

THE HAUSA PARTICLE KŌ: AN UNCERTAINTY MODALITY<sup>1</sup>

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1. Introduction

The morpheme kŏ in Hausa has been translated as having the meaning 'or, question, really, even, if, even though, and every'. As far as I know, Hausa-ists have never attempted to go beyond observational adequacy in their treatment of kŏ: they have been content to list meanings, sometimes providing examples.<sup>2</sup> In this paper I attempt to find a meaning for kŏ which is unique and consistent throughout its uses. I find that there is a very interesting semantic generalization that can be made about kŏ, taking into account two recent papers on modalities which I will discuss first as background. Next, I will discuss the syntax and semantics of different kinds of sentences containing kŏ. Finally, I will consider how to incorporate the particle into a transformational grammar of Hausa.

2. Modalities in Language

Two papers, Jackendoff [1971] and later Givón [1973], treat the role that modalities play in the semantics of language. Givón is mainly concerned with referentiality, and those opaque environments which produce ambiguity as to whether or not a noun phrase is referential, i.e. is presupposed to exist. Modalities which occur in a sentence may determine the referentiality of noun phrases within their scope. For Givón, a factive modality is

one by which a speaker commits himself to the (past or present) truth of a certain proposition--and therefore commits himself to the referentiality of the participating

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<sup>2</sup>In his entry for kŏ in his Hausa dictionary Abraham notes that kŏ can be prefixed to question words to form indefinites as discussed in section 2.6. He does not, however, attempt to arrive at a unified meaning for kŏ, nor does he try to account for the meaning change in the derived words.

nominals. A 'non-factive' modality, on the other hand is one in which the speaker does not make such a commitment [1973:15].

Givón makes the claim that universally all nominals are referential unless they fall within the scope of a non-factive modality. Non-factive modalities include NEG (both negation and inherently negative verbs such as 'doubt'), FUTURE which covers future aspect, future implicative verbs such as 'want', 'plan', 'try', and 'look for', and coercive-manipulative verbs such as 'permit' and 'ask'. Yes-no questions, conditionals, HABITUAL and non-factive verbs such as 'believe', 'hope', 'think' and 'be sure' are also non-factive modalities within Givón's system. If any of these modalities is present in a sentence it may produce ambiguity as to whether a nominal is presupposed to exist--it creates an opaque environment.

Jackendoff [1971] is dealing with very similar linguistic phenomena in his paper. He is concerned with the specificity of noun phrases when they occur after modals. His modals (modal operators) include unrealized, future, possible, negative, multiple, generic, and wh-. The first four are the same as Givón's modalities. Unrealized, possible and future are all included under Givón's FUTURE, negation under his NEG. Multiple is used by Jackendoff to disambiguate sentences with quantifiers such as:

(1) Five of the boys told a story.

where it is unclear whether one or five stories is involved. Givón would probably include multiple under HABITUAL along with generic, but I think that generic and multiple cover slightly different semantic fields.

Jackendoff and Givón differ in the ways that they would account for modalities within a grammar. Givón would posit underlying predicates, Jackendoff would have modal operators which are semantic markers, but they arrive at the same conclusions--that the interpretation of noun phrases may depend on whether or not they fall within the scope of a modal.

In the next section I will show that throughout its varied uses kō is a modal which consistently affects the interpretation of constituents which fall within its scope, assigning to those constituents the interpretation that, although the speaker may be committed to the truth of the rest

of the proposition (asserts the rest of the proposition), he does not assert, in fact is uncertain of, the truth of just those constituents which fall within the scope of *kō*. As such, *kō* is a non-factive modal. I will also show that *kō* interacts with other modals like those discussed in this section in an interesting and predictable way.

