constructions create a quantificational chain as opposed to topic constructions, which involve a non-quantificational chain. In addition, I assume that subject raising is determined by the EPP features under Fin° (10).

- (10) [_{ForceP} [_{Force°} [*taa-fú/dɔ́-ní*]_{type1} [_{TopP} *de/yà* [_{FocP} *wè* [_{FinP} Subject_i [_{Fin°} [*fú/ní*]_{type2} ..t_i ...]]]]]]]]

10. See also Cardinaletti (1997) for the discussion on two subject positions.

This representation accounts for the data under (1), repeated here as (11), in a straightforward manner. The topic-focus articulation projects between the two complementizer-types, Force and Fin, and the topic precedes the focus in both languages.

- (11) a. *Mi sabi taa di pingo de hen we Sema suti.* Sar
 1sg know that DET pig Top 3SG-S FOC Sema shoot
 ‘I know that, as for the pig, Sema shot it.’
 b. *Ûn sè dɔ̀ dān éhè ló yà éò wè Kòfí hù.* Gun
 1SG hear that snake DEM DET TOP 3SG-S FOC Kofi kill
 ‘I heard that, as for this snake, Kofi killed it.’

Under the proposed analysis, that Saramaccan includes a focus marker *we* (Smith 1996), which is identical to the Fongbe and Gungbe focus markers, as well as two *wh*-words (i.e. *andi* ‘what’, *mbe* ‘who’) derived from the forms *àní* ‘what’ and *mé* ‘who’ that are found in the Gbe languages of the Fon cluster (Capo 1991) can be regarded as a case of morphosyntax inheritance. The next section discusses verb focus constructions in Saramaccan and Gbe and shows that the properties shared by these languages are compatible with an analysis in terms of substrate influence.

2.2. V-focus in Gbe and Saramaccan

This section shows that even though there is cross-linguistic variation within Gbe as to how verb focus is realized and the type of structures that verb focus brings about across Gbe, there seems to be a strong parallel between verbal focus constructions in the Gungbe-type languages and Saramaccan.

2.2.1. V-focus in Gbe.

This section discusses verb focus in VO and OV constructions in Gbe, and shows that they involve different strategies that could be described as X-movement versus XP-movement. The examples in (12) illustrate the Gbe VO and OV constructions.¹¹ Most OV constructions involve a sentence-

11. See Awoyale (1997), Manfredi (1997), Aboh (2004a) for the discussion on the internal structure of OV constructions across Kwa.

final morpheme as *gbé* in (12b) or sometimes a sentence-final floating low toneme represented in (12c) by an additional stroke on the verb *xò*.

- (12) a. *Kòfí xò wémà ló* Gun
 Kofi buy book DET
 ‘Kofi bought the book’
- b. *Kòfí yì wémà ló xò gbé* Gun
 Kofi PROG book DET buy purpose
 ‘Kofi has gone to buy the book.’
- c. *Kòfí tò wémà ló xò* Gun
 Kofi PROG book DET buy-NR
 ‘Kofi is buying the book.’

In the VO sequences, the focused category could be either the verb, or a nominalised reduplicated verb. In both cases, a doublet of the verb occurs in the IP-internal position as schematised in (13a-b).

- (13) a. [_{FocP} [_{Foc°} V [_{IP}V...]]] Gun, Fon
 b. [_{FocP} [_{Nom-V-V}] [_{Foc°} [_{IP}V...]]] Ewe

In representation (13a) the fronted verb, which actually represents a root, is morphologically identical to the token in the IP-internal position. In (13b), however, the fronted verb is reduplicated contrary to the IP-internal token.

In the OV sequences, however, verb focus requires generalized pied-piping of the sequence containing the verb and its arguments. The preposed category leaves a gap in the IP-internal position, as shown in (14), where Σ P stands for the focused verbal sequence.

- (14) [_{FocP} [_{Σ P}..[VP..]]_i] [_{Foc°} [_{IP}t_i.....]]] Gun, Fon, Ewe

In this chapter, I discuss verb focus in VO sequences because only these constructions provide the relevant context for the analysis of language variations among Gbe on the one hand, and the parallels between Gbe and Saramaccan on the other. The discussion here will remain fairly descriptive and the reader is referred to Aboh (2003b, 2004a, 2006c), Aboh & Dyakonova (2009) and references cited there for a formal analysis of predicate fronting with doubling.

The representations (13a-b) indicate that verb focus in the VO sequences involves two strategies. This section further shows that these strategies correspond to two language-groups: the Gungbe-type languages

versus the Ewegbe-type languages. This partition roughly corresponds to Kluge's (2000) Eastern versus Western Gbe groups.

In the Gungbe-type languages, verb focus requires fronting of the verb stem to sentence-initial position.¹² In these constructions, the IP-internal position must contain a doublet of the fronted verb and a gap is excluded, as illustrated by the contrast between the grammatical example (15a) and the ungrammatical sentence (15b). In the Gbe languages, these constructions express verb focus. I refer to the strategy described in (15a) as V-focus.

- (15) a. [Gbá]_i Séná [gbá]_i xwé ló ná Kòfí. Gun
 build Sena build house DET for Kofi
 b. *[Gbá]_i Séná t_i xwé ló ná Kòfí. Gun
 build Sena house DET for Kofi
 'Sena BUILT the house for Kofi'

There is no lexical or semantic constraint on V-focus because verbs that can be focused include transitive and intransitive verbs (16a-b), double object construction verbs (16c), ergative verbs (16d) in the sense of Burzio (1986), and state verbs as in (16e).

- (16) a. Ìdù Séná òdù bléòdù ló. Gun
 eat Sena eat bread DET
 'Sena ate the bread.'
 b. Fón yé fón bléblé. Gun
 stand 3PL stand quickly
 'They stood up quickly.'
 c. Ná Séná ná kwè ví lé Gun
 give Sena give money child NUM
 'Sena gave the children some money.'
 d. Wá yé wá. Gun
 arrive 3PL arrive
 'They arrived.'
 e. Bí Séná bí tàù. Gun
 intelligent Sena intelligent very
 'Sena is very intelligent.'

In addition, the focused verb cannot move along with its arguments, a piece

12. This description also holds for Fongbe.

of evidence that V-focus involves the verb only (17). Put differently, V-focus is not an instance of VP-fronting.

- (17) **[Gbá xwé ló ná Kòfí]*_i *Séná* t_i. Gun
 build house DET for Kofi Sena build
 ‘Sena built the house for Kofi.’

In their analysis of predicate fronting with doubling, Aboh and Dyakonova (2009) propose that the Gungbe construction involves head movement of the verb (V) to the focus head (Foc^o). Some arguments in favor to this analysis include the fact that the verb cannot cyclically adjoin to the intervening tense and aspect markers on its way to Foc^o (18a). Instead, sentence (18b) shows that the intervening I-type markers must remain in situ.

- (18) a. **Đù-nò-ná Séná qù bléqì ló.* Gun
 eat-HAB-FUT Sena eat bread DET
 b. *Đù Séná ná nò qù bléqì ló.* Gun
 eat Sena FUT HAB eat bread DET
 ‘Sena will habitually eat the bread’ (instead of selling it).

In addition, the sentences in (19) show that V-focus is clause-bound.

- (19) a. **Đù ùn sè qò Séná ná nò qù bléqì ló* Gun
 eat 1SG hear that Sena FUT HAB eat bread DET
 b. *Ùn sè qò qù Séná ná nò qù bléqì ló* Gun
 1SG hear that eat Sena FUT HAB eat bread DET
 ‘I heard that Sena will eat the bread habitually’

Finally, V-focus is sensitive to negation in that the fronted verb cannot cross a negation marker. In the following example, the sentence is ungrammatical under the reading in (a), but not (b).

- (20) *Đù Séná má qù bléqì ló* Gun
 eat Sena NEG eat bread DET
 a. *‘Sena will not eat the bread’ [i.e. she did not eat it, she sold it]
 b. ‘Sena will not only eat the bread [i.e. she will devour it]’

The reading in (20a), where the event of eating is denied, can only be obtained with the type of expletive construction in (21), where negation has scope over the whole proposition.

- (21) *É má nyín d̀̀ Ś́ń́á d̀̀ bléd̀̀ ĺ́* Gun
 3sg NEG be.COP eat Sena eat bread DET
 ‘It is not the case that Sena ate the bread’

Aboh & Dyakonova (2009) further propose that the second doublet inside the sentence derives from movement of the verb into an intermediate aspect position (i.e. V-to-Asp). Combined with the fronted verb that raises to Foc, this would mean that predicate focus with doubling is an instance of parallel chains as illustrated in (22), where only the copy common to both chains (i.e. the one inside the VP) is not pronounced (Chomsky 2005).

- (22) $[_{\text{ForceP}} \text{d̀̀} [_{\text{FocP}} [_{\text{Foc}^\circ} \text{V} [_{\text{FinP}} \dots [_{\text{AspP}} [_{\text{Asp}} \dots \text{V} \dots \dots [_{\text{VP}} \dots \text{V} \dots \dots]]]]]]]]]$
-

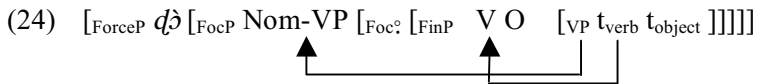
I will not enter the details of this analysis here and the reader is referred to the cited reference for further discussion. What matters for our description here is that V-focus in the Gungbe-type languages involves movement of the verb (i.e. the root) to the focus position (i.e. V-to-Foc movement).

