

Comparing constituent negation in English and Dondo

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Abstract

This paper compares constituent negation in English and Dondo in the light of Chomsky's Minimalist Framework which allows such functional projections as TP, AspP and NegP between CP and VP. The paper demonstrates that negative lexical items cannot function as small clauses in English. However, in Dondo, a lexical item such as *ngo* (no) can surface as a small clause. Under this condition, the refusal is fully expressed thanks to the reduplication of *ngo* and possessive markers which agree in number and person (*ngo-ngo-ani* = 'I refuse'). Next, *not* occurs in front of (proper) nouns in English usually relativized or followed by a *but-phrase* considered as an afterthought. It does not need any other Neg word to fully cover a part of a sentence. However, in Dondo, the Neg marker *ko* follows the aforementioned grammatical categories. In any cases, the Neg *ko* requires a negative partitive to restrict its negative reading meaning impact to a part of a sentence. This NegPa triggers off the negated constituent to move from final to initial position of the sentence, thus giving rise to an OSV derivation/spell-out.

Key words: constituent, lexical negation, phrasal negation, English, Dondo.

Résumé

Ce travail traite de la négation du syntagme en anglais et en dondo suivant le Programme Minimaliste de Chomsky qui approuve l'insertion des projections maximales fonctionnelles telles que TP, AspP et NegP entre CP et VP. Il est prouvé que les lexèmes négatifs n'expriment pas de propositions averbales en anglais. Cependant, en dondo, le lexème *ngo* (non) peut être propositionnel. Sur ce, le refus est entièrement exprimé par la reduplication de *ngo* et du pronom possessif ayant ses traits d'accord liés au nombre et à la personne. Ensuite, la marque négative *not* apparaît en position pre-nominale en anglais au cas où le nom est relativisé ou suivi d'un syntagme introduit par *mais*. Naturellement, *not* n'a besoin d'aucun autre lexème négatif pour limiter son chant négatif sur une partie de la phrase en anglais. Par contre, en dondo, la marque négative *ko* ne se place toujours qu'après le nom. Dans tous les cas, *ko* a toujours besoin du partitif négatif *ka* pour limiter son chant négatif sur une partie de la phrase. Ce dernier (*ka*) entraîne le mouvement du syntagme de la position finale à la position initiale de la structure phrastique, entraînant ainsi une structure dérivationnelle de type OSV.

Mots clés : syntagme, négation lexicale, négation partielle, anglais, dondo.

Introduction

This paper aims at comparing constituent negation in English and Dondo. Accordingly, the analysis highlights similarities and dissimilarities based on the syntactic and semantic properties of lexical and phrasal negation. The discussion is assessed by Abdallah Alnawaisheh (2015) who thinks that some nouns cannot be negated by the Neg '*not*'. The work addresses the following questions.

- 1) What morphemes express lexical or semantic negation in English and Dondo?
- 2) Can lexical words expressing negating meaning function as small clause in both English and Dondo?
- 3) How do NEG markers operate in a part of a clause?
- 4) Do English and Dondo select the same number of Neg words participating in the negation of a phrase?

The paper is organized as follows: section 1 concerns constituent negation in English. This section subsumes such subsections as lexical and phrasal negation (negative marker *not* in a part of a sentence), section 2 deals with constituent negation in Dondo. It subsumes lexical, phrasal negation (negative marker *ko* in a part of a sentence) and negative marker *ko* + adverbs/quantifiers and proper nouns; finally, section 3 is about the contrastive analysis of constituent negation.

1. Constituent negation in English

This section focuses on constituent negation in English and Dondo. The word constituent is assigned to lexical words such as *never* and *no-words* which can stand alone while they are used in short answers in every day conversation and to the sentential negative marker (SNM henceforth) *not* operating in a part of a sentence or phrases (*not* + existential quantifiers and *not* + nouns) (Abdullah Alnawaisheh, 2015: 4). Two main objectives cover this analysis. The first aims at scrutinizing lexical words namely *no-words*. The second takes interest in the analysis of the scope of the Neg *not* in a part of a sentence.

1.1. Lexical negation in English

This subsection deals with lexical negation. Lexical negation is also known as constituent negation expressed semantically (Yun Ding, 2013: 1202). From this point of view, the analysis seeks to highlight syntactic and semantic negative features of different words which can carry negative meaning in accordance with the context in which they are used. Consider:

- 1) a) **Nobody** is in the bedroom.
- b) I will **never** take your book
- c) **Few** people come to Laure's party. I am confused
- d) Tom has **little** money. He cannot buy my car.
- e) Maixence is lazy; she needs ***little/a little** help to lift this move

On the basis of their attribute, lexical words in English are expressed by quantifiers (*no-words*), adverbs as in (1a), *never* as in (1b), *a few/few* as in (1c), and *a little/little* as in (1d) and (1e). As a matter of

fact, some lexical words such as *nobody* in (1a) and *never* in (1b) are used in short answers in everyday conversation. This can be well understood in the following conversation between speaker A and B below.