2.1 *kō* meaning 'or'. *kō* has been translated as meaning 'or' in sentences like the following:

- (2) Beilò yā sàyi (kō) àyàbè kō rōgò.  
'Bello bought (either) bananas or cassavas.'
- (3) (Kō) Audù kō Beilò, {<sup>dáyansù</sup><sub>dáyā</sub> (dàgà clikinsù)}, yā sàyi mōtā.  
'(Either) Audu or Bello, one of them, bought a car.'
- (4) Gòbe (kō) Audù zāi yi kàràtū, kō àkĩ.  
'Tomorrow (either) Audu will read or work.'
- (5) (Kō) sun t̂àfi, kō t̂ā d̂āwō.  
'(Either) they left or she arrived.'
- (6) (Kō) yā t̂àfi, kō zāi t̂àfi.  
'(Either) he left or he will leave.'
- (7) Yā r̂ā ukù kō huḍū sun zō.  
'Three or four children came.'
- (8) Yā sàyi ĵā kō shūḍīyar r̂īgā.  
'He bought a red or blue shirt.'

In all of these sentences where *kō* is used to mean 'or', *kō* may precede both members of the conjunction or may appear just once between the two conjuncts. The meaning of sentences with constituents joined by *kō* is always that the speaker is equally unsure about both conjuncts regardless of whether *kō* precedes both conjuncts, and never that the speaker asserts the first conjunct and not the second. The scope of *kō*, therefore, always includes both conjuncts. One of my informants claims that when *kō* precedes both conjuncts there is a stronger sense of forced choice between the conjuncts, i.e. you have an 'either-or' situation.

Because of this slight meaning difference between sentences where *kō* precedes both conjuncts and sentences where it appears only between the conjuncts, I will not derive the latter from the former. Rather I will claim that these sentences are different from each other in their underlying representations, the former having two occurrences of the particle, the latter having only one occurrence of the particle. In the semantic interpretation, a double occurrence of the particle will result in the stronger reading.

Notice that the scope of *kō* can vary tremendously. In sentences (2) through (8) the particle has NP scope, V scope, sentence scope, aux scope, and adjective scope. Where the sentences are positive and in the perfective or progressive aspects the speaker presupposes everything that does not fall within the scope of *kō*. Thus, (2) presupposes (2'), while sentence (8) presupposes (8'):

(2') Bello yā sàyi wani àbù.  
'Bello bought something.'

(8') Yā sàyi rǎgā.  
'He bought a shirt.'

In sentence (2) the speaker expresses certainty that Bello bought something, and uses *kō* to express uncertainty about the thing that Bello bought. In sentence (8) the speaker expresses certainty that he bought a shirt, and uses *kō* to express his uncertainty about the color of the shirt.

The use of *kō* to mean 'or' is restricted in the following ways. First, *kō* can be used to conjoin direct objects as in (2) where the subject of the sentence is in the second or third persons. However, with first person subjects, in the perfective or imperfective, in positive sentences direct objects conjoined with *kō* are very questionable. My informants consistently strongly rejected sentences like (9) and (10):

(9) ?Nā sàyi àyàbā kō rōgō.  
'I bought bananas or cassavas.'

(10) ?Inà sàyeŋ àyàbà kō rōgō.

'I am buying bananas or cassavas.'

If a sentence is in the perfective or imperfective with a first person subject and is negated, or if a sentence with a first person subject is in the future or habitual aspect, or occurs after a modal verb such as those discussed in the first section, the direct objects can be conjoined with kō. So with non-factive modalities:

(11) Bān sàyi àyàbà kō rōgō ba.

'I didn't buy bananas or cassavas.'

(12) Zañ sàyi jàrɾdā kō ||tɾɾfɾ.

'I will buy a newspaper or a book.'

(13) Nakān sàyi jàrɾdā kō ||tɾɾfɾ.

'I usually buy a newspaper or a book.'

(14) Yā yɪwu nà sàyi àyàbà kō rōgō.

'It's possible that I bought bananas or cassavas.'

