

The Status of *sì* in Yoruba

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This paper examines the syntax of sentential conjunction in the Yoruba language with the view of ascertaining the actual syntactic function of *sì* on which opinions have been polarized in the syntax of Yoruba grammar. This paper argues that the Yoruba language has a sentential/clausal conjunction element but its structural position is not the between the two clauses. The researcher conducted a series of structured interviews and also consulted existing works targeting the *sì* in compound clauses so as to generate the data for the research. The research adopts the Minimalist Program (MP) as its theoretical tool for the analyses presented in the article. MP views syntactic derivations as resulting from computational systems whose operations are based on operation Select and operation Merge. Syntactic structures are built in a par-wise fashion from bottom to top by putting two items together at a time. The research shows that there are three different *sì* in Yoruba occurring in seemingly similar environment but they are performing different syntactic functions. One *sì* denotes “emphasis” as a preverbal element; the second one denotes “consecutiveness of action” while the third one performs the function of sentential/clausal conjunction, an overt realization of the in the second clause. The overtly marked sentential/clausal conjunction also has a variant, which is an abstract realization between the two conjoined clauses.

Keywords: *sì*, emphasis, consecutiveness, conjunction, sentential conjunction, minimalist program

In the Minimalist Program literature (hence, MP) there are several publications on the nature of sentence types and derivations (Pollock, 1989; Chomsky, 1991, 1993, 1995; Rizzi, 1997; Ajiboye 2005; Ajongolo, 2005; Abimbola, 2014, Olaogun 2016). Compound structures have been identified in MP as projections of the conjunction head (hence, Conj⁰) whose maximal projection is conjunction phrase (hence, ConjP). ConjP as a functional projection combines two or more Tense Phrases¹ (TPs, i.e. TP₁ and TP₂ TP_n) in pre-syntactic computations together to form compound

sentence constructions. Compound sentences are known to consist of two different clauses joined by a conjunction, in addition to having the two clauses as separable. Within Yorùbá linguistics, opinions are still polarized concerning one of the sentence conjunctions in Yoruba.

In the traditional grammar of the language *sì* is regarded functionally as the sentence conjunction. Scholars who hold this view are Bamgbose (1990), Yusuf (1980, 1999) among others. We shall regard this hypothesis as the first school of thought. But some scholars do not agree on the presence of sentential conjunction in Yoruba and out rightly disagree with the first school of thought on *sì* as the actual sentential/clausal marker of conjunction. Awobuluyi (1978; 2001; 2008; 2013) and Ilori (2010) hold the view that Yoruba does not have sentential conjunction, constituting the second school of thought. But there is no known work that has considered the status of *sì* in Yoruba grammar. This is the gap this research intends to fill using the Minimalist Program.

Based on the behavior of conjunctions, conjoined constituents are said to be on either sides of the conjunction element. It is observed, however, that

¹ Yoruba clause structure has been identified as having a tense head represented by T⁰, and TP re ten as a maximal category, Ilori (2010); Oduntan (2000); among others. Other abbreviations used in this work include; * - ungrammatical structure/sentence; MP – Minimalist Program; Conj⁰/Conj – conjunction head; ConjP – Conjunction phrase; ConjII – extended projection of ConjP; TP₁ and TP₂ – clause one and two in conjoined sentences; T₁ – intermediate category/projection of tense phrase; Fig. – figure; DP – Determiner Phrase; D/Det –Determiner; MaxP – Maximal Projection of a given phrasal category; CA – consecutive Action; emph – emphasis; S – sentence; pst – past tense; pres – present tense; prep – preposition; Ex-DP – external argument DP; foc – Focus head of Focus construction; vP – light verb/external VP shell; v₁ – intermediate category/projection of vP; α, β – variables; Adv – Adverb.

sì behaves differently and hence we investigate the behavior of the item if truly it is actually a conjunction as it has been classified traditionally and speculated in the language or whether it is a preverbal adverb as first mentioned by Awobuluyi (1978). Figure 1 is an example of compound sentence in Yoruba while Fig. 2 indicates the two clauses:

<p>[_{TP} Ọlá ra ẹran, ó <i>sì</i> jẹ ẹ]</p> <p>[_{TP} Ọlá buy:pst meat, he <i>sì</i> eat:pst it]</p> <p>“Ola bought meat and ate it”</p>

Figure 1. A compound sentence in Yoruba.

<p>[_{TP1} Ọlá ra ẹran], <i>sì</i> [_{TP2} Ọlá jẹ ẹ]</p> <p>[_{TP1} Ola buy:pst meat], conj [_{TP2} Ola eat:pst it]</p> <p>“Ola bought meat, Ola ate it”</p>
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Figure 2. Conjoined clauses: TP₁ and TP₂.

<p>[_{TP} Jẹ̀sù <i>sì</i> sọkún] (The Holy Bible: Matthew 11:35)</p> <p>[_{TP} Jesus <i>sì</i> cry:pst]</p> <p>“Jesus wept”</p>

Figure 3. A mono-clausal construction with *Sì*.

