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2A comparative Analysis of Yes/No Questions an English and Urhobo A Minimalist Investigation

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Abstract

This study is a syntactic investigation of the linguistic strategies employed in the derivation of yes/no interrogative structures on English and a south Western Edoid Nigerian language Urhobo. Its objective is to explore the different forms of polar interrogative structures in English and Urhobo and their various realizations and also to identify the syntax used on finding the role of tone and intonation in deriving polar structures in the said languages. The data analysis reveals that in English, the trigger or motivation for movement in yes/no question is the presence of a strong illocutionary force (IF) (question affixes which imposes both an interrogatives interpretation at logical form (LF) and the movement of operators to spec-CP at phonological form(PF). More so, the analysis also revealed that English negative yes/no interrogative structures contain a negative particle which is projected under the head projection 'Neg P' whereas Urhobo realizes negation by doubling the last morpheme for declarative statements while for negative yes/no structures, the tone functions as the negater and the question marker. In addition to this, English has double representation for some negative interrogative structures whereas Urhobo has a single representation as the translated equivalent for both structures. Arising from the findings, a conclusion can be drawn that, at the grammatical level, tone plays a prominent role in, among other things, the derivation of yes/no interrogative structures in Urhobo.

KEY WORDS: Urhobo, minimalist, yes/no(polar), interrogative, derivation, structures.

Introduction

At an early stage in the history of English, questions were made with the use of rising intonation alone. Only much later inversion came about in formation of questions. The earliest form of this inversion was with the subject and the main verb:

***Know you the way to Canada?**

It took much longer for the rule requiring subject and operator inversion to become standard.

Todeva (1991) has pointed out the parallelism between the evolution of the English language and the acquisition of English as either a first or second language: learners of English are known to first use rising intonation; only after several more stages do they master inversion. The following is somewhat modified developmental pattern for untutored learners that are adapted from Pienemann, Johnston, and Brindley (1988) (as reported in Ortega, 2009, p. 35):

Stage	*Example*
I: Fragments 1 rising intonation	A hat?
II: Statements 1 rising intonation	You are tired?

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III: P lace question marker in front of statement	Is your daughter work here?
IV: *Be* inversion	Are you listening to me?
V: *Do* support	Do you like ice cream?
VI: Other question types	Don't you see? I wonder why they left.

Polar questions are interrogatives that demand either a *yes* or a *no* response. In English, the derivation of polar questions was said to require three different rules: Aux-NP-Subject inversion, affix-hopping rule, and do-support.

Polar interrogative sentences are questions whose expected response could be either yes/no. Konig and Siemund (2007: 271) assert that "polar interrogatives are typically used to inquire about the truth and falsity of the propositions they express". They note further that different strategies are adopted by languages in forming polar interrogative sentences. They mention six methods that have been established typologically in forming polar interrogatives in languages. They are:

i. the use of interrogative particles
ii. a change of relative word order
iii. the use of special intonation patterns
iv. the addition of special tags
v. the use of disjunctive – negative structures
vi. the use of particular verbal inflection.

However, cross linguistic evidence has shown that languages differ in terms of the mechanism or strategies used in deriving polar interrogatives. Some languages such as Igbo and Urhobo use tone to derive their polar questions (Ileonu 2010 and Aziza 2010) while some others e.g. Yorùbá and Dagbani use designated question words and raising of pitch (Bamgbọ̀se 1967, 1990, Awobuluyi 1978 and Issah 2015). The Urhobo language has shown from various angles as a language that uses statement with a rising intonation to form polar interrogatives.

Background to the study

This study investigates Polar questions in English and Urhobo languages. A common feature that pervades all natural languages is that they perform communicative functions. A trait or a property of language that exists in all languages is known as Language Universal which is also called Linguistic Universals. A linguistic Universal is a pattern that occurs systematically across natural languages and potentially true for all of them. For instance, all languages have nouns and verbs. This field was largely pioneered by the linguist Greenberg (1966) who derived a set of forty-five basic universals, mostly dealing with syntax from the study of thirty languages. In spite of the "distinctiveness" of individual languages in the world, Joos (1966:95) still contends that, "there are numerous and far-reaching ways in which languages are

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alike". In other words, human languages irrespective of their 'differences or distinctiveness' are similar. This is the line with belief of Universal Grammarians.

The geopolitical area known as Nigeria today was occupied by diverse socio-cultural and linguistic group before the advent of the English language and culture. These include Nok, Ife,
Benin, and Igbo-Ukwu cultures which date back to the 5th century B.C. (Edewor, 2006).
Presently, Urhobo comprises nine local government areas with 24 kingdoms. These include Ughelli North, Ethiope West, Okpe, Ughelli South, Ethiope East, Sapele,
Udu, Warri South and Uvwie. Ifesieh and Ejobee (2013). The people have in the past been referred to indiscriminately in Europe records and others variously as Sobo, Udobo, Usobo and Uhobo. Each of the above is a corruption of the word Urhobo. It was not until 1st October 1938, the corrupted names ceased to exist. Egere (2012).

The English language is an international language, though indigenous to some group of speakers while the Urhobo language is of one the indigenous Nigeria languages which is only spoken in restricted areas of Delta State. Languages in contact are a general linguistic phenomenon. Due to this influence, such contact exists on both languages.

Many of the world's languages (Chinese, Thai, Punjabi, Zulu, Yoruba, Igbo, etc) form *yes/no* questions simply by adding rising intonation to declarative statements. English speakers do this too but the unmarked form of an English *yes/no* question requires rising intonation and a different word order from a statement—one that inverts the subject and the operator. Only a few languages other than English use a word order different from that of statements in making questions. There have been various researches on African languages including Nigerian languages over the years by linguists and one of the major reasons for these researches is to document and preserve these languages for posterity. Various aspects of Yoruba have been researched by linguists amongst whom we *have Acquisition of English polar (Yes/No) question by Nigeria learners* Oladejo(1993), *Yes/No questions in Èdó: The markers* Usembo(2017), *Question formation in the Onàdó Dialect of Yorùbá* Adeoye(2019). It is observed that almost all these works are on the general grammar of the language, thus touching a bit of everything but not providing an elaborate discussion. Furthermore, it has been observed from existing literature that works that have been done on the Urhobo language are based on other fields of linguistics like phonology, morphology, semantics, these includes; *The reflexive verb in the grammar of Urhobo language, negation in languages:An Urhobo perspective, The Urhobo Noun phrase.* There are few works on Urhobo syntax but they are mainly descriptive since they are not based on any grammatical theory. This is one of the gaps this study intends to fill. Furthermore, little has been done on the area of question formation especially polar questions based on any theory of Chomsky's Transformational Generative Grammar. In fact, to the best of my knowledge, no research has been done on English and

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Urhobo Yes\No question derivation based on Chomsky's Minimalist Programme which is a very recent theory. Since there are variations in the forms of English polar questions and Urhobo, there is need for them to be researched so the similarities and differences will be made clear. Besides the above, the absence of a detailed description of polar interrogatives in Urhobo and for that matter Urhobo as necessitated this research. All these call for investigation so as to provide extensive, detailed and comprehensive description of polar interrogatives in Urhobo in terms of the types, structure, strategies, their responses, and their interaction with other grammatical phenomena like focus for typological purposes.

This work is modeled within the framework of Basic Linguistics Theory by Chomsky and it attempts to answer the following questions:

1. What are the strategies for the formation of polar interrogative structures in English and Urhobo?
2. What is the role of tone and intonation in Urhobo polar interrogative structures?
3. Are there similarities and variances in English and Urhobo polar interrogative structures?
4. Does Urhobo realize polar interrogative structures through the forms listed in the minimalist programme?

The objective of this research is to explore the different forms of polar questions in English and Urhobo and their various realizations and also to;

1. Identify and describe the syntax of the polar interrogative forms in English and Urhobo.
2. Describe the strategies used in marking the polar interrogative types in Urhobo and the expected responses to each type.
3. Find out the role of tone and intonation in Urhobo interrogatives.

The crucial position that all languages occupy in the culture of a people is self-evident. Therefore, a comparative study is a source for experimental study into the predictability of the learner's difficulty combined with error analysis, as a partial classroom research tool for teachers anxious to adjust their teaching to the state of the knowledge of the learners.

Urhobo is one of the understudied minority languages. The absence of a comprehensive description of polar interrogatives in Urhobo has necessitated this research. This research is therefore relevant for the following reasons;

- It will serve as a comprehensive descriptive work on polar interrogatives in Urhobo.
- It will also be a reference material for future work in Urhobo.
- It will add to the existing literature on polar interrogatives.
- It will serve as a motivation for speakers of Urhobo to research into the other aspects of the language.

