

BaSIS Workshop
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Resuming topics and foci

Anyi, Baule and microvariation in Kwa languages

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Resumption: topic/focus asymmetry

Left peripheral topic

ITA **Il tuo libro, *(lo) ho comprato.**

‘As for your book, I bought it.’

Left-peripheral focus

ITA **IL TUO LIBRO (*lo) ho comprato.**

‘I bought YOUR BOOK.’ (Rizzi 1997: 289–290)

Similar facts: **Greek** (Anagnostopoulou 2006), **Tzotzil Maya** (Aissen 1992: 47), **Warlpiri** (Legate 2002: 166), **Wolof** (Torrence 2013: 72, 76),

‘**No focus resumption**’ (Neeleman and Van de Koot 2016: 400)

Resumption: topic/focus asymmetry

Left peripheral topic

ANY wó niàmá blá_i dié mìn mgbìdè-lì *(yì_i).

BCI wó niàmá blā_i lǎ́ ò kùdè-lí *(í_i).
2SG sibling woman TOP 1SG search-PFV 3SG

‘As for your sister_i, I searched for her_i.’

Left-peripheral focus

ANY wó niàmá blá_i jě mìn mgbìdè-lì *(yí) ɔ̀.

BCI wó niàmá blā_i jè ò kùdè-lí *(í) ɔ̀.
2SG sibling woman FOC 1SG search-PFV 3SG CD

‘I searched for YOUR SISTER.’

*Does the difference lie in the syntax of topic/focus or
in the behavior of pronouns?*

Resumption: topic/focus asymmetry

Two classes of languages reported to having resumption in constructions typically involving A-bar movement (focussing, wh-questions, relativization):

In some languages resumptive constructions do not show properties of movement (e.g. pronouns amnesty island violations)

English (Ross 1986 [1967]: 260–261), Swiss German (Salzmann 2013: 78), Irish (McCloskey 2006: 99–100), Hebrew (Borer 1984: 221–226), strong pronouns in **Lebanese Arabic** (Aoun et al. 2001: 375), zero pronouns in **Tuki**, Benue-Congo (Bilola 1990)

In other languages, resumptive constructions show properties of movement (e.g. sensitivity to islands)

Vata, Kru (Koopman 1983), **Edo**, Benue-Congo (Beermann, Hellan, Ogie 2002: 6), **Hausa**, Chadic (Tuller 1986: 55), **Nupe**, Benue-Congo (Kandybowicz 2006)

Contents

Hypothesis: Anyi/Baule resumptives have a *dual nature*:

- true resumptives in topic constructions
- apparent resumptives pronouncing gaps in focus constructions

A. Conditions for null arguments

- ☞ topic and focus constructions are linearly identical.
- ☞ resumption determined by factors that are orthogonal to IS

B. Syntax of foci and topics

- ☞ topics are co-indexed with a resumptive pronoun in situ;
- ☞ foci bind a pronoun in situ.

C. Necessary/sufficient conditions for this phenomenon

- ☞ microvariation in Kwa languages

Conditions

for null arguments

Subjects (null subject parameter)

Contextually retrievable referents: *no null subjects*

‘What did Kofi_i do yesterday?’

ANY *(ò_i) lî-lî bañà àljé.

BCI *(ɔ̃_i) dì-lí màdá àljé.

3SG eat-PFV banana food

‘He ate the banana fufu.’

Subjects not receiving thematic role: *expletives*

ANY *(ò_i) sòmàn ké' kòfí á hó.

BCI *(ɔ̃_i) tí ké' kòfí á wó.

3SG seem CMPL Kofi PFV leave

‘It seems that Kofi left.’

Subjects (topic/focus)

Obligatory resumptive with topic constructions:

ANY kòfí_i dǐé' *(ò_i) lì-lì bǎnà_u àljé.

BCI kòfí_i ljé' *(ɔ̀_i) dǐ-lí màdá_u àljé.

Kofi TOP 3SG eat-PFV banana food

‘As for Kofi, he ate the banana fufu.’

Resumptive with focus/wh- constructions

(obligatory in Anyi, optional in Baule)

ANY wá_u jě' *(ó) lì-lì bǎnà_u àljé ɔ́?

BCI wá_u jè' (ɔ́) dǐ-lí màdá_u àljé ɔ́?

who FOC 3SG eat-PFV banana food CD

‘Who ate banana fufu?’

