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# Naija grammatical classes and constructions

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SLPC PARIS 2021, JUNE 29

# Aim of the presentation

- ▶ Extract a corpus-based grammar of Naija
- ▶ Grammar rules contain quantitative information
  - ▶ this rule occurs in  $x\%$  of the situations
- ▶ Methodology
  - ▶ The grammar is extracted from a treebank, that is, a corpus annotated with syntactic dependency trees

# NaijaSynCor treebank

- ▶ 150 000 words annotated manually + 350 000 parsed
- ▶ The treebank contains:
  - ▶ POS (parts of speech)
  - ▶ morphosyntactic features (not very useful for creole)
  - ▶ syntactic relations
- ▶ The annotation is a starting point for a distributional study of the items
  - ▶ The analysis evolves during the annotation process, and annotating decisions can be changed

# Requests on the treebank

Grew-match  
developed by  
Bruno Guillaume  
(INRIA Nancy)

available online:  
[grew-match.fr](http://grew-match.fr)

# Example: distribution of POS

5

Hide corpora list

SUD\_Naija-NSC@latest [9242 trees, 140836 tokens] last

update: 2021/06/25

Relation tables

Validation

```
1 % Search for a token of a given upos tag
2 % Available tags: ADJ, ADP, ADV, AUX, CONJ, DET, INTJ, NOUN, NUM, PART,
3
4 pattern { N [upos<>PUNCT] }
```

Clustering 1:  No  Key  Whether

N.upos

lemma  upos  xpos  features  textform/wordform  sentences order:

initial

context

Search

Save

Export

# Example: distribution of POS 6

More than 1000 results found in 1.27% of the corpus [0.01s]

192 VERB

190 PRON

127 NOUN

114 AUX

72 DET

65 PART

56 ADP

48 ADV

43 INTJ

41 SCONJ

24 ADJ

10 PROPN

10 NUM

6 X

2 CCONJ

# distribution of POS of subjects

7

Hide corpora list

SUD\_Naija-NSC@latest [9242 trees, 140836 tokens] last update:

2021/06/25



Relation tables

Validation

```
1 search for a token of a given upos tag
2 available tags: ADJ, ADP, ADV, AUX, CONJ, DET, INTJ, NOUN, NUM, PART, PRON, PROPN, P
3
4 tern { N [upos<>PUNCT] ; H -[subj]-> N }
```

Clustering 1:  No  Key  Whether

N.upos

lemma  upos  xpos  features  textform/wordform  sentences order:  

context

Search

Save

Export



# distribution of POS of subjects

8

More than 1000 results found in 10.84% of the corpus [0.19s]

826 PRON

150 NOUN

9 PROP

5 ADJ

4 NUM

2 DET

2 X

1 ADV

1 VERB

More results

Metadata

CoNLL

SVG

e get one lady < hm she just enter inside shop o //

←

←

1 / 10

→

→

KAD\_22\_Chatting-At-The-Restaurant\_DG\_1

KAD\_22\_Chatting-At-The-Restaurant\_DG\_2 [1/2]

KAD\_22\_Chatting-At-The-Restaurant\_DG\_2 [2/2]

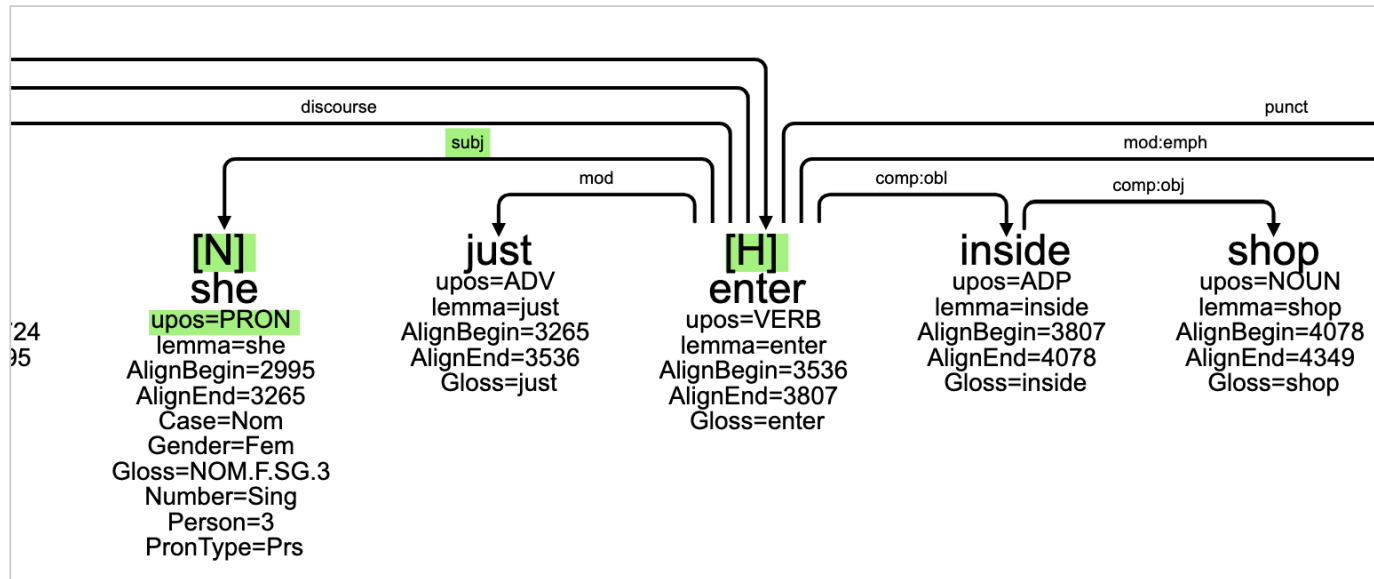
KAD\_22\_Chatting-At-The-Restaurant\_DG\_3 [1/2]