Perfective and imperfective are factive modalities within Givón's system. From sentences (9) through (14) it seems that the first person must also be considered as participating in the modal system of Hausa as a factive modality, since it is the combination of first person plus perfective and imperfective aspects that makes the occurrence of kō strange in these sentences. The native speakers said of sentences (9) and (10) that a speaker would have to be certain of an action which had happened to him or was happening to him. It was unacceptable to them that the speaker would not assert the entire utterance. The speaker could, however, report uncertainty about what has happened or was happening to another person. Furthermore, if a non-factive modality co-occurred with the first person, showing that the speaker was not asserting the entire utterance, then kō could be used to express uncertainty about the direct objects.

Another restriction on kō is that it cannot conjoin constituents which function as the subject of matrix sentences. Thus, (15) is ungrammatical:

- (15) \*(Kɔ̄) Audù Bèlìò yɛ̀ sà̀yì mɔ̀t̃à.  
'Audu or Bello bought a car.'

As seen in (16) this ungrammaticality extends to sentences containing non-factive modalities as well:

- (16) \*(Kɔ̄) Audù kɔ̄ Bèlìò  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} z̃àì sà̀yì mɔ̀t̃à. \\ b̃àì sà̀yì mɔ̀t̃à ba. \\ yakàn sà̀yì mɔ̀t̃à. \end{array} \right\}$   
'Audu or Bello  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{will buy a car.} \\ \text{didn't buy a car.} \\ \text{usually buys a car.} \end{array} \right\}$

In Hausa, subjects are always factive--are always presupposed to exist, unless they are the subjects of embedded sentences which fall within the scope of a non-factive modal. If a constituent falls within the scope of *kɔ̄* it is interpreted as non-factive; if it is the subject of a sentence it must be factive; due to this clash of interpretations, (16) is unacceptable. An acceptable way to express sentence (16) is sentence (3) which I will repeat here for convenience:

- (17) Audù kɔ̄ Bèlìò,  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{ɗayansù} \\ \text{ɗayɛ̀ (ɗàgà cìkìnsù)} \end{array} \right\}$ , yɛ̀ sà̀yì mɔ̀t̃à.  
'Audu or Bello, one of them, bought a car.'

I claim that the underlying representation of (17) is:

- (17') ɗayɛ̀ ɗàgà cìkìn Audù kɔ̄ Bèlìò yɛ̀ sà̀yì mɔ̀t̃à.  
'One out of Audu or Bello bought a car.'

and the subject of the sentence is the factive head noun *ɗayɛ̀* (which is qualified by the phrase *ɗàgà cìkìn Audù kɔ̄ Bèlìò*). After a focus copying rule which moves the conjoined NP's out of the qualifier clause and attaches them to the top S-node to the left of the subject NP has applied, sentence (17) results. Sentence (18) is the underlying representation of (17), and (19) is the tree after the transformations have applied:





questions. They do not ask for information but rather enable the speaker to show his attitude towards a proposition. This type of sentence occurs in Hausa when a speaker must admit the truth of a proposition about which he was previously uncertain or doubtful. By the use of *kō* and question intonation he expresses his surprise that the proposition is true. Thus, in sentence (24) the speaker had previously doubted that *yā kōwō kēkē* 'he brought a bicycle', and presently admits to the truth of the proposition. We will find this reading of surprise, resulting from the combined interpretations of assertion plus *kō*-uncertainty, in several other constructions discussed later in the paper.

We have seen that *kō* occurs in three different types of questions. First, *kō* conjoins yes-no questions conveying speaker uncertainty about both conjuncts. Second, *kō* is used following an assertion to express uncertainty, like tag questions in English. Third, *kō* is used in rhetorical questions where it shows previous uncertainty about a proposition. With all three kinds of questions *kō* operates as a non-factive modal operator and its meaning remains consistent.

2.3 *Kō* meaning 'if' or 'whether'. *Kō* has been translated as meaning 'if' in sentences like the following:

- (27) *Nē san kō tanē aikī.*<sup>4</sup>  
'I know if she's working.'
- (28) *Nē tām̀b̀aỳsh̀l̀ kō tanē aikī.*  
'I asked him if she was working.'
- (29) *Yanē cōwē kō sun zō.*  
'He was wondering if they had come.'

