

Contrastive topic and predicate doubling in Bantu

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Predicate doubling

Kĩĩtharaka (database Kanampiu & Van der Wal)

(1) Kũ-rũgǎ n-káá-rũg-a. [Topic]
15-cook 1SG.SM-FUT-cook-FV
'I will indeed cook.'

(2) I kũ-rĩngá tũ-rĩng-iré ng'-óombé, tũ-tĩ-ra-cĩ-thaik-a. [Cleft]
FOC 15-hit 1PL.SM-hit-PFV 10-cows 1PL.SM-NEG-YPST-10OM-tie-FV
'We HIT the cows, we didn't tie them.'

(3) Ba-kĩ-bá-thírí-á kũ-ba-thíría [In situ]
2SM-DEP-2OM-finish-FV 15-2OM-finish
'They completely finished them.'

(See also Güldemann & Fiedler (to appear) on predicate doubling)

Topic doubling

- Left dislocation of the infinitive is like left-dislocation of any other NP

Kĩĩtharaka (database Kanampiu & Van der Wal)

(4) *Kû-íná* í ba-íín-íré.

15-dance FOC 2SM-dance-PFV

'They did dance!'

(5) (Can I buy bananas on this market?)

N-dígú n'wa ú-gúr-e.

10-banana can 2SG.SM-buy-SBJV

'Bananas you can buy.'

Topic doubling: left-peripheral infinitive

Rukiga (database Asiimwe and Van der Wal)

- (6) (There is one task left to do, which is mingling karo; the others will get the water or do the weeding. Now you volunteer to do the last task.)

[O-kú-góyá a-ká-ró] tu-ryá-ka-góya.
AUG-15-stir AUG-12-millet.bread 1PL.SM-FUT-12OM-stir
'Mingling karo, we will do it.'

Copi (database Nhantumbo and Van der Wal)

- (7) Ni-yá-kuwû:l-a kámbe [ku-bhika ti-feijáu] ni-bhík-î:le.
1SG.SM-NEG-wash-FV but 15-cook 10-beans 1SG.SM-cook-PFV
'I didn't wash, but I did cook the beans.'

Topic doubling: left-peripheral infinitive

Kĩĩtharaka (Patrick Kanampiu, p.c.)

(8) (Do you do sports? What kind of sporting activities do you do?)

Gû-ceetha, i-mb-ug-ag-i-a.

15-do.sports FOC-1SG.SM-run-HAB-IC-FV

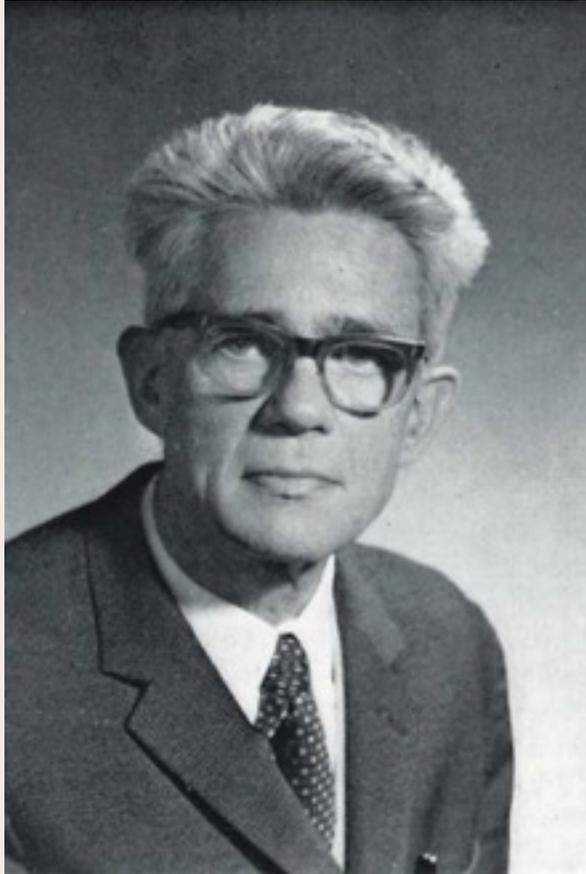
'As for sports, I run.'