Subjects (summary)

	Anyi	Baule
ellipsis	obligatory	obligatory
topicalization	obligatory	obligatory
focus fronting	obligatory	optional
<i>wh</i> - fronting	obligatory	optional
relative clauses	obligatory	obligatory

Objects (animacy in ellipsis/topicalization)

animate objects → resumptive pronoun

Context: ‘Did you search for the woman?’

ANY (blá dǐé) mǐ mgbǐdè-lì *(yí).

BCI (blā lǐé) ò kùdè-lí *(í).

woman TOP 1SG search-PFV 3SG

‘Yes, (as for the woman), I searched for her.’

inanimate objects → zero (with certain verbs)

Context: ‘Did you search for the letter?’

ANY (klàtǎ dǐé) mǐ mgbǐdè-lì (*yí).

BCI (flúwà lǐé) ò kùdè-lí *(í).

letter TOP 1SG search-PFV 3SG

‘Yes, (as for the letter), I searched for it.’

Objects (animacy in wh- questions/focus constructions)

animate objects → resumptive pronoun

ANY wá_~ jě́ è pìdè-lì *(yí) ɔ́?

BCI wá_~ jè́ à kùdè-lí *(í) ɔ́?

who FOC 2SG search-PFV 3SG CD

‘Whom did you search for?’

inanimate objects → zero (with certain verbs)

ANY nzìké́ jě́ è pìdè-lí (*yí) ɔ́?

BCI ñzùké́ jè́ á kùdè-lí (*í) ɔ́?

what FOC 2SG search-PFV 3SG CD

‘What did you search for?’

Objects (specificity of null objects)

null objects cannot be non-referential.

‘What did you do yesterday?’

ANY *mì* *nzùán-lì* *nìké/* #Ø.

BCI *̀n* *kàgá-lí* *liké/* #Ø.

1SG read-PFV something 3SG

‘I read something.’

null objects are pro-forms resuming an inanimate object

(Baule in Creissels and Kouadio N’Guessan 1977: 186 and Larson 2005: 95, 135, Gã in Korsah 2017: 15, Akyem in Boadi 2005: 31).

zero → [3, SG, –animate, specific]

Summary

Left peripheral topics and foci/*wh*- are linearly identical:

- (a) left peripheral constituent
- (b) functional head
topic, focus/*wh*- marker
- (c) pro-form in situ,
either pronoun or null (object) under conditions (animacy, specificity)
that are orthogonal to the discourse features (topic, focus/*wh*-).

Except:

optionality of subject resumption with focus/*wh*- questions in Baule.

Syntax

of topics and foci

Mismatches (data)

TOPICS → unagreement possible

ANY sùklú mmá mò dìé jè wàdì-lí hò-lì bassam.

BCI sùklú bà mù̀ ljé jè wàdí-lí wò-lí bassamu.

school child PL TOP 1PL run-PFV go-PFV Bassam

‘As for the students, we went to Bassam.’

FOCI → unagreement impossible

ANY *sùklú mmá mò jě́ jè wàdì-lí hò-lì bassam ɔ̀.

BCI *sùklú bà mù̀ jè jè wàdí-lí wò-lí bassamu ɔ̀.

school child PL FOC 1PL run-PFV go-PFV Bassam CD

‘We STUDENTS went to Bassam.’

Mismatches (conclusions)

- TOPICS co-indexed with a pro-form in situ.
The ϕ -features of the pro-form *match* the ϕ -features of the topic constituent (as far as this is required for co-indexation).
- FOCI related with a pro-form in situ by a movement chain.
The ϕ -features of the pro-form *agree* with the ϕ -features of the focused constituent.

Islands (data)

TOPICS → coindexed to resumptives within islands

ANY $\acute{a}m\grave{a}_i$ $d\grave{i}\acute{e}$, $m\grave{i}$ $s\grave{i}$ [ISLAND $sr\acute{o}w\grave{a}$ $b\grave{o}$ $\acute{o}_{i/j}$ $h\acute{u}l\grave{o}-l\grave{i}$ $y\acute{i}_{j/i}$].
BCI $\acute{a}m\grave{a}_i$ $l\acute{j}\acute{e}$, \acute{n} $s\acute{i}$ [ISLAND $sr\acute{a}$ $m\grave{o}$ $\acute{o}_{i/j}$ $kl\grave{o}-l\acute{i}$ $\acute{i}_{j/i}$].
Ama TOP 1SG know person that 3SG love-PFV 3SG
'As for Ama_i , I know the person who loved her_i .' / '...she loves'