Figure 2 represents the two clauses in Figure 1 where the bracketed TP₁ is clause1 and clause2 is TP₂ and *sì* is regarded as the linker between the two clauses, an item which is noticeable to occur consistently after the subject DP. Figure 3 is an example of mono-clausal construction where it occurs independently without the second clause.²

Materials and Methods

Aims of the Research

It should be noted that the status of *sì* in the grammar of Yoruba language is still unknown. This paper aims to fill this vacuum. It will also examine the derivation of sentences involving clausal conjunction. Apart from the aforementioned goals, it will also investigate the possibility of the item being two in Yorùbá. To archive the aforementioned aims, the following research questions are developed to guide the analysis presented here:

- What are the inadequacies in the analyses of conjoined sentences?
- Does the Yoruba language have an overt realization of sentence conjunction marker?
- If the language has a sentence conjunction marker, what is its form?

² Clauses of this sort are discussed in section 5.2. of this work in detail. However, curious reader could read Awobuluyi (1978, 2001) among others.

- Is *sì* a sentence conjunction marker in the Yoruba language?
- What is the function of *sì* in the Yoruba language?

The Minimalist Program

The Minimalist Program (hence, MP) propounded by Chomsky (1995, 2000) among others, is adopted for the analysis of this work. MP is a theory that builds on economic principles in the derivation of syntactic structures. It is a more natural and general approach to language (Ouhalla, 1999). MP views the human cognitive system as a computational system similar to that of a computer and uses a limited set of mechanisms and constraints to provide adequate explanation to language structures. MP’s assumptions significantly deviated from its offshoot – Principles and Parameters’ theory and other models of Generative Grammar - by eliminating theory internal levels of representation such as D-structure and S-structure. The Computational System of Human Language (C_{HL}) in MP is regulated by a principle called the Inclusiveness condition, which assumes that a derivation of a syntactic structure can be built only from the items specified in the numeration (Radford). The numeration serves as the spring-board for the computation where items are first selected into from the lexicon. The lexicon consists of lexical items (LI) used in the computational processes.

MP adopts minimal operations for computational processes: Operation Select, and Operation Merge, Agree, Transfer and Spell-Out.

- **Operation Select** is used to choose from the list of Lexical Items (LIs) available in the lexicon into the numeration for further computation.
- **Operation Merge** is a binary operation that combines two LIs to derive a Syntactic Object (SO). The by-product of merge operations is endocentric, so that when Merge groups two LIs, one of them projects maximally; for instance, if merge combines two elements X and Y, the resulting phrase takes its label from either X or Y (Collins, 2011) e.g. merge (X, Y) = {X, Y} = XP. Merge can be divided in two: internal and external merge. Internal merge is concerned with SOs that enter the derivation but have to undergo another merge operation. External merge only targets merger of SOs that enter the derivation from the lexicon.
- **Agree** is the mechanism responsible for the matching of features for onward valuation of unvalued features, i.e., a situation where a head looks for matching features in its c-commanding domain.
- **Transfer** is an operation in narrow syntax that ships derivation to the interfaces, i.e., LF and PF.
- **Spell Out** is the point of interpretation at either the PF or LF.
- This theory determines the structural

representations drawn in this work. Also, the data analyzed were subjected to theoretical analysis.

Results

The materials for the study include: a) a primary data source where structured interviews were conducted in English and the responses were given in Yoruba by randomly selected Yoruba speakers; b) secondary sources were also consulted, including existing works on Yoruba grammar.

A Review of Existing Works on *Sì*

Scores of Yorùbá grammarians and linguists have examined the *sì* and opinions remain polarised on the conjunction *sì* in the language. Scholars like Yusuf (1980), Bamgbose (1980), Awobuluyi (1978) and Ilori (2010) among others have discussed conjunctions in Yorùbá. Conjunction has been variously defined, it is said to link two or more items together. In Yorùbá, there are basically two types of conjunctions regarding the items they can conjoin. Ogunbowale (1970, p. 95), cited in Yusuf (1980, p. 2), defines conjunction as, “a word which links part of speech or sentences together”. This means that conjunctions that are used to connect two words, phrases, or sentences together do occur in between the words, phrases, or sentences that are being connected. As implied, from this analogy, conjunctions acts like the concrete between two bricks holding them together. Consider the following examples;

[TP [DP Olá] àti/pèlú [DP Adé] wá ilé lánàá]
 [TP [DP Ola] and/and [DP Ade] come-pst house
 yesterday]
 “Ola and Ade came home yesterday”

Figure 4. A simple sentence showing nominal conjunction.

[TP [DP Oko] àti [DP iyàwò rè] ti lo]
 [TP [DP Husband] and [DP Wife his] has go-pst]
 “The husband and his wife have gone”

Figure 5. The use on nominal conjunction.

*[DP Olá lo] àti/pèlú [TP Olú ti dé]
 [DP Olá go-pst] conj0 [TP Olú has arrive-pst]

Figure 6. An ungrammatical use of nominal conjunction.