KAD\_22\_Chatting-At-The-Restaurant\_DG\_3 [2/2]

KAD\_22\_Chatting-At-The-Restaurant\_DG\_4

KAD\_22\_Chatting-At-The-Restaurant\_DG\_5

KAD\_22\_Chatting-At-The-Restaurant\_DG\_7



# governors of subjects

9

```
11 pattern { N [upos<>PUNCT] ; H -[subj]-> N }
```

Clustering 1:  No  Key  Whether

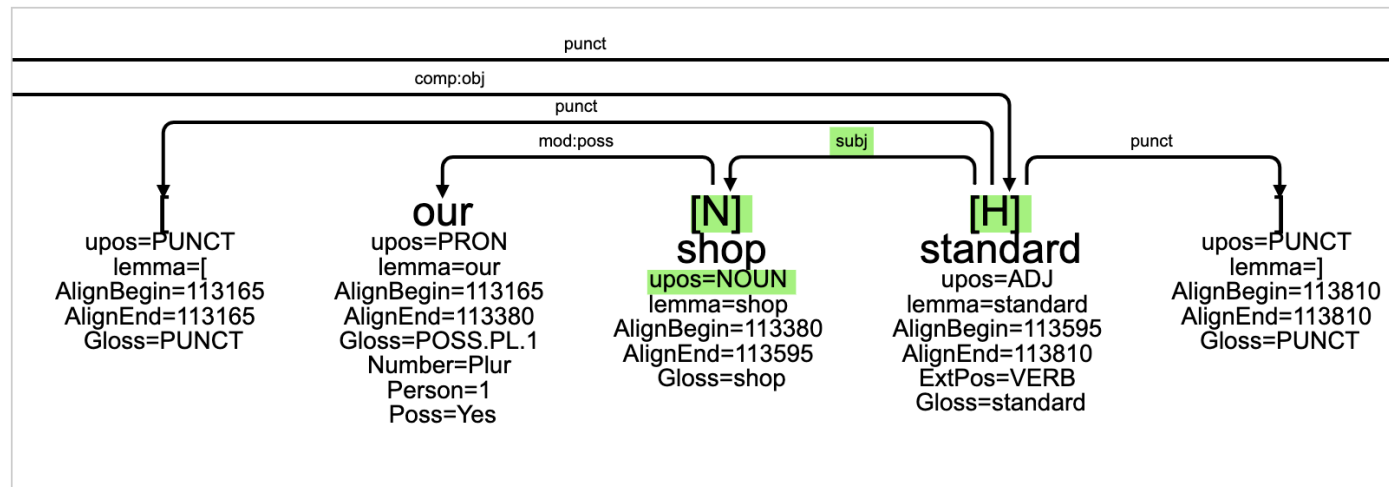
More than 1000 results found in 10.84% of the corpus [0.01s]

549 AUX   407 VERB   **20 ADJ**   18 PART   4 X   2 ADP

- More results
- 1 / 10
- KAD\_22\_Chatting-At-The-Restaurant\_DG\_71 [2/2]
  - JOS\_21\_Marriage-Talk-With-Oscar-1\_DG\_7 [2/2]
  - JOS\_21\_Marriage-Talk-With-Oscar-1\_DG\_43
  - JOS\_21\_Marriage-Talk-With-Oscar-1\_DG\_122 [1/2]
  - JOS\_10\_Mothers-Against-Mini-Skirts\_DG\_22
  - ENU\_17\_Buying-Grocery\_DG\_9
  - ENU\_17\_Buying-Grocery\_DG\_12
  - ENU\_17\_Buying-Grocery\_DG\_40
  - ENU\_17\_Buying-Grocery\_DG\_41

Metadata > CoNLL SVG

you know sey [ our shop standard ] //



# Focus on AUX and ADV

- ▶ Can we characterize auxiliaries and distinguish them from adverbs?
  - ▶ difficult question, because:
    - ▶ no inflection
    - ▶ same position (preverbal)

More than 1000 results found in 12.15% of the corpus [0.41s]