FOCI → sensitivity to island violations

ANY * $\acute{a}m\grave{a}_i j\check{e}$ $m\grave{i}$ $s\grave{i}$ [ISLAND $sr\acute{o}w\grave{a}$ $b\grave{o}$ $\acute{o}_{i/j}$ $h\acute{u}l\grave{o}-l\grave{i}$ $y\acute{i}_{i/j}$] \acute{o} .
BCI * $\acute{a}m\grave{a}_i j\grave{e}$ \acute{n} $s\acute{i}$ [ISLAND $sr\acute{a}$ $m\grave{o}$ $\acute{o}_{i/j}$ $kl\grave{o}-l\acute{i}$ $\acute{i}_{i/j}$] \acute{o} .
Ama FOC 1SG know person that 3SG love-PFV 3SG CD
'I know the person who loved AMA/ whom Ama loved.'

Islands (conclusions)

TOPICS first merged in the left periphery
co-indexed with a resumptive pronoun in situ.

Foci extracted out of A-positions through movement
related with the extraction site by a movement chain

Prediction:

the pronoun in topic constructions is a constant, receiving its value by anaphora, while in focus constructions it is a variable having the same properties with a gap (in languages such as Italian or English)

Quantificational properties (data)

two possible interpretations under VP-deletion:

strict identity

the deleted 3SG is coreferent with the pronoun in the first conjunct

sloppy identity

the deleted 3SG is not coreferent with the pronoun in the first conjunct

ANY kòfí kùló jí cɔ́á jě kùádjó kɔ́sɔ́ jò sɔ́ bìjé.

BCI kòfí kló ǐ àluá ljè kwàdjò kúsù jó sò vjé.

Kofi love 3SG dog and Kouadio too do so too

‘Kofi_i loves his_i dog and Kouadio_j does so too (loves his_{i/j} dog).’

Quantificational properties (data)

TOPICS → only strict identity (☞ 3SG is a constant)

ANY jí cɔ́à dìé kòfí kùló jí jě kùádjó kɔ́sɔ́ jò sɔ́ bìjé.

BCI ǐ àluá ljé kòfí kló ǐ ljè kwàdjò kúsù jó sò vjé.

3SG dog TOP Kofi love 3SG and Kouadio too do so too

‘As for his_i dog, Kofi_i loves it

and Kouadio_j does so too (loves his_{i/*j} dog).’

Focus → strict/sloppy identity (☞ 3SG is a variable)

ANY jí cɔ́à jě kòfí kùló jí jě kùádjó kɔ́sɔ́ jò sɔ́ bìjé.

BCI ǐ àluá ljè kòfí kló ǐ jè kwàdjò kúsù jó sò vjé.

3SG dog FOC Kofi love 3SG and Kouadio too do so too

‘It’s his_i dog that Kofi_i loves

and Kouadio_j does so too (loves his_{i/j} dog).’

Quantificational properties (conclusions)

TOPICS Topics are non-quantificational
 they relate to a *coreferent constant* in situ.

FOCI Foci are quantificational
 they bind a *co-valued variable* in situ.

Summary

Dual nature of pronouns

in topic constructions, ‘true resumptives’

in focus constructions, ‘apparent resumptives’

Topics

first merged in the left periphery

co-indexed by a resumptive pronoun in situ

$[_{TopP} DP_i [_{Top'} Top [_{AspP} \dots [_{DP} D_i] \dots]]]$

Summary

Focus constructions

Hypothesis 1: PRONOMINAL INSERTION > MOVEMENT

Hypothesis 2: MOVEMENT > (postsyntactically) PRONOMINAL INSERTION

- (a) INSERTION FIRST: pronoun in the logical form, effects on the interpretation; e.g., specificity effects with resumptives (Broeckx 2003: 31)

ANY [nǎ srɔ́wa]_i jě ó_i lì-lì baǎ̀nǎ̀ àljé ɔ̀.

BCI [nǎ srá-fi]_i jè ɔ́_i dì-lí màdǎ̀ àljé ɔ́.

NEG person-NEG FOC 3SG eat-PFV banana food CD

‘NOBODY ate the banana fufu.’