As evident from the data presented above in Figure 4 and Figure 5, one could deduce that the conjunction *àti/pèlú* are DP conjunctions and cannot be used to connect DP and a clause/sentence together as seen in Fig. 6, any attempt to make *àti/pèlú* function in similar structures as Figure 6 would yield ungrammatical sentence structure in Yoruba language.

Yusuf’s (1980) View on *Sì*

Yusuf (1980) is one of the earliest scholarly works found on *sì* and his view has some theoretical implications and shortcomings as first observed by Ilori (2010). First, the lowering of *sì* to the position after the subject DP is rightward. This is not theoretically possible in Minimalist assumptions. This is because MP does not allow rightward movement. Secondly, clauses are generated from the list of lexical items selected from the lexicon, made available in the lexical sub-array, i.e., where computation begins, resulting in clausal architectures built from the Merge operation of two basic elements { α and β } with projection towards the leftward movement or Left periphery. This being so, there is no point where an item that enters late in the derivation can ‘move down’ to what has already being computed in the derivation. Judging by the ways conjunction elements in the language behave (even those Awobuluyi (1978) referred to as disjunctions) usually stand in between the elements being conjoined together and none of them moves rightward. Yusuf’s representation is provided below in Figure 7 and Figure 8.

As evident in Figure 7 and Figure 8, the structures

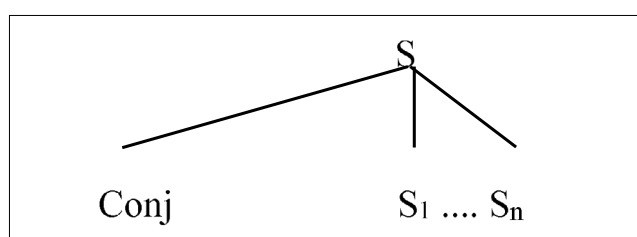


Figure 7. Yusuf’s (1980) Conjunction rule.

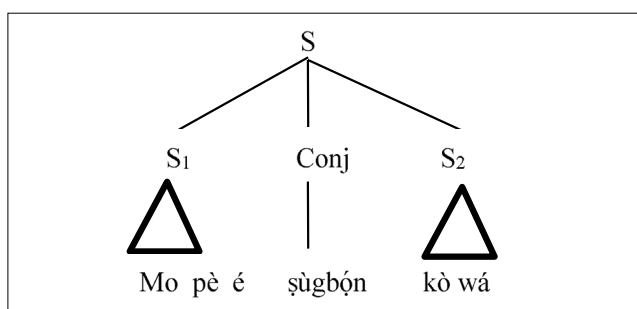


Figure 8. A representation of conjoined sentences by Yusuf (1980).

projected are not allowed in Minimalism. Apart from this, neither of Figure 7 and Figure 8 are possible structures in Minimalism. Figure 7 is not endocentric, i.e., it is not the projection of the conjunction head and so it is not allowed in MP. Figure 8 does not have a head of its own; besides the use “S” is alien to MP.

Awobuluyi’s View (1978 & 2008) on *Sì*

Traditionally, *àmó*, *ṣùgbón* and *sì* were identified as the clausal conjunctions in the language. But Awobuluyi (1978, p. 104) taking insight from the behaviour of these items noted that two separate classes are combined together in one class called conjunction in the Yorùbá traditional grammar. On the one hand, there is the disjunction which he defines as showing two or more elements are alternatives, and a person can only choose one; on the other hand, there are the conjunctions which ‘show that two or more things go together or are united. In sum, both conjunctions and disjunctions ‘relate elements of the same functional class’. In his work *sì* is not classified as a sentence conjunction rather he classifies the item as pre-verbal adverb which marks ‘consecutive action’ (Awobuluyi, 1978, p. 69). He assumes that there is no sentence conjunction that behaves as phrasal conjunction or disjunctions in the language. In his discussion on the HTS in his (2008) book, he only advanced arguments in favor of HTS use of *sì*.³

[_{TP} Ó *sì* lọ sí ibẹ̀]
 [_{TP} He *sì* go-pst prep there]
 “And he went there”

Figure 9. A simple clause in Yoruba.

[_{TP} Òun nàà ni ó *sì* lọ sí ibẹ̀]
 [_{TP} He det foc he conj go-pst prep there]
 “He is the one that went there”

Figure 10. A focus construction showing in *sì* not conjoining any clause.

It should be noted that Awobuluyi is the first scholar who observed and thus rejected the ideal that *sì* is a sentence conjunction. However, the reason for grouping the item with pre-verbs is unknown. The grouping is not enough to say that the item not a conjunction.

Ilori’s (2010) View on *Sì*

³ Awobuluyi (2008) still maintains his initial stance concerning *sì* when he says that HTS, *ó* occurs after some pre-verbs in the language. For more of discussions on the HTS and the form of 3rd person pronoun (subjective case), traditionally called *ó* see Awobuluyi (1992, 2001, 2006, 2008), Oduntan (2000) and Ajongolo (2005). In this paper, we assume that *ó* is 3rd:sg subject DP.

