

**Analysing noun and verb additive coordination in
Embósi**

**Yvon-Pierre NDONGO IBARA, KIBA
NGAPOULA
Université Marien N'GOUABI
*yvon.ndongo-ibara@umng.cg***

Abstract

This contribution examines the and-conjunction of noun and verb in Embosi language. This discussion shows that Noun and Verb coordination is both syndethic and asyndethic. Of interest is fact Embósi language in addition to coordination nouns resorts to an emphatic pronoun which occurs adjacent to the first noun and before the conjunction and the second noun. Moreover, verb coordination implies either the juxtaposition of the predicate when the latter has an object or the reduplication of the verb when one predicates goes with two complements.

Keywords: additive coordination, Embósi, noun, verb, conjunction phrase.

Résumé

Cette contribution examine la conjonction du nom et du verbe dans la langue Embosi. Cette discussion montre que la coordination des noms et des verbes est à la fois syndétique et asyndétique. Il est intéressant de noter que la coordination recourt à un pronom emphatique qui se place à côté du premier nom et avant la conjonction de coordination et le deuxième nom. De plus, la coordination verbale implique soit la

juxtaposition du prédicat lorsque celui-ci a un objet, soit la reduplication du verbe quand un prédicat va avec deux compléments.

Mots clés: coordination additive, Embósi, nom, verbe, syntagme conjonctive phrase

Introduction

Embosi is a Bantu language classified in Group C20 and spoken in Cuvette and Plateau departments in the Republic of Congo. This study is devoted to the scrutiny of coordination in embosi with a particular attention on the different discourse and syntactic strategies used in this language to process coordination. This contribution focuses on **and-conjunction**. It addresses the following questions: (i) How is coordination processed in Embosi? (ii) What are similarities and dissimilarities regarding NP+NP and VP+VP coordination under universal grammar principles? Data are mainly driven from Théophile Obenga (1984) and Bisi Ambósi Newsletter.

I- Theoretical background on coordination

This section deals with the definition, distribution and classes of coordination. To begin with, coordination refers to different syntactic constructions in which two or more units of the same type are combined into a larger unit but still have the same semantic relations with other surrounding elements (cf. Haspelmath 2007: 1). In this respect, coordination is a grammatical category based operation as it licenses words belonging to the same class only.

Before hand, let us start by arguing that there are three types of coordination cross linguistically as exemplified below.

- | | | |
|-----|---|--|
| (1) | <i>a. the tiger and the lion</i> | <i>conjunctive coordination</i> |
| | <i>b. the tiger or the lion</i> | <i>disjunctive coordination</i> |
| | <i>c. He walked fast,</i> | <i>adversative coordination</i> |
| | <i>but he did not run. (Lohmann, 2014:6)</i> | |

This paper concerns conjunctive coordination. Yet, the realization of these coordinators is language specific. The following examples are about coordination distribution and morphology.

(2) a- Lavukaleve (Terrill°, ex. 9)

nga-bakala nga-uia tula
1sg.poss-paddle(m) 1sg.poss-knife(f) small.sg.f
'my paddle and my small knife' (Haspelmath, 2004:4)

b- bisyndetic: Upper Kuskokwim Athabaskan (Kibrik°, ex.1)

dineje ?iɬ midzish ?iɬ
moose with caribou with
'moose and caribou' (Haspelmath, 2004:4)

c- conjunction: Persian (Stilo°, ex. 25)

tir=o kæman
arrow=and bow
'bow and arrow' (Haspelmath, 2004:5)

d- prepositive: Lenakel (Moyse-Faurie & Lynch°, ex. 28a)

I-em-va m-əm-angən.
1sg-past-come and-past-eat
'I came and ate' (Haspelmath, 2004:5)

It transpires from the above examples that the and-coordination has three morphological forms cross linguistically. In some languages, the coordinator 'and' is a free morpheme (2b), in other languages it is either a bound morpheme (2c, 2d) or empty category (2a).