This study is also significant in solving the problem of difficulty encountered in the formation of polar questions for Urhobo learners of English as L2. This will enhance efforts towards vocabulary development. It will in turn help in the codification and standardization of Urhobo language. This research will make

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explicit similarities and differences that exist in the polar question forms of English and Urhobo language respectively.

Finally, this study is expected to be of importance to linguists, comparative analysts, language pedagogist and the government.

The Concept of Question

A question is a type of sentence expressed in form that requires or at least appears to require an answer. Also known as an interrogative sentence, a question is generally distinguished from a sentence that makes a statement, delivers a command, or expresses an exclamation. Nordquist (2019).

According to the popular Hamblin/Groenendijk & Stokhof ([5],[4]) semantic theories of questions, the meaning of a question Q is a set of propositions that are "good" answers to the question. Thus the meaning of the question *Is Luke right?* Is a set containing the proposition *Luke is right* and its complement, *Luke is not right*. The same holds for the negative polar question *Is Luke not right?*

1. [[Is Luke right?]]= [[Is Luke not right?]]=
   { λw[Luke is right in w], λw[Luke is not right in w]}

Works on interrogative construction in Yorùbá and its dialects include Bamgbose (1967, 1990), Awobuluyi (1978), Ajiboye (2011, 2013), Akintoye (2011), Akanbi (2011), and Akintoye and Adeoye (2014). These scholars agree that Yorùbá interrogative constructions are formed through the use of overt interrogative markers, content question phrase and rising of voice.

The Forms of Polar Questions8

Polar questi2ons are often defined as questions for which either "Yes" or "No" is the expected answer:

Are you going to the party? { **Yes (I am)** / **No (I am not)**

Inverting the subject and operator gives rise to the characteristic syntactic form8 of *yes/no* questions in English

The Negative Polar Question

Ladd (1992) asserted that when the negation in the question is interpreted IP-internally, this leads to a feature clash with the affirmative meaning of *yes* in the answer. The variation in (4) is explained in part by the fact that there are two negations *not* in English, a higher *not* with sentential scope, and a lower *not*, with scope over vP only. When the question is analyzed as instantiating the lower *not*, the answer *yes* confirms the negation. When the question is analyzed as instantiating the higher not, the answer *yes* leads to a feature clash between affirmation and negation.

The reason why the precise syntax of the IP of the question matters for the interpretation of the answer is that the answer inherits that IP, although it is elided in the case of the bare *yes* and *no* answers. The more general

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hypothesis defended in this paper is that answers to YNQs have the structure (1) universally, although the focused affirmative or negative operator can take quite different forms.

The Concept of Tone

Tone is the use of pitch in language to distinguish lexical or grammatical meaning – that is, to distinguish or to inflect words. **Tone** is the use of pitch in language to distinguish lexical or grammatical meaning – that is, to distinguish or to inflect words. All verbal languages use pitch to express emotional and other paralinguistic information and to convey emphasis, contrast and other such features in what is called intonation, but not all languages use tones to distinguish words or their inflections, analogously to consonants and vowels. Languages that have this feature are called **tonal languages**; the distinctive tone patterns of such a language are sometimes called **tonemes**, by analogy with *phoneme*. Tonal languages are common in East and Southeast Asia, Africa, the Americas and the Pacific; and as many as seventy percent of world languages are tonal. Chinese, Thai and Vietnamese are amongst the most well-known tonal languages used today; however, the languages with the most tones are found in West Africa and the Americas.

Theoretical Framework

This work is based on the minimalist programme propounded by Noam Chomsky (1995).

He defines the minimalist programme as a theory of language that takes a linguistic expression to be nothing other than a formal object that satisfies the interface conditions in the optimal way.

The Minimalist Programme reduces the levels of representations in a language to just the interface levels: Phonetic Form (PF) and the Logical Form (LF), thus simplifying language description. All conditions are applicable at these interface levels, any other levels of representations, such as the S-Structure and the D-Structure, are eliminated. A new method is used to describe and derive syntactic derivations; they are built to satisfy the properties of the words: their Features. Every word carries a set of features, which are responsible for every syntactic operation such a movement, topicalization and focus (Chomsky 1995).

The Minimalist Programme (*The Structure of MP)*

In MP, the input is a set of numeration of words in random order that are regulated by the X` -theory to form constituents, which in turn are used by the operation *Merge* accordingly to form a sentence. These words are chosen by the speaker to form the derivation using the operation *Select*.

The numeration is written as in the form below. Example (1a) shows the lexical item and then the number of times it is being used between brackets:

(1) a. [the (2), boy (1), walked (1), to (1), school (1)]

In the checking relation, the uninterpretable feature is deleted, whereas the interpretable one is not deleted to give it a chance to get into another checking relation with another element. For example, subjects

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are elements that have their φ- features [+Interpretable], and predicates have their φ- features [-Interpretable]:

1. Mary loves John.
   a. [TP -s {φ-} [VP Mary {φ+} [V` love- John]]]
   b. [TP Mary {φ+} [T` -s {φ-} [VP t [V` love- John]]]

(Hornstein et al. 2005: no. 12 & 13)

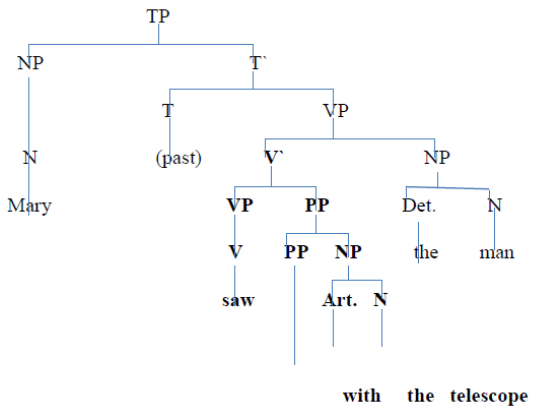
This example shows that the subject *Mary* has a [+Interpretable] φ- features, and the predicate T has a [-Interpretable] φ-features, which make them get into a checking relation that would check and delete the [-Interpretable] φ-features; this way the derivation does not crash at LF.

In this sense, MP has unified the linguistic analysis to a single rule which is that elements are merged or moved in the derivation to delete the uninterpretable feature carried by other elements. The operation *Merge* is dealt with in the following section.

Chomsky (2006) represents the hierarchal tree in his explanations so that the hierarchal tree can eliminate the ambiguity in the sentence by showing the related merge to each component. In fact, there are two types of ambiguity. These are the lexical and the structural one. The hierarchal tree is used widely rather than the linear to reduce the ambiguity as example (6) below shows:

(6) *Mary saw the man with the telescope.*

Here in this example, the Preposition Phrase *with the telescope* identifies the Verb (V) *saw* or it describes the Noun Phrase (NP) *the man*. In the tree, this ambiguity will be eliminated.



In the previous diagram, the merge occurs in the V` between the VP and PP, *with the telescope* modifies the (V) *saw*. Whereas, if the PP merges with the NP as in the following diagram, the PP clarifies the NP not VP. By this way, the ambiguity of the projection is reduced. In short, if the PP *with the telescope* merges with (V), it describes the *saw* whereas if the PP merges with NP it describes the *man.*

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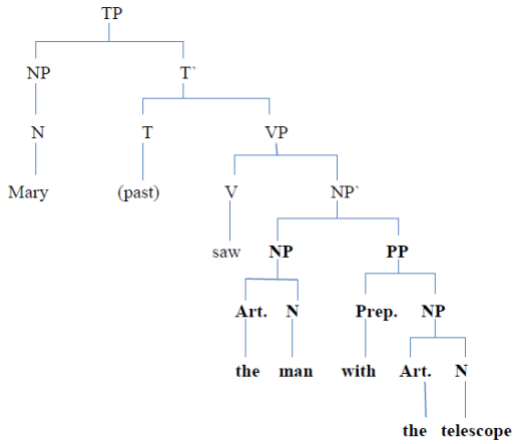

Chomsky (1995) represents the principles by the binary merge between the phonetic Form (PF) and Logical F2orm (LF) to have the interface term. As a consequence, all the condition of the interface could be applicable. The new way to describe and derive is called syntactic operation. Syntax operations are responsible for any movement, Chomsky (1995).