256 dey

237 go

189 no

89 con

73 don

66 make

30 fit

12 bin

10 never

9 be

7 will

5 can

5 do

4 gats

2 for

2 must

1 should

1 may

# AUX

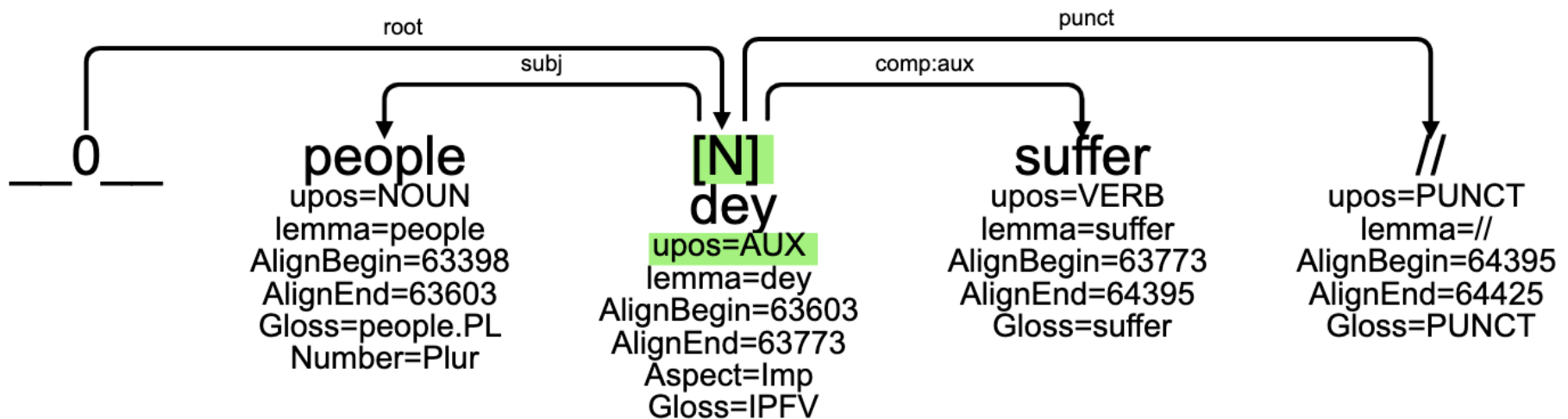
12

- ▶ dey = IMPERFECTIVE ≈ 'be Ving' 26%
- ▶ go = FUTUR ≈ 'will' 24%
- ▶ no = NEGATION ≈ 'don't' 19%
- ▶ con = CONSECUTIVE ≈ 'then' 9%
  - ▶ I con gast carry her go di spare room //  
'Then I took her to the spare room.'
- ▶ don = PERFECTIVE ≈ 'have Ved' 7%
- ▶ make = JUSSIVE/HORTATIVE ≈ 'let X' 6%

# AUX

- ▶ AUX is preverbal

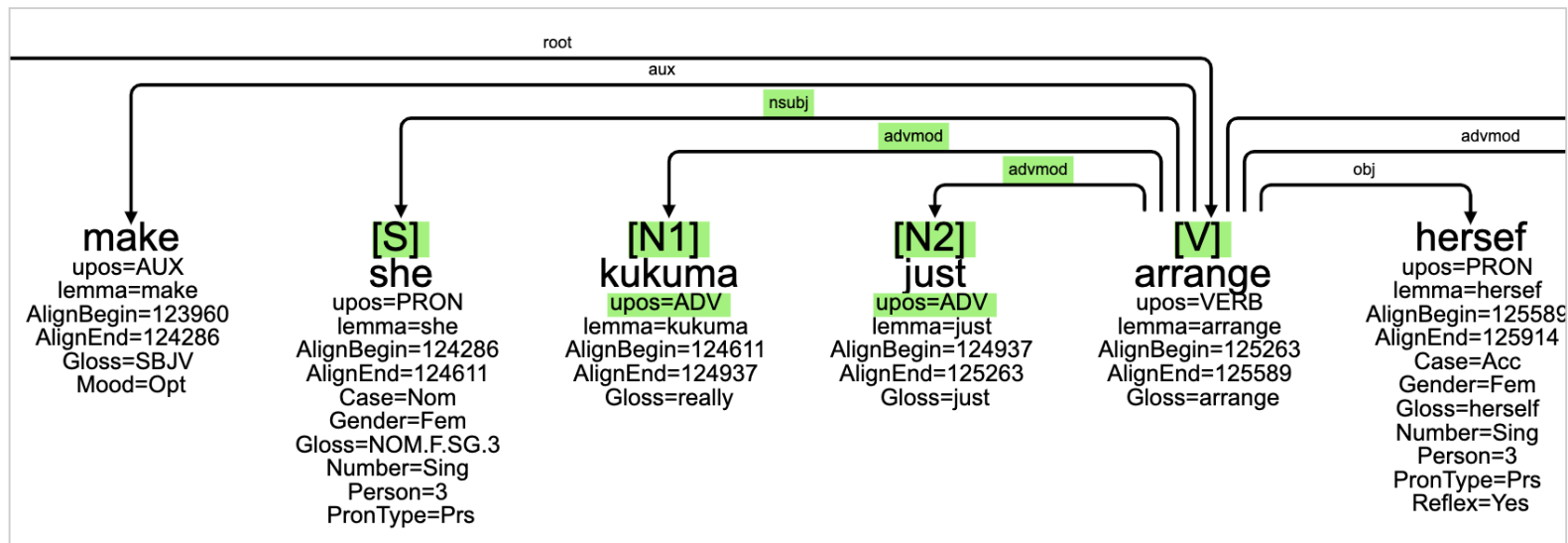
people **dey** suffer //



# ADV

- ▶ 438 ADV between AUX and V
- ▶ 293 ADV between S and V
- ▶ 123 ADV between S and AUX

make she kukuma just arrange hersef o //



# AUX piling vs ADV piling

- ▶ **Only 8 cases with two ADV**
- ▶ In contrast, it is common to have two AUX
  - ▶ 1300 cases with **two AUX**  
+ 103 cases with three AUX
- ▶ and common to have an AUX and an ADV
  - ▶ 438 configurations **AUX ADV V**
  - ▶ 123 configurations **ADV AUX V**