In the Ewegbe-type languages, V-focus requires fronting of a nominalized reduplicated verb. The latter is combined with a non-reduplicated verb in IP-internal position. I refer to this process as VV-focus. Unlike V-focus, VV-focus is not clause-bound (23b).

- (23) a. *Fo-f̀̀- é wó f̀̀- é.* Ewe
 RED-hit FOC 3SG hit 3SG
 ‘Beating s/he beat him/her.’
- b. *Fo-f̀̀- é me se be wo fo d̀̀vi-a.* Ewe
 RED-beat- FOC 1SG- hear that 2SG- beat child-DET
 ‘I heard that beating the child he did.’ (Ameke 1992: 12)

Abstracting away from verb movement to some aspect position (e.g. under habitual aspect) and object movement to a case licensing position, prior to verb focus (Aboh 2003b, 2004a), I suggest that the fronted VV-category is not a simple reduplicated lexical verb, but a maximal projection. Accordingly, V-focus involves V-to-Foc movement, while VV-focus

requires movement of the nominalized remnant VP to [spec FocP].¹³ Put differently, VV-focus is a type of remnant VP-fronting where the fronted emptied VP is spelled out through reduplication.¹⁴ I therefore conclude that in VV-focus, the remnant VP moves to [spec FocP] to check its focus feature against Foc°. In both VV-focus and V-focus, the IP-internal verb moves to the aspect position as in (24).¹⁵



We now come to the characterization that the Gbe languages manifest two major strategies for verb focusing in VO sequences. In the Gungbe-type languages, the lexical verb checks its focus feature against Foc° by adjoining to it. In the Ewegbe-type language, however, the remnant VP moves to [spec FocP] where it checks its focus feature against Foc° and gets spelt out through reduplication.

2.2.2. *V-focus in Saramaccan.*

The analysis proposed here for the Gbe languages extends to Saramaccan in a straightforward manner. Like the Gungbe-type languages, Saramaccan has verb focus constructions where the lexical verb is moved to sentence initial position, while the IP-internal position contains a doublet.¹⁶

13. That the Ewegbe-type languages involve remnant VP-movement is further suggested by the fact that these languages show morphological reflex of V-to-Asp movement. For instance, the habitual aspect marker is an affix that cliticizes on to the verb in the Ewegbe-type languages, but it necessarily precedes the verb in the Gungbe-type languages where it is a free morpheme (see Aboh 2004a, Aboh & Dyakonova 2009 for discussion).

14. This suggests that reduplication is not due to nominalization (Aboh 2004a, 2005c).

15. Alternatively, one could assume that the reduplicated V is first merged in [spec FocP], leaving the lexical V in situ. This will also correctly explain why VV-focus manifests no sensitivity to clause-boundness. Choosing between those two analyses goes beyond the scope of the present chapter and I leave the matter for future research.

16. Byrne (1987) also reported that Saramaccan V-focus strategy extends to predicate adjectives, a difference compared to the Gbe languages, where no

- (25) a. *Sì Kòfisi dì mujée bi tà woòkòà di kéiki.* Sar
 seeKofiseeDET woman PAST PROG work LOCDETchurch
 ‘Kofi SAW the woman working at the church.’
- b. *Lùku a tà lùku dì mii tà kò a lio.* Sar
 watch 3SGPROGwatch DET child PROG come LOC river
 ‘He is watching the child coming from the river.’
 (Byrne 1987:58)

Just as in the Gbe languages, there seems to be no lexical or semantic constraint on the Saramaccan verbs that can be focused. For instance, the sentences under (26) indicate that verbal focusing may include unaccusative verbs as well as state verbs.¹⁷

- (26) a. *Go Amato bi go na wooyo.* Sar
 go Amato PAST go LOC market
 ‘Amato went to the market.’
- b. *Lùsu dì bànti lùsu.* Sar
 loose thebelt loose
 ‘The belt is loose.’ (Byrne 1987:59)

The examples (25-26) suggest that V-focus in Saramaccan is very similar to that in the Gungbe-type languages. Under substrate influence, I propose that Saramaccan replicates the morphosyntax of these languages. A fact supporting this hypothesis is that V-focus is clause-bound in both Saramaccan and the Gungbe-type languages (cf. the ungrammatical sentences under 27a-b). The Saramaccan focused verb cannot be extracted across the complementizer layer.¹⁸ The same is true of the Gungbe ungrammatical example (19a) repeated here as (27c).

- (27) a. **Boi dì mujée ke faa boi dì gbamba.* Sar
 cook DET woman want fu-type₁cook DET meat
 ‘The woman wants to cook the meat.’

such construction exists. However, such asymmetry disappears if the so-called predicate adjectives are lexical verbs, as correctly suggested in the literature (e.g. Byrne 1987).

17. See Veenstra (1996) for the discussion on unaccusativity in Saramaccan.

18. According to Byrne (1987) certain speakers do accept such constructions, but my informants did not.

- b. **Lùku a méni tàà dì wòmì mì lùkudì wòsu.* Sar
 look 3SG think that DET man child look DET house
 ‘He thinks that the little boy LOOKED at the house.’
 (Byrne 1987:59-60)
- c. **Đù ùn sè d̂ Séná ná nò d̂ bléd̂ ló* Gun
 eat 1SG hear that Sena FUT HAB eat bread DET

In this regard, verb focus in Saramaccan and Gungbe differs from non-verbal constituent focusing because the former is clause-bound but not the latter. Accordingly, a focused embedded verb must occur within the left periphery of the embedded clause. This restriction does not hold on non-verbal constituent focusing where a focused phrase can occur either in the embedded or matrix clause. Consider, again the Saramaccan verbal focus sentence (28a), as opposed to the focus sentence (28b), where the subject of the embedded clause is focused to the matrix clause.

- (28) a. *A ke fu njàn dì mì njàn dì muungà* Sar
 3SG want COMP eat DET child eat DET porridge
 ‘He wants the child to EAT the porridge.’ (Byrne 1987:60)
- b. *Dì mì a ke fu njàn dì kuku.* Sar
 DET child 3SG want COMP eat DET cookie
 ‘THE CHILD wants to eat the cookie.’ (Byrne 1987:56)

Just as in Gungbe-type languages, the Saramaccan focused verb cannot be extracted along with its internal arguments (29). This is evidence that there is no VP fronting in Saramaccan, unlike in Ewegbe-type languages.

- (29) **[Sùku en] a sùku* Sar
 search 3SG 3SG search (Byrne 1987:97)

I conclude from these facts that V-focus in the Gungbe-type languages and Saramaccan involves movement of the focused verb to the complementizer system, where it checks its focus features against the focus head Foc° . In this view, V-to- Foc° is coupled with a parallel movement of the verb to an intermediate aspect position as argued for in Aboh & Dyakonova (2009) and further illustrated in (30) for Gungbe-type languages and Saramaccan.

- (30) [_{ForceP} *d̂-ní-type₁/taa-fu-type₁* [_{FocP} [_{Foc[°]} V [_{FinP}... [_{AspP} [_{Asp}... V... [VP... ~~V~~...]]]]]]]]
-
- The diagram shows a syntactic tree structure with movement arrows. An arrow points from the V node in the embedded VP up to the V node in the intermediate AspP. A second arrow points from the V node in the AspP up to the Foc[°] head in the FocP. A vertical line is drawn to the right of the FocP, and a horizontal line connects the top of this line to the Foc[°] head, indicating a checking relationship.

An objection to this analysis could be that verb focus (or predicate cleft) is found in almost all creoles, including those that might not have the Gungbe-type languages as potential substrate languages. Building on this, one could then suggest that V-to-Foc^o movement is provided by UG as the unmarked option. For instance, this correctly explains the fact that typologically different languages, such as Russian, Yiddish, Portuguese, Spanish, Hebrew, etc display verb focusing or topicalization with doubling, (see Aboh 2006c, Aboh & Dyakonova 2009 and references cited there).

It is worth mentioning that I am not refuting the fact that V-to-Foc^o movement results from a principle of UG, nor do I deny the fact that the architecture of the left periphery of the clause in general is primarily made available by UG. In the language contact situation where creoles were created, it seems reasonable to me to assume that the relevant morphosyntactic cues are provided by the languages in competition. I therefore propose that, in an emerging creole, some parameter settings as well as their associated morphosyntactic properties may be acquired under substrate influence. This would mean that verb focusing of the Gungbe-type provided additional morphosyntactic cues for the creators of Saramaccan to fix the parameters of the left periphery of the language the Gbe way.

The discussion in previous paragraphs shows that the Gungbe-type languages and Saramaccan share similar morphosyntactic properties with respect to verb focus. The following section discusses another morphosyntactic property of verb focus that lends further support to an analysis in terms of the Gungbe/Saramaccan-type languages versus other Gbe/creole-type partition.