According to Ilorio, the structural position occupied by *sì* within two sentences or clauses conjoined together seemingly questions the traditional or popular view. Ilori observed that *sì* regularly occur after the subject of clause2 of such compound clauses. As evident in Figure 11 below:

[_{TP} Adé jẹun ó *sì* yó bámú]
 [_{TP} Ade eat-thing he *sì* full to-the-brim]
 “Ade ate and he was filled to the brim”

Figure 11. An illustration of the position of *sì* after the subject of the second clause.

His view is, however, unlike most of his predecessors. He claimed that *sì* is a kind of adverb, “that adjoins to the pre-VP adjunct position in the second IP of the compound clause. It is from that position that the subject raises across *sì/dẹ̀* to spec-IP to derive the surface syntax in which the subject of the clause2 linearly precedes *sì/dẹ̀*”.⁴ His view corroborated Awobuluyi’s (1978) view that *sì* is a pre-verbal adverb which indicates “consecutive action”. In view of this claim he proposed the following architecture in Figure 12 below;

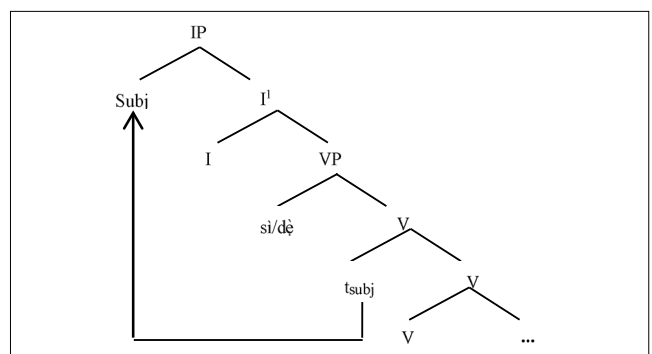


Figure 12. Ilori (2010) derivational schema.

Inactive elements are not accessible for further operations.

His claim assumes that *sì* occurs as syntactic adjunct, i.e. adverb, which originates in pre-VP or pre-ASP within the second clause.⁵

Ilori (2010, p. 176) concluded that Yorùbá does not have clausal co-ordinating conjunction similar to disjuncts like *àmó* and *ṣùgbón* “but” which structurally occupy the central position between the clause1 and clause2 in the language. We disagree with Ilori (2010) on this claim that although it may not be possible

⁴ He observed that the so-called conjunction has a variant; *dẹ̀*, which is similar to the *dẹ̀* found in Eko dialect of Yoruba as used in this example here, Adé jẹun, ó *dẹ̀* yó bámú “Ade ate and he was filled to the brims”. Another example is Mí *dẹ̀* lọ sí ibẹ̀ yẹn, “and I was at the place”. The form *dẹ̀* can substitute *sì* in all its occurrences in the dialect; in fact *sì* is never used in Eko dialect.

⁵ cf. Ilori (2010, p. 192) the diagram presentend as Fig.12 here is data (226) in his work.

to have overt realisation of the conjunction marker between clause1 and clause2, a non-overt counterpart is realised in the structure by virtue of its feature.

One may quickly want to jump to a conclusion based on Ilori (2010) that truly Yorùbá does not have a clausal conjunction as he opined. But there are some notable shortcomings in his view notable as follows: (i) from the theoretical view, the Minimalist Program does not allow for traces⁶, movement is specified by the need of a Lexical Items (LIs) to satisfy some features otherwise it is frozen as Activity Condition specifies as Figure 13 below; (ii) adjunction as used in Ilori’s work is theoretically anomalous. Before adjunction of constituents can take place the item must have: (a) at one time being adjoined in the lower level of the tree before it could be raised to spec-VP (as he assumes), which is suggestive of the fact that there is a fusion or merger of two different theoretical models in his work; (b) adjunction extends a MaxP into another MaxP, but this is never the case in his representation. As evident in the work, he assumes *sì/dẹ̀* is adjoined to spec-VP as if it is DP or a MaxP, whereas it is not. That point shows that the item was merged at spec-VP. *sì/dẹ̀* did not originate from anywhere in the derivation but merged at spec-VP which shows that *sì/dẹ̀* cannot enter the derivation there because it does not have MaxP projection. (iii) The assumption that there is no conjunction in such clauses is unacceptable. There is actually a connective abstract/ non-overt element which connects TP₁ to TP₂ as shown below in Figure 14.

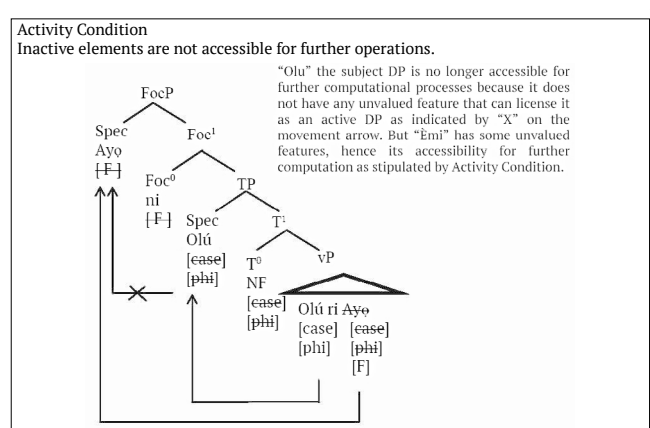


Figure 13. Definition of activity condition: Nevins (2004, p. 295).

