MORPHOSYNTAX OF MOVEMENT DEPENDENCIES IN HAITIAN CREOLE

1. The Issue: In Haitian Creole, the lexical item *ki* shows up when a subject, but not an object undergoes operator movement in *wh*-question, cleft and relativization, as shown in (1) and (2) (we focus on *wh*-question here). The primary goal of this paper is to explain the distribution of *ki*. As a more general goal, we suggest a way to capture similar subject/object asymmetries in other languages.

2. The General Claims: We argue that *ki* is a phonological reflex of agreement between C$^0$ and a *wh*-phrase. We claim that when all features of C$^0$ are checked by a single goal, C$^0$ is spelled-out as *ki*. The C$^0$ in question involves an uninterpretable operator feature (uOP) and uninterpretable φ-features (υφ). We take complementizer agreement (CA) in Germanic languages exemplified in (3) to be evidence for the presence of υφ on C$^0$ and agreement of φ-features between C$^0$ and a subject (Carstens 2003). Our analysis of (1) and (2) is the following. In the subject extraction case, both features are checked by a subject *wh*-phrase in the Spec of TP, as illustrated in (4). In the object extraction case, the uOP of the C$^0$ is checked by the object *wh*-phrase in the vP-adjointed position (based on Chomsky’s (2000) proposal of successive cyclic movement). However, the υφ of the C$^0$ is checked by a subject in the Spec of TP, as shown in (5) and hence, the C$^0$ is not spelled-out as *ki*. Our claim is that the subject/object asymmetry of *ki* results from the locality constraint on Agree. This analysis captures another property of *ki*, namely, it appears only in the clause from which the subject *wh*-phrase is extracted, as shown in (6). As the simplified derivation in (7) shows, the uOP and the υφ of the C$^0$ cannot be checked by a single goal, except for the lowest C$^0$ in long distance movement.

3. Intervention Effect: Evidence for *ki* as a Result of CA: One noticeable similarity between CA in (3) and *ki* is that an intervention effect is observed in both cases. We take it to be an argument for the claim that agreement of φ-features is involved for *ki* to appear. The adverb intervention effect in CA is shown in (8). The adverb *yè* cannot appear between *ki* and the predicate, as shown in (9). The facts in (10) indicate that the adverb cannot be in a position lower than the subject. Thus, the adverb intervenes between the subject and the C$^0$, as shown in (11), and this prevents the φ-feature agreement between them, like in (8).

4. *Ki* as Spell-out of C$^0$: Among other arguments, we here provide two arguments for the claim that *ki* is an overt realization of C$^0$. First, *ki* cannot co-occur with a complementizer *ke* ‘that’, as shown in (12). Second, the complement clause in the causative construction does not involve a CP structure, as indicated by the fact that *ke* cannot appear in (13). As expected, *ki* cannot appear even if a causee undergoes *wh*-movement in (14).

5. Consequences: Salvation by Spell-out of φ-features: Like in other languages, a resumptive pronoun (RP) salvages violations of grammatical principles in Haitian Creole. The raising construction in (15) involves a dependency between one Case position and another, which constitutes a violation of a principle of grammar. (16) violates the *wh*-island condition. In both cases, *ki* can appear in the relevant C$^0$ positions in (17) and (18). It is noticeable that a RP cannot show up if *ki* appears, as shown in (19) and (20). We suggest that violations of above mentioned principles of grammar are rescued if φ-features of an element involved in an illegitimate dependency are spelled-out. In (15) and (16), it is clearly achieved by a RP. In (17) and (18), φ-features of the *wh*-phrase are spelled-out through the appearance of *ki*, whose υφ have been valued by the *wh*-phrase. Thus, *ki* can play the same role as a RP. Consequently, a RP cannot co-occur with *ki* in (19) and (20) for economy reasons (i.e., φ-features should not be spelled-out in more than one position in order to salvage violations of grammatical principles).