- 2) a) Speaker A: Tertullien! Who's in my bedroom?
- b) Speaker B: **nobody!** (Hum what?)
- c) Speaker A: I've heard a noise. What has fallen?
- d) Speaker B: **nothing** (at all).
- e) Speaker A: Oh! You've used my perfume! You're crazy!
- f) Speaker B: **Never!** (I never touch your belonging without your permission)
- g) Speaker A: I'm sorry! My perfume has broken.

In this dialogue, the lexical words *nobody* as in (2b), *nothing* as in (2d) and *never* as in (2f) are used as short answers. This means that these lexical words do not always need to be combined with other negative elements in some situations. This can justify the reason why the structure "*hum what*" in Speaker B in (2b), for instance, is between parentheses, because it is optional. Basically, the negative word *never* is used to defend one's honesty. That is, to show how much someone is scrupulously honest about the not doing of something, s/he uses the lexical negation denoted by *never*. Besides, when the denial about a given argument is expressed by this word, the speaker generally stops to accuse his listener. This means that the semantic degree of the negative words differs from one negative word to another. In this perspective, Yun Ding (op.cit: 1202) identifies *never*, *nobody* and *nothing* as full or absolute negatives and *not or nothing at all* as partial negative¹⁶. Yet, according to Yun Ding (ibidem), this is not the obvious way to illustrate the semantic meaning of negation in English. He argues that the true semantic meaning of negation considers the quantifiers¹⁷ *few* in (1c) and *little* (1d), above. As a matter of fact, a

¹⁶ This is fully illustrated in the upcoming subsections.

¹⁷ It is obvious that Yun Ding ignores the semantic usage of the NEG *not*. Without semantics none can figure out that a given negative sentence refers to such or such an assertion. None should also figure

particular attention must be put on the syntactic and semantic features of the quantifier *little* and its related counterexample *few*. Traditionally, *few/a few* is used before count nouns as in (1c) whilst *little/a little* before uncountable nouns as in (1d). Basically, *a few* and *a little* are paraphrased as *a bit much/many* whilst *few* and *little* as *not much/many*. Yet, it appears that the meaning and selection of the quantifiers *little/a little* and *few/a few* depends on the context in which they are used. When we observe the context in which these quantifiers are used, we figure out that there is always an afterthought which clarifies whether a *few/few* or a *little/little* has to be selected to pre-quantify a DP. As such, in (1c), the afterthought “*I am confused*” shows that the speaker is not satisfied about the number of people who have come to Laure’s party, the meaning is negative. In this situation, as *people* is a count noun, *few* paraphrased as *not many* expresses negative meaning before it. Similarly, in (1d), the fact that is not able to buy a car illustrates that *Tom* does not have **much** money. As money is a non-count noun, the negative meaning must be expressed by *little*. Finally, in (1e), the meaning is positive. The *help* is really needed by Maixence; otherwise, the sofa will not be moved or Maixence will suffer a lot to move the sofa. Thus, from the tiredness of Maixence, the quantifier *a little* is selected before the uncountable noun *help*. The upcoming section is concerned with constituent negation in Dondo.

1.2. Phrasal negation (negation marker *not* in a part of a sentence)

This subsection aims at analyzing the sentential negation marker *not* in a part of a sentence (the possible lexical words that the sentential negation marker *not* can introduce). Let us observe the following:

- 3) a) My friend gives Laure **not** *a book*, but a pen.
- b) ***Not** *Laure* went to school yesterday.
- c) **Not** *one thing* was left untouched by the wrath of the tornado

out that certain sentences require the implication of pragmatics (the case of ghost negative clause). This means that *not* is semantic when it is used in context. In the same circumstances, no one can figure out the meaning of *little* and *few* without context.

- d) **Not** every company expects to pay taxes
 - e) ***Not** each citizen files a tax return
 - f) **Not** often do I cut astronomy class
- (Abdullah Alnawaisheh, op.cit: 2)

Before saying something about these examples, it is crucial to remind that the discussion emanates from Abdullah Alnawaisheh (op.cit) who thinks that the Neg *not* cannot occur before proper nouns. Again, the scrutiny seeks to clarify Abdullah Alnawaisheh's assumption that the co-occurrence of *not* with quantifiers is sensitive to negate a sentence. Accordingly, it is argued that when the negative reading impact of *not* covers a part of a sentence, it refers to Special Negation. In fact, Special Negation is construed with a negative marker negating one constituent (not necessarily a clause), except the verb (Yun Ding, ibidem: 1202). In Ndongo Ibara (2012 : 222)'s words,

Il apparait que la négation peut avoir deux cibles dans un énoncé ; l'énoncé verbal et l'énoncé complet peuvent ainsi être des entités qui constituent la portée de la négation. L'on voit ainsi que la négation peut viser une partie de l'énoncé, donc une négation partielle ou viser toute la phrase, donc une négation complète¹⁸.