In fact, as a bound morpheme, the and-coordinator can appear as a prefix of verb (2d) or a suffix of the first noun in Noun+Noun structure (2c). In this respect, Haspelmath (Op.cit:5) puts forward the notions of prepositive and postpositive for coordination as he points it out in the following lines:

The coordinator usually combines with one of the coordinands, so that the construction is not entirely symmetric. If it precedes this coordinand, it is called prepositive; if it follows this coordinand, it is called postpositive. The evidence for prepositive status is clearest when the coordinator is a prefix or a

proclitic (...) and for postpositive status when the coordinator is a suffix or enclitic.

The syntactic account of coordination highlights two classes, one is lexicalised, the other is alexicalised. In connection to this, Haspelmath (Op.cit:4) uses the terms of syndetic and asyndetic to refer to coordination when he asserts that “*If one or more coordinators occur in a coordinating construction, it is called syndetic. Asyndetic coordination consists of simple juxtaposition of the coordinands*”.

When the coordination is visible with a word meaning ‘and/with’, Haspelmath (op.cit:6) puts forward four typologies summarised as follows:

(3) **a. [A] [co B]**

e.g. Hausa Abdù dà Feemì ‘Abdu and Femi’ (Abdoulaye°, ex. 14a)

b. [A co] [B]

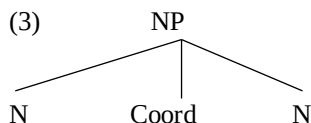
e.g. Lai vòmpii=leé phè]tee ‘a bear and a rabbit’(Peterson & VanBik°, ex. 4)

c. [A] [B co]

e.g. Latin senatus populus-que romanus ‘the senate and the Roman people’

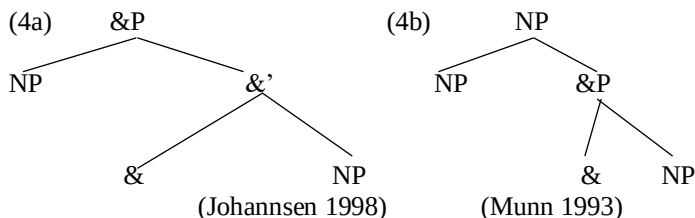
d. [co A] [B]

Based on generative framework, initially coordination appears like a violation of binary condonation since it appears as a flat representation as follows.



Yet, there were a number of studies (Thiersch 1985, Munn 1987a, 1987b, 1992, 1993, Collins 1988a,b, Kolb and Thiersch 1991, Woolford 1987, Kayne 1994, Johannessen 1990, 1993a–c, 1996, 1998, Zoerner 1994, 1995, Camacho 1996, 1997, 1998, Camacho and Sanchez 1996, Collins 1998a, 1988b, Progovac 1996, 1997.) which deeply explored this issue leading to reconsidering this coordination analysis. It comes out from these studies that conjunction should be considered as head alike determiner, inflection, aspect, etc. This new direction raises controversies concerning whether Conj should be

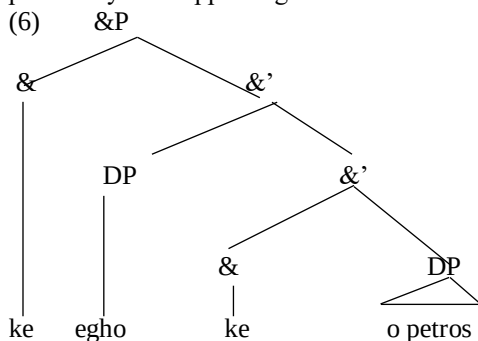
considered the head of the phrase (Conjunction Phrase, &P) or the complement of coordinated phrase illustrated as follows:



If for Johannsen (1998) and Munn (1993) the debates are centered on the structural hierarchy of the grammatical categories which is coordinated, there is another insight worth for attention; that is to say, the external conjunction as illustrated in Latin sentences.

- (5) a. et ego et Cicero meus flagitabit
and I and Cicero my will-demand.3SG.
- b. ke eghe ke o petros to thelume
and I and the Petros it want, 1 PL
'Both Peter and I want it.'