# Co-occurrence and order between AUX

► no < go < don < fit < con < dey

<	no	go	don	fit	con	dey
no	–	129	0	17	52	131
go	0	–	18	91	44	127
don	0	0	–	4	1	76
fit	6	0	0	–	4	3
con	0	1	0	1	–	98
dey	0	0	1	1	1	–

# Focus on the Negation in Naija : *NO*

3 types of negation have been annotated in the corpus, operating 3 different levels, with 3 different POS

- ▶ Determinative: DET (NOUN Phrase)
- ▶ Negative Predicative Particle: PART (Non-verbal Sentence)
- ▶ Negative Auxiliary (VERB Phrase)

The word *no* is also used as an interjection: INTJ

Hide corpora list

SUD\_Naija-NSC@latest [9242 trees, 140836 tokens] last update: 2021/06/25

```

1 % Search for a given lemma (lemmatization is not available for all languages)
2
3 pattern { N [lemma="no"] }
4

```

Relation tables

Clustering 1:  No  Key  Whether

N.upos

 lemma  upos  xpos  features  textform/wordform  context

sentences order: shuffle

Search

Save

Export

## More than 1000 results found in 54.64% of the corpus

863 AUX

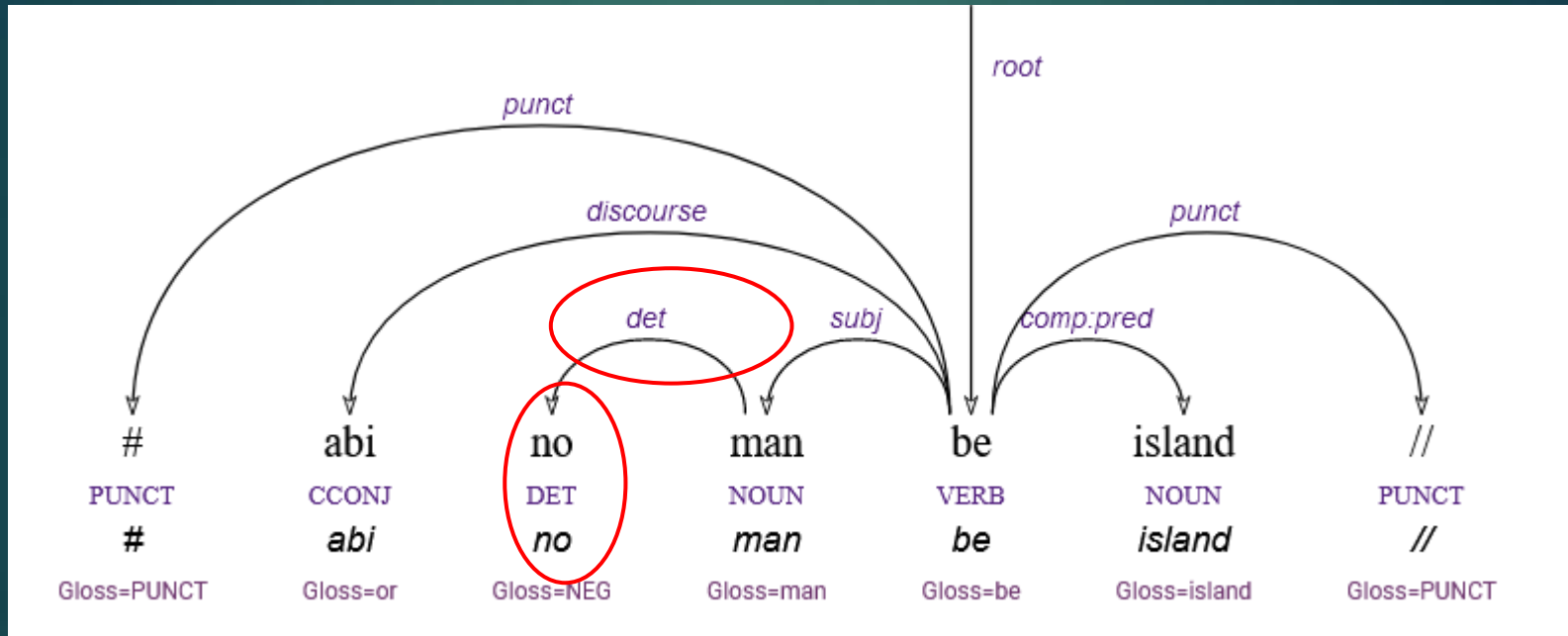
101 PART

25 INTJ

11 DET

<b>AUX</b>	1569	86,3%
<b>PART</b>	183	10,1%
<b>INTJ</b>	45	2,5%
<b>DET</b>	20	1,1%
<b>TOTAL</b>	1813	100%

# No = DET



`text_en` I mean, no man is an island.