In the Gungbe and Saramaccan examples discussed above, the fronted verb keeps its bare form as shown by the examples in (31). The conclusion reached there is that verb focus targets the verb inside VP.

- (31) a. *Lùku a tà lùku dì mìi tà kò a lio.* Sar
 watch 3SGPROG watch DET child PROG come LOC river
 ‘He is watching the child coming from the river.’
- b. *[Gbá]_i Séná [gbá]_i xwé ló ná Kòfí.* Gun
 build Sena build house DET for Kofi
 ‘Sena built the house for Kofi.’

Yet, in most Creoles discussed in the literature, the focused verb seems to belong to a (nominalized) phrase. The following examples, taken from Seuren (1993:56), indicate that in Negerhollands, Haitian, Papiamentu,

Jamaican, Gullah, and Sranan (a sister creole to Saramaccan), the fronted verb is right adjacent to a copula-like element.

- | | | |
|---------|----------------------------------|---------------|
| (32) a. | <i>Da breek sender ka breek.</i> | Negerhollands |
| | is break they are-now broken | |
| b. | <i>Se depale u ap depale.</i> | Haitian |
| | is stray you PRES stray | |
| c. | <i>Ta kasa bo kier kasa</i> | Papiamentu |
| | is marryyou want marry | |
| d. | <i>A tiif Jan tiif di mango.</i> | Jamaican |
| | is steal John stole the mango | |
| e. | <i>Da tiif I tiif mai buk.</i> | Gullah |
| | is stealhe stolemy book | |
| f. | <i>Na bigi yu futu bigi.</i> | Sranan |
| | is big your feet big | |

In the framework adopted here, the contrast between Saramaccan and the creoles in (32) is straightforward. Saramaccan shares the left peripheral morphosyntactic features of the Gungbe-type languages. Instead, the other creoles seem to manifest the type of verbal focusing in which a nominalised verb phrase (ΣP) is fronted. This strategy, which is also found in OV contexts in Gbe, appears to be widespread in other Kwa languages (Manfredi 1993, Aboh 2003b, 2004a, 2005c, 2006c). This would mean that while the Gungbe-type languages might have played an important role in the development of the Saramaccan left periphery, other Gbe (or possibly Kwa) languages could have well influenced other portions of the Saramaccan grammar. In this respect, that the creoles in (32) manifest ΣP -focusing could be ascribed to substrate influence from other Gbe-type or Kwa languages. I am not claiming that Saramaccan is just the result of relexification of the Gungbe-type languages. Instead, the approach advocated for here is a multidimensional one that may involve different sources (Aboh 2006b, 2007b). This clearly suggests that only a precise comparative analysis of the type undertaken here can possibly tell to which extent a language-type played a decisive role in the emergence of a creole feature. The next section on sentence-final markers further establishes the link between the Gbe languages and Saramaccan.

2.3. On sentence final C-type markers in Gbe and Saramaccan

The discussion in the preceding sections shows that Gbe and Saramaccan display a rich structure involving distinct projections where the topic-, focus-, and *wh*-phrases are licensed. In Gbe and Saramaccan, the head of these projections are realized at PF by the topic and focus markers. As components of the C-domain, these markers occur in the left periphery, that is, between the complementizer and the subject, and one does not expect them to target other portions of the clause. Yet, a striking property of both Gbe and Saramaccan is that some supposedly left peripheral elements appear on the right edge. A case in point is the yes-no question marker that occurs sentence-finally.

2.3.1. *The yes-no question markers in Gbe: on sentence final C-type markers*

In Gbe languages, yes-no questions require a sentence-final question marker that encodes interrogative force. In Gungbe, the question marker surfaces as a sentence-final low tone that is represented here by an additional stroke [˘] on the sentence-final syllable. Consider the following sentences.

- | | | |
|---------|----------------------|-----|
| (33) a. | <i>Kòfí d̀ù nú.</i> | Gun |
| | Kofi eat thing | |
| | ‘Kofi ate.’ | |
| b. | <i>Kòfí d̀ù nù?</i> | Gun |
| | Kofi eat thing-INTER | |
| | ‘Did Kofi eat?’ | |

Sentences (33a-b) form a minimal pair. On the surface level, the only difference between them is the intervention of the low tone in (33b) which triggers a question reading, as opposed to the statement in (33a). I propose that the low tone specific to Gungbe yes-no questions is the reflex of a question marker that encodes interrogative force. This toneme arguably originates from a morpheme that underwent partial deletion as the language evolved. Additional piece of evidence in favor of this analysis comes from Fongbe, which exhibits a sentence-final question marker *à* in yes-no questions (34).

- (34) *Kòkú yró Kòfí à* [Fon]
 Koku call Kofi INTER
 ‘Did Koku call Kofi?’

The above examples are clear evidence that the sentence-final question marker is typical of the Gbe languages, even though the languages vary as to whether the question marker is realized as a toneme or as a full morpheme. Under the hypothesis that interrogative force is a specification of Force^o, that is, the topmost head of the complementizer system, one could think that the Gbe sentence-final question marker is evidence against the split-C hypothesis that integrates the yes-no marker in the left periphery. However, the Gbe data are consistent with an analysis in terms of movement of the IP (or the proposition) to the specifier position of the functional projection headed by the question marker (Rizzi 1997, Aboh 2004a, Aboh & Pfau 2010). In Gungbe, for example, the complementizer *dɔ̀* ‘that’ and the question marker (i.e. the sentence-final low tone) can be realized simultaneously in the clause. Notice, in sentence (35), that the embedded yes-no question is introduced by the complementizer *dɔ̀*, which is merged in Force^o. On the other hand, the question marker is realized sentence-finally, hence the additional low tone on *lɛ̀sì* ‘rice.’

- (35) *Ùn kànbíó dɔ̀ Kòfí d̀ù lɛ̀sì?* Gun
 1SG ask that Kofi eat rice.INTER
 ‘I asked whether Kofi ate some rice?’

Pursuing the split-C hypothesis, I propose that the question marker encodes the interrogative force that is associated with a functional head Inter^o that projects within the complementizer system and whose specifier hosts interrogative phrases. Given that the interrogative phrase (or sentence) is sandwiched between the complementizer and the question marker in (35), I further conclude that ForceP immediately dominates the functional interrogative projection, InterP.¹⁹ This amounts to saying that Gungbe interrogative constructions necessarily involve leftward (snowballing) movement of the sentence to [spec InterP] to check the feature interrogative under Inter^o.²⁰ As a result, the Gbe question marker must always surface in sentence-final position. This is not a trivial conclusion. We now suggest that another particularity of the Gbe languages is that they manifest right

19. See also Rizzi (2001) for a similar proposal for Italian.

20. See Aboh (2004a) for a detailed discussion of snowballing movement.

edge C-type markers because certain markers of the left periphery are licensed under a spec-head configuration where the complement moves to the specifier position of its head. The yes-no question in (35) is partially represented as in (36) (abstracting away from TopP and FocP).

(36) $[_{\text{ForceP}} [_{\text{Force}^\circ} \text{d}\check{\text{ɔ}} [_{\text{InterP}} [_{\text{K}\check{\text{o}}\check{\text{f}}\check{\text{i}} \text{ q}\check{\text{u}} \text{ l}\check{\text{e}}\check{\text{s}}\check{\text{i}}]_i [_{\text{Inter}^\circ} \emptyset \dots [_{\text{FinP}} \text{t}_i]]]]]]$

In this regard, Aboh (2004a, b, c) shows that such movement also applies to the Gbe D-system where the noun complement must surface to the left of the specificity and number markers (see also the discussion part II of this chapter).

The same reasoning extends to the so-called clausal determiner in Gbe. Like the question marker, the clausal determiner occurs in sentence-final position and indicates that the information being conveyed is pre-established in discourse and/or specific. The sequence in (37a) includes the Gungbe specificity marker, while examples (37b) involves the clausal determiner. Observe that the specificity marker and the clausal determiner are homophonous.²¹

- (37) a. $[[\text{M}\acute{\text{o}}\text{t}\acute{\text{o}}] \text{l}\check{\text{s}}]$ Gun
 car DET
 ‘the (aforementioned) car (e.g. the one we saw yesterday)’
 b. $[[\text{D}\acute{\text{e}} \text{K}\acute{\text{o}}\check{\text{f}}\check{\text{i}} \text{h}\acute{\text{ɔ}}\check{\text{n}}] \text{l}\check{\text{s}}] \text{v}\acute{\text{e}} \text{n}\acute{\text{a}} \text{y}\acute{\text{e}}.$ Gun
 as Kofi flee DET_{CL} hurt for 3PL
 ‘The fact that Kofi fled (instead of waiting), hurt them.’