Summary

Focus constructions

Hypothesis 1: PRONOMINAL INSERTION > MOVEMENT

Hypothesis 2: MOVEMENT > (postsyntactically) PRONOMINAL INSERTION

(b) MOVEMENT FIRST: sensitivity to islands and WCO

the presence of a pronoun in narrow syntax would create new possibilities; see strong pronouns in Lebanese Arabic (Aoun et al. 2001: 375)

(c) INSERTION FIRST: pronoun and the DP co-exist in situ (prior to movement).

This is possible for weak pronouns (heads) and not for strong pronouns (DPs).

Summary

Focus constructions

Hypothesis 2: MOVEMENT > (postsyntactically) PRONOMINAL INSERTION

focus-movement: $[_{\text{FocP}} \text{DP}_{[\text{foc}]i} [_{\text{Foc}' \text{ FOC}} [_{\text{AspP}} \dots [\text{DP}_{[\text{foc}}] \dots]]]]$

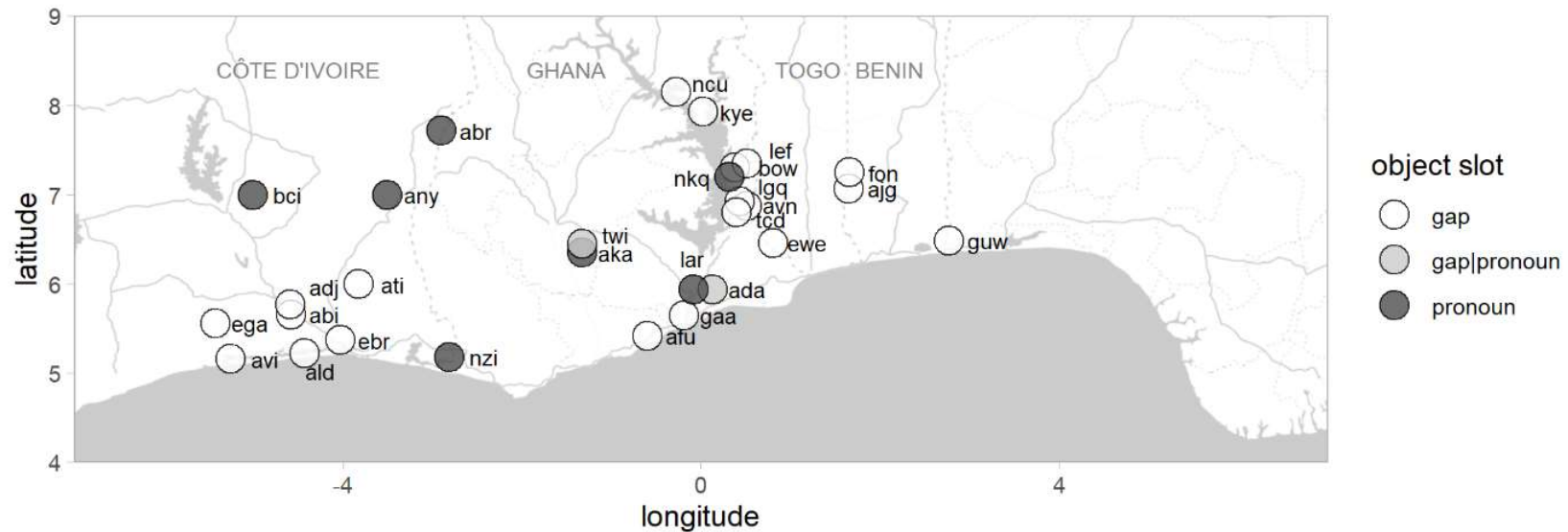
PF: $[_{\text{FocP}} \text{DP}_{[\text{foc}]i} [_{\text{Foc}' \text{ FOC}} [_{\text{AspP}} \dots [\text{pro}_i] \dots]]]]$

Crosslinguistic conditions

for pronouncing gaps

Objects

Animate object (apparent) resumptives in focus constructions



RESUMPTIVES: Central Tano (Baule, Anyi, N'zema, Akanic, Abron), sporadically outside this branch (Nkami, Larteh, Dangme)

Further languages: focused/*wh*- objects relate to gap in situ; cf. Gungbe (Aboh 2007: 85) or Ewe (Collins 1993: 39), various lgs. in Ameka 2010: 152–153).

Objects

Null Objects

Null objects are generally excluded in these languages:

also languages with a gap in situ have resumptive object pronouns in ellipsis/topicalization.