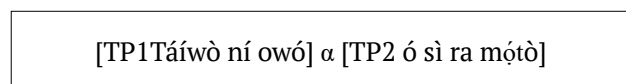


Figure 14. α- the position of an abstract conjunction marker.

⁶ This is an assumption in government and binding theory. See Haegeman (1991) for more details.

⁷ The alpha sign ‘α’ is used all through this paper to show the abstract form, which connects the clauses together in compound clauses like this in Yorùbá.

We draw cross-linguistic evidence and present theoretical evidence from the Minimalist point of view on conjunctions and *sì*.

As one could have observed so far, assuming the previous version of generative theory is problematic towards ascertaining the function of *sì* but the problem becomes more vivid as mere over generalization of meaning carried over from the traditional view to the generative theory. Yet the earlier generative version cannot handle the derivation of such constructions accurately which is why it is comfortable to assume (even with GB) lowering of the clausal conjunction. The question one is likely going to ask is this, ‘what actually connect the two clauses?’ Is it the case that there is no connective morpheme/ Lexical Item (LI) as assumed and shown by Ilori (2010) and implicit Awobuluyi’s (1978) claim? In the next section we present the various readings of *sì* in Yorùbá.

Status of *Sì* in Yoruba Grammar

In this section we examine the various meaning of *sì* in Yoruba and also to ascertain among other things: (i) if *sì* does not conjoin any constituents in Yoruba, (ii) if there are other meanings associated with the item and finally (iii) is the item homophonous?

- Yoruba scholars have overlooked one important function of *sì*, which is emphasis in some sentence structures. In such constructions, we could delete or optionally leave out *sì* and the construction would still converge. Only the emphasis placed on the sentence would be left out. Consider the following:

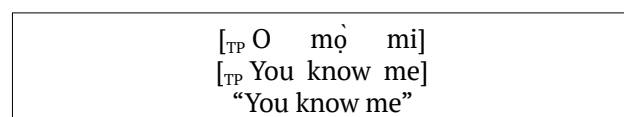


Figure 15. A simple sentence in Yoruba.

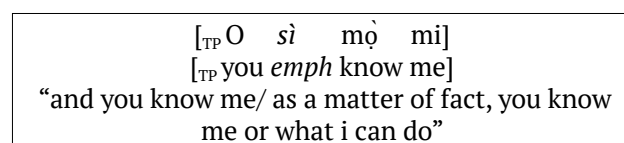


Figure 16. *Sì* as an emphatic marker.

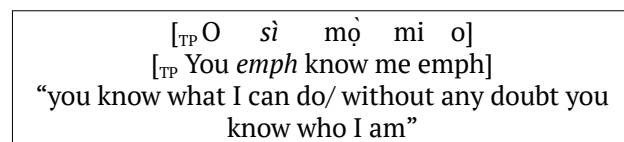


Figure 17. *Sì* - an emphatic and sentence final emphasis.

⁸ Emphasis is abbreviated as “emph” and it is used all through this paper.

[_{TP} Ó lọ sí ibẹ̀]
 [_{TP} He/she went prep there]
 “He went there”

Figure 18. A simple sentence without *sì*.

[_{TP} Ó sì lọ sí ibẹ̀]
 [_{TP} he/she *emph* went prep there]
 “the fact is, he went there”

Figure 19. A simple sentence with emphatic *sì*.

In Figure 15 above, the sentence does not overtly mark any emphatic reading as did Figures 16 and 17. Figure 15 is just a simple declarative without any other information exerted in it. The addressee is actually aware of what the speaker is talking about before he stressed the point in the information. There is nothing else marking emphasis in Figure 16 except *sì* and nothing seems to be connected to that sentence as clause 2. In essence, Figure 15 is not adjoined to any sentence. Figure 18 is a simple declarative sentence, which does not exert any emphatic force compared to Figure 19 where it is as a matter of fact that the said action was carried out by the *ó*, the Ex-DP (subject). The addressee is unaware of the fact that the person being talked about actually did what was done.

- As observed earlier, Awobuluyi (1978, pp. 73-74) notes that *sì* function is not according to the traditional view rejecting that *sì* is a conjunction in Yorùbá⁹, he claims that *sì* marks consecutive action as against the conjunction in linking two clauses together. Consecutive actions denote that events in a given sentence occur in succession or one after the other. One action occurs in precedence to the next in sequence and order of the time of occurrence without interruption. For examples: II

[_{TP} Tópé ra aṣọ tuntun, ó sì wò ọ́]
 [_{TP} Tope buy-pst clothe new, he CA wear it]
 “Tope bought a new clothe and wears it”

Figure 20. A compound sentence showing consecutiveness in action expressed.

[_{TP} Ó gé ẹran, ó sì sè é]
 [_{TP} He cut-pst meat, he CA cook it]
 “He cut the meat and cooked it”

Figure 21. A compound sentence with consecutive action.