It emerges from this assertion that the meaning of a negative element may cover either a part of a sentence or the whole sentence. That is, the parts that the negative meaning may affect are either the predicate or the whole sentence. In English, when the negation influences the action of the verb, the negative reading impact is wide (sentential), but when it influences another constituent, the negative reading impact is narrow (constituent). It is obvious that the examples above exemplify narrow negation. This is so because the sentential negation marker *not* does not negate the whole sentence as in (3). The sentential negation marker is considered as a determiner pre-specifying particular lexical

¹⁸ It appears that negation aims at two targets in an utterance; the predicate and the whole sentence may be the parts that constitute the reach of negation. Thus, one may observe that negation may aim at a part of a sentence, partial negation or at the entire sentence, complete negation (my translation).

words. Accordingly, in (3a), *not* does not influence the action denoted by the verb *gives*, its negative reading impact pertains on the DP *a book* it predetermines. When referring to what the speaker says, one may realize that s/he utters the presupposition “*my friend gives Laure a book*”. To correct this mistake, the speaker puts the negation directly where the mistake has been done. This kind of negation is accomplished by a *but phrase*. It is in this purpose that McCawley (1991) thinks that negation is contrastive. That is, the first constituent/clause negated by *not/n’t* is followed by a *but phrase*. The “*but phrase*” contradicts the preceded constituent. This type of negation takes the form of “*not X but Y*”. When the *but phrase* is omitted, the negative element **no** intervenes as:

4) My friend gives Laure **no books**

It is worthy to stress that the negative element *no*¹⁹ is never used when one wants to negate the action expressed by the verb. Its negative features always pertain on a plural noun (for count nouns) it prespecifies. Yet, (4) differs from (3a). This difference is not only syntactic (the fact that negative phrase requires an afterthought, a *but phrase* which specifies what the action doer exactly does) but also semantic. The semantic difference is based on the way the action is performed. In (3a), “*My friend*” performs the action of giving *a pen* that the speaker misses to correctly report to the hearer. However, in (4) the hearer utilizes the negative element *no* because he knows that “*my friend*” does nothing at all. Basically, this type of negation is utilized by speakers with a view to being more forceful, careful, polite or hesitant (Yun Ding, *ibidem*). That is to say, phrasal negation has a very powerful role in emphasizing. For example, when one says “*My friend gives Laure no books*”, the hearer will pay more attention to the result “*no books*” than to something else (Abdullah Alnawaisheh, *op.cit*: 3).

¹⁹ After the determiner ‘no’, we can use both singular and plural nouns, it mainly depends on the context.

(i) a) No new message is correct if we are dealing with only one message;

b) No new messages

(Abdallah Alnawaisheh, *ibidem*).

Next, (3a), illustrates *not* predetermining a noun. However, according to Abdallah Alnawaisheh (ibidem) all nouns cannot be predetermined by the negative element *not* as in (3b). Yet, Abdallah Alnawaisheh ignores that when *not* predetermines a proper noun, it is what comes after which determines its grammaticality. The DP *not Lan* as a subject of a sentence must be relativized as in:

5) Speaker A: **Lan** went to school yesterday

Speaker B: Hum! **not Lan** who went to school yesterday, it was Lee.

Hum! no, **not Lan**, it was Lee who went to school yesterday

When Speaker A in (61) fails to guess who went to school, it is obvious that Speaker B can correct his statement in saying “**Not Lan** who went to school yesterday, but it was Lee” or “No, **not Lan**, it was Lee who went to school yesterday”. Yet, let’s note that the occurrence of *not* before a proper noun is plausible when the proper is relativized or when there is a caesurae marked by a comma between the NegP and the focused clause. The problem which may arise here is that there are nouns which cannot allow to be adjacently predetermined by *not*. In (3c) for instance, it is certain that the DP *not one thing* does not crash because *not* is not adjacent to the noun *thing*. In this connection, in (3c), the sentential negative *not* negates the meaning value entailed by the cardinal number *one*. However, all cardinal numbers do not accept to be negated by *not*. This is the case of all cardinal determiners which are not equal to two (Abdallah Alnawaisheh, ibidem) as exemplified below:

6) *Not two/twenty/300 hundred people came to the movie debut.

(Abdallah Alnawaisheh, ibidem)

If this example crashes because noone can understand which number exactly the speaker refers to; it is difficult to infer an exact number when one says “*not two hundred*”. However, when the cardinal number *two* is negated, the listener will automatically refer to *one*. It is in this context that Abdallah Alnawaisheh introduces the notion of size. The concept size with regard to the meaning of cardinal numbers and quantifiers which must, after being negated by *not*, encode a meaning similar to either *more than* or *less than*, not both at the same

time (or not an approximate meaning as in (6)). This demonstrates that the interpretation of the above cited items must not bring about confusion since that confusion cannot allow the sentential negation marker *not* to appear in front of them. In his words, Abdallah Alnawaisheh (ibidem) writes:

Negation by 'not' is only allowed when the denotation of the negated noun phrase has a readily definable interpretation; more specifically, the set of possible sizes for the set denoted by the negated noun phrase must be a continuous range of values.