The Output

The Output is the end result used in the language. Each output is the sum of a process that goes as follows: first, the numeration which is the input used to create a sentence. This input is the building blocks of the sentence. This numeration contains lexical items which carry features that determine the force of the sentence, either a declarative or an interrogative. Other features which determine which elements are merged together and which need to be moved. After the operations Merge and Move are performed using up all the elements in the numeration, the derivation is then taken to both the PF level for phonetic interpretation, and LF level for semantic interpretation a derivation can crash at these levels if it contains extra or fewer elements than there are in the numeration or one of the operations Merge and Move-α is not applied when needed or one or more features carried by a lexical item are not satisfied before the derivation is moved to LF. Once the derivation moves to LF, all overt operations stop functioning.

Lasnik & Lohndal(2013) also argue that the interface is found in the Minimalist program. The interface is a result of mixing and combining between the Phonetic Form (PF) and the Logical Form (LF). The Photic Form (PF) is showing the interacting between the syntactic structures with the semantic structure. This process needs to have Phonetic Form (PF) which is represented by the spell out what has been produced from the (LF). It is a phonological system. The numeration is the speaker/ writer's store of vocabulary, with details concerning its syntactic and semantic properties. It is the starting point of utterances or writing.

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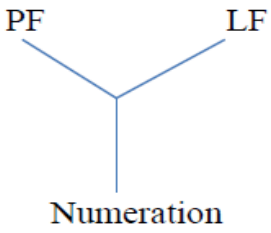

(the lexicon of the speaker- writer)

Data Presentation and Analysis

In this chapter, we present and analyze the data on English and Urhobo polar interrogative structures. The sole aim is to identify the grammatical rules and operations involved in the derivation of the investigated linguistic phenomena, the ultimate objective being to proffer, within the minimalist framework, a unitary account of two languages under the following subfields:

- Subject and auxiliary inversion with main and modal auxiliary verbs.
- Polar interrogative structures with the BE copula.
- The DO insertion
- Negative polar question

To achieve this objective, we shall attempt to provide answers to the following research questions:

- What are the strategies in the formation of polar interrogative structures in English and Urhobo?
- What is the role of tone and intonation in the formation of Urhobo polar nterrogative structures?
- Are there variations in English and Urhobo polar interrogative forns?
- Does Urhobo realizes question forms based on the subfield of English interrogative forms listed above?
- What syntactic rules and operations are responsible for the derivation of Negative polar interrogative structures in English and Urhobo?

Subject-Operator Inversion

To commerce investigation for polar interrogative structures with subject-auxiliary inversion, we shall consider the following sentences;

1. (a) in-situ: She will be in the market tomorrow.
   [SPEC-TP She [T will [V be [PP [P in [DP[D the [NP[N market [AdvP [Adv tomorrow]]]]]]]]]]
   (b) in-situ: Ọ cha dịẹ evun èki na odệ rọ chanà.
   She will be in market the tomorrow
   Lit: she will be in the market tomorrow.
   [SPEC-TP Ọ [T cha [V dịẹ [PP[P evun [N èki [DP[D na [AdvP[Adv odệ rọ chanà]]]]]]]
2. (a) Subject-auxiliary inversion
   Will she be in the market tomorrow?
   [SPEC-CP Will [SPEC-TP she [T *t*I [V be [P in [D the [N market [Adv tomorrow]]]]]]]]

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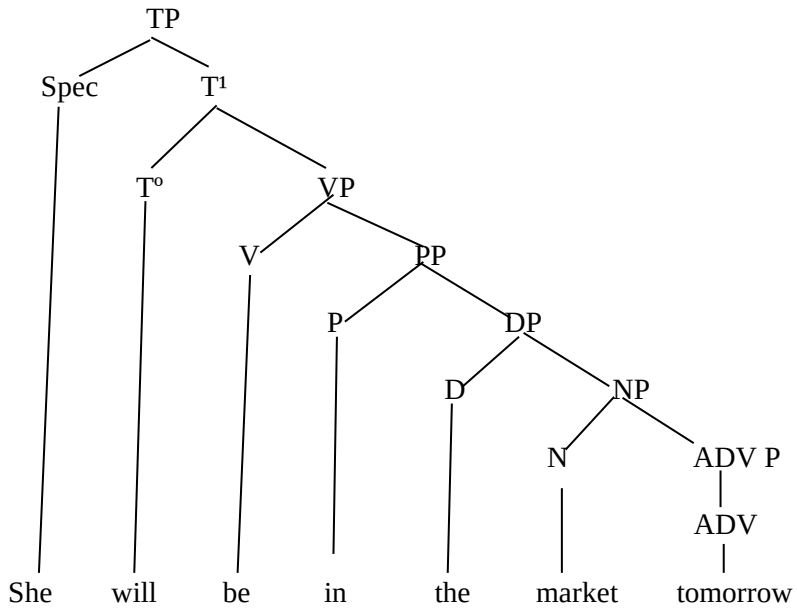
(b) Question: Ọ cha diẹ evun èki na odẹ ro chaná?
She will be in market the tomorrow
Lit: Will she be in the market tomorrow?
[SPEC-TP Ọ [T cha [V diẹ [P evun [N èki [D na [AdV odẹ ro chaná]]]]]]]

In each of the sentences, the '**a**' expressions is in English, while the '**b**' sentences is the Urhobo translation equivalent and word for word glosses. 1a and b are statement in in-situ whose questions are realized in 2a and b with the subject-auxiliary inversion rule.

The schematic representation of the English statements in-situ in (1a) and the inversion in (2a) structures are shown below respectively.

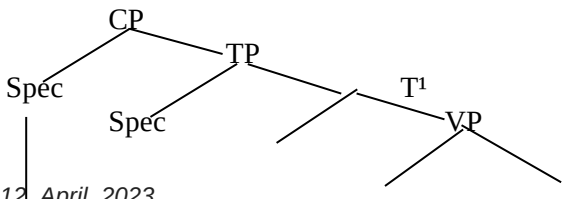
3. She will be in the market tomorrow.

[SPEC-TP She [T will2 [V be [PP [P in [DP[D the [NP[N market [AdVP [AdV tomorrow]]]]]]]]]]



4. Will she be in the market tomorrow?

[SPEC-CP Will [SPEC-TP she [T *t*1 [V be [PP [P in [DP [D the [NP [N market [AdVP [AdV tomorrow]]]]]]]]]



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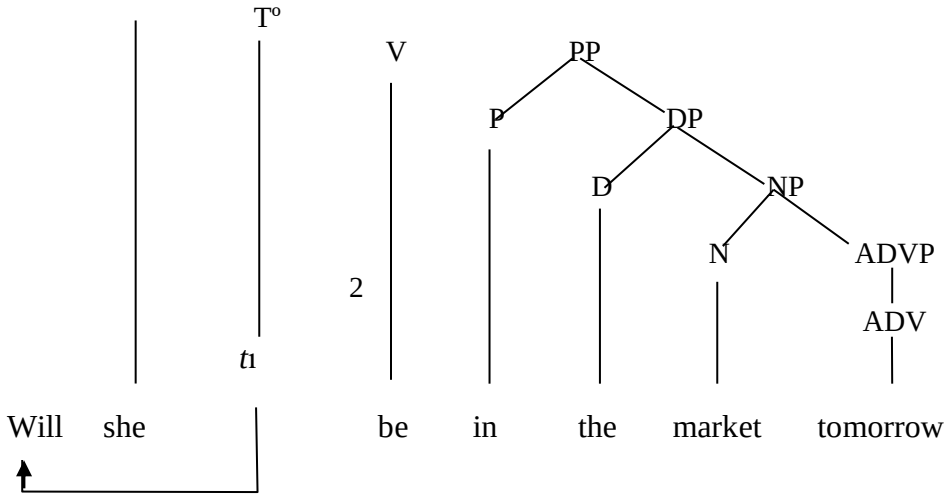
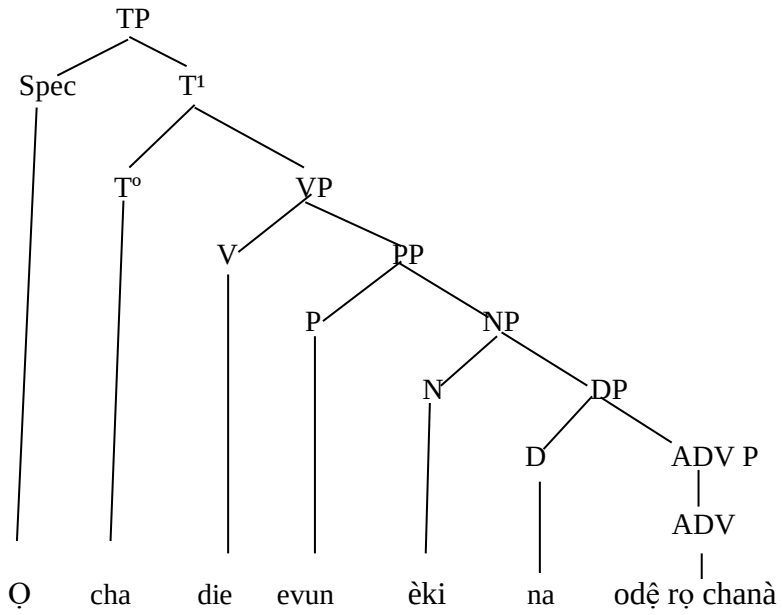


Similarly, the Urhobo translation equivalent for both a statement and interrogative in (1b) and (2b) are schematically shown below as structures (7) and (8) respectively.