In these sentences *kō* precedes the sentential complements of the main verb. The speaker asserts in sentence (27) *Nē san wani àbù* 'I know

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<sup>4</sup>Sentence (27) is strange in English as well as in Hausa. Yet it is the case in both languages that this construction is used when a speaker wishes to assert that he knows the truth value of a proposition but he does not wish to assert that the sentence is true or false.

something', but he does not assert that the sentential complement is true. *kō* interrupts the scope of the assertion. As such, it is acting as a non-factive modal operator consistent with its other uses.

2.4 *kō* meaning 'even'. *kō* has been translated as meaning 'even' in sentences like the following:

- (30) *kō* Bèlìò (mā), yā zō gídā.  
'Even Bello came home.'
- (31) *kō* (mā) Bèlìò, tā tāmbyā.  
'She even asked Bello.'
- (32) *kō* ɪta (mā), tā zō gídā.  
'Even she came home.'
- (33) Yā yɪ gudù *kō* dà kərɔ̀ biyū (mā).  
'He even ran at two o'clock.'
- (34) *kō* (mā) kwabō tā bāsù.  
'She even gave them a penny.'
- (35) *kō* Kanò (mā) tā tãfi.  
'She even went to Kano.'
- (36) *kō* (mā) kəkē, Bèlìò yā sàyā.  
'Bello even bought a bicycle.'

In all of these sentences where *kō* seems to mean 'even' the particle *mā* also optionally occurs. In order to understand the constructions with *kō* it is necessary to examine the structure of sentences with *mā* like (37). *mā* is a particle meaning 'indeed' or 'in fact' which functions as a factive modal, assigning to a constituent within its scope the interpretation of strong emphasis on the part of the speaker. By the use of *mā*, the speaker is showing his commitment to the fact that that particular constituent is a participant in the proposition represented by the whole sentence. Thus, in sentence (37), *Bèlìò* is strongly emphasized, while *yā zō* 'he came' is not:

- (37) Bèlìò mā, yā zō.  
'Bello came.'

Those constituents which are strongly emphasized with  $m\bar{a}$  are almost always in a focused position at the beginning of the sentence, and begin at a higher than normal pitch. Adverbials, such as in sentence (33), are acceptable in post-verbal position, but otherwise my informants preferred that the constituent with  $k\bar{o}(m\bar{a})$  be moved to the beginning of the sentence. They always preferred that an object phrase be preposed if it occurred after a factive verb in a positive sentence in the perfective or progressive aspects; if the sentence was negated, or in the future or habitual tenses, or contained a non-factive verb it was acceptable for the object with  $k\bar{o}$  to follow the verb. Locatives were also more acceptable in preposed position with the  $k\bar{o}(m\bar{a})$  constructions. Thus, sentences (35) and (36) are preferable to sentences (38) and (39):

- (38) ?Bɛlɪ̀d̩ yā̀ sà̀yɪ̀ k̄ō (m̄ā) k̄ōk̄ō.  
           k̄ō k̄ōk̄ō (m̄ā).  
           'Bello even bought a bicycle.'

- (39) \*T̄ā̀ t̄ā̀fɪ̀ k̄ō Kanò (m̄ā).  
           k̄ō m̄ā Kanò.  
           'She even went to Kano.'

Because of this requirement that the  $k\bar{o}$  constituents be preposed, perhaps it is preferable to analyze this construction as a  $m\bar{a}$ -emphasis construction to which  $k\bar{o}$  has been added. An analysis of the meaning of 'even' supports this hypothesis. We saw in the section on questions that  $k\bar{o}$  sometimes occurs in rhetorical questions where the speaker who previously was not committed to the truth of a proposition was presently convinced of the truth, and we find that combining  $k\bar{o}$ , to show previous uncertainty, with assertion we get a meaning of unexpectedness on the part of the speaker. One of the implications of even in Hausa, as in English, is that the speaker implies that he did not expect the proposition to be true. So in:

- (40) Even Pat thinks he's guilty.

the speaker presupposes that many people think he's guilty, asserts that Pat is an additional member of the set who think he's guilty, and implies that I wouldn't have expected Pat to think he's guilty. Similarly in

Hausa, sentence (30) has the following presupposition, assertion, and implication:

- (41) presupposition:  $\dot{A}kwai\ m\dot{u}t\dot{u}m\dot{i}n\ wad\dot{a}nd\dot{a}\ suk\dot{e}\ z\dot{o}\ g\dot{i}d\dot{e}.$   
'There are men who came home.'
- assertion:  $B\dot{e}l\dot{l}\dot{o}\ kum\dot{e}\ y\dot{e}\ z\dot{o}\ g\dot{i}d\dot{e}.$   
'Bello also came home.'
- implication:  $N\dot{e}\ y\dot{i}\ m\dot{a}m\dot{e}k\dot{l}\ d\dot{a}\ B\dot{e}l\dot{l}\dot{o}\ m\dot{e}\ y\dot{e}\ z\dot{o}\ g\dot{i}d\dot{e}.$   
'I'm surprised that Bello came home.'

There is a way to say even in Hausa without this sense of unexpectedness on the part of the speaker.

- (42)  $K\dot{O}w\dot{a}\dot{e}\ y\dot{e}\ z\dot{o}\ g\dot{i}d\dot{e},\ ha\dot{r}\dot{e}\ B\dot{e}l\dot{l}\dot{o}.$   
'Everyone came home, even Bello.'

This sentence asserts that the set of people who came home has one additional member but does not add that it is unexpected that Bello also came home. We can see that it is the use of  $k\dot{o}$  which results in this meaning. Again we have a case where the use of a non-factive modality within the scope of a factive modality results in a reading of unexpectedness. Therefore,  $k\dot{o}$ , even in sentences where it combines with other modals to form a third meaning, is behaving as a non-factive modality and its use is consistent with those discussed previously.

2.5  $K\dot{O}$  meaning 'even if'/'even though'.  $K\dot{O}$  means 'even if' or 'even though' in sentences like the following:

- (43)  $K\dot{O}\ d\dot{a}\ y\dot{a}k\dot{e}\ tan\dot{e}\ d\dot{a}\ ky\dot{a}u\ ban\dot{e}\ sont\dot{a}.$   
'Even though she's beautiful, I don't like her.'
- (44)  $K\dot{O}\ d\dot{a}\ tan\dot{e}\ d\dot{a}\ ky\dot{a}u,\ ba\ z\dot{a}n\ so\ \ddot{r}\dot{e}\ ba.$   
'Even if she were beautiful, I wouldn't like her.'

Sentence (43) is a conditional sentence with the antecedent within the scope of  $k\dot{o}$ , and sentence (44) is a counterfactual conditional. The sentences are very similar in meaning. In sentence (43) the speaker is committed to the truth of a conditional ( $P \rightarrow Q$ ); he presupposes that the antecedent holds ( $P$ ), but adds that, contrary to expectations, the

consequent does not hold ( $\sim Q$ ). So, sentence (43) has at least the following interpretation:

- (45) implication: (P + Q)  
 In màcè tanḡ dà kyāu za'ā so t̄à.  
 'If a woman is beautiful, one will like her.'
- presupposition: (P)  
 Tanḡ dà kyāu.  
 'She is beautiful.'
- assertion: ( $\sim Q$ )  
 Banḡ son t̄à.  
 'I don't like her.'

In sentence (44) we have very much the same meaning. In this sentence the speaker holds the same conditional to be true as in (45), but in this case he says that even if in some possible world the antecedent (P) were true, nevertheless the consequent would not hold ( $\sim Q$ ). I claim that kō does not carry a conditional meaning in either of these kinds of sentences. It retains its consistent meaning of non-assertion on the part of the speaker. Since the propositions preceded by kō (P) and (Q) are held to be true by the speaker, the factive meaning combines with the non-factive meaning of kō to form the interpretation that the assertions are contrary to the expectations of the speaker, a combination of meanings which we have found in previous sections. Kō therefore is behaving consistently as a non-factive modality.