⁹ Although Awobuluyi did give any explanation regarding such claim in his work. It is however the focus of this paper to show how such constructions has consecutive actions and also shows the conjunction linking the two clauses together.

¹⁰ CA denotes “Consecutive Action”.

[_{TP} Ó mu ọ́tí, ó sì yó kánrin]
 [_{TP} He drink:pst wine, he CA brim excess]
 “He drank wine and he was drunk a lot”

Figure 22. Consecutive action in compound sentence.

In Figure 20, the action of the buying of clothes, which is in clause 1, precedes that of wearing it signified by *sì* in clause 2.¹² Similarly the action in clause 1 of Figure 21 occurred before that of clause 2 invariably, the events thereof occurred in succession. There is no way where the cooking of the meat could occur before the buying of the same meat. Also, the events in described in Figure 22 were in sequence. The event of clause one, i.e. drinking of wine, occurred before the man got drunk. He could not be drunk before drinking of the same wine, which got him drunk. Nothing else informs this sequential ordering of events denoted in Figure 22 than *sì*. From the foregoing, one could conclude that which conjoins the two clauses is overtly not marked in Figures 20, 21 and 22 above. The question arising from this is, if *sì* is not conjoining the two clauses what is the conjunction? We shall come back to this question in the next section.

- Although the pool of evidence raised from the last two points could actually make one jump to a conclusion that *sì* is not a conjunction in Yorùbá. There are some expressions where one would be missing words to look further for the conjunction other than *sì*. For example:

[_{TP} Ó sanra, ó sì tóbi]
 [_{TP} He be-fat, he conj be-big]
 “He is fat and he is big”

Figure 23. A compound sentence with *sì* as conjunction.

[_{TP} Ó jáde, ó sì sunkún]
 [_{TP} He go-out he conj cry-pst]
 “He went out and he cried”

Figure 24. Another compound sentence with *sì* as conjunction.

¹¹ You can have the same sentence rendered without consecutiveness in the action expressed like: Ó mu ọ́tí, ó yó kánrin where the clauses are only just conjoined together with an abstract conjunction, orthographically represented with that ‘comma’.

¹² *Sì* in sentences of this sort could be replaced with *nítórí* “because” or consequence of what has happened then, another event also occurred. For instance, Figure 20 Tópé ra aṣọ tuntun, ó sì wò ọ́ could be Tópé wò aṣọ tuntun, nítórí ó rà á (aṣọ tuntun) “Tope wore a new clothe because he bought a new clothe”. It is a case of one event bringing about the occurrence of another in succession. Consider this other example; Èmi yóò dide, èmi yóò sì tọ baba mi lọ, èmi yóò sì wí fun pé bàbá..., “I will arise and go to my father, and tell him father ...” (Diglot Bibeli mímọ́ elédè méjì, Luke, 15:18, p. 1684). The order of event came sequentially. The first thing is getting up, followed by going to the father and telling him that ..., getting up cannot be preceded by going to the father or telling the father all that has happened. Nothing else is responsible for the ordering of the event other than *sì*.

[_{TP} Ó pupa, ó sì lẹ̀wà]
 [_{TP} He be-fair, he conj be-beautiful]
 “He is fair and he is beautiful”

Figure 25. A compound sentence showing *sì* as a conjunction.

The sequences of events in Figures 23, 24 and 25 above are not in sequential or consecutive order; rather the events were completed and not related to, overtly, the next event. It is not a consequence of being “fat” that leads to being big. It is quite relative to the individual who is fat. One that is fat does not necessarily have to be big. In Figure 24, one could go out without crying and one could stay indoors without crying. Invariably, neither of the two clauses could trigger emphasis nor consecutive actions. Similarly, one could be fair without being beautiful and one could be beautiful without being fair. Neither of clause1 nor clause2 is taking precedence, which informs why there is no consecutive reading in the events. There is no emphasis placed on the clauses, therefore *sì* is not in any way connected to emphasis and consecutive actions rather it is conjoining the clauses together.

The two clauses linked together in Figures 23, 24 and 25 above are linked by overt conjunction marker *sì*. But how is it that *sì* is a conjunction in some expressions, emphatic marker in some others and consecutive action marker?

It is logically plausible to assume that there are three different *sì* in the language, which have the same occurrence position from the Minimalist point of view. MP assumes that LIs are fully specified in the Lexicon with all the required syntactic, phonological and semantic properties needed for LIs in the derivation. If a lexical item is identical with another LI but different functionally, then they are two different lexical items specified in the lexicon. Variants are treated as individual lexical items in the Lexicon. From a logical point of view, there is a *sì* which marks emphasis, another one marks consecutive action, while the third denotes clausal conjunction. The three lexical items are specified in the lexicon with their features.