Under the proposed analysis, a natural account for the bracketed sequence in sentence (37b) is to assume that the Gungbe clausal determiner realizes the left periphery of the clause. Put differently, there is, within the complementizer system, a functional projection whose head is the locus of the clausal determiner and whose specifier hosts the whole sentence. This would mean that the Gbe clausal determiner and question marker occur sentence-finally because they have scope over the proposition. Following Aboh (2004a, b), I propose that this scope relation is established under specifier-head configuration as a consequence of which the proposition is fronted to the specifier position of the relevant (scope) marker located in the left periphery. We therefore conclude that a typical property of the Gbe languages is that they involve a series of left peripheral markers some of

21. See also Lefebvre (1992, 1998), Law & Lefebvre (1995).

which occur to the right edge as a result of movement of the complement of a head to some specifier position to the left. The necessity of this movement is determined by the fact that right-edge C-type markers take scope over the proposition. Building on this, I further propose that it is reasonable to consider the presence of such morphosyntactic feature in Saramaccan as a result of substrate influence. Notice that the universalist view fails to capture such facts because there is no, a priori, unmarked or default parameter setting that forces C-type markers to occur to the right.

2.3.3. *The yes-no marker no in Saramaccan*

In his discussion of question formation of Saramaccan, Byrne (1987:41) suggests that “Saramaccan follows the creole pattern with one exception. In yes-no questions, the interrogative particle *no* with the appropriate rising intonation may follow the S string”. Put differently, Saramaccan yes-no questions involve a sentence-final question marker that encodes interrogative force. In this respect, sentence (38a) is a declarative (i.e. a statement), as opposed to sentence (38b), a yes-no question.

- (38) a. *A jei taa manu fu en go a foto.* Sar
 3SG hear that husband for 3SG go LOC city
 ‘He heard that her husband went to the city.’
- b. *A jei taa manu fu en go a foto *(no)?* Sar
 3sg hear that husband for 3sg go LOC city
 ‘Did he hear that her husband went to the city?’

Byrne (1987) mentioned that the interpretative difference between the sentences (38a-b) reduces to the presence of the particle *no* (associated with the appropriate intonation) in (38b) but not in (38a). However, he reported that the apparent optional status of the particle *no* could indicate that it is a tag.

The analysis presented here differs from Byrne (1987) in that it suggests that the particle *no* is a question marker, not a tag. This hypothesis is motivated by the fact that none of the speakers I consulted allows yes-no questions of the type (38b) without the sentence-final question marker. In addition, Byrne’s (1987) account cannot distinguish between the different question particles that occur sentence-finally in Saramaccan as discussed in (Habbo 2003). Finally, the Saramaccan focus and topic markers can occur sentence-finally as well, on a par with the question marker. This is

indicated by the following dialogue from Rountree & Glock (1982:68).²²

- (39) A: *Umfa i ta sei di bakuba?* Sar
 how.much 2SG PROG sell DET banana
 ‘How much are you selling the banana?’
- B: *Wan kwaliki wan maun* Sar
 one quarter DET hand
 ‘25cents per hand’
- C: *Di baaka uwii wɛ?* Sar
 DET black leave FOC
 ‘What about the greens?’

Similar examples are found in Gungbe.

- (40) *Kòfí kò d̀̀ nù kpó wè?* Gun
 Kofi already eat thing finish FOC-INTER
 ‘Has Kofi already finished eating?’

Putting all this together, I propose that Saramaccan displays a sentence-final question marker that has a morphosyntax similar to that of the Gbe yes-no question marker. Additional evidence that supports this analysis is that even though the focus marker occurs in the left periphery in Saramaccan and Gungbe, it may surface in sentence-final position under appropriate circumstances. In the Gungbe example (40), the focus marker takes scope over the proposition and surfaces in sentence-final position, similarly to the Saramaccan example (39C).

The presence of the focus marker *wɛ* in sentence-final position in these examples strongly suggests that in Gbe and Saramaccan, a left peripheral marker may surface on the right edge if it has scope over the proposition. Accordingly, I argue that, like its Gbe substrate, Saramaccan requires movement of the sentence to [spec InterP] in yes-no questions because the latter always takes scope over the proposition. Accordingly, both Saramaccan and Gbe involve right-edge C-type markers that encode interrogative force. I therefore conclude that the Saramaccan complementizer system involves a projection InterP whose head hosts the yes-no question marker *no*. This would mean that a sentence (38b) is derived as represented in (41).

22. See Aboh (2005a, b) for further discussion.

(41) ..._{[InterP [FinP *A jei taa manu fu en go a Foto*]_i [_{Inter°} *no* [_{FinP} *t_i*]]]}

2.4. Summary

This section has shown that the Gbe languages and Saramaccan manifest a complementizer system that provides room for discrete functional projections, whose specifiers host distinct fronted elements (e.g. focus, wh-phrases, topic-phrases, etc.) and whose heads host distinct makers. These markers are considered the morphological realizations of the features [+interrogative], [+topic], [+focus], [+specific], [+injunctive], that are associated with the left periphery. The Gbe/Saramaccan left periphery is partially represented in (42), but see Aboh (2006a) for further discussion.

(42) ForceP_[*q^h/taa: n^h/fu-type1*] > InterP_[*a^h/no*] > TopP_[*y^h/de*] > FocP_[*w^h/we*] > FinP_[*n^h/fu-type2*]

Representation (42) supports the idea put forth in this chapter that Gbe and Saramaccan clauses manifest a similar morphosyntax in the case of their left periphery. With regard to the genesis of creoles, this would mean that the Saramaccan left periphery did not develop *ab ovo* or from English, but rather under the influence of Gbe. That there is a continuum between Gbe and Saramaccan is compatible with Arends' (1999) observation that complementizers were established in early Saramaccan.

The conclusion we reach here suggests that the idea that certain categories are lost in the course of pidginization and reconstructed later on in the course of creolization due to the bioprogram (or innate linguistic capacity) should be revised. While some language universals are needed to account for the existence of a split complementizer system, substrate influence is needed to account for (i) why Saramaccan has a complementizer system that is very much parallel to that of the Gungbe-type languages, but differs from that of English or Portuguese, and (ii) how such a complementizer system is transferred or acquired. In addition, by restricting itself to aspects of the complementizer domain, this chapter suggests that the sources of substrate influence might not be uniform. In this regard, the discussion in Section 3 indicates that substrate influence in the nominal domain has led to different results.

3. The nominal left periphery: the D-system in Gbe and Saramaccan

I consider now the left periphery of the nominal domain of the Gbe languages and the Surinamese creoles and show that substrate transfer is not a unitary syntactic phenomenon. I show that substrate transfer may target just a set of features, leaving the morphosyntax associated with it unfixed. This would mean that in such cases, substrate transfer doesn't seem to play an important role in setting the parameters that underlie the formal licensing conditions that apply to the set of features being transferred. Section 3.1 focuses on the D-system and shows that, while the function of the Sranan determiners is parallel to that of the Gbe languages in encoding specificity and number, their morphosyntax appears to be different from that of both the substrate and the superstrate languages. For example, I show that while Gungbe and Sranan fall into the same typological class with respect to the specific versus non-specific opposition, the morphosyntax of the specificity marker in these two languages is not exactly parallel. A possible solution could be that the parallels between Gungbe and Sranan are due to substrate transfer where the appropriate features are retained but not their syntax. In this regard, section 3.2 shows that, even though, the syntax of the Sranan determiner is different from that of Gungbe and English, the latter might have provided a favorable context for its development. Accordingly, both Gungbe and English feed into the emergence of the Sranan D-system. As the concluding remarks in section 3.3 show, what matters in the framework advocated here is not a particular choice, *per se*, but what may trigger that choice in a context of language contact. The proposed analysis extends to Saramaccan (Aboh 2003b), but I only refer to Sranan data for ease of discussion.²³

3.1. The D-system in Gbe and Sranan

The following paragraphs discuss word order within the Sranan and Gungbe determiner phrase and show that these languages manifest bare noun phrases that are interpreted as (in)definite depending on the context. When the noun surfaces with the determiner, the resulting phrase (i.e. the DP) is necessarily understood as discourse specific.

23. The results presented here are further discussed in Aboh (2006a).

3.1.1. Bare nouns and the expression of definiteness

The following examples show that bare noun phrases have the same distribution in Gungbe and Sranan. In example (43), the bare noun ‘*banana*’ is interpreted as generic or indefinite.

- (43) a. *Kofi, gona wowoyogobai bana tya kon gi mi Sr*
 Kofi goLOC market gobuy banana carry come give 1SG
 ‘Kofi, go to the market to buy me banana(s)’
- b. *Kòfí, yì àxìmè bó yì xò àkwékwè wá ná mì. Gun*
 Kofi gomarketCOORD gobuybanana come give 1SG
 ‘Kòfí go to the market to buy me banana(s).’

The Sranan example (44a) illustrates a context where the bare noun *bana* (in boldface) is interpreted as definite because it refers back to the banana that father brought, that is, the first instance of *bana* in the preceding relative clause. Similarly, the Gungbe headed relative clause in (44b) shows that the bare noun head is interpreted as definite.

- (44) a. *Na a bana di ppa tya kon, dati a nyan. Sr*
 FOC DET banana REL father carry come that 3SGeat
*a bere hati, a nyan **bana***
 3SG stomach hurt 3SG eat banana
 ‘The banana that father brought that is what he ate. His stomach is aching because he ate the banana.’
- b. *Àkwékwè [dǝ pàpá hèn wá sò] wè é dù. Gun*
 banana RELfather hold come yesterdayFOC 3SG eat
 ‘It is the banana that father brought yesterday that he ate.’