2.6 kō meaning 'every', 'each' and 'any'. It has been noted by many Hausa-ists (including Abraham, for instance) that kō can be prefixed to interrogative words to form indefinites:

- |                |   |                       |
|----------------|---|-----------------------|
| (46) wàḡ, wàcè | + | kōwàḡ, kōwàcè         |
| 'which'        |   | 'everyone/anyone'     |
| m̄             | + | kōm̄                  |
| 'what'         |   | 'everything/anything' |
| l̄nḡ           | + | kō'l̄nḡ               |
| 'where'        |   | 'everywhere/anywhere' |

wā		kōwā
'who'	+	'everyone/anyone'
yaùshè		kōyaùshè
'when'	+	'whenever/always/never'

The words in (46) are used as follows:

- (47) Mē sukà sàyā?  
'What did they buy?'
- (48) Sun sàyi kōmē.  
'They bought everything.'
- (49) Bāsù sàyi kōmē ba.  
'They didn't buy anything.'

Givón [1973] points out that these constituent questions or identity questions "involve a presupposed sentence (proposition) in which the identity of one element...is not fully known...and is queried. Thus, the referentiality of the constituent under query is also presupposed" (p. 114). My informant agrees that sentence (47) presupposes:

- (50) Sun sàyi wani àbù.  
'They bought something.'

This is borne out by the fact that identity questions must be cleft sentences in Hausa. Cleft sentences share the requirement that those portions of the sentence which are not clefted are presupposed.

The derived words formed by prefixing kō to interrogative words are not referential, are not presupposed to exist. Kō, as a non-factive modal, removes this presupposition. The interpretation of these words depends on whether they fall within the scope of a factive or non-factive modality. Thus, in sentence (48) kōmē is referential (to a set) because it falls within the scope of the perfective, a factive modality. In sentence (49) it is non-referential since it falls within the scope of the negative. Kō functions consistently to remove the factivity of these derived words. Its non-assertive meaning combines with the basic meaning of these words depends on whether they occur in a factive or non-factive environment. English lexicalizes these separate interpretations

with separate lexical items. For instance, every-words occur in positive sentences, as subjects of sentences, as objects of positive factive verbs, while any-words occur in negated sentences, in the future and habitual, etc.:

- (51) Everyone went home.                    \*Anyone went home.  
 They broke everything.                    \*They broke anything.  
 They didn't break anything.            ?They didn't break everything.

Although Hausa lexicalizes with *kõ* only, both the factive and non-factive interpretations are available.

### 3. Summary of the Data

In sections 2.1 to 2.6 we found that *kõ* can be assigned the consistent readings of non-assertion or uncertainty on the part of the speaker. Hausa has many ways of showing the speaker's attitude towards the truth value of a sentence through its system of modalities. Some of those which I have discussed in these sections can be arranged on a scale which shows the degree of assertion assigned to constituents within their scope:

(52) degree of speaker's commitment to the truth of the proposition	↑	<i>mā</i> 'in fact, indeed'	strong or emphatic assertion
		<u>perfective</u> and <u>progressive</u> with factive verbs	assertion
		<u>question</u> (yes-no) in 'if'	neutral, speaker neither asserts nor doubts truth of proposition
		<i>kõ</i> the word <i>shakkà</i> 'doubt'	non-assertion, doubt
		<u>negation</u> neg-factive verbs like <i>kõsà</i> 'be unable to'	commitment to falseness

We have also found in these sections that *kõ* can combine with other modals to form a third interpretation, which is different from the interpretation of *kõ* or the other modal. Thus, *kõ* + *mā* is assigned the reading of unexpectedness on the part of the speaker that a proposition is true. And *kõ* + interrogative word is assigned a neutral reading, so that the constituent depends on its environment for interpretation.