Discussion

The Form of the Conjunction. The Abstract Clausal Conjunction in Clauses with *Sì* as Emphasis or Consecutiveness Marker

As noted earlier, in some constructions *sì* often marks consecutiveness and/or emphasis which invariably implied that there is a conjunction present in them, overt or not. In such constructions, a non-overt clausal conjunction conjoins clause1 and clause

2 together and as a functional head it has the ability to project maximally. In such compounds, the non-overt conjunction is the head of the ConjP contrary to Yusuf’s (1980) assumption. Using Figure 11 above as Figure 26 and Figure 27:

[_{TP1} Adé jẹun] α [_{TP2} Ó sì yó bàmú]
 [_{TP1} Ade eat-pst-something] Conj
 [_{TP2} He CA fill-pst to-the-brim]
 “Ade ate the food and He was filled to the brim”

Figure 26. A sentence showing the abstract conjunction marker between two clauses.

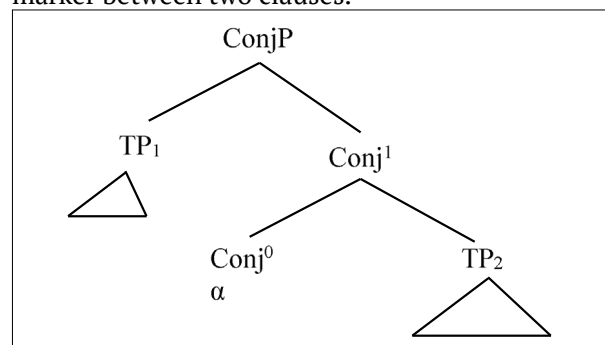


Figure 27. A proposed ConjP schema.

Figure 27 above shows that the head of the projection is the Conj⁰ represented by “α”. The Conj⁰ selects into its complement position TP₂, and selects TP₁ into its spec position. Both TP₁ and TP₂ are convergent TPs which have been computed before been selected here and merged to Conj⁰ in the narrow syntax. As said earlier, Conj⁰ is headed by a strong non-overt in the ConjP. This is why it is able to select the two clauses into its complement and spec positions. This is further illustrated on the schema in Figure 28.

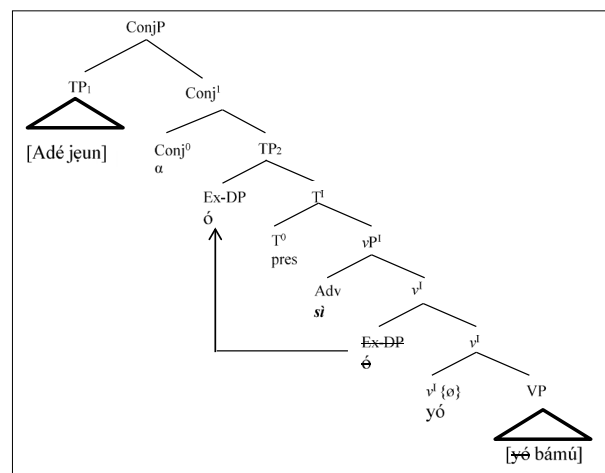


Figure 28. A structural illustration of a construction showing the abstract conjunction where *sì* denotes emphasis or consecutive action.

Figure 28 above shows the representation of the ConjP clause structure, where Conj⁰ selects TP₂. Conj⁰ and TP₂ were the first to enter the derivation under merge and both of them project Conj¹. TP₁ was selected into spec position, such that Conj¹ and TP₁ were merged together to project ConjP. SÌ enters the derivation at spec- vP for either “emphasis” or “consecutive actions”. But the Ex-DP has to value its unvalued features, it is a goal. The Probe head is T⁰ which has to value its φ-features. It probes down its domain and found a matching goal ó at spec- vP. It attracts the goal to its spec and values its φ-features which explains the ordering of sÌ after the Ex-DP in clause2.

Only the highest copy of the Ex-DP was linearized.¹⁵

The Clausal Architecture of Clauses with SÌ as Conjunction Marker

Normally, sÌ often occur after the Ex-DP in clause 2¹⁴ and this actually informs the perspective from which scholars have been looking at it since the 1980s. It should be noted that sÌ does not occur in between the conjoined clauses but rather in another position, which makes it difficult for some early generative theories and their adherents to capture its behaviors. A conjunction is a functional head linking two or more items/constituents of equal properties together. We shall use Figure 23 for our illustration (repeated here for convenience as Figure 29). The projection is given as Figure 30 below.

¹⁵ As observed clearly, the T0 precedes sÌ, and so are aspectual markers in Yorùbá. For example. Olá á si ló, “Ola will still go” where á preceds sÌ. “á” combines both the tense of the expression and the future marker. Invariably, the Ex-DP raises above sÌ to value its features.