OBJECT FOCUS: **Kòfí wè ùn yró.**

Kofi FOC 1SG call

‘I called KOFI.’ (Aboh 2007: 85)

ANIM. OBJECT TOPIC **dàn ló yà Kòfí hù ì.**

snake DEF TOP Kofi kill.PFV 3SG

‘As for the snake, Kofi killed it.’

INAN. OBJECT TOPIC **mótò ló yà Kòfí xò-è.**

car DEF TOP Kofi buy.PFV-3SG

‘As for the car, Kofi bought it.’

(Aboh 2004: 298, 310)

Null Objects

The particular property is that in some languages the null object is a pro-form for inanimates.

-BOUND (topic, ellipsis)	+BOUND (focus, wh-)	
$p_{anim} \emptyset_{inan}$	$p_{anim} \emptyset_{inan}$	Baule, Anyi, N'zema, Akyem, Asante Twi, Larteh, Nkami
$p_{anim} \emptyset_{inan}$	\emptyset	Gã, Adiukru, Ebrie
$p_{anim inan}$	$p_{anim} \emptyset_{inan}$	-
$p_{anim inan}$	\emptyset	Gungbe, Ewe, Abidji, Attié, Avatime, Logba, Lelemi, Tuwuli, Ega
$p_{anim} \emptyset_{inan}$	$\leftarrow p_{anim} \emptyset_{inan}$	
$p_{anim inan}$	$\rightarrow \emptyset$	

Crucial is the existence of a *zero* pro-form.

In some languages, the animacy contrast through different (non-zero) 3rd singular object pronouns for animates and inanimates (Attié, Bogny 2009: 13; Logba, Dorvlo 2009: 98; Tuwuli, Harley 2005: 128, Gungbe in Aboh 2004: 298, 310) or varies depending on noun class (Avatime, Schuh 1995: 146; Lelemi, Allan 1973: 224-225; Tafi, Bobuafor 2009: 303).

Null Objects

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-BOUND (topic, ellipsis)	+BOUND (focus, wh-)	
$p_{\text{anim}} \emptyset_{\text{inan}}$	$p_{\text{anim}} \emptyset_{\text{inan}}$	Baule, Anyi, N'zema, Akyem, Asante Twi, Larteh, Nkami
$p_{\text{anim}} \emptyset_{\text{inan}}$	\emptyset	Gã, Adiukru, Ebrie
$p_{\text{anim}} _{\text{inan}}$	$p_{\text{anim}} \emptyset_{\text{inan}}$	-
$p_{\text{anim}} _{\text{inan}}$	\emptyset	Gungbe, Ewe, Abidji, Attié, Avatime, Logba, Lelemi, Tuwuli, Ega
$p_{\text{anim}} \emptyset_{\text{inan}}$	$\leftarrow p_{\text{anim}} \emptyset_{\text{inan}}$	
$p_{\text{anim}} _{\text{inan}}$	$\rightarrow \emptyset$	