5. Ọ cha diẹ evun èki na odẹ ro chanà.
   She will be in market the tomorrow
   Lit: she will be in the market tomorrow.
   [spec8-TP Ọ [T cha [V diẹ [PP[P evun [N èki [DP[D na [AdvP[Adv odẹ ro chanà]]]]]]]



6. Ọ cha diẹ evun èki na odẹ ro chaná.
   She will be in market the tomorrow
   Lit: Will she be in the market tomorrow?

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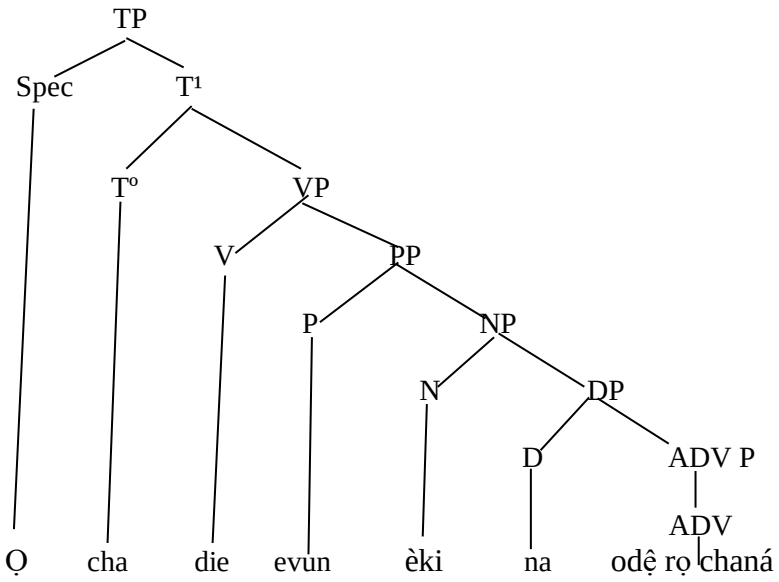
[SPEC-TP Ọ [T cha [V diẹ [PP[P evun [N èki [DP[D na [AdvP[Adv odẹ̀ rọ chaná]]]]]]]



From the structures above, there is an overt inversion of the subject and auxiliary, the 'will' is moved from its original position under 'T' in the 'TP' to the Spec position of the 'CP'. The structures for statement and interrogative realized in the Urhobo translation equivalent for sentence (5) made use of falling intonation in the last word hence, a falling tone is assigned to the word 'odẹ̀ rọ chamà'(tomorrow) while the structure (6) has a rising intonation in word final, a rising tone is assigned to the last word 'odẹ̀ rọ chamá'.

Derivation of polar interrogative with the BE copula

Investing polar interrogative sentences with the BE copula, considering the following instances below in English and Urhobo respectively.

7. (a) in-situ: Pamela is the good child.
   [SPEC-TP Pamela [V is [DP[D the [AdjP[Adj good [N child]]]]]]]
   (b) in-situ: Pamela yẹn ọmọ oyoma nā.
   Pamela is child good the
   Lit: Pamela is the good child.
   [SPEC-TP Pamela [V yẹn [NP[N ọmọ [AdjP[Adj oyoma [D nā]]]]]]]
8. 2(a) BE copula inversion
   Is Pamela the good child?
   [SPEC-CP Is [SPEC-TP Pamela [V *t*ı [DP[D the [AdjP[Adj good [N child]]]]]]]
   (b) Question: Pamela yẹn ọmọ oyoma ná?
   Pamela is child good the
   Lit: Is Pamela the good child?
   [SPEC-TP Pamela [V yẹn [NP[N ọmọ [AdjP[Adj oyoma [D ná]]]]]]]

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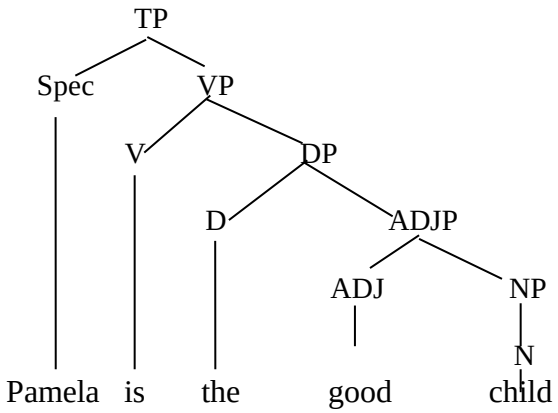
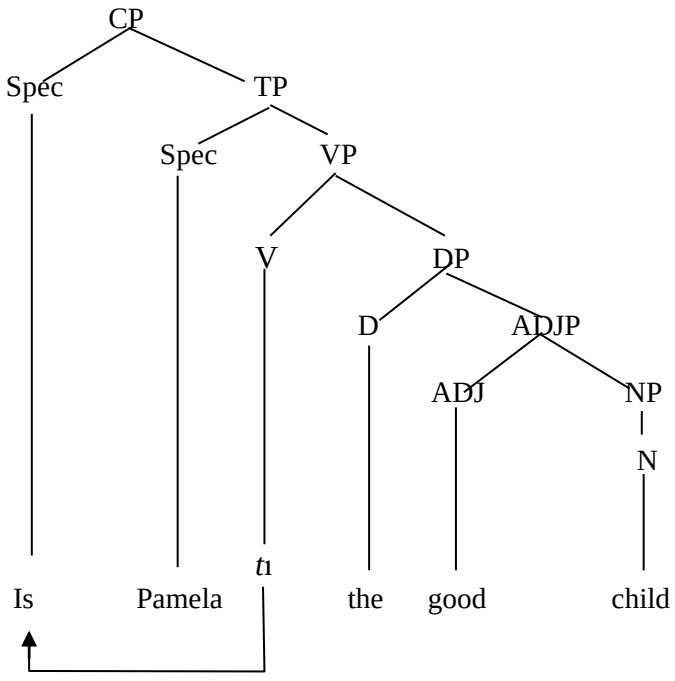
Similarly to what is done with the subject-auxiliary inversion, the expression 'a' are in English while the 'b' sentences are the Urhobo translation equivalent. The sentences in (7a) and (8a) will be schematically shown as (9) and (10) respectively. Their Urhobo translation equivalent will be shown as structures (11) and (12).

9. Pamela is the good child.
   [SPEC-TP Pamela [V is [DP[D the [ADJP[ADJ good [NP[N child]]]]]]]]



10. Is Pamela the good child?
    [SPEC-CP Is [SPEC-TP Pamela [V *t*1 [DP[D the [ADJP[ADJ good [NP[N child]]]]]]]]]



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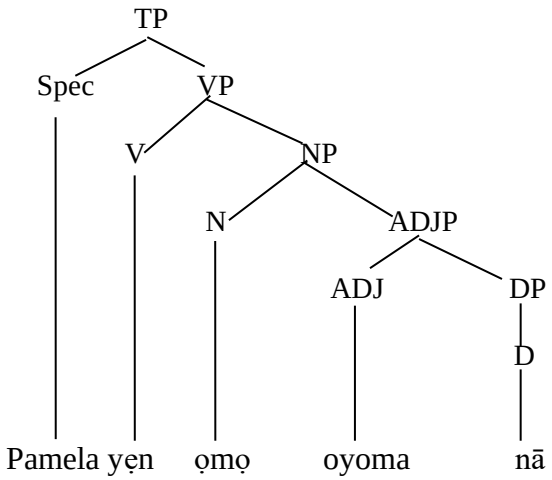
11. Pamela yẹn ọmọ oyoma nā.
    Pamela is child good the

    Lit: Pamela is the good child.