Kinyakyusa (database Lusekelo, Msovela & Van der Wal)

(9) A-ba-sukuuru pa-ku-lima bi-ku-seeny-aany-a.

AUG-2-school 16-15-cultivate 2SM-PRS-weed.sloppily-PEJ-FV

'The pupils are not very good at cultivating.'



A.E. Meeussen (1967: 121)

A peculiar kind of sentence, with twice the same verb, the first occurrence being an infinitive, is attested frequently [...]. The meaning varies between stress of **'reality'**, stress of **'degree'**, and even **'concession'**:

kutákuna báátákunide

“they chewed as (much as) they could”

“(as for chewing) they did chew, (but ...)”.

Kĩĩtharaka (database Kanampiu & Van der Wal)

- (10) Kû-rímá í tû-rîm-iré.
15-dig FOC 1PL.SM-dig-PFV
'We weeded, but...' / 'Although we dug...'
(... the weeds will return soon)

Range of interpretations

Rukiga (database Asiimwe & Van der Wal + p.c.)

(11) O-ku-hínga tu-hing-íre.
AUG-15-dig 1PL.SM-dig-PFV

- a. 'As for ploughing, we did plough.' CT
[We were expected to dig and feed the animals]
- b. '(Yes,)We did actually plough.' Verum
[There is doubt as to whether we did the ploughing]
- c. 'We ploughed a lot!' Intensive
[The boss expected us to cover only one part but we did the whole field]
- d. 'We ploughed anyway.' Depreciative
[It's planting season but there is no rain]

Research questions

- Which aspects of the interpretations are in the semantics and which in the pragmatics in topic doubling?
- How can all four interpretations be derived?

Contrastive topic

- Forms answer to a subquestion, i.e. there is a multi-part question under discussion (Roberts 1996)

(12) Q: What did Jane and Pedro eat?

A: [Jane]_{CT} ate [fish]_{FOC}... (Pedro I don't know)

- Same for topic doubling:

Kirundi (database Nshemezimana & Van der Wal)

(13) Ku-ryá, n-dy-a i-nyama, ku-nywá n-yw-a i-fanta.
15-eat 1SG.SM-eat-FV AUG-9.meat 15-drink 1SG.SM-drink-FV AUG-9.fanta
'For eating, I eat meat; for drinking, I drink fanta.'

Contrastive topic

- Buring (2003) proposes the following steps to derive the CT meaning:

[kuryá]_{CT} ndya [inyama]_{FOC}

1. replace the focus by a variable and open a set of alternatives:
[kuryá]_{CT} x → What do you eat?
2. convert the question into a set of questions:
What do you p? → {What do you eat?, What do you drink?, ... }

- The answer addresses **one** of the questions, but the CT crucially indicates the presence of further subquestions to a larger issue. It indicates contrasting questions which are derived from substitutions for the CT phrase.
- CT-Congruence (Constant 2014:37 from Buring 2003:520)
An utterance U with CT-marking answers a question within a strategy containing ≥ 2 questions from the set $\llbracket U \rrbracket$

Verum

(14) (Don't you know how to swim?)

Makhuwa

O-rámpeléla, ki-náá-rampelél-a.

15-swim 1SG.SM-PRS.DJ-swim-FV

'I do know how to swim.' / 'As for swimming, I can indeed swim.'

- Same operations take place, BUT what will the alternatives consist of?
- Muñoz Pérez & Verdecchia (2022:20) propose that focus marks a polarity head Σ (Laka 1990, Holmberg 2016)-> focus targets **polarity**
 1. replace the focus by a variable and open a set of alternatives:
[orampelela] -> Do you swim?
 2. convert the question into a set of questions:
??

Verum

Vicente (2007:64-65) makes use of the distinction between contradictory and non-contradictory verum focus:

- **Contradictory:** $\neg p$
emphasizes the truth of p in contrast to its negation
 - **Non-contradictory:** $\neg p \wedge q \not\equiv p$
establishes a contrast between p and a different proposition q that is not entailed by p
1. replace the focus by a variable and open a set of alternatives:
[orampelela] \rightarrow Do you swim?
 2. convert the question into a set of questions:
 - a. Contradictory: {Do you p ?, Do you not p ?}
Verum reading without implied other predicates
 - b. Non-contradictory: Do you p ? \rightarrow {Do you swim?, Do you walk?, Do you eat?, ...}
Verum reading answering one subquestion and leaving others for implication

Contradictory (Kĩĩtharaka, database Kanampiu & Van der Wal)

(15) (I cannot believe that the teachers would dance)

Kũ-íná í ba-íín-íré.

