

Comitative Coordination in Capeverdean

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1. Introduction

In Capeverdean, a Portuguese-based Creole language, the word *ku* ‘with’ may function either as a coordinative conjunction, with an additive meaning, or as a preposition (Veiga 1995: 312, Batista 2002:134-135, Brito 2011, 2014). In (1), the first *ku* is a conjunction and the second one is a preposition. This language has another way of expressing additive coordination, the conjunction *y* ‘and’, which connects the two clauses in (1):

- (1) Djon **ku** Maria bai Somada y es ben **ku** pexi.
Djon CONJ Maria go Somada and they come PREP fish
‘Djon and Maria went to Somada and they came back with fish.’

Comitative coordination is widely spread across languages. It occurs in European languages, e.g., Slavic languages (McNally 1993, Vassilieva & Larson 2005 for Russian; Skrabalova 2003 for Czech) and Romance languages (Camacho 2000 for Spanish; Colaço 2005, Matos & Raposo 2013 for Portuguese), but also in Asian, African and Oceanic languages (Stassen 2000, Haspelmath 2004, 2007).

The word *ku* is diachronically related to Portuguese *com* ‘with’, a word with comitative value that also occurs as a preposition and a coordinative conjunction.¹ Still, Capeverdean coordinative *ku* presents some specific properties. In particular, it contrasts with the comitative coordination in Portuguese (and other European languages), by coordinating categories other than noun phrases (NPs) and applying iteratively. In addition, although it has an additive content, *ku* contrasts with *y* ‘and’ by not being able to coordinate predicative adjectival phrases (APs), finite clauses or verbal phrases (VPs) with aspect/tense specification.

In this paper we describe the behavior of *ku* in Capeverdean and we propose an account for the above mentioned properties.

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¹ One anonymous reviewer has suggested that we “discuss *ku* in relation to the presumed substrate languages” of Capeverdean. We know that these substrate languages are mainly from the Mande and Atlantic families, spoken by the slaves from the Guinea Rivers area that were taken to Santiago Island in the 15th century (Carreira 1982). In fact, we aim to extend, in a very near future, the crosslinguistic study of *ku* to any cases of comitative coordination in these substrate languages. This is, however, out of the scope of the current paper.

2. *Ku* as a comitative preposition and as a coordinative conjunction

Not unexpectedly, the preposition *ku* behaves differently from the conjunction *ku*. In A to E we describe these distinguishing properties.

A. Prepositional *ku* has an antonymous correlate, which is the preposition *sen* ‘without’. This is not the case for *ku* as a conjunction, (2) vs. (3):

- (2) a. Es ben **ku** pexi.
 they come with fish
 ‘They came with fish.’
- b. Es ben **sen** pexi.
 they come without fish
 ‘They came without fish.’
- (3) *Djon **sen** Maria bai Somada.
 Djon without Maria go Somada
 ‘Djon without Maria went to Somada.’

B. Coordinative *ku* has an additive value, and in most contexts it may be replaced by the copulative conjunction *y*, which also exhibits an additive content. As shown in (4), both items translate into English ‘and’:

- (4) Djon **ku** / **y** Maria bai Somada
 Djon with / and Maria go Somada
 ‘Djon and Maria went to Somada.’

This is not possible for prepositional *ku*, as is shown by the contrast between (2a) vs. (5):

- (5) *Es ben **y** pexi.
 they come and fish
 ‘They came and fish.’

C. In contrast with prepositional *ku*, the comitative conjunction requires adjacency of the coordinate conjuncts:

- (6) a. [_{NP} Ana] **ku** [_{NP} Maria] kunpra pexi.
 Ana with Maria buy fish
 ‘Ana and Maria bought fish.’
- b. #[_{NP} Ana] kunpra pexi **ku** [_{NP} Maria].
 Ana buy fish with Maria
 ‘Ana bought fish and Maria.’

The sentence in (6b) is pragmatically anomalous in the intended reading. It means that Ana bought both fish and Maria.