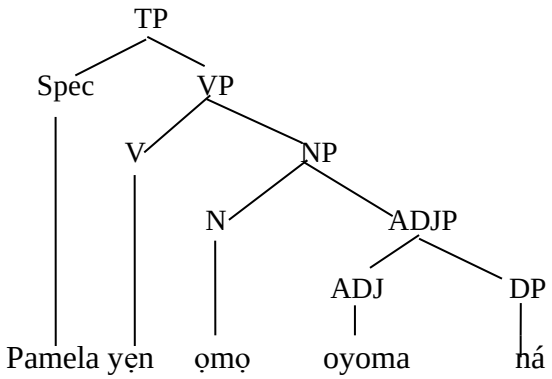
    [SPEC-TP Pamela [V yẹn [NP[N ọmọ [ADJP[ADJ oyoma [DP[D nā]]]]]]]]



12. Pamela yẹn ọmọ oyoma ná?
    Pamela is child good the

    Lit: Is Pamela the good child?

    [SPEC-TP Pamela [V yẹn [NP[N ọmọ [ADJP[ADJ oyoma [DP[D ná]]]]]]]]



As shown in previous schemata, in the derivation of polar interrogatives, the auxiliary verbs 'will' and 'has' were inverted with the subject hence, they were moved from their original generated position. That is 'T' in TP to a landing site in the 'Spec' of the CP to give rise to a question in English whereas, in the schemata for polar interrogatives with auxiliary verbs in Urhobo, there is no form of movement or inversion, the variance in tone was noticed in the sentences.

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May 2023

Furthermore, in the derivation of polar interrogative structure with a string of auxiliary verbs in English, the first auxiliary verb in the string is involved in the inversion to derive interrogative, similarly, the BE verb when no auxiliary verb is present in a sentence, serves as the operator that is inverted to derive a polar interrogative.

Derivation of Polar Interrogatives with the Dummy Verb - DO

When a sentence has no auxiliary or BE verb, a different condition occurs. Notice that we cannot simply invert the subject and the main verb as we did with the auxiliary and BE verb to derive a grammatical question:

Ejiro plays the organ on Sunday.

*Plays Ejiro the organ on Sunday?

Although, as we have noted already, such forms were acceptable historically in the earlier forms of English question, and their equivalent are grammatical in certain languages today(such as German and the Scandiavian languages), the main verb in a sentence is not inverted with the subject in modern English. In the derivation of polar interrogative, 'DO' is inserted to function as an operator when there is no auxiliary or BE verb to invert with the subject.

In this segment, we will be analysing structures with no auxiliary or BE verb and the insertion of a dummy DO verb in other to derive polar interrogative sentences in English and Urhobo respectively.

13. (a) in-situ: Ejiro plays the organ on Sunday.
[SPEC-TP Ejiro [VP plays [DP[D the [NP[N organ [PP[P on [NP[N Sunday]]]]]]]]]]

(b) n-situ: Ejiro hworẹ ọgani na vwẹ ẹdijana-rodē.
Ejiro plays orgsn the on Sunday

Lit: E2iro plays2 the organ on Sunday.
[SPEC-TP Ejiro [VP hworẹ [NP[N ọgani [DP[D na [PP[P vwẹ [NP[N ẹdijana-rodē]]]]]]]]]]

14. (a)DO insertion
Ejiro DO plays the organ on Sunday.
[SPEC-TP Ejiro [T DO [VP plays [DP[D [the [NP[N organ [PP[P on [NP[N Sunday]]]]]]]]]]]

(b) Insertion: Ejiro rhe hworẹ ọgani na vwẹ ẹdijana-rodē.
Ejiro DO plays orgsn the on Sunday.

Lit: Ejiro DO plays the organ on Sunday.
[SPEC-TP Ejiro [T rhe [VP hworẹ [NP[N ọgani [DP[D na [PP[P vwẹ [NP[N ẹdijana-rodē]]]]]]]]]]

15. (a) Subject-operator inversion
Does Ejiro play the organ on Sunday?
[SPEC-CP Does [SPEC-TP Ejiro [T *t*ı [VP plays [DP[D [the [NP[N organ [PP[P on [NP[N Sunday]]]]]]]]]]]]

(b) Question: Ejiro hworẹ ọrgani na vwẹ ẹdijana-rodé?

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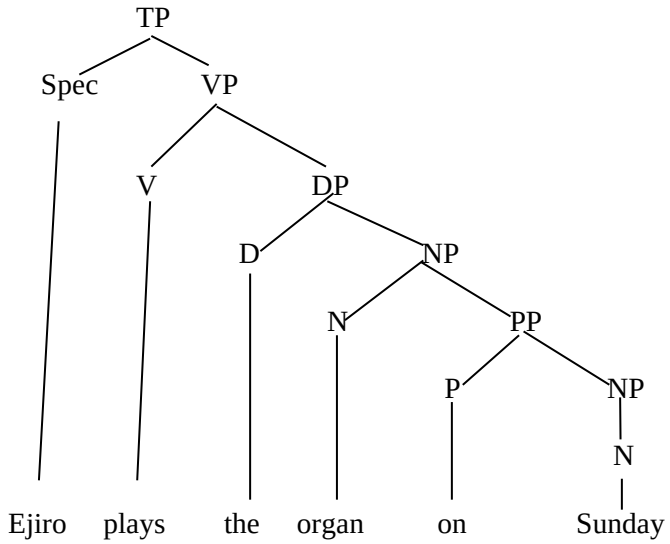
Lit: Ejiro plays organ the on Sunday
[SPEC-TP Ejiro [T rhe [VP hworẹ [NP[N ọgani [DP[D na [PP[P vwẹ [NP[N ẹdijana-rodé]]]]]]]]]]

As observed from the previous analyses, the expression in 'a' are English while the 'b' are their Urhobo translation equivalent.

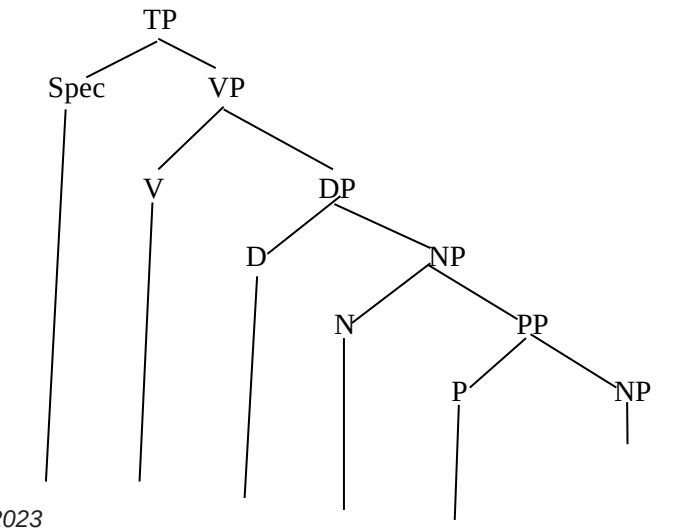
16. Ejiro plays the organ on Sunday.
[SPEC-TP Ejiro [VP plays [DP[D the [NP[N organ [PP[P on [NP[N Sunday]]]]]]]]]



17. Ejiro hworẹ ọgani na vwẹ ẹdijana-rodē.
Ejiro plays orgsn the on Sunday

Lit: Eiro plays the organ on Sunday.