Finally, we found that unless *kō* combines with some other modal to form such a third interpretation, it cannot occur in factive environments such as in subject position in a matrix sentence, or as the object of a factive verb in an affirmative sentence in the perfective or progressive with a first person subject.

The claim that *kō* is an uncertainty modality is supported by a Hausa saying cited by Abraham in his dictionary entry for *kō*:

(53) Bē'ā sam māganà dā 'kō'.

literally: 'No one likes speech with "kō".'

meaning: 'No one likes uncertainty.'

This saying shows that the Hausas have formed a meta-linguistic generalization about *kō* which conforms to my hypothesis about its meaning.

One final note on the use of *kō*: I asked one of my informants his feelings about sentences with more than one occurrence of *kō* such as:

(54) Kō Bello mē zāi sàyi àyàbē kō rōgō, kō?

'Even Bello will buy bananas or cassavas, won't he?

He said that he would never say a sentence like (54), but "that's the way that women talk." Lakoff in a recent paper, "Language and Woman's Place", makes the claim that women use the tag question formation more than men do because we have been 'taught' to speak in a non-assertive manner, and tag questions "provide a means whereby a speaker can avoid committing himself" (p. 17). While neither Lakoff nor I have done a careful study of the distribution of the use of these constructions in women's speech, it is interesting to find that her claim also makes a correct prediction for Hausa, namely, that even Hausa women use uncertainty modalities more than their men.

#### 4. Incorporation of 'kō' into a grammar

*Kō* will be treated here as a modal operator with a defined predictable scope. Those constituents which fall within its scope are assigned a reading, namely that the speaker does not assert, and is uncertain of, the truth of just those constituents within the sentence. *Kō* can have sentence, NP, V, VP, Aux, adverbial, and adjective scope.

We have seen that *kō* interacts with other modals in the following way:

- (55) a. may not occur within the scope of:
- i. subject position
  - ii. direct object of factive verbs with first person subjects, in the perfective or imperfective (i.e. if occurring, it will result in an anomalous reading)
- b. is modified in meaning from uncertainty to unexpectedness by:
- i. mā
  - ii. rhetorical questions
  - iii. counterfactuals and even though conditionals
- c. removes a presupposition of referentiality from question words resulting in a neutral reading

The unpredictable way in which *kō* interacts with other modals is a problem for the theory. When we found that *kō* could not occur in factive environments, as in the (55a) cases above, we pointed out that this was because of a clash of interpretations; non-factive *kō* could not occur with factive modals. Yet very much the same clash of interpretations occurs in the (55b) cases above, but the result is not an anomalous utterance, but rather a modification of meaning with one modal operator dominating *kō* resulting in a weaker, but predictable, interpretation of unexpectedness on the part of the speaker. In the (55c) cases above, *kō* again clashes with the reading of another modal, a question word in this case, but a third outcome results, namely, *kō* dominates the other modal and removes a presupposition of referentiality from it. It would be preferable in the grammar if the reading of *kō* plus any other modal could be predicted just from the meaning of the elements occurring in the sentence, not from knowing the relative strength of the modals in the language. As it stands, it appears that a speaker of Hausa must learn a strength hierarchy of modal operators. He must learn, for instance, that the factivity of subject position is not modified by future, negative, or *kō*, but the interrogative words are altered; a presupposition of factivity is removed by *kō*. This means that each

time he learns a new modal he must also learn its strength relative to every other modal in the language. Some of this hierarchy may prove to be universal; subject position seems to be factive in most languages.

My investigation of the particle *kō* has led me to an attempt to account for what happens when contradictions occur in language, specifically, what kinds of meanings may result from clashes between factive and non-factive modalities when they co-occur. Contradiction is something that occurs in all languages. It is necessary to be able to express that something happened contrary to expectations. At times an assertion must be made that violates an if-then condition that the speaker previously, or even presently, holds to be true. It will be interesting to investigate further how factive and non-factive modalities interact in other languages to form these interpretations.

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