15-dance FOC 2SM-dance-PFV

'They did dance!'

1. [kũina] -> Did they dance?
2. {Did they dance?, Did they not dance?}

Non-contradictory (Makhuwa, database Van der Wal)

(16) (Are you even listening to me?)

W-iúwá, ki-ńńí-ùwá, só ki-náá-hí-tthún-a o-wáákhúla.

15-hear 1SG-HAB-hear-FV just 1SG.SM-PRS-NEG-want-FV 15-reply

'I hear you, it's just that I don't want to reply.'

1. [wiwwa] -> Did you hear?
2. Did you p? -> {Did you hear?, Did you reply?, ...}

Intensive & depreciative

- We propose a third kind of verum contrast:
- **Relational:** $p' \models p \wedge p' \neq p$
establishes a contrast with a proposition p' which entails p but is not equal to it
- Truth of p , contrastive with other ways in which p could have been done

Kirundi (database Nshemezimana & Van der Wal)

(17) Ku-andika u-r-and-itse.

15-write 2SG.SM-PRS.DJ-write-PFV

a. intensive: 'You have really written a lot!'

b. depreciative: 'At least you have written (something).'

1. [kuandika] -> Have you written?
2. Have you p? -> {Have you written poorly?, Have you written well?, ...}

Intensive & depreciative

- We propose that, by conventional implicature, the extremes of this set are invoked for the depreciative and intensive readings

Kinyakyusa (database Lusekelo, Msovela & Van der Wal)

(18) (From Mbeya to Kiwira takes 10hrs to walk but someone arrives in 6hrs, which is extraordinary.)

Mwé, u-kw-eenda u-mw-aana eend-ile!

EXCL AUG-15-walk AUG-1-child 1SM-walk-PFV

'The child (really) walked!'

- High point on alternatives entailment scale = intensive

< walk supersonically fast \models walk fast \models walk at a pace \models walk >



Rukiga (database Asiimwe & Van der Wal)

(19) O-ku-tambura kw-e tw-a-tambur-a...
AUG-INF-walk 15-CM 1PL.SM-N.PST-walk-FV

'Although we walked... (I don't know whether we'll ever arrive).'

- Low point of alternatives entailment scale = depreciative/concessive

< arrive \models walk until near the goal \models walk halfway \models walk >



- Which alternatives are generated depends on the context

Kĩĩtharaka (database Kanampiu & Van der Wal)

(20) Kũííná n' áííniré bai!
kũ-iina ni a-iin-ire bai
15-sing FOC 1SM-sing-PFV friend

intensive: 'Boy did she sing!' (we never knew she had such a good voice)

depreciative: 'Well at least she sang...' (try to see the positive side)

Open issues

- Is entailment the right way to go? Should this be situationalised, e.g. the chicken dying does not necessarily entail strangling it, but in this situation it might?

Kĩĩtharaka (database Kanampiu & Van der Wal)

(21) (How can one kill a chicken?)

Kw-íítá, nwá w-iít-e, índî î-tí-kwa rûa.
15-strangle can 2SG.SM-strangle-SBJV but 9SM-NEG-die-FV soon
'Well, you can strangle (it), but it doesn't die quickly.'

- (Comparison with) other predicate doubling, which may also be intensive:

Copi (database Nhantumbo & Van der Wal)

(22) Vá-tsímbíté kú-tsímbî:la.

2SM-walk.PFV 15-walk

'They really walked!' (they walked more than just a walk, further than normal)

Many **thanks** to the BaSIS collaborators Allen Asiimwe, Patrick Kanampiu, Amani Lusekelo, Nelsa Nhantumbo, Ernest Nshemezimana; to the speakers we worked with for their patience and insights; and to Elisabeth Kerr, Zhen Li, Ines Fiedler, Tom Güldemann, and participants in the BaSIS brainstorm 2019 workshop and TripleA 8 for fruitful discussion.

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