¹⁴ This assumption is over-simplified, majority of the items listed in Awobuluyi (1978, pp. 68-69) may appear between the Ex-DP and sÌ in clause2. Items like future marker: yóò and á, uncompleted action marker; ì, sentence negative markers; kò/ò, and bá/báà which denotes “may/might” and some others may come between the external DP of clause2 and sÌ. For example:

1. Olá yóò sÌ ló ola will sÌ go “still, Ola will go”
2. Olá ì bá sÌ ló ola should-have sÌ go “and Ola should have gone”
3. Olá á si ló (... bí iwò ò bá ló) Ola will sÌ go (if you neg conditional go) “and Ola will go..(if you will not go)”
4. Olá ò sÌ ló ola neg sÌ go “and ola did not go”
5. (he) kò sÌ ló (he) neg sÌ go “and he did not go”

All of these items are grouped under the pre-verbal adverb in his work. He further maintains in Awobuluyi (2001) that they co-occur together because they are pre-verbs in the language. It should be noted, however, that the split-Infl hypothesis has shown that this view is not so. In the decomposed Infl, some of the listed items (i.e. on Awobuluyi, 1978, pp. 68-69) are actually functional heads of various projections like the TP, AspP, NegP, etc. Similarly, the decomposed Infl would not allow the treatment of Ilori’s (2010) analysis because his work overgeneralized the function of sÌ in Yorùbá. Consequently, his analysis only assumes that sÌ is a pre-verbal adverb which is adjoined to VP (and not even the light vP). For further reading, see Ilori (2010). It is noteworthy here for us to emphasize here that pre-verbs can be serialized one after the other. One could have one, two, three or even four of them in a sequence. One could do this for sÌ denoting emphasis and sÌ marking consecutiveness without resulting into non-existence derivation.

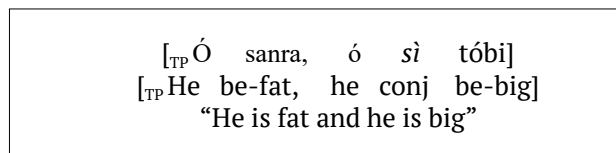


Figure 29. A sentence for demonstration of sÌ as a conjunction.

In Figure 30 above, TP₂ enters the derivation before TP₁, which enters the derivation as the spec – ConjP. Ignoring all the details at the vP layer, the derivation proceeds with the merging of the Ex-DP argument with T⁰ pres, to project T¹. T⁰ is a probe head and it has unvalued features. It probes down its domain and finds a goal ó with matching features, it attracts the goal to its spec, where the φ-features were valued and deleted. Consequently, the Nominative case feature of ó was also valued and deleted. The Conj⁰ overtly marked by sÌ, is merged with the derivation thus projecting Conj¹. SÌ at Conj⁰ has some edge feature which must be satisfied thus projecting in multi- spec order. i.e. multiple spec which holds that [X^{n...-1}] could project a multiple number of specs which reduced by immediate projection below it. To be precise, multi-specs from the top of the tree to bottom reduces by one. Thus, ó at spec- TP₂ bares unvalued features, i.e. emphasis. By virtue of being raised to spec of Conj⁰ it become prominent in TP₂. The same person who has performed the event in TP₁ is also performing event depicted in TP₂. The entity is singled out as the topic of the discussion while the rest of the clause is the comment about the same entity.¹⁵ ó which now has two copies is occupying the spec- Conj¹. Only the highest copy is linearized at PF. Conj¹ is merged with an already converged TP₁ and thus projects ConjP.

The results demonstrate that in the Yorùbá Lexicon there are three main sÌ: one which denotes “emphasis”, the second one marks “consecutive action” and the third is used as “clausal conjunction”.

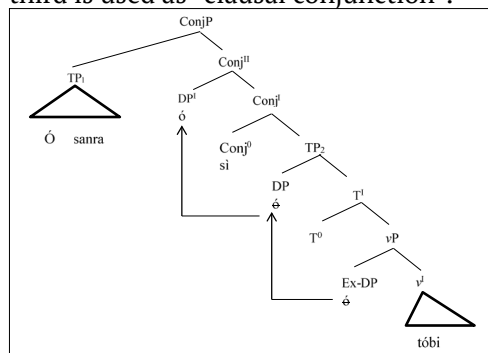


Figure 30. A structural representation of constructions where sÌ functions as a conjunction.

¹⁵ It should be noted that clause₁ i.e. TP₁ would also have projected in similar order if there were to be another extended projection above it. Also, by swapping the event order in Figure 29 and similar clauses like it, ó tóbi, ó sÌ sanra, for instance, the external DP would also have been given prominence by being raised to spec – Conj¹ which will also be projecting in multiple spec layer.

Conclusion

From the Yorùbá traditional grammarians, there is a clausal conjunction which does not behave according to every other conjunctions in the language whereas, scholars like Awobuluyi (1978, 2001), Ilori (2010) have assumed that the traditional view is wrong. Their assumptions polarized the view on Yorùbá clausal conjunction; hence, the status of *sì* is unknown. In this article, however, we have established that there may be three instances of *sì* in Yorùbá differentiated by their individual functions present in the Yorùbá lexicon. We also submit that contrary to Ilori's (2010) claim that *sì* enters the derivation through as an adverb in the light vP layer and concludes that when the *sì* that denotes conjunction is selected from the lexicon, it enters the derivation as a head. Additionally, it has a strong edge feature, which triggers the Ex-DP of TP₂ to move to its spec position thereby projecting multi-spec for Conj⁰. When *s_i* which denotes "emphasis" or "consecutive action" is selected, the item will enter the derivation through the edge of the light vP as an adverbial item.

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