If we consider examples (5), it is obvious that Johannsen's attempt meets descriptive and explanatory adequacies since it predicts both the possibility of & appearing on the left of &' as instantiated below:



The tree diagram in (6) confirms that conjunction should occupy the maximum projection position and this is what we are going to use in the present contribution. Under Johannsen's coordination framework, either single or multiple conjunctions can be handled properly.

2- NOUN COORDINATION

This section deals with the coordination of nouns in Embosi. Further to the presentation of the data, it challenges coordination analysis since in the language under discussion, coordination of nouns can resort to the insertion of new argument. To begin with, let's consider the following examples:

- | | | |
|-------|---|---------------------------------------|
| (7)a- | ikó la tsenge
sky and earth | ‘The Sky and the earth’ |
| b- | Tsési wa la Ngwe
hare him and panther | ‘Hare and panther’ |
| c- | Tsési ba la Ngwe
hare them and panther | ‘Hare and panther’ |
| d- | la ayíri la abaa
and girls and boys | ‘both girls and boys’ |
| e- | bá la mwási la bána
them and wife and children | ‘Both they, their wives and children’ |

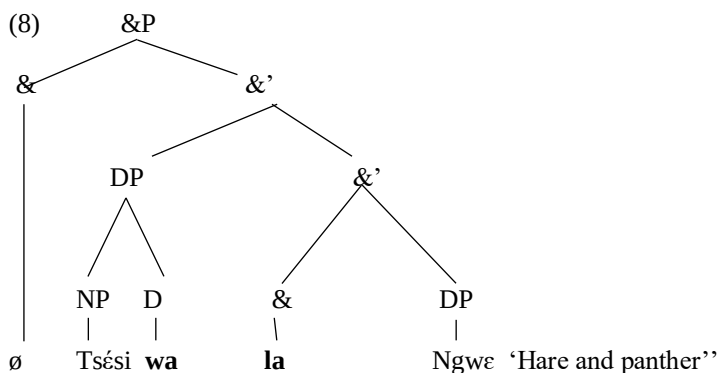
The analysis of the examples in (7) raises a number considerations. Firstly, there is an insight regarding both the distributional property of a coordinator and the number of conjunctions. It transpires that the and-conjunction has two basic positions in an Embosi coordinated noun phrase; they are, initial position and middle position. In mono syndethetic case, the conjunction is between the two nouns coordinated, whilst in bisyndethetic construction (7a), the conjunction appears before each noun coordinated (7d).

There is a particular issue that deserves analysis in Embosi. One can observe from the examples in (7) that in addition to a conjunction,

Embosi resorts to a third personal singular/plural pronoun. The number feature of the third personal pronoun is semantically motivated. That is to say, the singular form (7b) of the pronoun stands for the non-semantic equality between the two nouns coordinated. In fact, hierarchically, the singular third means that the second noun depends on the first noun. For example, if one has to coordinate parents with children, based on the assumption that children depend on parents, the phrase will be Parents and Children. The contrary will raise a number of questions to the extent that it should sound something negative goes with these children.

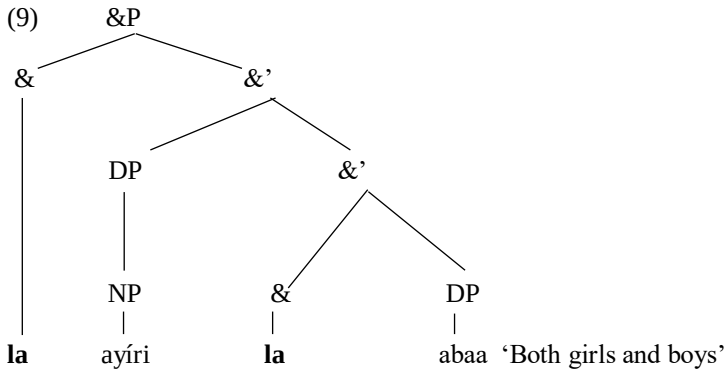
Furthermore, this singular also means that the nouns coordinated are not committed to undertake the same action. However, when the third personal pronoun is plural (7c), this presupposes that there is a mutual commitment to undertake the same action.