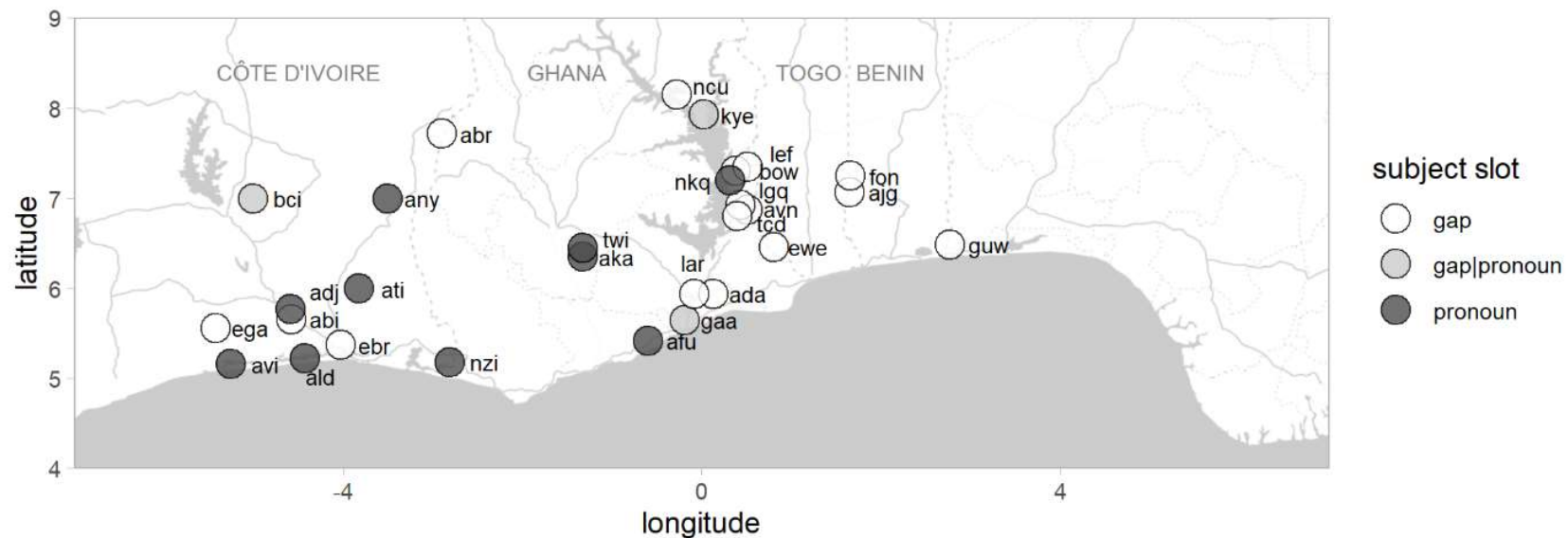
Zero-proforms are a necessary (not sufficient) condition.

A null object can have two interpretations in these languages: (a) the gap of movement, (b) the inanimate 3SG. Some languages (Central Tano) opt for the latter option, other languages (Gã, Adiukru, Ebrie) for the former.

Subjects

Subjects

Subject (apparent) resumptives in focus constructions



There is an overlap (most Central Tano lgs.) but several further languages
↳ the phenomenon is not reducible to \pm argument resumption.

Null subjects

possible in the Kwa languages that have subject agreement:

Central Togo languages that have (noun class/person) prefixes cross-referencing the subject, e.g., **Avatime** (Schuh 1995, Van Putten 2014: 49) and **Tafi**, or person prefixes as in **Logba** (Dorvlo 2009: 93) and **Lelemi** (Allan 1973: 93; Fiedler & Schwarz 2009: 61)

☞ do not have subject resumptives in focus/wh- constructions.

Null subjects

The further Kwa languages without resumptives in wh-/focus constructions do not allow for null subjects:

Resumption appears in topicalization, see Gungbe:

SUBJECT FOCUS

Kòfí wè wá.

Kofi FOC come

‘KOFI came.’

SUBJECT TOPIC

vī ló yà é yì wéxòmè.

child DEF TOP 3SG go.PFV school

‘As for the child, it went to school.’ (Aboh 2004: 309)

Long extraction

Null subjects only appear in short extraction. Long extraction requires a resumptive in all languages (except Abidji).

FON [CP kòkú_i wè kòjó dɔ̀ [CP dɔ̀ *(é_i) kló mótò ɔ́]]
Koku FOC Kojo say that 3SG wash car CD

‘Kojo said that KOKU washed the car.’ (Ndayiragije 1992: 92)

ANY [CP ámà_i jě m̀ ngá-lí [CP ké *(wà_i) hɔ́-lì ɔ̀]].

BCI [CP ámà_i jè ñ kà-lí [CP kè *(ɔ́_i) wò-lí ɔ́]].
Ama FOC 1SG say-PFV that 3SG go-PFV CD

‘I said that AMA left.’

Short vs. long extraction

To the exception of Abidji, null subjects only appear in the highest subject.

Long extraction	Short extraction	
p	∅	Fongbe, Gungbe, Ewe, Tuvuli, Baule
p	p	Akyem, Asante Twi, Anyi, Gã
∅	∅	Abidji
∅	p	–
p	← p	
∅	→∅	

What is special with the highest subjects?

Conclusions



Conclusions

Topics

- first merged in the left periphery
- co-indexed by a resumptive pronoun in situ

Foci

- evidence for movement
- binding a variable in situ

Dual nature of pronouns

- in topic constructions, ‘true resumptives’
- in focus constructions, ‘apparent resumptives’

Crosslinguistic conditions

- object resumptives in a subset of the languages with zero pro-forms
- null subjects only in short extraction either due to cross-linguistic variation in locality effects or in properties of phonological well-formedness.

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