`text` # abi no man be island //

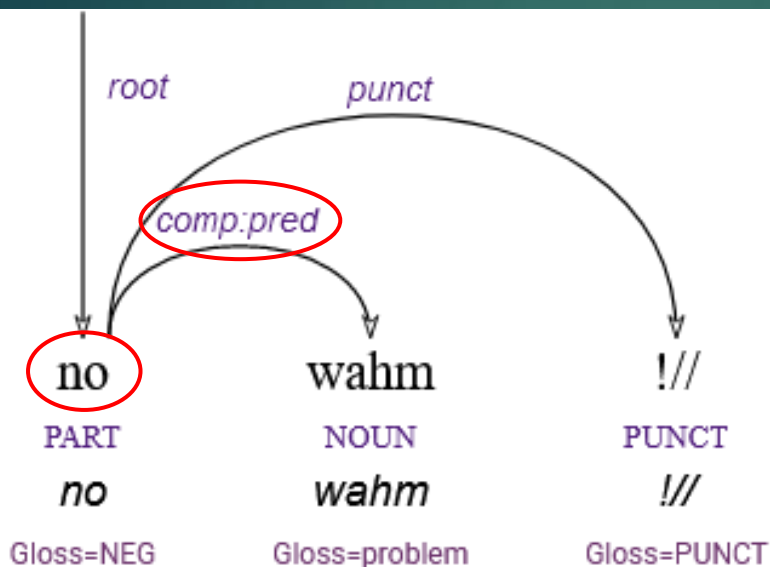
`sent_id` WAZA\_05\_Big-Mo\_MG\_63

```

1
2 pattern { N [lemma="no"] ; N [upos=DET] }

```

# No = PART



text\_en No problem!

text no wahn !!!

sent\_id PRT\_05\_Ghetto-Life\_MG\_44

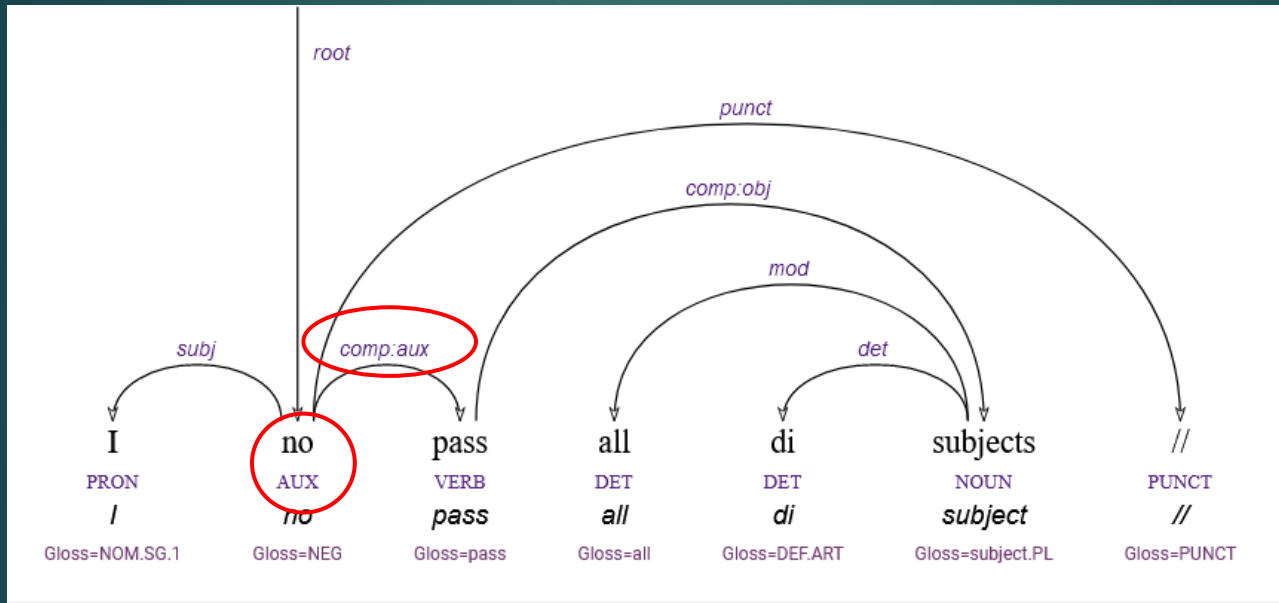
```

1
2 pattern { N [lemma="no"] ; N [upos=PART] }|

```

# No= AUX:

21



`text_en` I didn't pass all the subjects.

`text` I no pass all di subjects //

`sent_id` WAZP\_07\_Imonirhua-Lifestory\_MG\_14

```
1  
2 pattern { N [lemma="no"] ; N [upos=AUX] }
```

Why is *NO* an *AUX* or a *PART* and not an *ADV*?

# NO + NOUN

## The case of noun predication

- ▶ If NO is treated as a DET in noun predication, two problems arise:

`text_en` No problem!