Yet, the most important fact concerns the descriptive adequacy to provide a phrase marker for an Embosi &P. To analyse this construction, one has to take into consideration DP hypothesis and view the pronoun incorporated in CoP as a pronominal D-constituent. Due to the fact that Embosi is Specifier Final language, the D follows NP as shown below:



Moreover, Embosi language shows case of external conjunctions as it appears in (7d). As stated above concerning Greek or Latin multiple

conjunctions, we assume that the following tree is about Embosi external conjunction illustration.



3- VERB COORDINATION

This section is devoted to the scrutiny of the coordination of predicates. The examples that follow illustrate the different ways Embosi resorts to when coordinating verbs. Consider:

- (10) a- Oba a-dzá **(la)** a-dzεε
 Oba he-eat (and) he-laugh
 ‘Oba is eating **and** laughing’

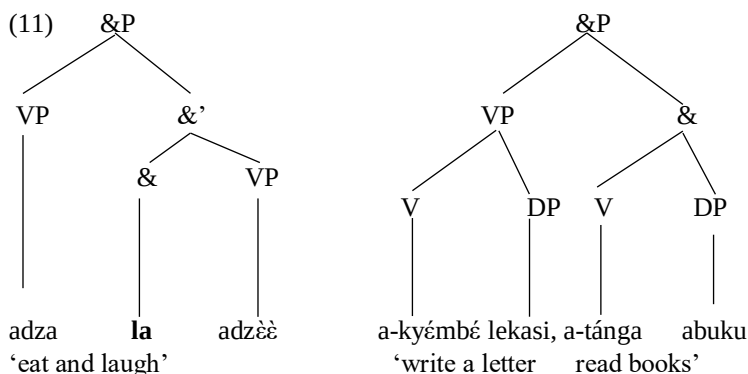
- b- Ndzémbé a-yémba **la** a-bina
 singer s/he-sing and s/he-dance
 ‘A singer is singing and dancing’

- c- Isaa a-kyémbé lekasi, a-tánga abuku o ndai
 Isaa he-write letter he-read books at home
 ‘Isaa is writing a letter and reading books at home’

- d- Ibara a-dzéeé tai, a-dzéeé ngoo
 Ikama he-laughs father he-laughs mother

‘Ikama is mocking at his father and his mother’

The analysis of the verb coordination in Embosi will be carried out threefold. Firstly, I consider the coordination implying two predicators as illustrated in (10a) and (10b). It results that whence two verbs are used without a complement, Embosi speakers use the conjunction ‘la’ between the two verbs. Secondly, the conjunction disappears when the predicate selects a complement as shown in (10c). Finally, when a predicate has two complements, the same verb is used twice with the different complements; this is proved in (10d). As things stand, the predicate coordination is either overt with the presence of a conjunction, or by juxtaposition or by the reduplication of the predicate.



CONCLUSION

Embosi attests both NP+NP and VP+VP coordination. These constructions can be syndetic or asyndetic. Syndetic constructions can imply complexity whence an emphatic pronoun appears, whilst asyndetic constructions can lead to either juxtaposition or verb reduplication with its two complements.

That is to say, Vs whence appearing without object are coordinated, whilst the presence of object precludes/prohibits VP coordination, hence leading to juxtaposition coordination process.

