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(1) John was able to find *someone* [who is willing to learn *every language* that we intend to study].

Focus association and scope: Yorùbá allows exclusive association with both in-situ focus (2-a) and ex-situ focus (2-b). The exclusive particle *nikan* is adfocal in that it immediately follows its focus associate, and forms a constituent with it; a fact supported by the ex-situ focus association in (2-b).

- Typically, it has been argued that adfocal *only* can produce scope ambiguity with specific elements (e.g. modals, negation, certain predicates) in the clause (Taglicht 1984, Lee 2005, Quek & Hirsch 2017, a.o.). In Yorùbá, adfocal-*nìkan* plus its focus associate can scope either below the negative marker or above it, see (3-a). These ambiguous readings are supported by the continuations in (3-b) & (3-c) respectively.

- b. ... Ó jẹ ẹwà pẹlú.
3SG eat beans also
'He also ate beans.'
- c. ... Ó jẹ ẹwà.
3SG eat beans
'He ate beans.'

(4) **Flexible scope in embedded clause**

- a. Tolú mò wípé [Adé jẹ́ [iṣu]_F **nìkan** (léè mètà)]. [know > only, only > know]
 Tolú know COMP Adé eat yam only thrice
 ‘Tolú knows that Adé ate only YAM.’
 (i) *Narrow scope*: It is the case that Tolú knows that Adé ate yam, and nothing else.
 (ii) *Wide scope*: Tolú only knows that Adé ate yam- he doesn’t know about any other food.

b. ... Adé ò jẹ èwà.
Adé NEG eat beans
'Adé did not eat beans.'

c. ... Tolú ò mò wípé Adé jẹ ẹja pèlú.
Tolú NEG know COMP Adé eat fish also
'Tolú does not know that Adé also ate fish.'

Unlike classical quantifiers which have been argued to be insensitive to islands, adfocal exclusive association in Yorùbá is sensitive to island. Example (5) involves a complex noun phrase, with adfocal-*nìkan* associating with the object of the relative clause. The exclusive scope can only be narrow, below the epistemic predicate *mo*, as in (5)-i. The exclusive wide scope reading is absent, see (5)-ii.

(5) Tolú mò obìnrin [tí o jẹ [iṣu]_F **nìkan**] [know > only, *only > know].

Tolú know woman REL 3SG eat yam only
'Tolú knows the woman who ate only YAM.'

(i) Tolú knows the woman who ate nothing but yam.

(ii) *Tolú only knows the woman who ate yam, and does not know any other thing.

Since relative clause is considered as one of the strong islands (Szabolcsi & Lohndal 2017, a.o.), and we have seen that exclusive scope does not violate it, the prediction is that weak islands should be violable. This prediction is borne out. Consider the NP-island example in (6). Although, the exclusive particle and its focus associate are within the NP-island, the exclusive scope is ambiguous in relation to negation.

(6) Tolú ò ka [ìwé nípa [ìjápá]_F **nìkan**]. [neg > only, only > neg]

Tolú NEG read book about tortoise only

Lit. 'Tolú did not read a book about only tortoise.'

(i) *Narrow scope*: Tolú did not only read a book about tortoise, he also read about some other animals.

(ii) *Wide scope*: Tolú read a book about some other animal, but not a book about tortoise.

Discussion: Based on the discussion above, a possible proposal may be to assume that the DP_F+*nìkan* undergo quantifier-raising (QR) in the contexts where inverse scope is allowed (i.e., embedded clauses, weak islands). In island sensitive contexts, QR is blocked. However, I argue for a different approach to the analysis. I propose that instead of QR, the mechanism involved here is agreement. Given the semantic property of *only*, which requires that it composes with a proposition (with vP as the minimum propositional constituent) (Horn 1969, Rooth 1992, a.o.), the adfocal syntactic position of *nìkan* does not meet this requirement. Following some recent studies, I assume that there is a covert exclusive operator (Op_{only}), which occupies a preverbal position and is responsible for the exclusive interpretation (cf. Lee 2005, Quek & Hirsch 2017, Aremu t.a., a.o.). Op_{only} establishes agreement with the node containing the adfocal particle and the focus associate, (7). Although earlier studies in this line of analysis assume that the adfocal particles are merely concord markers (cf. Lee 2005, Hirsch 2022, a.o.), I, however, assume that they rank the alternatives evoked by the focus (cf. Coppock and Beaver 2014).

(7) [TP DP [Op_{only} [_{vP} v [_{vP} [DP+**nìkan**]]]]]

One argument which supports the Op_{only}-particle analysis comes from multiple association with focus contexts, such as (8). Apart from the multiple-*only* reading (where only Adam ate only rice, and others ate rice and other things), the sentence can also have a concord reading, where the eating relation is satisfied only by the pair <Adam, rice>, see (9-b). The QR-analysis cannot account for such a concord reading, as it predicts that each adfocal particle is interpreted independently. The concord structure is given in (10), which assumes a multiple Agree strategy (à la NEG-concord analyses, see Zeijlstra 2004, 2022, a.o.)

(8) Adam **nìkan** **ni** *(ó) jẹ ìrẹ̀sì **nìkan**.

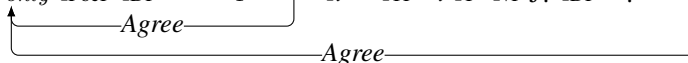
Adam only_{adf} FOC 3SG eat rice only_{adf}

Reading: 'It is the case that among those who could have eaten something, it is only Adam who ate something x, such that x is rice.' [Technically: the pair <Adam, rice> is the only alternative that satisfies the eating relation.]

(9) a. ALT: {Adam ate rice, Adam ate beans, John ate rice, John ate beans, ... }

b. *Only concord*: Op_{only} . <Adam, rice> eat.

(10) [_{ExclP} Op_{only} [_{FocP} [DP Adam_F **nìkan**]_i ni [_{TP} ó_i [_{T'} [_{vP} jẹ [_{DP} ìrẹ̀sì **nìkan**]]]]]]]



Therefore, in unbounded dependency constructions, the exclusive narrow and wide scope is derived as a result of the position that Op_{only} occupies in the clause, and establishes agreement with the DP+adfocal-*nìkan*, see (11). However, the agreement relation is blocked in the presence of a strong island.

(11) [TP ... [(Op_{only}) [_{vP} knows [_{CP} that [TP ... [(Op_{only}) [_{vP} [_{vP} DP+only]]]]]]]]]