As recently asserted above, Abdallah Alnawaisheh asserts that the occurrence of *not* in front of a noun phrase or a quantifier must denote a meaning which does not have ambiguous interpretations. That is, a negated quantifier must not mean at the same time *more than* and *less than*. This twofold interpretation constrains *not* to grammatically occur before a quantifier and a cardinal number. Hence, if the determiner denotes a set of size one, the negation is grammatical because it indicates *none*, or more than *one*.

The instances in (3d) and (3e) illustrate the combination of *not* with quantifiers. The meaning of *every* in (3d) can be compared to the quantifier *all*. The two quantifiers are sensitive to be negated by '*not*' to mean less than or few. Yet, it is argued that not all English quantifiers are supposed to be introduced by *not*. This is the case of *each* which does not admit to be predetermined by *not* as in (3e). This refusal to occur with *not* is due to the meaning of *each* which does not mean *more than* or *less than* (it is abnormal to negate it). In the case of '*not each*', it is hard to guess whether the negative element negates the universal quantification portion of *each* or the manner or 'individuating' portion of *each*. In the sentence "*Not each company is expected to pay taxes*", one may say that only a few are required to pay taxes or the companies are all expected to pay the tax as a group. It is clear that the ambiguity of the negation of *each* leads to its ungrammaticality; it cannot be negated by *not*. This ungrammaticality brought by some quantifiers can be further exemplified in:

- 7) a) *Not **few** people came to the meeting, (*but many*)
 - b) *Not **several** people came to the meeting last week
 - c) Not **many** people came to the meeting last week.
- (Abdallah Alnawaisheh, op.cit: 2)

Abdallah Alnawaisheh, (ibidem) shows that *few* leads to ungrammaticality when negated. Actually, the scrutiny of “**not few*” could mean both ‘no’ and ‘many’, which is very confusing. The quantifiers ‘*several*’ in (7b) and ‘*many*’ (7c) have a difference in the grammaticality of their corresponding negating quantifiers. Abdallah Alnawaisheh explains that when we consider the sentences “*Not many people came to the meeting last week*” and “**Not several people came to the meeting last week*”, there are two possible values for the size of the set denoted by ‘*not several*’: less than the value for *several* given by the discourse, or greater than that value. This is very similar to the case of ‘*few*’. Hence, “*Not several people came*” can mean *few* /no people came or *everybody* /many people came. The range of sizes for the set denoted by ‘*not several*’ is not a continuous set of values (the size is either less than or greater than). As such, ‘*several*’ cannot be negated (Abdallah Alnawaisheh, op.cit: 3). Yet, it is worth stating that the manifold meaning expressed by (7a) can be rendered continuous and fixed by the afterthought “*but many*”. That is to say, from this structure, *not few* in “*Not few people came to the meeting, but many*”, takes the value of more than only.

Furthermore, the example in (3f) exemplifies the negative element *not* predetermining the adverb *often*. Lasnik, (op.cit: 46) says that *often* can be used to refer to particular instances whilst *not often* cannot. As such, when *not* combines with *often*, the two lexical words create a semantic unit similar to *seldom*. When this AdvP is licensed in subject position, the grammaticality is conditioned by the auxiliary subject inversion. That is, the grammaticality of sentences in which *not often* is utilized does not only emanate from the fact that *not often* is positioned at the beginning of a sentence, but also when the movement of the verb to the subject position implies. The issue worthy to clarify is that Abdallah Alnawaisheh (op.cit: 2) argues that another way of changing an affirmative sentence into a negative sentence is the determiner ‘not’ negating the subject of the sentence. In English, there are several instances where ‘not’ can grammatically negate the subject of a sentence. We know that negative quantifiers are licensed in subject position. However, Abdallah Alnawaisheh omits to state that there are quantifiers negated by *not* which occur before the subject and, the negation denoted by such NegP (negative quantifiers licensed at subject position) does not cover the whole sentence. This is the case

of the expressions such as *not often* which expresses partial negation within a sentence. In (3f), for instance, the negative marker *not* does not negate the whole sentence. Its negative reading impact covers the structure *not often*. The remainder of the structure escape from its scope²⁰. The plausible quantifiers and nouns which can and cannot be negated by *not* are summarized by Abdallah Alnawaisheh in the following chart.

(8)

Grammatical	Ungrammatical
1. Not every company expects to report increased earnings.	10. *Not each company is expected to pay taxes.
2. Not all of NASA's space-science work will be so auspicious.	
3. Not a peso is offered.	11. *Not some pesos are offered.
4. Not one thing in the house is where it is supposed to be.	
5. Not many people came to the meeting last week.	12. *Not several people came to the meeting last week.
6. Not any person can just walk right in there and get what they want.	
7. Not both David and Amy came to my party	
7. Not more than half of the team showed up	13. *Not most of the team showed up last

²⁰ This can be testified by the expression *either* and the positive tag “*do I?” which follow a negative assertion. Put otherwise, the positive tag “do I?” in (ia) crashes because the main verb *cut* which encodes the action performed by the subject of the sentence is positive.