Building on example (44), I propose to define a definite noun phrase as having (pre)-identified referents where identification may be determined by some modifiers, or else from the context. Therefore, definiteness selects one object in the class of possible objects (Ihsane & Puskas 2001). Such definite referents occur as bare nouns in Sranan and Gungbe. In English, however, definiteness is necessarily encoded by the determiner *the*, and bare nouns of the Gungbe and Sranan type are excluded. For instance, the English counterpart of Gungbe (44b) is ungrammatical.

- (44) c. **banana that daddy brought yesterday*

3.1.2. *The expression of specificity*

In this chapter, the term ‘specificity’ refers to nouns (or referents) previously established in discourse (i.e. old/known referents). For instance, a Sranan noun that occurs with the determiner (*n*)*a* is interpreted as specific definite (i.e. discourse anaphoric). In example (45), the first instance of *bana* in (45a), is interpreted as specific definite (i.e. the aforementioned banana) as opposed to (45b) where *bana* is (in)definite.

- (45) a. *Kofi, teki a bana tya gi mi.* Sr
 Kofi take DET_[+spec, +def, -plur] banana carry give 1SG
 ‘Kofi, give me the aforementioned banana [e.g. the one I brought yesterday].’
- b. *Kofi, teki bana tya gi mi.* Sr
 Kofi take banana carry give 1SG
 ‘Kofi, give me a/the banana.’

Note that the specific definite interpretation is also assigned to the first instance of *bana* in example (44a). On the other hand, a noun phrase preceded by the determiner *wan* is interpreted as specific indefinite (46a). Example (46b) shows that the two determiners cannot co-occur. Yet, the second interpretation assigned to (46b) suggests that the specific definite determiner *na* and the numeral *wan* can co-occur.

- (46) a. *Kofi njan wan (sortu) bana* Sr
 Kofi eat DET_[+spec, -def, -plur] sort banana
 ‘Kofi ate a certain banana.’
- b. *Kofi, teki a wan bana tya gi mi.* Sr
 FOC take DET_[+spec, +def, -plur] one banana carry give 1SG
 ‘*Kofi, give me the certain banana [e.g. the one I brought yesterday].’
 ‘Kofi, give me the aforementioned one banana [i.e. the only one available].’

The situation in Sranan is reminiscent of that in Gungbe. Observe, for instance, that a noun phrase followed by the specificity markers *lɔ* or *dɛ* is necessarily interpreted as specific definite and specific indefinite, respectively. In (47a), *távò cè* ‘my table’ is understood as non-specific definite, unlike the sequence *távò lɔ*, which is interpreted as specific definite because it refers to a referent that has been pre-established in

discourse. A similar contrast arises in example (47b), where the sequence *távò dɛ́* is interpreted as indefinite specific, as opposed to the sequence *távò cè*. The ungrammatical example (47c) shows that the specificity markers *lɔ́* and *dɛ́* compete for the same position.

- (47) a. *Kòkú m̀̀n t̀̀v̀̀ò c̀̀è b̀̀ò d̀̀ɛ̀*
 Koku see table 1SG-POSS and say
émi ná x̀̀ò t̀̀v̀̀ò l̀̀ɔ́. Gun
 3SG FUT buy table DET_[+spec, +def]
 ‘Koku saw my table and said that he would buy that
 aforementioned table.’
- b. *Kòkú m̀̀n t̀̀v̀̀ò c̀̀è b̀̀ò d̀̀ɛ̀ émi ná x̀̀ò*
 Koku see table 1SG-POSS and say 3SG FUT buy
t̀̀v̀̀ò d̀̀ɛ̀. Gun
 table DET_[+spec -def]
 ‘Koku saw my table and said that he would buy a certain
 table.’
- c. **Kòkú m̀̀n t̀̀v̀̀ò l̀̀ɔ́ d̀̀ɛ̀*
 Koku see table DET_[+spec, +def] DET_[+spec, -def]

These examples indicate that the Gungbe and Sranan noun phrases are not determined for definiteness but for specificity. Put differently, while a noun phrase may be ambiguous with regard to definiteness (i.e. it may be interpreted as (in)definite or generic depending on the context), it is not with respect to specificity. Accordingly, these languages manifest a specific versus non-specific opposition. Assuming that definiteness applies to pre-identified noun phrases, while specificity includes D-linked noun phrases only, I conclude that a specific noun phrase is necessarily discourse-anaphoric, but a definite noun phrase may not be (Pesetsky 1987, Cinque 1990, Enç 1991, Campbell 1996, Ihsane & Puskás 2001). Aboh (2006b: 224) tentatively defines the combination of SPECIFICITY and DEFINITENESS in these languages as in (48):

- (48) a. A specific definite noun phrase is strongly D(iscourse)-linked and represents a unique referent assumed to be known to both speaker and hearer, and to which the speaker intends to refer.
- b. A specific indefinite noun phrase need not be D-linked. It represents an existing referent that the hearer may not know about, but one which the speaker has in mind and to which he/she intends to refer.

The description in (48) suggests that while these languages do not mark definiteness overtly, they systematically mark specificity, which in turn relates to: (i) the speaker's intent to refer, and (ii) whether the referent is assumed to be known to both speaker and hearer. Therefore, a specific definite noun phrase requires the marker *lɔ̃/na* as the morphological realization of the features [specific, definite], while a [specific indefinite] noun phrase must occur with *dé/wan* (*wan sortu*). Noun phrases that are interpreted as [non-specific, definite] or [non-specific, indefinite] occur as bare NPs.

Assuming that the features [\pm specific, \pm definite] are properties of D° , I propose that Gungbe and Sranan bare noun phrases are full DPs where D° hosts a null morpheme that expresses the feature [-specific]. Under this approach, we expect bare noun phrases (i.e. non-specific noun phrases) and specific noun phrases to have the same distribution. This prediction is borne out as suggested by previous examples (see also Longobardi 1994, Aboh 2004b).

3.1.3. The expression of number

Gungbe and Sranan manifest determiners that encode plurality, but they differ as to the function and the distribution of these determiners.

While the Sranan determiners *na* and *wan* express the features [specific, definite, -plural] and [specific, indefinite, -plural], respectively, the features [specific, definite, +plural] are realized by the determiner *den* as shown in (49a). However, Sranan lacks an overt form that expresses the features [+specific, indefinite, +plural]. As example (49b) shows, some speakers use the form *wan tu* where plurality is expressed by a numeral (*tu*). Example (49c) shows that the singular specific definite marker *na* and its plural counterpart *den* are mutually exclusive.

- (49) a. *Kofi, teki den bana tya gi mi. Sr*
 Kofi take DET_[+spec, +def, +plur] banana carry give 1SG
 'Kofi, give me the aforementioned banana [e.g. the one I brought yesterday].'
- b. *Kofi nyan wan tu bana Sr*
 Kofi eat DET_[+spec, +def, -plur] [PL] banana
 'Kofi ate some bananas.'
- c. **Kofi, teki na den*
 Kofi take DET_[+spec, +def, -plur] DET_[+spec, +def, +plur]

bana tya gi mi.
 banana carry give 1SG

Gungbe differs from Sranan in that it has a number marker that encodes plurality and definiteness but may co-occur with the specificity markers, as shown in (50).

- (50) a. *Kòkú m̀̀n távò lé tò àxìmè* Gun
 Koku see table NUMB at market
 ‘Koku saw the tables at the market.’
- b. *Kòkú m̀̀n távò ló lé tò àxìmè* Gun
 Koku see table DET_[+spec, +def] NUMB at market
 ‘Koku saw the specific tables at the market.’
- c. *Kòkú m̀̀n távò qé lé tò àxìmè* Gun
 Koku see table DET_[+spec, -def] NUMB at market
 ‘Koku saw some specific tables at the market.’

The definite interpretation assigned to the noun phrase *távò lé* ‘the tables’ in (50a) suggests that, in addition to the feature [+plural], the Gbe number marker may also encode definiteness as defined in (48b), that is, as pre-identified referents. The following examples in (51) support this hypothesis. In example (51a) the sequence *àkwékwè átón* ‘five bananas’ is interpreted as indefinite. Here the customer is asking for any five bananas (maybe out of a set of ten), because s/he is not interested in any particular set of five bananas. In example (51b), however, the definite sequence *àkwékwè átón lé* refers to a pre-identified set of five bananas. In example (51c) the sequence *àkwékwè átón ló lé* refers to a set of five bananas that has been previously established in discourse, hence the specific interpretation.

- (51) a. *mì sà àkwékwè átón ná mì* Gun
 2PL sell banana five for 1SG
 ‘Sell me five bananas.’
- b. *mì sà àkwékwè átón lé ná mì* Gun
 2PL sell banana five NUMB for 1SG
 ‘Sell me the five bananas.’
- c. *mì sà àkwékwè átón ló lé ná mì* Gun
 2PL sell banana five DET_[+spec, +def] NUMB for 1SG
 ‘Sell me the aforementioned five bananas.’