`text` no wahn !//

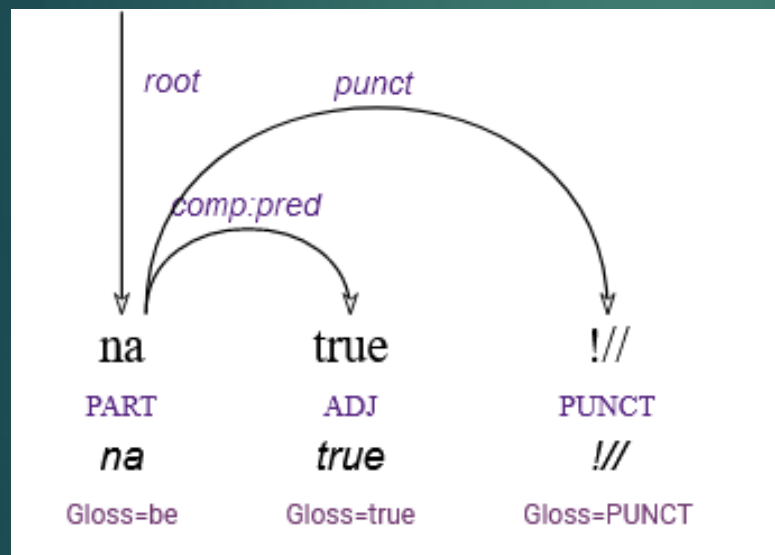
`sent_id` PRT\_05\_Ghetto-Life\_MG\_44

1. The noun *wahn* becomes the head of the sentence, and this is not possible outside short answers, insults, etc.
2. Negative determinatives of NOUNS functioning as arguments not common (23) compared to those in nominal predication (183)



# Conclusion on non-verbal negative predication

- ▶ NO operates just like the particle *na* in *na true*, 'it's true!'



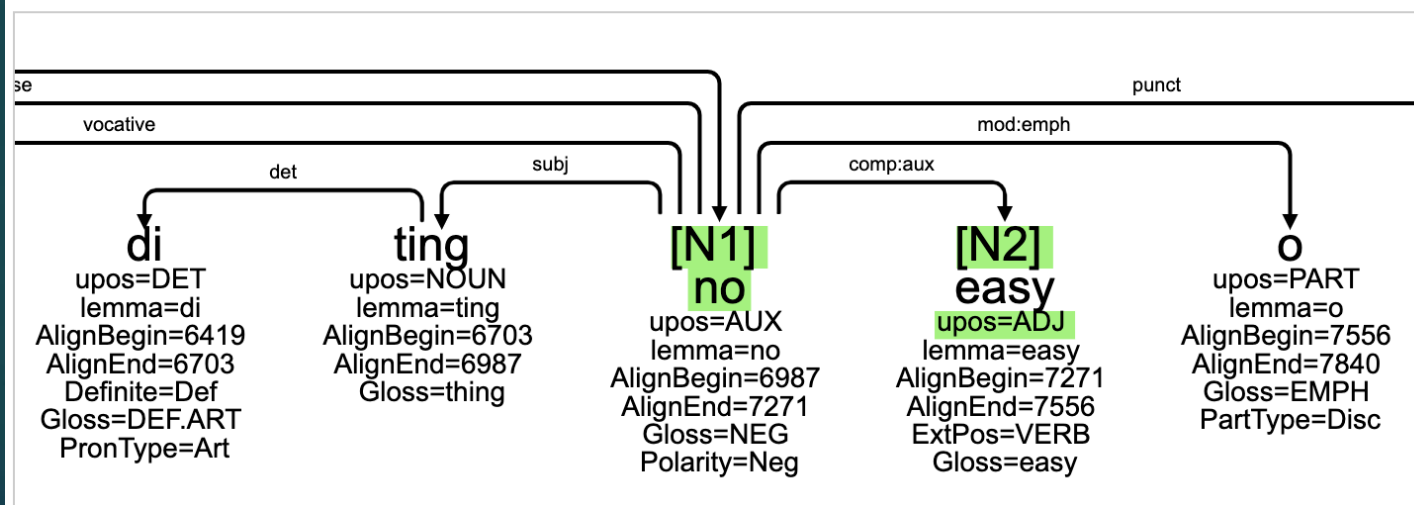
'It is'	na (PART) na true	no be (no = AUX; be = VERB) no be true
'there is'	dey (VERB) wahala dey	no (PART) no wahala

# NO + ADJ

## Adjectival negation

- ▶ NO co-occurs with ADJ only when ADJ is the predicate
  - ▶ 63 cases with ADJ predicate, 0 case with ADJ functioning as a modifier

