

Negation in the Gulf of Guinea Creoles in the light of (creole) typology

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Since Ferraz (1979), it has been generally accepted that the four Gulf of Guinea creoles (GGCs) descend from a proto-Gulf of Guinea creole (PCGG) that became diffused in time and space from the early stages on. One of the syntactic features that can readily be reconstructed for the PCGG is a discontinuous negation pattern consisting of a preverbal (pre-TMA) negation marker and a VP-final marker which is syntactically distinct from clause-typing markers. This feature, which is currently still the standard negation pattern in three GGCs, should therefore be considered an early property and not the result of more recent innovation. It follows from typological studies, such as Kahrel (1996), that this negation pattern with two markers is cross-linguistically marked. In addition to the standard bipartite negation patterns, specific, non-standard negation patterns, without Neg1 or without Neg2, are also attested, in emphatic and mood-related environments respectively.

Differently from languages such as French, syntactic testing shows that the preverbal and post-verbal negation markers in the GGCs are X^os (Hagemeijer 2007), thus failing to comply with the Neg-Criterion (Haegeman 1995). I will argue that each negation marker heads its own NegP, following the typology proposed in recent work on Afrikaans (Bell 2004) and languages of the Gbe cluster (Aboh 2004, *forthc.*). This specific typology for standard negation is not included in Zeijlstra's (2004) extensive survey of negation types within Jespersen's cycle.

Neg2 in the GGCs typically occurs in VP-final position and its syntactic distribution is sensitive to clause peripherality: complement clauses and low adjunct clauses occur to its left, whereas high adjunct clauses occur to its right. Clause-fronting shows that Neg2 belongs to the same domain Neg1 occurs in. The key question is therefore where the abovementioned additional NegP hosting Neg2 projects within the functional structure. In the past, only a few authors have attempted to answer this question. Irrespectively of the label PolP or NegP and despite the different frameworks used, Oosthuizen (1998), Bell (2004) and Aboh (2004, *forthc.*) argue for Afrikaans and Gbe varieties that Neg2 heads a left-peripheral projection. The canonical NegP sits lower in the clause and is pied-piped into the specifier of the high NegP/PolP together with everything it contains.

I will sketch a different analysis whereby NEG2 in the GGCs corresponds to the head of a NegP2 that sits lower – not higher - in the structure than NegP1, in order avoid that Neg2 scopes over the clausal subject. The relation between both NegPs is one of Agree (at distance). For the exact locus of NegP2 in Santome's functional structure, I expand on a proposal made by Zanuttini (1997) that leaves room for the possibility of couching a negative projection in the I-system. In Santome, where the I-system consists of lexicalized functional TMA projections, this yields the following overall configuration: NegP1 – MoodP - TP- NegP2 – AspP – VP. AspP-raising to [Spec,NegP2] then derives the correct surface order of negative sentences: it solves the subject scope problem and correctly predicts that complement clauses and low adjunct clauses always occur to the left of *fa*, whereas this marker does not reach into the domain of high adjuncts.

In sum, the double-headed negation pattern found in the GGCs is typologically rare and does not easily fit existing theories of negation. Hence, this case-study shows that

creole languages, like any natural language, bear relevance for linguistic theory but not for concepts such as complexity or newness.

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Some examples:

- (1) Bô **na** mêtê pa n fla kwa ku sa setu **fa**
 2SG NEG1 want COMP 1SG say thing REL be right NEG2
 'You don't want me to say the right thing.'
- (2) Ê **na** ka nda sê **pa** ê da topi **fa**
 3SG NEG ASP walk without for 3SG give trip NEG
 'He doesn't walk without tripping.'
- (3) Xi ê **na** bê faka **fa**, ê **na** bêbê vin **fa**.
 if 3SG NEG see knife NEG 3SG NEG drink wine NEG
 'If he doesn't find the knife, he won't drink wine.'
- (4) Milhon pa bô **na** b'êlê
 better for 2SG NEG see-3SG
 'You had better not see him.'
- (5) N **na** sêbê mo ê nganha ke.
 1SG NEG know how 3SG arrive house
 'I don't know how he got home.'
- (6) pa aman-pasa pa a **na** fla kuma non ska da mali ngê.
 for day after tomorrow for IMP NEG say that 1PL ASP give bad people
 '(...) so tomorrow they won't say that we are speaking badly of people.'
- (7) Ni glêntu d'awa? Sabi kyê nê **fô!**
 in inside of-water key fall in-3SG NEG-EMPH

'In the water? The key didn't fall in there!'