Because the Gungbe number marker may encode definiteness in addition to the number feature, I conclude that it expresses some referential features.²⁴ These facts clearly suggest that the Gungbe determiner *lɔ* is primarily a specificity marker, not a definite determiner as often proposed in the literature (see, for example, Lefebvre 1998).

The above discussion may give the impression that the specificity marker and the number marker are completely independent. Yet, even though these markers can occur independently as in previous examples, a noun modified by a numeral encoding plurality (e.g. *àkwékwè átɔn* ‘five bananas’) cannot be marked as specific in the absence of the number marker. Compare the grammatical sentence (52a) to the ungrammatical example (52b) where the number marker is missing.

- (52) a. *mì sà àkwékwè átɔn lɔ* *lɛ ná mì* Gun
 2PL sell banana five DET_[+spec, +def] NUMB for 1SG
 ‘Sell me the aforementioned five bananas.’
- b. **mì sà àkwékwè átɔn lɔ* -- *ná mì* Gun
 2PL sell banana five DET_[+spec, +def] for 1SG
 ‘Sell me the specific five bananas.’

These data indicate that the number marker is required so as to establish concord (or agreement) between the plural expression in the nominal inflectional domain and the elements that are set off to the right edge, that is, the specificity and number markers. Following previous work on the parallels between the clausal and the nominal domains, I assume that the specificity and number markers are morphological expressions of the nominal left periphery DP and NumP, respectively (Abney 1987, Szabolcsi 1987, 1994, Longobardi 1994, Ritter 1995, Bernstein 1997, 2001, Aboh 2004a, b, 2006b). According to this view, the Gungbe nominal left periphery mimics the clausal left periphery in the sense that both systems manifest right edge markers, which have scope over the proposition or predicate, which is then fronted into their specifiers.

Compared to the Sranan data, however, it appears that, while Sranan manifests the opposition *na/wan* and *den* to encode the set of features [+specific, ±definite, ±plural], Gungbe manifest two types of determiners:

24. According to Essegbey (p.c.), the Ewegbe counterpart of the Gungbe (51a) has a generic meaning. In addition, Ewegbe excludes (51b), but allows (51c). These facts seem to confirm the definite nature of the plural marker in Gungbe, as opposed to Ewegbe, but I leave this matter for further study.

lɔ/dɛ express the features [+specific, ±definite] and *lé* essentially manifests the feature [+plural].

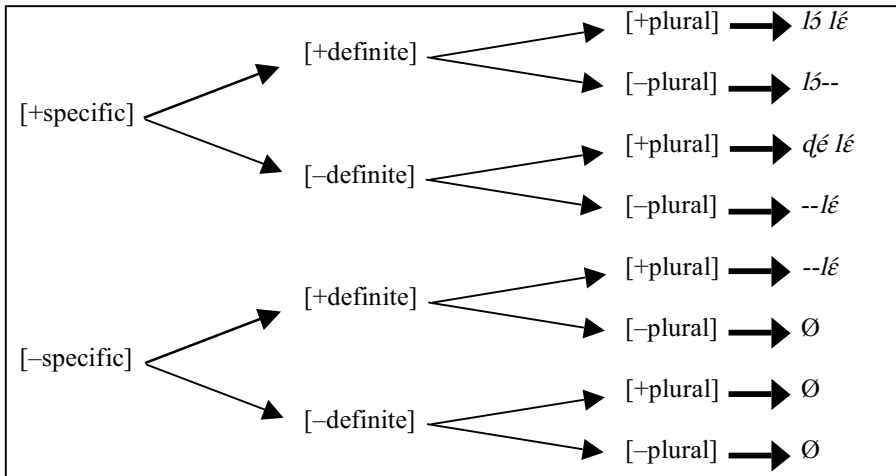


Figure 1. Gungbe

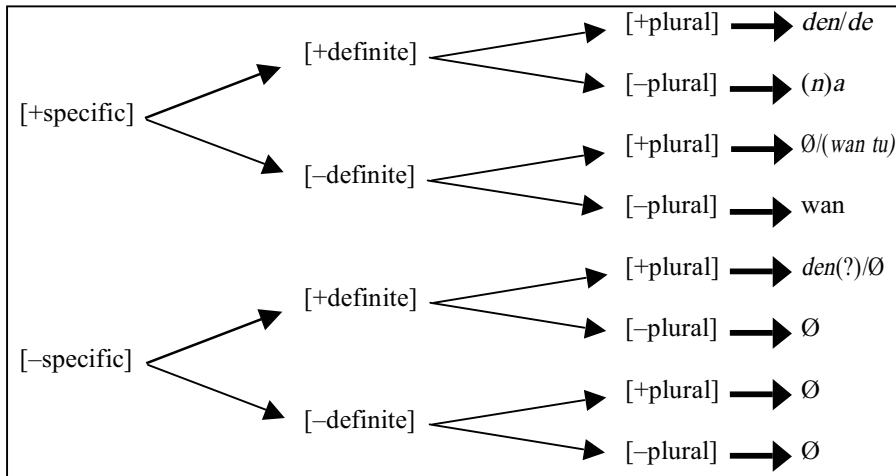


Figure 2. Sranan

Also notice that while the determiners *lɔ* and *na* are highly discourse-anaphoric, *dɛ* and *wan* appear to be less so. The former but not the latter always refer to a referent that has been established in previous discourse and that is known to both speaker and hearer.

The existence of the specific versus non-specific opposition in Gbe and Sranan in association with the expression of plurality and definiteness

allows for the combinations indicated in Figures 1 and 2. The representations in these Figures are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. The combinations of features expressed by the Gungbe and Sranan determiners

D-features	Gungbe	Sranan
[+spec, +def, +plur]	<i>lɔ lé</i>	<i>den</i>
[+spec, +def, -plur]	<i>lɔ</i>	<i>na</i>
[+spec, -def, +plur]	<i>dé lé</i>	Ø (<i>wan tu</i>)
[+spec, -def, -plur]	<i>dé</i>	<i>wan</i>
[-spec, +def, +plur]	<i>lé</i>	<i>den(?)</i> /Ø
[-spec, +def, -plur]	Ø [definite]	Ø [definite]
[-spec, -def, +plur]	Ø [generic]	Ø [generic]
[-spec, -def, -plur]	Ø [indefinite]	Ø [indefinite]

The last three rows of Table 1 show that Gungbe and Sranan are similar in allowing for bare noun phrases associated with the features [-spec, +def, -plur], [-spec, -def, +plur], and [-spec, -def, -plur] that are interpreted as definite, generic and indefinite, respectively. The two languages also pattern alike in allowing for distinct markers that encode discourse properties (i.e. specificity and number) in a way that English does not. Observe, however, that Sranan *na* and *den* express two different set of features each, unlike Gungbe specificity markers. In addition, the rows 3 and 5 show that the two languages do not manifest a one to one correspondence. In a sense, we reach a situation where the determiners serve similar semantic functions in these languages, but the forms they take appear to derive from different internal structures. The question then arises why are Sranan [+specific, -definite, +plural] noun phrases often realized as bare NPs or preceded by *wan tu*, while there seems to be no determiner (i.e. distinct from *den*) for expressing the features [-specific, +definite, +plural]? In order to answer these questions I will now consider the syntax of D in Gungbe as opposed to Sranan and English.

3.1.4. The derivation of determiners

In my account of the Gungbe facts, I propose that the specificity and number markers manifest distinct categories within the determiner system, DP-NumP, which I consider to belong to the nominal left periphery. Under the split-D hypothesis argued for in Aboh (2004a), D° heads the highest

projection of this system that links the noun phrase (or the nominal predicate) to previous discourse. Num^o, on the other hand, delimits the nominal left periphery downward as the interface between the nominal left periphery and the inflectional domain. Following Aboh (2004b: 7), I further assume that the specificity marker realises the head of a topic phrase (TopP) that projects between DP and NumP and expresses the features [\pm specific]. In Gungbe Top^o is morphologically realized as *lɔ*, the expression of the feature [+specific]. On the other hand, Num^o encodes number (i.e. [\pm plural]) as well as nominal agreement (and definiteness) features that match those of the nominal inflectional domain. Building on Szabolcsi (1994), I argue that definiteness is determined within the nominal inflectional domain but is taken up again by Num^o in the left periphery as the result of a concord process similar to that of number (53). In Gungbe, Num^o is overtly realized by the marker *lɛ*. Under this analysis therefore, the Gungbe determiner system can be illustrated as in (53), where it appears that D, comparable to Force on the clause level, is always non-overt in these languages.

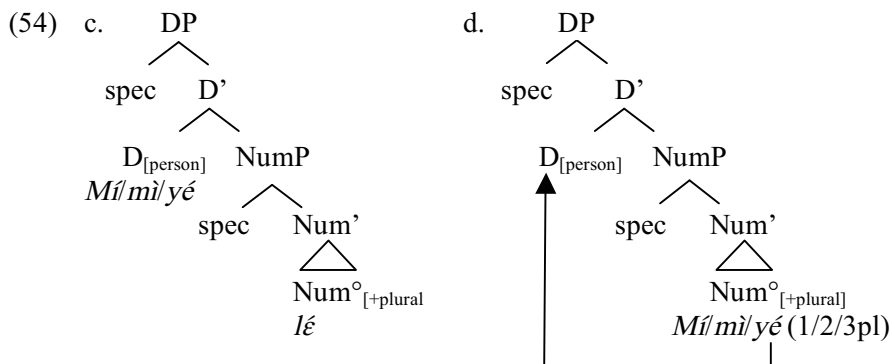
(53) [DP [D [TopP [Top *lɔ* [NumP [Num *lɛ* [NP.....]]]]]]]