[SPEC-TP Ejiro [VP hworẹ [NP[N ọgani [DP[D na [PP[P vwẹ [NP[N ẹdijana-rodē]]]]]]]]]



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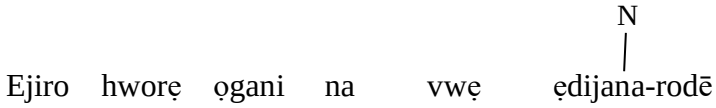
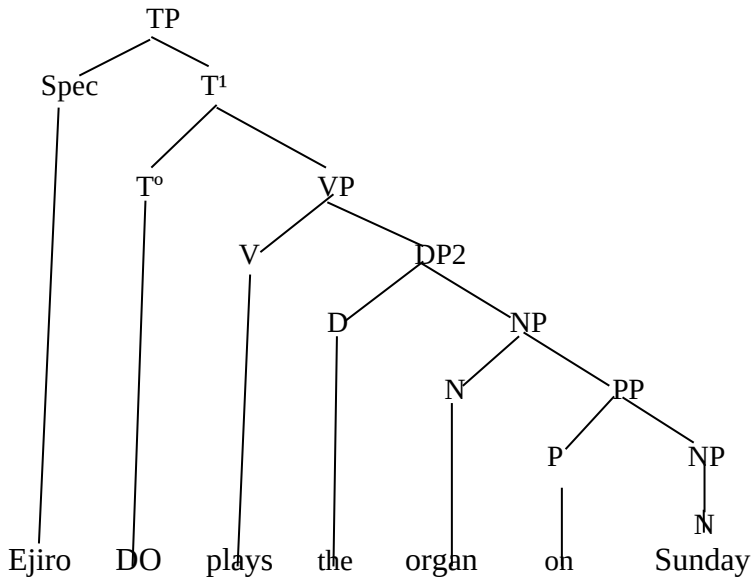


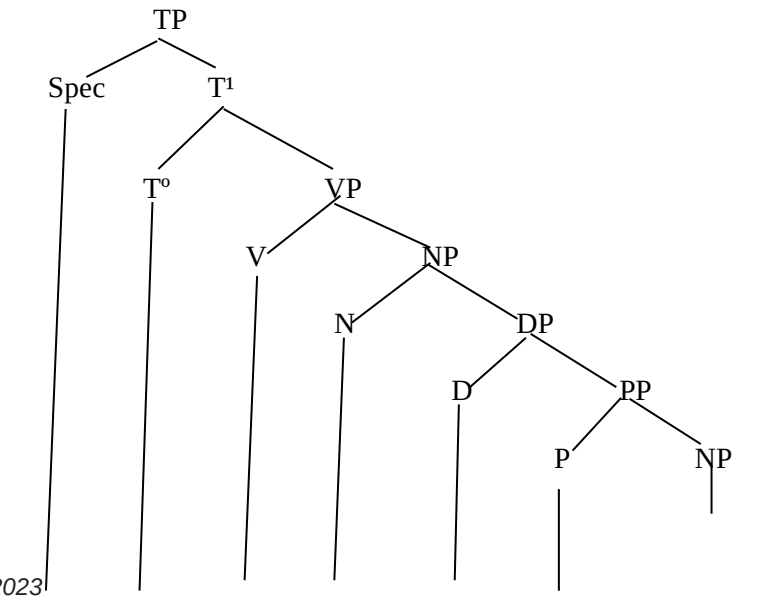
18. Ejiro DO plays the organ on Sunday.
[SPEC-TP Ejiro [T DO [VP plays [DP[D [the [NP[N organ [PP[P on [NP[N Sunday]]]]]]]]]]]



19. Ejiro rhe hworẹ ọgani na vwẹ ẹdijana-rodē.
Ejiro DO plays orgsn the on Sunday.2

Lit: Ejiro DO plays the organ on Sunday.

[SPEC-TP Ejiro [T rhe [VP hworẹ [NP[N ọgani [DP[D na [PP[P vwẹ [NP[N ẹdijana-rodē]]]]]]]]]]



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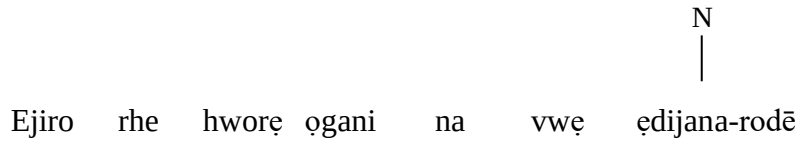
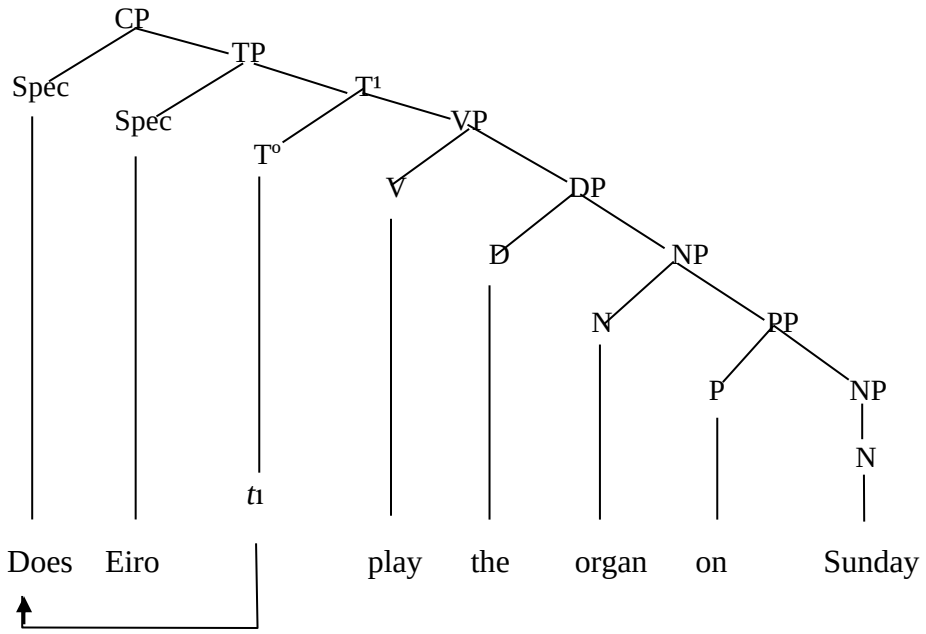


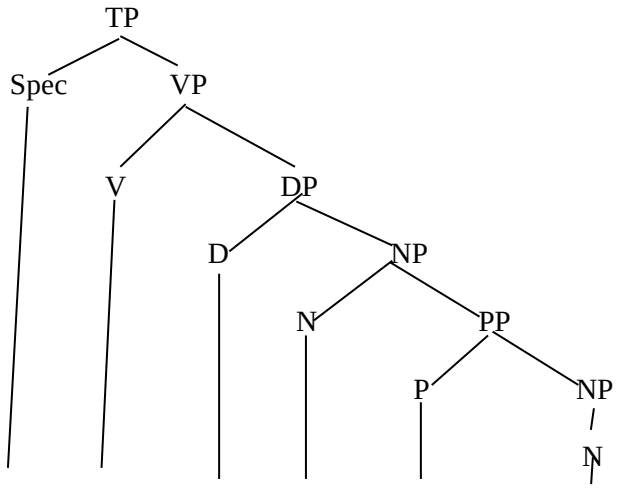
20. Does Ejiro play the organ on Sunday?
[SPEC-CP Does [SPEC-TP Ejiro [T *t*ı [VP plays [DP[D [the [NP[N organ [PP[P on [NP[N Sunday]]]]]]]]]]]]



21. Ejiro hworẹ ọrgani na vwẹ ẹdijana-rodé?
Ejiro plays organ the on Sunday

Lit: Does Ejiro play the organ on Sunday?

[SPEC-TP Ejiro [T rhe [VP hworẹ [NP[N ọgani [DP[D na [PP[P vwẹ [NP[N ẹdijana-rodé]]]]]]]]]



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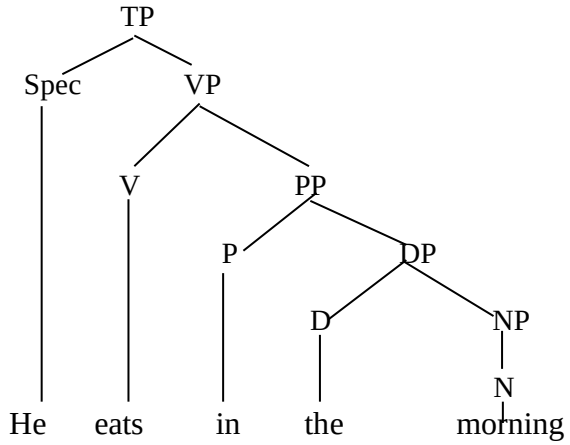
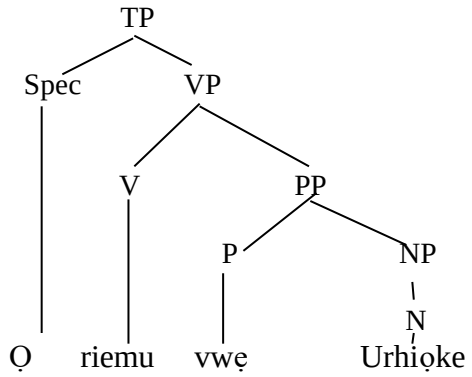
May 2023