(i) a) Not often do I cut astronomy class, *do I?

b) Not often do I cut astronomy class and does john do **either*

In this example, the expression *either* is strange because the scope negation of *not* is phrasal, not sentential.

last Friday.	
8. Not more than 200 people attended the opening gala celebration.	14. *Not few people came to the meeting. 15. *Not no man
9. Not less than one million people enjoy listening to ABBA Gold every day.	16. *Not the man walked into the store. 17. *Not John came on time

(Abdallah Alnawaisheh, *ibidem*)

The quantifiers *all* and *every* are the contrary of the quantifier *each*. However, the chart illustrates that *each* cannot be negated since the meaning of *not each* is ambiguous as commented above. The quantifiers *any* and *both* can also be negated. In the sentence “*Not any person can just walk right in there and get what they want*”, in the mind of the speaker, there is a specific set of individuals who can have the privilege of walking right in there and get what they want; i.e., the speaker indicates that nobody, except a very specific group of people can walk right in (Abdallah Alnawaisheh, *ibidem*). Next, the listener figures out in the sentence “*Not both David and Amy came to my party*” that it is one person, and not the other, came to the party²¹. The following subsection deals lexical negation.

2. Constituent negation in Dondo

2.1. Lexical negation in Dondo

Lexical negation in Dondo can be illustrated as:

- 9) a) Sumba buta
Buy gun
“buy a guy”
b) **Kani**, (meno na-lendi sumba buta ko)
No, (me I-can buy gun no)

²¹ Abdallah Alnawaisheh (*ibidem*) reveals that the identity of the person who came to her party is ambiguous, however this is unimportant in terms of the ability of ‘both’ to be negated. The set of possible values for the size of the negated set is closed and continuous, so the negation of ‘both x’ is grammatical.

“No, (I cannot buy a gun)”

- b) **Ngo**/meno ngo
No/ me no
“No, I refuse”
- c) **Pele**
No
“Never”
- d) **Mpya**
No
“No”

The examples in (9) show that lexical negation is expressed by *kani*, *ngo*, *pele*, *mpya* which can or cannot introduce another lexical item. What is more, the morpheme *kani* can either introduce a noun or verb (Lumwamu, 1973: 216):

- 10) a) **kani** muntu
No person
“No person”
- b) **ka** muntu **ko**
NegPa person no
“it is not a person”
- c) **kani** kutala
Without see
“Without visiting us”

It appears that the morpheme introduces a noun as in (10a). It fully negates the DP *kani muntu*. When the negation is fulfilled by *ko*, the negative morpheme *kani* is truncated to *ka* as in (10b). Yet, when *kani* introduces a noun followed by the NEG *ko*, the structure expresses a small clause, rather than a simple DP. Next, *kani* introduces a verb in infinitive with its infinitive marker *ku* as in (9c). Semantically, when a Dondo speaker says *kani kutala*, s/he either expresses sadness or anger caused by someone he knows very well but has not paid him visit despite s/he passed through his house. The lexical Neg morpheme *ngo* in (9b) expresses a small clause as the intelligible translation can prove it. Practically, the refusal denoted by this negative element can fully be expressed thanks to the reduplication of *ngo* and possessives as illustrated in the chart below.

11)

Singular	Plural
Me-ngo-ngo- ani	Ngo-ngo- eto
me-no-no-mine	No-no-us
“I refuse”	“we refuse”
Ngo-ngo- aku	Ngo-ngo- eno
No-you	No-you
“You refuse”	“You refuse”
Ngo-ngo- andi	Ngo-ngo- awu
No-him	No-them
“He refuses”	“You refuse”

From this chart, it appears that the non-reduced expression works thanks to the reduplication of *ngo* and the suffixation of possessive pronouns in bold. Let's recall that, at the PF, the vowel *o* of the reduplicated morpheme becomes glide, when it combines with the vowel of the possessive pronouns. This can generate the following phonological rule:

12) /o/  [w] /# — vowels (a & e)

In sum, the Neg *ko* operating in a part of a sentence can follow an adverb, a quantifier or a noun. Yet, the occurrence of *ko* in a given QP is constrained by the meaning of a quantifier. In this purpose, it is argued that there are quantifiers such as *mwa* (few) in “? *ka mwa bindia ko*” which cannot be negated by *ko* since when “*mwa*” is negated the meaning it expresses is not explicit or fixed; it may mean at the same time “*more than*” ore “*less than*”. Furthermore, the analysis has proved that the constituent which the NEG operator covers in can undergo movement. This movement is mainly motivated by the occurrence of the NegPa *ka* in front of the moved constituent. This means that Dondo selects two Neg words to negate a part of a sentence: the negative partitive *ka* and the negative marker *ko*. Thus, it is stated that phrasal negation is expressed by means of one optional,

the negative partitive (NegPa) *ka* and obligatory (the NEG *ko*) negative elements schematized as:

13) *ka...DP...ko*

Moreover, In the lexical negation is expressed by words which can be considered as small clauses. When they are used as small clauses, the refusal denoted by these negative small clauses can be fully expressed thanks to the reduplication of *ngo* and possessive markers (*-ani*, *-eto*) which agree in number and person with the subject.