Building on representation (53), I suggest that the Gbe bare noun phrases can be seen as full DPs where Top^o and Num^o host null morphemes that express the feature [-specific], [-plural], or else do not project (Longobardi 1994, Aboh 2004a, b). Given that Top^o and Num^o are embedded within DP, whose head is always non-overt in these languages, the proposed description predicts that bare noun phrases (i.e. non-specific and singular noun phrases) will have the same distribution as specific and plural noun phrases (i.e. specific singular or plural noun phrases). As the data discussed here have shown this prediction is borne out.

With this analysis in mind, let us now consider the structure of pronouns. As already discussed in Aboh (2004a, chapter 4), Gungbe plural strong pronouns derive from a combination of a weak pronoun and the number marker as in (54a). Weak forms, on the contrary, exclude the number marker as shown in (54b). Accordingly, Gungbe weak pronouns involve a morphologically simple form that encodes both [person] and [number] specifications. On the other hand strong forms are morphologically complex and express [person] and [number] features separately.

- (54) a. *Mí-lé / mí-lé / yé-lé* Gun
 1PL / 2PL / 3PL
 ‘We/you/they’
- b. *Mí-(*lé) / mí-(*lé) / yé-(*lé)* Gun
 1pl / 2pl / 3pl
 ‘We/you/they’

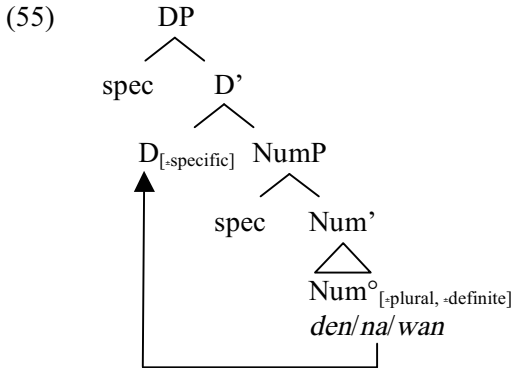
In order to account for these forms, I propose that weak pronouns involve a less articulated structure than full noun phrases in that they do not (always) project the DP-internal topic phrase. Under the assumption that D° and Num° express [person] and [number] respectively (Ritter 2005), I propose structure (54c) for deriving strong forms, while (54d) represents weak forms. In this analysis, the plural weak pronouns merge under Num° to encode number but must raise to D° to check the person feature.



We can derive the structure of the determiners in Sranan on the basis of the representation in (54d) that accounts for the Gungbe weak pronouns. Put differently, I propose that the determiner merges under Num° to encode the features [\pm plural, \pm definite] but must raise to D° as an expression of the features [\pm specific]. Accordingly, a single determiner expresses the set of features [\pm specific, \pm definite, \pm plural] as represented in (55).

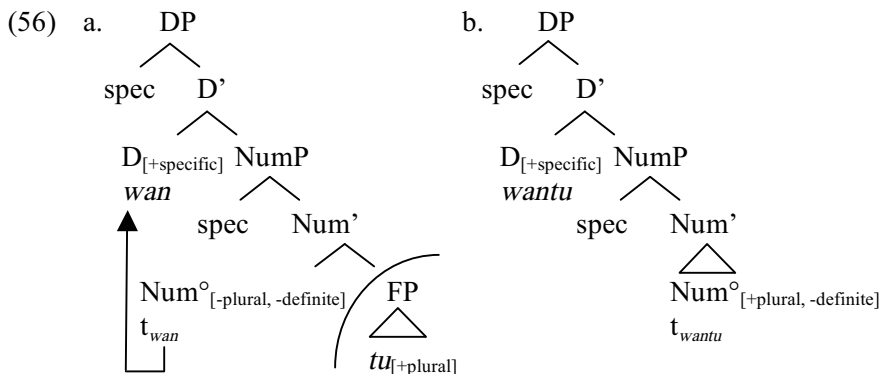
This analysis is compatible with the fact that the determiners in Sranan and Saramaccan developed from pronominal forms (e.g. demonstrative, 3PL). That the Sranan determiner and the Gungbe weak pronouns manifest the same derivation shouldn't necessarily be seen as substrate transfer where the Sranan determiners are modelled on the Gungbe weak pronouns. Actually representation (54d) is also compatible with English determiners and weak pronouns. As I show in the following section, the more plausible

analysis is therefore that English is the source of this structure in Sranan, with Gbe languages possibly acting as reinforcers. Accordingly, I assume that both Sranan and English realize the structure in (54d), where a single head encodes a set of features (i.e. specificity, number), while the same features are expressed by two distinct morphemes in Gungbe (54c-f).

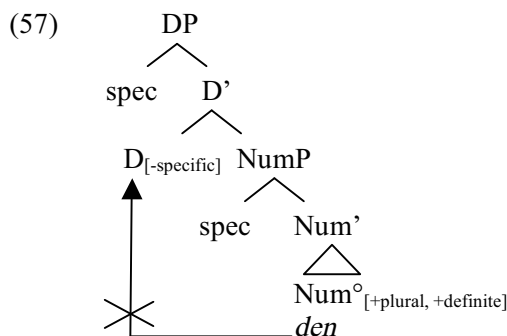


Building on this, I propose that the lack of distinct morphemes as the expression of D° and Num° is also responsible for the discrepancy in rows 3 and 5 of Table 1. *Wan* is a numeral that is inherently singular. Accordingly, when used as [specific indefinite] determiner, it cannot simultaneously encode plurality as a combination of the features [+spec, -def, +plur]. To circumvent this clash, some Sranan speakers resort to the form *wan tu* where we can reasonably assume that plurality is encoded by the numeral inside the nominal inflectional domain as represented in (56a). This derivation parallels with the usage of *wan sortu* to mark specific indefinite noun phrases in example (46a). Alternatively, one could propose that *wan tu* is a single morpheme that also encodes plurality. In this case, the derivation is parallel to (55). *Wan tu* merges under Num° but raises to D° as expression of the features [+spec, -def, +plur] (56a). Deciding between these two derivations is beyond the scope of this chapter and I leave the matter for further study.²⁵

25. A third possibility would be to assume that the bimorphemic *wan tu* is parallel to Gungbe because *wan* expresses D° and *tu* encodes Num° . But such scenario would have to account for why the determiner *den*, the definite counterpart, is monomorphemic and does not involve the combination of say a demonstrative like *da*, and a numeral like *tu*. Cross-linguistically, the Sranan morpheme *wan*



A similar clash arises with the combination of features [-spec, +definite, +plural]. The morpheme *den* is inherently plural and somehow referential (i.e. definite), being derived from a pronoun or a demonstrative (Bruyn 1995). As such, *den* merges under Num° but must raise to D° to encode the feature [+specific]. But the system doesn't seem to provide a way for licensing the feature [-specific] in this context (57). As a result, a noun phrase that is associated with the combination of features [-specific, +definite, +plural] surfaces as a bare noun (or for some speakers) preceded by *den*, which is therefore ambiguous with regard to the features [±specific, +definite, +plural].



The conclusion here seems to be that Gungbe and Sranan pattern alike because they manifest a specific versus non-specific opposition and allow for definite, indefinite or generic bare noun phrases in a way that English

tu is comparable to the Spanish form *unos* where a determiner intrinsically singular is marked for plural.

does not. However, the determiners of both languages appear to manifest different morphosyntax. Put another way, the morphosyntax of the Sranan determiner is more like that of English. The question now is what triggers this asymmetry.

3.2. Same function, different syntax, why?

If we assume that the similarities between Sranan and Gungbe can be accounted for in terms of substrate influence, then the natural question to ask is what makes Sranan syntax deviate from the Gbe pattern. In what follows, I propose that English might have provided the impetus for this change, assuming that we take into account other differences between Gungbe and Sranan as opposed to English and Sranan.

A striking difference between Gungbe and Sranan is that while the determiner must follow the noun in Gungbe, it precedes it in Sranan (and English) as represented in (58).

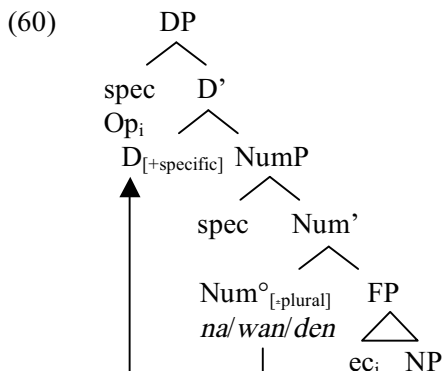
- (58) a. [NP —] > *Iɔ/dé-Ié*
 b. *na/wan-den* > [NP —]

With regard to (58a), I propose that specificity and number licensing in Gbe requires some type of predicate fronting whereby the predicate as a whole (that is, the extended projection of N represented by FP) moves to [spec NumP] and [spec TopP] as illustrated in (59).²⁶

- (59) [DP [D [TopP [Top *Iɔ* [NumP [Num *Ié* [NP.....]]]]]]]
-

The word order of the noun phrase in Sranan and English (58b) suggests that fronting does not occur in these languages, and specificity (and number) must be licensed otherwise. In this respect, Campbell (1996) proposes that in languages like English, the feature [specific] is checked by an operator in [spec DP]. The latter binds an empty category in the nominal domain. Building on this, we could assume that Sranan specific noun phrases are derived as represented in (60).