Ejiro hworẹ ọgani na vwẹ ẹdijana-rodé

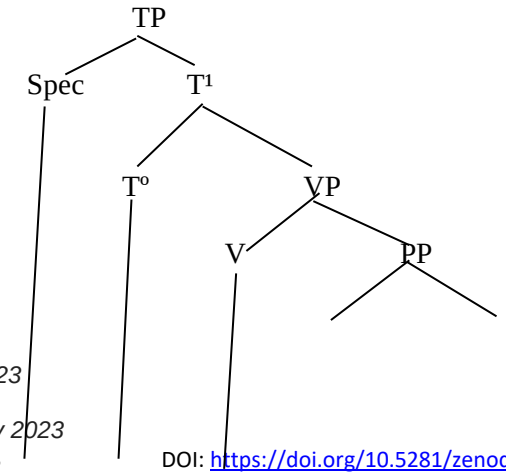
22. He eats in the morning.
[SPEC-TP He [VP eats [PP[P in [DP[D the [NP[N morning]]]]]]]]



23. Ọ riemu vwẹ Urhiọke.
He eats in morning
Lit: He eats in the morning.
[SPEC-TP Ọ [VP riemu [PP[P vwẹ [NP[N Urhiọke]]]]]]



24. He DO eats in the morning.
[SPEC-TP He [T DO [VP eats [PP[P in [DP[D the [NP[N morning]]]]]]]]



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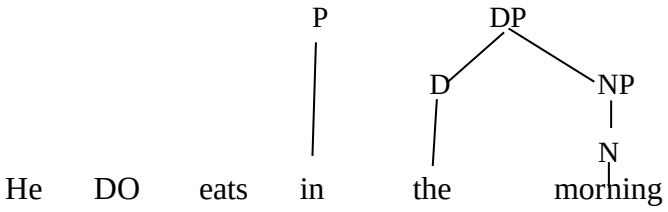
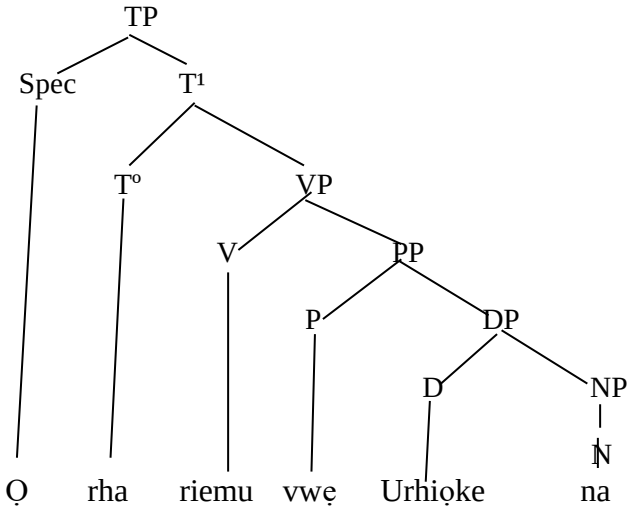


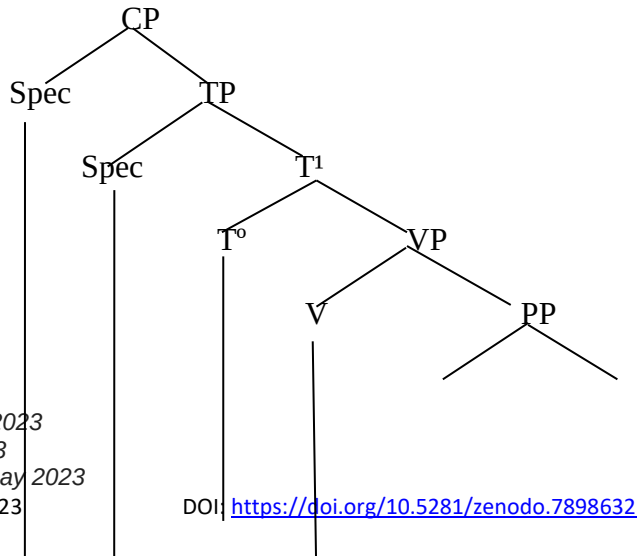
25. Ọ rha riemu vwẹ Urhiọke na.
He DO eats in morning the

Lit: He DO eats in the morning.

[SPEC-TP Ọ [T rha [VP riemu [PP[P vwẹ [NP[N Urhiọke [DP[D na]]]]]]]]]



26. Does he eat in the morning?
[SPEC-CP Does [SPEC-TP He [T *t*1 [VP eats [PP[P in [DP[D the [NP[N morning]]]]]]]]]



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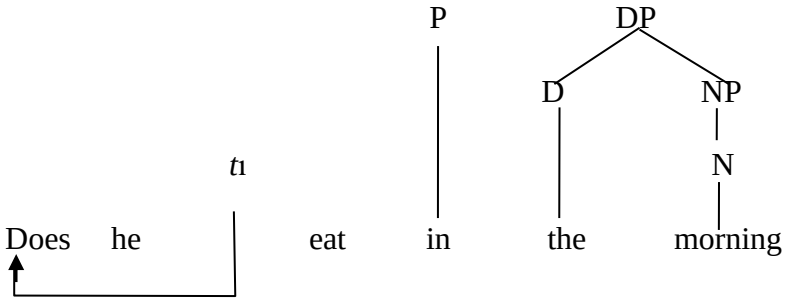
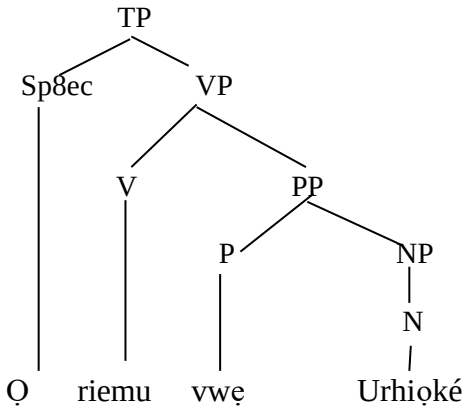


27. Ọ riemu vwẹ Urhiọké?
    He eats in morning
    Lit: Does he eat in the morning?
    [SPEC-TP Ọ [VP riemu [PP[P vwẹ [NP[N Urhiọké]]]]]]



T2he Negative Polar Question

We turn now to the issue of interpretation of negative polar interrogatives. Our objective is to identify he syntactic rules and operations responsible for the derivation of these negative structures in English and Urhobo respectively. To commence ourinvestigation, we will consider the following sentences below:

28. (a) in-situ: They will not sit here.
    [SPEC-TP They [T will [NEGP[Neg not [V sit [ADVP[Adv here]]]]]]]
    (b) in-situ: Ayèn ché chidia etinẹ-ẹ̀.
    They will sit here not
    Lit: They will not sit here.
    [SPEC-TP Ayèn [T ché [V chidia [ADVP[Adv etinẹ [NEGP[Neg -ẹ̀]]]]]]]
29. (a) Subject-auxiliary inversion:
    Will they not sit here?
    [SPEC-CP Will [SPEC-TP They [T *t1* [NEGP[Neg not [V sit [ADVP[Adv here]]]]]]]]
    (b) Question: Ayèn ché rhe chidia etinẹ́?
    They will not sit here
    Lit: Will they not sit here?