2.2. Phrasal negation (negative marker *ko* in a part of a sentence)

The sentential negative marker covering a part of a sentence can be exemplified in the following dialogue:

14)

a) Speaker A	Gánki	Sumbiri	mwana	dimpa?
	Why	Bought	Child	Bread

“Why have you bought a piece of bread to the child?”

b)Speaker	mwenge ²²	meno	na-mu-	<i>ka</i>	dimpa	ko
B	Juice	me	I-him-	Neg	bread	Neg
			buy			

I've bought him juice, but not a piece of bread"

OR

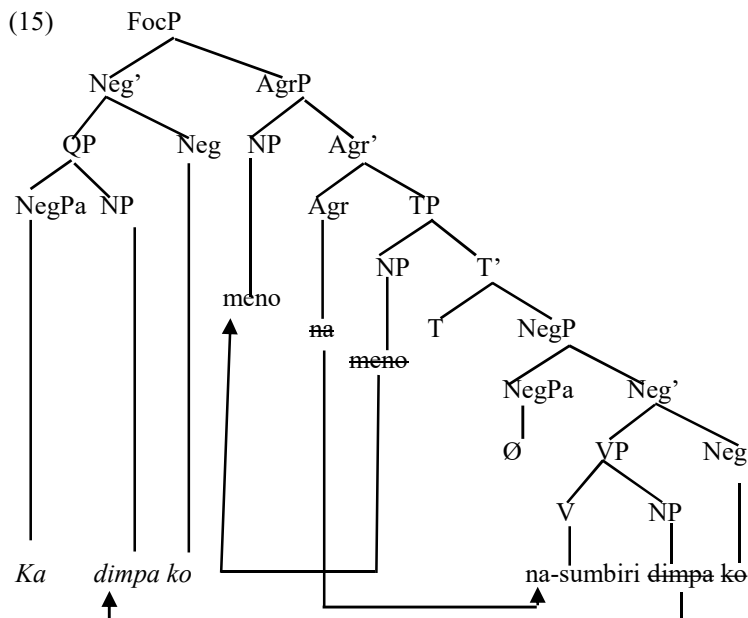
<i>c-ka</i>	dimpa	ko	meno	na-mu-sumbiri	mwenge
Neg	bread	Neg	me	I-him-bought	juice
Not a loaf of bread I have bought him, but a bottle of juice					

d) **Speaker A:** ah, matondo
“ah, thank you!”

In this dialogue, it appears that the sentential negative marker *ko* ends up the sentence as in (14b). However, despite this position, the

²² Mwenge is the juice of palm wine

negative scope of *ko* does not cover the entire sentence; but it rather covers a DP as in Speaker B in (14b). The movement of NegP justifies the narrow scope of the sentential negative marker *ko*. That is, *ko* moves from the final to the initial position of the sentence because it does not negate the whole sentence. It governs a part of a sentence which, as it is a constituent, can move from one position to another as in such counterpart sentence as “*ka dimpa ko na mu-sumbiri, mwenge*” as in speaker B in (14c). That is to say, as the negative meaning of *ko* is limited on *ka dimpa ko*, this constituent can be fronted without bringing any oddness. In other words, the presence of the NegPa *ka* justifies the narrow negation scope of *ko* which discontinuously co-occurs with it (*ka ...DP (dimpa)...ko*). Hence, *ko* covering the entire sentence cannot move whilst it can when it covers just a part of a sentence (yet, it is important to signal that at PF, there is a caesura marked by a comma between the VP and the NegP). In this perspective; while dealing with negation and movement in Embosi language, Ndongo Ibara (op.cit: 232) argues that the fundamental word order of Embosi is SVO. Yet, it comes out that the object expressed by nominal items may be positioned before the verb. Ndongo Ibara states that this object raising is not only motivated by a negative morpheme. In Dondo, the fundamental word order is SVO too. However, the SOV order is dictated by the presence of the NegPa *ka*. That is, the object is fronted because of the morpheme *ka* which participates in the negation of a phrase as schematized as follows:



The following subsection deals with the NEG *ko* + adverbs and proper nouns.

2.3. The sentential negative marker *ko* + adverbs/quantifiers and proper nouns

The sentential negative marker *ko* negating a DP or QP is illustrated in Dondo as follows:

- 16)a *Konso muntu Ko* (wa-kota mu nzo yi) *ka*
 Every person Not (he-enters In house this NegPa
 “Not every person is allowed to enter in this house”

- b) *ka Kadi Mfumu bwala Ko* (fweti longa kangu
 NegPa Each Chief village Not (must educate people
 “Not each Chief of the village must educate his persons”

c) **Ka** Ndambu Bindia **ko** (na-ku-sisidi)
 NegPa little Food not (I- you-left)
 “Not little food I have left for you”

d) **ka** Kadi Mfumu bwala **Ko** (fweti longa kangu
 NegPa Each Chief village Not (must educate people
 “Not each Chief of the village must educate his persons”

e) *Ntama* *Yiyingi* **ko** (ba-yisidi ku mavula
 long very/ago no (the-came to town)
 “Not long ago they came from town”

f) **ka** *Lemba* **ko** wele ku zando
 Negpa Lemba not (go to market)
 “Not Lemba (who went to market)”