References

- ABDOULAYE, Mahamane L. 1996. Efferential ‘verb + da’ constructions in Hausa. *Journal of African Languages and Linguistics* 17: 113–151.
- Camacho, José (1996). Comitative Coordination in Spanish. In C. Parodi, D. Quicoli, M. Saltarelliand
- CAMACHO, José (1998). How Similar are Conjuncts? Paper presented at the 28th Linguistic Symposium on Romance Languages (LSRL), The Pennsylvania State University.
- CAMACHO, José and Liliana Sánchez (1996). Three Types of Conjunction. In Proceedings of NELS 26. University of Massachusetts at Amherst: GLSA. Chametzky, Robert (1987). Coordination and the
- CAMACHO, José Antonio (1997). The Syntax of NP Coordination. Doctoral Dissertation, University of Southern California, Los Angeles.
- COLLINS, Chris (1988a). Part 1. Conjunction Adverbs. Manuscript, MIT.
- COLLINS, Chris (1988b). Part 2. Alternative Analyses of Conjunction. Manuscript, MIT.
- HASPELMATH, Martin (ed) .2004. Coordinating constructions. The Netherlands: John Benjamins Publishing Co.
- HASPELMATH, Martin. 2007. “Coordination,” in T. Shopen (ed.), *Language Typology and Syntactic Description, vol.II: Complex Constructions*, 2nd edn. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 1–51.
- JOHANNESSEN, Janne Bondi (1993a). A Configurational Theory of Coordination. In D. Adger And C.S. Rhys, (eds.), *Working Papers 8, Centre for Cognitive Science*, Edinburgh University, Edinburgh.
- JOHANNESSEN, Janne Bondi (1993b). *Coordination. A Minimalist Approach*. Doctoral Dissertation, University of Oslo.
- JOHANNESSEN, Janne Bondi (1993c). Coordinate alpha and unbalanced Coordination. In Andreas Kathol and M. Bernstein, (eds.), *Proceedings of the 10th ESCOL*, 153–162, Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y.

- JOHANNESSEN, Janne Bondi (1996). Partial Agreement and Coordination. *Linguistic Inquiry* 27.4: 661–676.
- JOHANNESSEN, Janne Bondi (1998). *Coordination*. Oxford: Oxford University Press
- JOHANNESSEN, Janne Bondi. 1990. Unbalanced coordination—barriers, binding and thematic relations, Research Paper No. 44, Centre for Cognitive Science, Edinburgh University, Edinburgh.
- Johannessen, J. B. (1992) "Prominence constraints on coordination?" Paper
- KAYNE, Richard S. (1994). *The Antisymmetry of Syntax*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- KOLB, Hans-Peter, and Craig Thiersch (1991). Levels and Empty Categories in a Principles and Parameters Approach to parsing. In Hubert Haider and Klaus Netter, (eds.), *Representation and derivation in the Theory of Grammar*, 251–302, Dordrecht: Kluwer.
- LOHMANN, Arne. 2014. English Coordinate Constructions: A Processing Perspective on Constituent Order. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- M.L. Zubizarreta, (eds.), Aspects of Romance Linguistics: Selected Papers from the Linguistics Symposium on Romance Languages XXIV, Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press.
- MUNN, Alan (1987a). *Coordinate Structure and Xbar Theory*. McGill Working Papers in Linguistics 4: 121–140.
- MUNN, Alan (1987b). *Coordinate Structures, X-bar Theory and Parasitic Gaps*, Honors Research Paper, McGill University.
- MUNN, Alan (1992). A Null Operator Analysis of ATB Gaps. *The Linguistic Review* 9: 1–26.
- MUNN, Alan (1993). *Topics in the Syntax and Semantics of Coordinate Structures*. Doctoral dissertation, University of Maryland.
- OBENGA, Théophile. 1984. *Littérature traditionnelle mbochie. Etsee leyamba*. Paris: Présence Africaine.
- PROGOVAC, Ljiljana (1996). (And) Coordination, and Coordination. Paper presented at the LSA Annual Meeting, San Diego.
- PROGOVAC, Ljiljana (1997). Slavic and the Structure for Coordination. In Martina Lindseth and Steven Franks, (eds.), *Proceedings of 1996 Formal Approaches to Slavic Linguistics (FASL)*, 207–224, Ann Arbor: Michigan Slavic Publications.

THIERSCH, Craig (1985). VP and Scrambling in the German Mittelfeld. Manuscript, University of Connecticut and University of Koln.

Woolford, Ellen (1987). *An ECP Account of Constraints on Across-The-Board Extraction*. *Linguistic Inquiry* 18: 166–171.

ZOERNER, Ed (1994). Deriving the Distribution of Conjunctions. *Kansas Working Papers in Linguistics* 19: 214–234.

ZOERNER, Ed (1995). *Coordination: The Syntax of &P*. Doctoral Dissertation, University of California, Irvine.

Zoerner, Ed (1995). *Conjunction as a Case Fea*.