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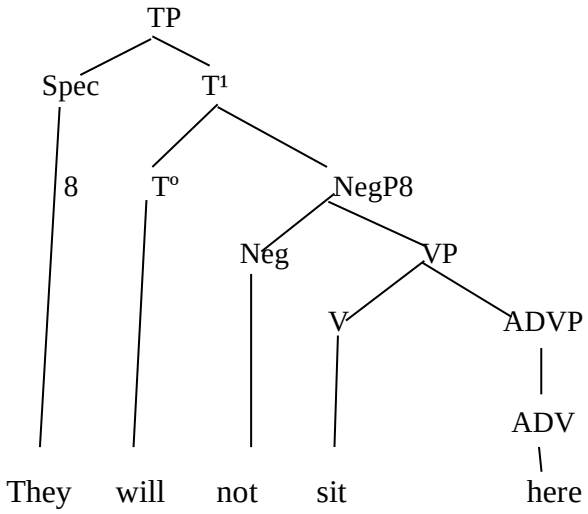
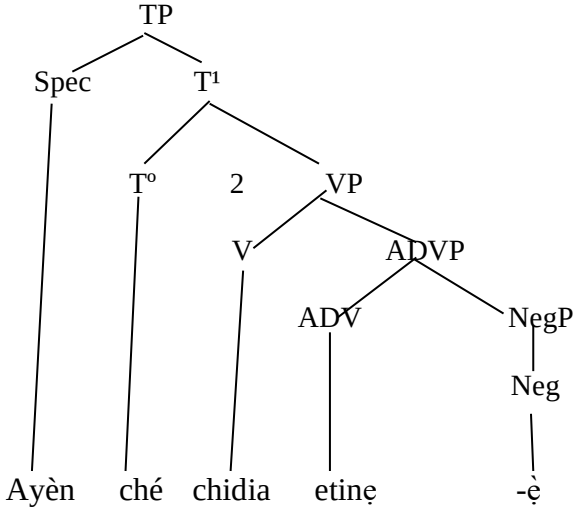
May 2023

[SPEC-TP Ayèn [T ché [NEGP[Neg rhe [V chidia [ADVP[ADV etiné]]]]]]]

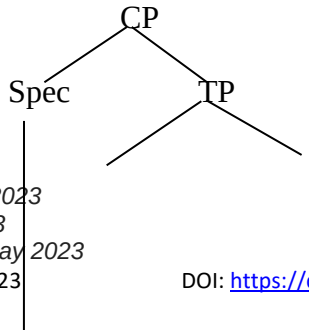
30. They will not sit here.
[SPEC-TP They [T will [NEGP[Neg not [V sit [ADVP[ADV here]]]]]]]



31. Ayèn ché chidia etiné-è.
They will sit here not
Lit: They will not sit here.
[SPEC-TP Ayèn [T ché [V ch8idia [ADVP[ADV etiné [NEGP[Neg -è]]]]]]]



32. Will they not sit here?
[SPEC-CP Will [SPEC-TP They [T *t*ı [NEGP[Neg not [V sit [ADVP[ADV here]]]]]]]]



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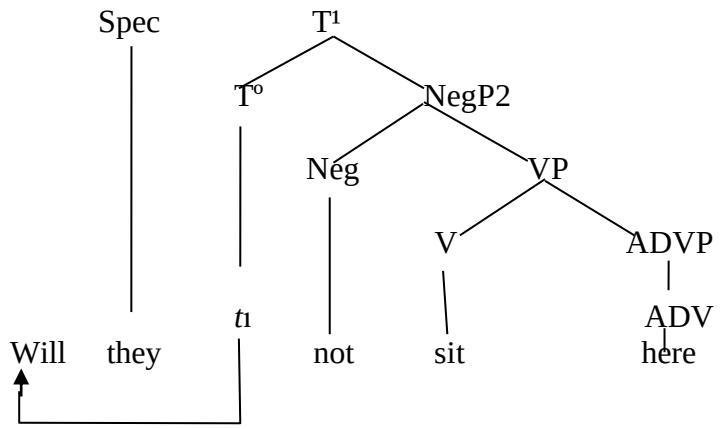
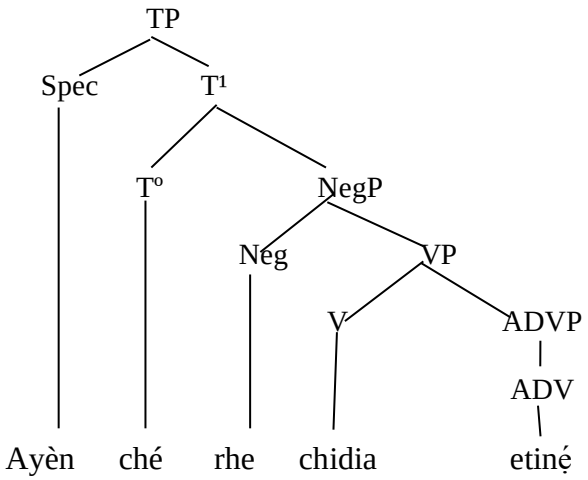


33. Ayèn ché rhe chidia etiné?
They will not sit here

Lit: Will they not sit here?

[SPEC-TP Ayèn [T ché [NEGP[Neg rhe [V chidia [ADVP[ADV etiné]]]]]]]



From the schemata presented in (55), its observed that it's a negative statement with a negative particle 'not' in which an inversion will be carried out to derive an interrogative, the inversion is between the subject and auxiliary verb or operator, in structure (56) which is8 the Urhobo translation equivalent, the negative particle is realized in a negative declarative statement as additional vowel in the last word, hence we have 'etiné-è' with the last '-è' as the 'not'. In the schemata (57) which is negative polar interrogative, the auxiliary verb 'will' moved from its original position in 'T' of TP to the Spec position of the 'CP', while in structure (58), the negative polar interrogative is formed with a negative particle 'rhe' and a rising tone at the end of the stateme2nt usually on the last word.

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In brief, the derivation of polar interrogatives in English and Urhobo involves different strategies. English employs a movement of the auxiliary verb or operator from its based generated T-internal position to spec-CP through a movement rule known as subject-auxiliary/operator inversion or T-C (movement from tense (T) node to the complimentiser (C) position. This movement is according to Radford (2002; 14-16), triggered by the presence of a 'tense feature' (TNS) at interrogative C. With the auxiliary or operator extracted from T to C, the requirement 8for C to bear tense is satisfied, and the tense/TNS feature is deleted.

The minimalist explanation for auxiliary/operator movement is centered on 'feature checking'. Chomsky (2005a) suggests that an edge feature (EF) is the mechanism which drives movement of the auxiliary/operator to spec-CP; he argues that in polar interrogatives, the complimentiser (C) carries an edge feature (EF) which requires C to be extended in a CP projection containing a Specifier on its edge. Radford (2006: 122) further explains that in languages such as English, 'a clause is interpreted as a non-echoic question if (and only if) it is a CP with an interrogative Specifier (ie a Specifier containing an interrogative word)'. In other words, the (assumed) edge feature on interrogative C attracts an interrogative word or phrase to spec-CP so that the clause can be given a non-echoic interrogative interpretation. Once the interrogative word/phrase arrives at spec-CP, the EF requirement is satisfied and thus deleted.

In Urhobo, Polar interrogatives are formed with the use of tone. A kennel or declarative statement has a falling intonation at the end of the statement where as, for a polar interrogative, it employs a rising intonation at the end of declarative statement. Tone is the major tool for the derivation of Polar interrogatives in Urhobo.

Conclusion

With reference to the first research question, namely, what are the strategies in the formation of polar interrogative structures in English and Urhobo, the data analysis suggests that English makes use of a syntactic operation known as subject auxiliary operator inversion which is a movement of T to C in derivation of polar interrogative structures where as Urhobo makes use of a rising intonation in the formation of polar interrogative structures.

With reference to the second research question, viz. the role of tone and intonation in Urhobo polar interrogative structures, the analysis shows that, a kennel sentence in Urhobo has either a falling intonation where a falling tone is assigned to the last word in the utterance or downstep, meanwhile, in deriving a polar interrogative structure, the intonation changes from a falling tone or downstep to a rising tone.

With reference to the third research question, viz. are there variations in English and Urhobo polar interested structures, the data analysis shows that English does not form polar 8interrogative structures with tone though it was stated in our literature review that some time in8 the history of English, questions where

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made with the use of rising intonation, the standard form of an English Yes/No question is one that inverts the subject and auxiliary/operation. English employs the movem8ent of constituents in the derivation of polar interrogative structures, hence there is a movement from T.P to C.P. T.P is employed for the projection of a declaration statement while C.P is employed for the derivation of polar interrogative structures. In Urhobo, the structure of the declarative and polar interrogatives are the same and are both projected under TP, the significant feature which distinguishes them is the tone assigned them.

With reference to the fourth research question, viz. does the Urhobo language realizes question forms with auxiliary verbs, Be copula, DO insertion, from the data analysis on this subfield. The Urhobo language has projection for these word groups but there is no form of movement in the derivation of polar interrogative structures as that of English.

Finally, the syntactic operations and rules responsible for the 8derivation of negative polar interrogatives in English and Urhobo as seen in data analysis, English negative polar interrogative structures contains a negative particle which is projected under the head projection 'Neg P' whereas, Urhobo realizes negation by doubling the last morpheme. In the last morpheme of the statement accompanied with a falling tone or downstep. This is the strategy employed by Urhobo in the derivation of negative declarative statements while in the derivation of negative polar interrogative structures, the tone functions as the negater and the question marker.

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