Generally, it is known in Dondo that the sentential negative marker *ko* always occurs at the end of a sentence. Above all, this NEG is not subject to move from one position to another within a structure when its negative scope covers the whole sentence. However, it results from these examples that the NEG *ko* occurs before the subject as in (16a). Based on Sangeet Khemlani (2011: 11)’s assumption, while elaborating a theory of how negation should be analyzed and understood, stipulating that the procedures the model theory use to construct a representation of the meaning of an assertion needs to identify the argument to which negation applies. That is, to understand negation, one must take interest in identifying its scope; the available lexical words that it negates. Accordingly, the scope of the sentential negative marker *ko* in these examples is narrow; it does not operate over the whole sentence. This is the reason why other lexical items appear between parentheses since they are optional and out of the scope of the negation *ko*. Yet, let us note that, in this position, its negative reading impact is also fulfilled by the negative partitive (NegPa) *ka* (*ka* ...DP...*ko*) in all phrases. Basically, when the negative scope is narrowed, for emphasis or insistence reasons, the NEG *ko* is placed after the selected word the speaker wants to lay emphasis on. In this purpose, as our aim is to scrutinize the different lexical items the negative marker *ko* negates, the examples (16a), (16b) and (16c) exemplify quantifiers, (16d) adjectives and (16e) proper nouns negated by the NegPa *ka* and NEG *ko*. In (16a), the

quantifier *konso* can take many forms. This multiple form demonstrates that Dondo does not have a fixed word which expresses such a quantifier. Its form is dictated by the Ncl of the noun it quantifies. However, the form of its counterpart word *kadi* in (16b) does not evolve from the Ncl of its complement; it is a non-flexible lexical word. The problem is that, in everyday conversation, all Dondo speakers, be them kids or old, do not make a good choice between *konso* which is synonymous to *mpisi* (every) and *kadi* (each). This is so because these quantifiers may mean at the same time *each* or *every*. To avoid this ambiguous understanding or interpretation, Dondo speakers precise the intending meaning of these QPs in saying:

- 17) a) *Ka* Bilumbu *bia* ***Biwo*** ***Ko***
 NegPa Days of All Not
 “not all days/not every day”
- b) *Ka* kilumbu *kia* ***Kiwo*** ***Ko***
 NegPa day of whole No
 “not the whole/all day”

Actually, these examples clearly demonstrate that the speaker uses the quantifier *biwo/kiwo*, occurring after the noun, to mean not every day; i.e., he talks about something which does not happens repeatedly from Monday to Sunday. Next, the quantifier *ndambu* (little/few) does not arise any problem in the way it is understood in Dondo. In every day conversation, Dondo speakers often use the quantifier *mwa* (some) so as not to look too impolite. It can quantify a noun or another quantifier as:

- 18) a) ***Mwa*** *Bindia* (na-ku-sisidi)
 Some/little food (I-you-left)
 “I have left some food for you”
- b) *Mwa* *ndambu* *bindia* (na-ku-sisidi)
 some little food (I-you-left)
 “I have left some food for you”
- c) **?*Ka*** *mwa* *Bindia* *ko* (na-ku-sisidi)
 NegPa some/little Food not (I-you-left)
- d) ***Ka*** *Mwa* *ndambu* *Bindia* ***ko*** (na-ku-sisidi)
 NegPa Some little Food not (I-you-left)

“I have left some food for you”

It appears that the quantifier *mwa* predetermines a noun in (18a) or another quantifier in (18b). The issue is that Dondo speakers find harder to negate a phrase wherein the quantifier *mwa* is adjacent to the noun as in (18c). This is so because *mwa* has an ambiguous interpretation; it may mean some, more or less than. It is in this purpose that I agree with Abdallah Alnawaisheh's assumption stipulating that the occurrence of the sentential negative marker before a quantifier or a noun is only allowed when the denotation of the negated quantifier phrase has a readily definable interpretation; more specifically, the set of possible sizes for the set denoted by the negated quantifier phrase must be a continuous range of values. That is to say, the sentential negative marker *ko* must not appear before a quantifier which has a manifold meaning. Put likewise, if (18d) is not doubtful because *mwa* in front of the quantifier *ndambu* expressing a fixed meaning (less). Hence, when this quantifier is negated, the meaning is predictable; “*na*” left a little food (more). The example in (18d) illustrates the adverb of time *ntama* negated by *ka* ---*ko*. This adverb can be post modified by *yiyingi* (long ago) to show that the action took place long time ago. It often selects a verb in past simple. The instance in (18e) shows that the NegPa and the NEG *ko* can negate a proper or any other noun in Dondo. We know that when a noun is negated, the listener mentions the missing noun as illustrated in the following dialogue:

18)

Speaker A: Lemba wu-kweriri
 Lemba She-married
 “Lemba has married”

Speaker B: **Ka** Lemba **Ko** wu-kweriri **Nsungi**
 NegPa Lemba not She-married **Nsungi**
 “Not Lemba who got married, but Nsungi did”

The missing name *Nsungi* is mentioned to construct a complete structure²³.