6. Conclusion and Further Theoretical Implications: We have claimed that C$^0$ is spelled-out as *ki* if all features of C$^0$ are checked by a single goal. The subject/object asymmetry is reducible to the locality constraint on Agree. We suggest that this analysis could be extended to explain a similar asymmetry in other languages. In Vata and Yoruba, a subject extraction requires a RP, but not an object one, as shown in (21) and (22). Our suggestion is that if all features of C$^0$ are checked by a single goal, φ-features of the goal is spelled-out in these languages for morphosyntactic reasons.
(1) Kilès *(ki) te vini nan fèt la? who KI ANT come to party the
who KI ANT come to party the
‘Who came to the party?’
(2) Kilès (*ki) Mari te wè? who KI Mari ANT see
‘Who did Mari see?’
(3) … datte we komme that-PL we come-PL
(South Hollandic)
(4) [CP Cᵢ[σₐ; Ω] OP] [TP kilès[kᵢ; OP] [σₐ tᵢ vini nan fèt la]]
(5) [CP Cᵢ[σₐ; Ω] OP] [TP Mari[kᵢ; OP] [σₐ tᵢ wè]]
(6) Kilès (*ki) Michel panse (*ki) Mari kwè ki rich? ‘Who does Michel think Mari believes is rich?’
who KI Michel think KI Mari believe KI rich
(7) [Cᵢ[σₐ; Ω] OP] [TP Michel[kᵢ; OP] [σₐ kilès[kᵢ; OP] [σₐ tᵢ vini nan fèt la]]
(8) dat/*datte [op den wärnsten dag van’t joar] wiej tegen oonze wil ewärkt hebt. (Hellendoorn)
that that-PL on the hottest day of the year we against our will worked have
‘that on the warmest day of the year we have worked against our will.’ (Ackema and Neeleman 2001)
(9) *M ap mande kilès ki yè achte yon machin. ‘I am wondering who bought a car yesterday.’
I ASP wonder who KI yesterday buy a car
yesterday Jan ANT see Mari c. *Jan te yè wè Mari.
(11) [CP Cᵢ[σₐ; Ω] OP] [TP yè kilès[kᵢ; OP] achte yon machin]]
(12) a. *Kilès Mari panse ke ki te achte machin nan? who Mari think that KI ANT buy the
who Mari think that KI ANT buy the
‘Who does Mary think bought a car?’
(13) *Michel te fè ke Mari (te) vini nan fèt la. (14) Kimouni ou te fè (*ki) tᵢ vini?
Michel ANT make that Mari ANT come to party the
Michel ANT make that Mari ANT come to party the
‘Michel made Mari to come to the party.’
(14) Kimouni ou te fè (*ki) tᵢ vini?
(15) Jan; sanble ke *(li) te vini nan fèt la. Jan seem that he ANT come to party the
Jan seem that he ANT come to party the
‘Jan seemed to come to the party.’
(16) Kilès: Jan ap mande tèt li si *(li) achte machin nan? who Jan ASP wonder sell him if he buy car a
who Jan ASP wonder sell him if he buy car a
‘Who, if Jan wondering whether he buy car a?’
(18) Kilès Jan ap mande tèt li ki achte machin nan? who Jan ASP wonder sell him KI buy car a
‘Who, is Jan wondering whether he buy car a?’
(19) *Kilès ki sanble ki te vini nan fèt la? who KI seem KI ANT come to party the
who KI seem KI ANT come to party the
‘Who seemed to come to the party?’
(20) *Kilès: Jan ap mande tèt li ki lii achte machin nan? who Jan ASP wonder sell him KI he buy car a
who Jan ASP wonder sell him KI he buy car a
‘Who, is Jan wondering whether he buy car a?’
(21) a. àl'ò le sa'ká la? who he eat rice WH
‘Who is eating rice?’
(22) a. taₚ ni o₁ ni ta isu? who FOCUS 3SG ASP sell yams
‘Who is selling yams?’

Selected References