26. I refer the reader to Aboh (2004a, c) for the discussion on the structure of noun phrases in Gungbe.



Compared to Sranan as described in (60), the representation of Gungbe in (59) suggests that the determiners will always follow the noun. Indeed, this word order also extends to all the nominal modifiers, which must follow the noun in the fixed order adjective > numeral > demonstrative, as shown in (61a). In a sense, except for the postposed demonstrative in Sranan, the sequence of the Gungbe nominal modifiers (i.e. adjective, numeral) is the mirror of that of the Sranan modifiers (61b).

- (61) a. *Kòfí wè xò àvò [yù àwè éhè/*ff]*
 Kofi FOC buy cloth black two DEM/here
ló l'é Gun
 DET_[+spec,+def] NUMB_[+plur]
 ‘Kofi bought these two black clothes.’
- b. *Kofi bai den [dri bigi]*
 Kofi buy DET_[+spec,+def,+plur] three big
ipi-bana disija Sr
 heap_of_banana this/here
 ‘Kofi bought these three big heaps of banana.’

Also notice from example (62) that while the relative clause is sandwiched between the specific head noun and the specificity and number determiners in Gungbe, it follows both the specificity and number determiner and the head noun in Sranan.

- (62) a. *Kòfí zé àvò [dǎ mí xò sò] ló lɛ́* Gun
 Kofi take cloth REL 1PL buy yesterday DET_[+spec, +def] NUMB_[+plur]
 ‘Kofi took the clothes that we bought yesterday.’
- b. *Den uma [dǐ mí sí ná a*
 DET_[+spec, +def, +plur] woman REL 1SG se LOC DET_[+spec, +def, -plur]
wowoyo], den e kon Sr
 market 3PL PROG come
 ‘The women that I met at the market have come.’

The word orders in examples (61) and (62) suggest that Sranan and Gungbe nominal sequences differ in syntax. Sranan manifests a word order of the English-type. In this respect, the examples in (63) further show that Sranan and Gungbe differ because the Sranan postnominal demonstratives *disi/dati* (or the place adverb *ja/dape* ‘here/there’) can encode some type of emphasis, as in the English example *this heap here* versus *that heap there*. This construction is also found in Germanic and Romance languages (Bernstein 2001). In the literature, such examples are referred to as demonstrative reinforcement constructions. The following examples show that the Gbe languages lack such constructions, because the postnominal demonstrative determiner in these languages does not have an emphatic meaning.

- (63) a. *This here guy* non-standard English
 b. *Ce livre-ci* French
 this book-here
 ‘This book’
 c. **dávè éhè fí²⁷* Gun
 man DEM here

27. This sentence is perfectly grammatical if interpreted as ‘the man is here.’ An interesting fact that could suggest that the Gbe languages act as reinforcers is that, unlike other nominal modifiers, which must all precede the relative clause, the demonstrative may precede or follow the relative clause.

- (iii) a. *dávè éhè [dǎ wá fí]*
 man DEM that come here
 ‘This man that came here’
 b. *dávè [dǎ wá fí] éhè*
 man that come here here
 ‘This man here, that came here’

Interestingly, the interpretation of (iii) suggests that this structure might involve focusing of the relative clause, a process similar to the demonstrative

In terms of the present discussion, the fact that English has such constructions supports the hypothesis that it provided the impetus for such development in Sranan. This suggests that the Gbe languages are not the primary source for post-nominal demonstrative in Sranan. If that were the case, one would wonder why such process, which systematically targets all noun modifiers in Gbe, only found its way through demonstratives in Sranan, without affecting the morphosyntax of adjectives, numerals, and relative clauses, which all appear prenominal in this language. The discussion on the clausal left periphery in the first part of this chapter suggests that such scenario is less likely. Similarly, one might ask what blocks demonstrative reinforcement constructions in Gungbe, but not in Sranan, even though both languages display postnominal demonstratives?

Again, it seems to me that the answer to this question lies in the underlying structure of the nominal sequence and the formal licensing conditions that it requires. Let us assume that Sranan and Gungbe display the (universal) hierarchy in (64).

- (64) $[_{DP} [_{D^{\circ}} [_{TopP} [_{Top^{\circ}} \text{Specificity} [_{NumP} [_{Num^{\circ}} \text{Number} [_{FP} \text{Demonstrative} [_{FP} \text{Numeral} [_{FP} \text{Adjective} [_{NP} \text{Head noun}]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]$

However, the conditions on noun licensing differ in the two languages. In Gungbe, noun licensing requires two compulsory rules. The first consists of a systematic reversing rule that successively left-adjoins the noun to the preceding modifiers. This movement, referred to as snowballing in Aboh (2004a, b), is comparable to N-raising in some languages (e.g. Romance), where the noun raises past the modifiers to some inflectional position. This produces the order Noun-head>Adjective>Numeral>Demonstrative. As far as I can tell, there does not seem to be any semantic effect associated with this displacement, a fact that could explain the absence of the emphatic (or contrastive) force of postnominal demonstratives in this language.

The second obligatory rule as described in (59) appears a predicate fronting operation that forces movement of the constituent including the head noun and its modifiers (i.e. the nominal predicate) to [spec NumP] and [spec TopP/DP], as an instance of predicate fronting as proposed in (20). This fronting rule appears to have a semantic effect with regard to the interpretation of specificity or number. The combination of the two movements discussed here is described in (65).

reinforcement structures discussed above. The proper analysis of these structures goes beyond this chapter and I leave the matter for further research.

demonstrative is underlyingly prenominal. In this regard, it is worth mentioning that diachronic work by Bruyn (1995: 115) shows that the demonstratives *disi* and *dati* are used both prenominally and postnominally even though in different proportions. Figure 3 indicates that pre-N *disi* decreases in the course of time, while post-N *disi* increases.

3.2.1. Summary

Table 2 summarizes the discussion and shows that both Gungbe and English fed the morphosyntax of the nominal sequence in Sranan. While Gungbe provided the impetus for the development of discourse-related markers (i.e. the specific versus non-specific opposition) in Sranan, English has influenced its grammar. In this regard, a look at the second column shows that the grammar of Sranan appears to be different from both that of Gungbe and English. It is as if the creators of Sranan took advantage of both systems because the outcome appears to be more efficient than the grammar of Gungbe and English, respectively.

Table 2. Properties on the nominal sequence in Gungbe, Sranan, and English

	Gungbe	Sranan	English
Bare nouns	+	+	–
Spec vs. Non-spec	+	+	–
Modifier > noun	–	+	+
Noun > Modifier[intensifier]	–	+	(+)

4. Concluding remarks

The discussion in the preceding sections shows that substrate transfer is not a unitary phenomenon. The emergence of a feature in a given creole may be triggered different aspects of the languages in competition (see Aboh 2006b for further discussion). The analysis proposed here is compatible with situations where the function and the syntax of a set of features may be retained from either the substrate or the superstrate. In this regard, the discussion in Section 3 indicates that, even though the Gbe languages provide the appropriate context for the emergence of the specific versus non-specific opposition, as well as the use of bare nouns in Sranan and

Saramaccan, such feature transmission was not subject to morphosyntactic inheritance. On the other hand, the discussion in Section 2 suggests that Gungbe-like varieties have played a central role in the development of the Saramaccan clausal left periphery, as well as its morphosyntax. Accordingly, even though the two languages differ in many respects with regard to their TMA systems, Saramaccan manifests a subset of core morphosyntactic properties of the left periphery that are found in Gungbe, and cannot be easily attributed to language natural development or language universals.

Table 3 summarizes the properties of the Saramaccan and Gungbe left peripheries and shows that English manifests different structures from both Saramaccan and Gungbe.

Table 3. The left peripheries of Gungbe, Saramaccan, and English: an overview

Construction	Gungbe	Saramaccan	English
XP-focus	$XP_i w\grave{e} [IP - t_i -]$	$XP_i w\grave{e} [IP - t_i -]$	$XP_i [IP - t_i -]$
V-focus	$V_i (w\grave{e}) [IP - t_i -]$	$V_i w\grave{e} [IP - V_i -]$	$VP_i [IP - t_i -]$
XP-topic	$XP_i y\grave{a} [IP - pro_i -]$	$XP_i de [IP - pro_i -]$	$XP_i [IP - pro_i -]$
Yes-no question	$[IP - -]` t_{IP}$ $[IP - -] \grave{a} t_{IP}$ (Fon)	$[IP - -]$ no t_{IP}	Do-S-V-O