In sum, semantic negation is expressed by some words which can be considered as small clauses in Dondo. This is the case of “*ngo*” in which possessive markers (which agree in number and person) post-attached to its reduplicant stands as a clause and fully express the refusal. Next, we have argued that the Neg *ko* operating in a part of a sentence can follow an adverb, a quantifier or a noun. Yet, the occurrence of *ko* in a given QP is constrained by the meaning of the quantifier. In this purpose, it is argued that there are quantifiers such as *mwa* (few) as in “*? ka mwa bindia ko*” which cannot be negated by *ko* since the meaning it expresses is not explicit or fixed. It may mean at the same time “*more than*” ore “*less than*”. Moreover, the analysis has proved that the constituent in which the NEG operator covers can undergo movement. This movement is mainly motivated by the presence of the NegPa *ka* occurring in front of the moved constituent. This means that Dondo selects two Neg words to negate a part of a sentence: the negative partitive *ka* and the negative marker *ko* (*ka...DP...ko*).

The contrastive analysis of constituent negation is the concern of the upcoming section.

3. Contrastive analysis of constituent negation

This section establishes similarities and dissimilarities of constituent negation in both English and Dondo. As a matter of fact, the analysis of data related to the negative makers predetermining adverbs, quantifiers, nouns and lexical negation has shown that English and Dondo attest similar and dissimilar points.

The similarities regarding constituent negation in both and English and Dondo concern a number of points. Firstly, English and Dondo attest lexical or semantic negation. The analysis has shown this words can stand alone and be able to negate a sentence in their own (without the help of the Neg *not* in English and *ko* in Dondo. This is the case of “*never*” in English and its Dondo counterpart example “*pele*” as

²³ When it misses, the listener may say, if it is not Lemba, it’s who?

demonstrated in (1) and (9). Likewise, the two languages attest the negation of a part of a sentence as illustrated in (3) and (14) respectively. Secondly, the constituent negation is plausible with the same parts of speech namely, quantifiers, adverbs and nouns as shown in (3), (5) and (16) respectively. Semantically, it is noticed that the meaning of these negated phrases must not be manifold. That is, in negative QPs, for instance, the meaning they express must be either “*more than*” or “*less than*”, not both at the same time. When they entail the two interpretations, at the same time, the English and Dondo negative markers *not* and *ko* are excluded as it is the case with the English QP “*? not few*” and its Dondo counterpart example QP “*? ka mwa bindia ko*”. However, in Dondo, it has been asserted that the QP “*? ka mwa bindia ko*” can be disambiguated by the presence of *ndambu* (*few*) which makes the meaning of this QP more explicit and fixed as it is well illustrated in (18). Finally, the scrutiny has demonstrated that the constituent in which the negation scopes over can undergo movement in English and Dondo.

Yet, the following lines are devoted to the demonstration of the dissimilarity between English and Dondo concerning the constituent negation. In fact, this dissimilarity is twofold; that is, it concerns the syntactic distribution of the NEG marker as well as the number of Neg words the two languages can select. Actually, the English Neg “*not*” occurs in front of an adverb, a quantifier, or a noun; whereas, in Dondo, the Neg “*ko*” follows these class categories. Moreover, English selects one Neg particle to participate in the negation of a part of a clause, the Neg marker *not* whilst Dondo select two Neg words: the negative partitive *ka* and the negative marker *ko*. This is to say that phrasal negation is expressed by means of one obligatory negative element (the NEG *not*) occurring in front of the negated word in English whilst one optional, the negative partitive (NegPa) *ka* and obligatory (the NEG *ko*) negative elements appearing in discontinuous manner (*ka...ko*) in Dondo.

Conclusion

This paper has compared constituent negation in English and Dondo. The scrutiny has highlighted the syntactic and semantic features that characterize lexical and phrasal (Neg markers operating in a part of a clause) negation in both English and Dondo. It has been demonstrated that English and Dondo attest words expressing negative meaning.

These words are mainly used in short answers in every day conversation. This is the case of the no-word *nothing* in English and its counterpart example *kani kima* (nothing) in Dondo as in (1) and (9) respectively. Yet, in Dondo, it has been revealed that some lexical elements such as *ngo* (no) can surface as a small clause. When this lexical word is used as a small clause, the refusal is fully expressed thanks to the reduplication of *ngo* and possessive markers which agree in number and person.

The Neg marker *not* occurs in front of an adverb, a quantifier, or a noun in English. It does not need any other Neg word to fully cover a part of a clause. However, the Neg marker *ko* follows these grammatical categories in Dondo. What is more, the Neg *ko*, in Dondo, requires a negative partitive to restrict its negative reading impact to a part of a clause. This NegPa triggers the negated constituent to move from final to initial position. As such, English selects one Neg word to negate a phrase whilst Dondo requires two Neg words.

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