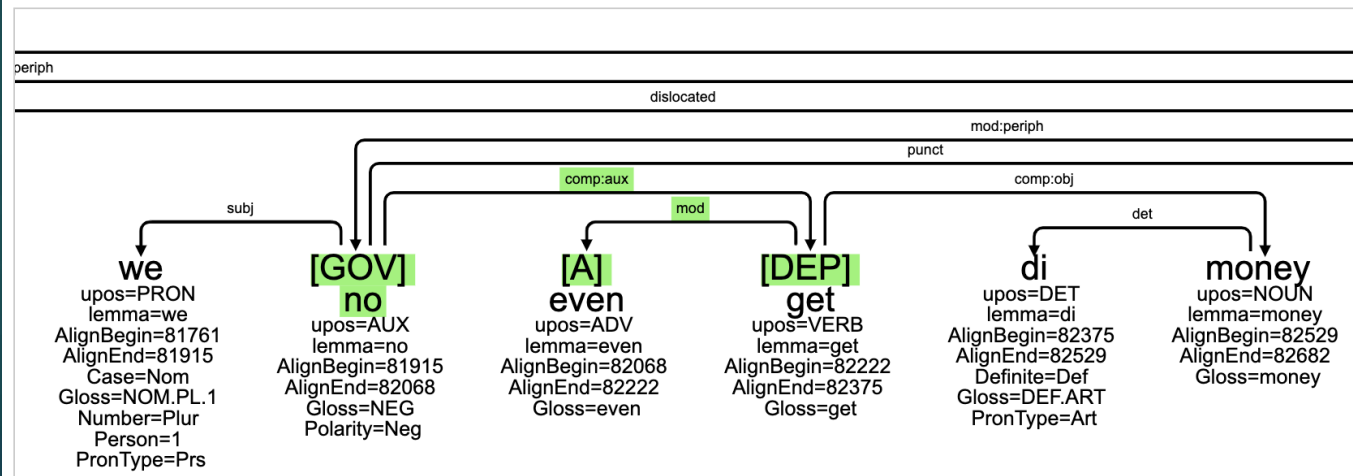
ehn auntie < di ting no easy o //



# NO + ADV

- ▶ NO never modifies an ADV
- ▶ But NO can cooccur with an ADV
  - ▶ 78 configurations NO ADV V
  - ▶ to be compared with the only 8 cases of two ADV cooccurring in the preverbal position
  - ▶ This makes it very unlikely that NO is an ADV

as e be now sef < recession < we no even get di money < na im >> be di ting //



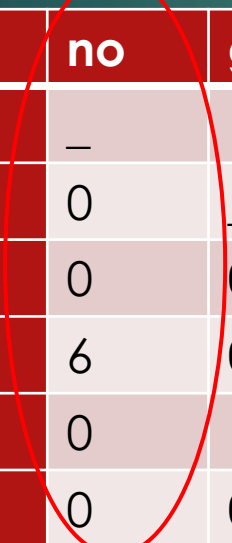
# NO + VERB

## Verbal negation

- ▶ NO appears in the same position as the TAM markers (=AUX), on the left of the verb
- ▶ Whereas adverbs move quite freely within the group of TAM markers, NO has a set place, just like other TAM markers, as shown by Sylvain

# Distribution of NO in the AUX cluster

- ▶ NO only has 2 positions:
  - ▶ At the initial of the AUX group
  - ▶ In second position with a small list of AUX



<	no	go	don	fit	con	dey
no	–	129	0	17	52	131
go	0	–	18	91	44	127
don	0	0	–	4	1	76
fit	6	0	0	–	4	3
con	0	1	0	1	–	98
dey	0	0	1	1	1	–

Position of NO	3 AUX	2 AUX	1 AUX
1	2	56	494
2	1	17	80
3	0	1	–
4	0	–	–

- ▶ **Conclusion: The preferred position is at the initial**
- ▶ If not, the negation is **in second position** after a limited number of AUX: *make, fit, bin, for*. See the count for 1 AUX when filtered on the lemma of the AUX:

## 70 occurrences [0.11s]

59 make

6 fit

3 bin

2 for

[More results](#)
[Metadata](#)
[CoNLL](#)
[SVG](#)

# man fit no forgive at all |c but God

WAZP\_07\_Imonirhua-Lifestory\_MG\_70

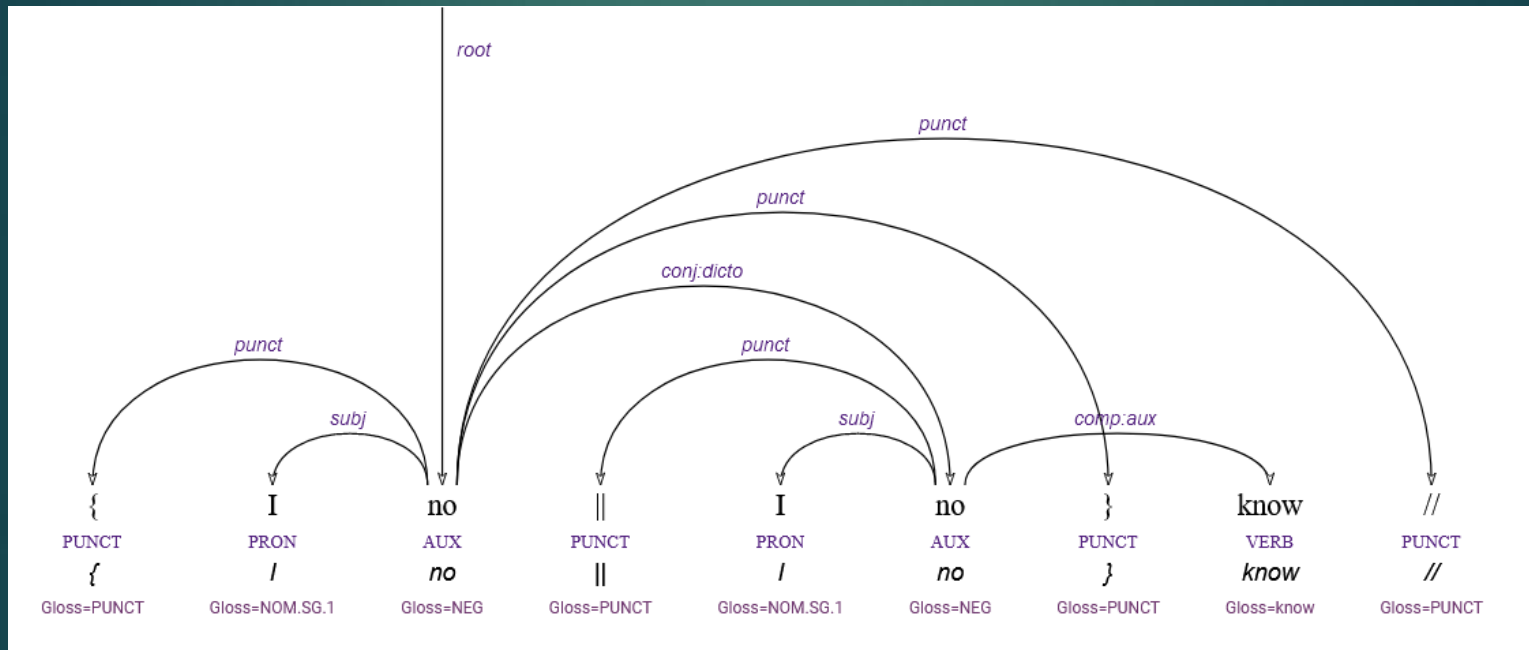
- ▶ One exception stands out: 1 NO that appears in 3rd position after 2 AUX:

Position of NO	3 AUX	2 AUX	1 AUX
1	2	56	494
2	1	17	80
3	0	1	–
4	0	–	–

- ▶ # *my people < na here >+ I go hold brake dis wonderful morning make e for no loss //*
- ▶ ‘My people, this is where I will call it a day this wonderful morning, so that it will not get spoilt.’
- ▶ This actually underlines the possibility of a grammaticalization of the AUX *make* to a purposive SCONJ.

# NO and dysfluencies

- ▶ Treating NO as an AUX that can head a sentence explains clearly how certain dysfluencies work in Naija.



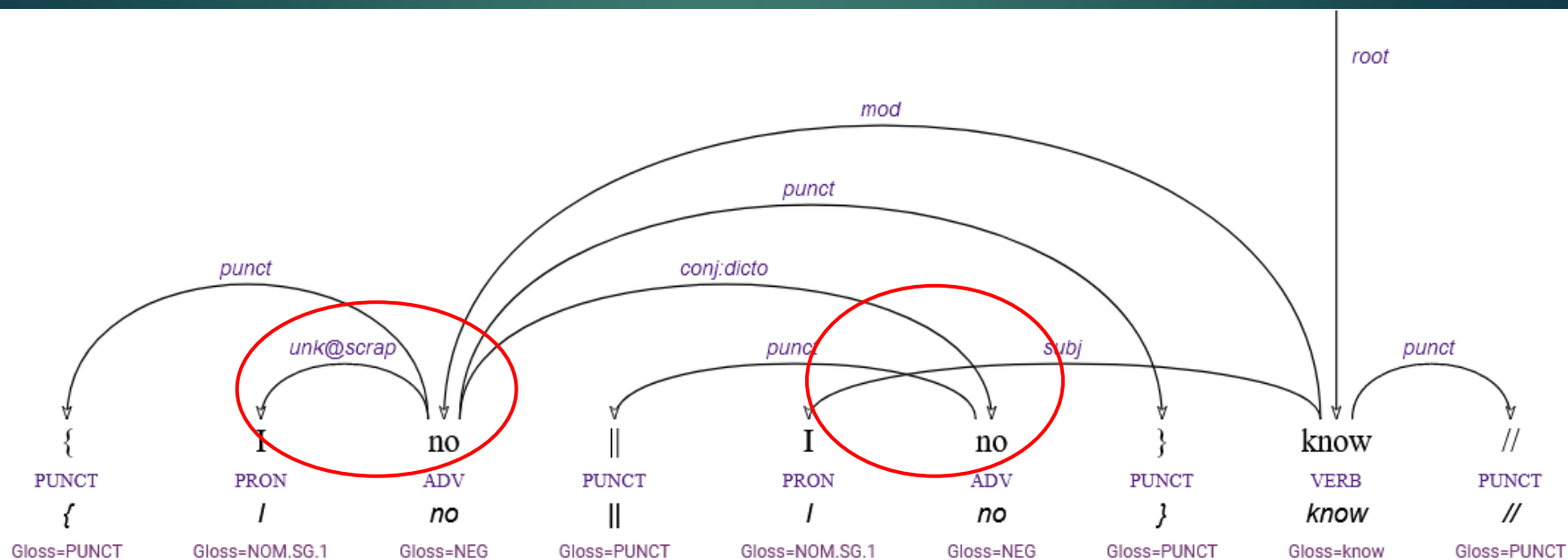
text\_en I don't... I don't know.

text { I no || I no } know //

sent\_id KAD\_22\_Chatting-At-The-Restaurant\_DG\_\_8



(If you don't, it gets very messy! Believe me!)



# Conclusion

- ▶ (1) **Negation** tends to operate high in the syntactic tree  
(ADJ and ADV are not negated as modifiers)
- ▶ (2) With **SUD treebanks + GREW**, it is possible to get quickly and rather easily a detailed account of the distribution of words, filter them on their syntactic function and thus pave the way for an extraction of **quantitative grammars**.