D. Just like the comitative coordination attested for other languages, for instance Portuguese (Colaço 2005) and Russian (McNally 1993, Vassileva & Larson 2005), the NPs connected by *ku* form a plural unit²:

² Note that these languages also have a corresponding prepositional comitative construction. In this case the verb does not present plural agreement affixes.

- (7) a. [O ouro **com** a prata] combinam-se facilmente. (Portuguese)
 the gold with the silver combine.3PL-REFL easily
 ‘The gold and the silver combine easily.’
- b. [Ivan **s** Petej] usholi domoj (Russian)
 Ivan-NOM with Petej.INSTR ir.PL home
 ‘Ivan and Pete went home.’

Capeverdean verbs do not exhibit agreement inflection marks. However, there is evidence for the plural nature of the NP resulting from comitative coordination. In the points D.1 to D.3 we show the sources for this evidence.

D.1. Comitative coordinate NPs may only be substituted by a plural pronoun, (8b):

- (8) a. [Bu pai **ku** bu mai] resebe-u
 2SG father with 2SG mother welcome-CL2SG
 ‘Your father and your mother welcomed you.’
- b. **Es** resebe-u.
 they welcome-you
 ‘They welcomed you.’
- c. #E recebe-u.
 he welcome-you
 ‘He welcomed you.’

D.2. Comitative coordinate NPs bind plural anaphors:

- (9) a. [Ana **ku** Maria]_i odja [ses kabesa]_i na spedju.
 Ana with Maria see their heads in.the mirror
 ‘Ana and Maria saw themselves in the mirror.’
- b. *[Ana **ku** Maria] odja [si kabesa]_i na spedju.
 Ana with Maria see his/her head in.the mirror
 ‘Ana and Maria saw herself in the mirror.’

D.3. Comitative coordinate NPs control embedded null subjects that bind the reciprocal expression *kunpanheru* ‘each other’.

- (10) [Djon **ku** Maria] {kre / tenta / prumete} PRO ruspetu kunpanheru.
 Djon with Maria {want / try / promise} PRO respect fellow
 ‘Djon and Maria wanted / tried / promised to respect each other.’

E. Finally, a fifth property distinguishes *ku* as a preposition and as a conjunction. Just like other symmetrical coordinations, coordinative-*ku* construction obeys to the Coordinate Structure Constraint, which states that “in a coordinate structure, no conjunct may be moved, nor may any element contained in a conjunct be moved out of that conjunct.” (Ross 1967). Thus, (11b) is marginal because the second conjunct, introduced by *ku*, has been extracted out of the coordinate structure and has been merged at the left periphery of the sentence:

- (11) a. [Ana **ku** Maria] odja ses kabesa na spedju.
 Ana with Maria see their heads in.the mirror
 ‘Ana and Maria saw themselves in the mirror.’
- b. ***Ku** Maria, Ana odja ses kabesa na spedju.
 with Maria, Ana see their heads in.the mirror
 ‘And Maria, Ana saw themselves in the mirror.’

This behavior contrasts with the one of prepositional *ku*, as shown in the example (12)³:

- (12) **Ku** Maria, Ana odja si kabesa na spedju.
 with Maria, Ana see her head in.the mirror
 ‘Just like Maria, Ana saw herself in the mirror.’

To sum up, there is strong evidence for an additive comitative conjunction in Capeverdean, *ku*, on a par with a homonymous preposition, which also expresses comitative meaning.

3. Coordinative *ku* vs. other comitative conjunctions in other languages

Comitative coordination in Capeverdean presents properties that distinguish it from its correlates in Romance (e.g. Portuguese) and Slavic languages (e.g. Russian), and relate it to comitative coordination in WITH-languages (such as Japanese, Iraqw, Fongbe, Haitian, Hawsa, Vafsi, Sgaw Karen, Riau, Indonesian, Nêlêmwa, etc.), which use the same marker for expressing conjunctive and comitative relations (Stassen 2000, Haspelmath 2004, 2007). In this section, we list these distinguishing properties.

3.1. *Ku*-coordination is not restricted by the semantics of the verb

In languages like Portuguese, comitative coordination is licensed by verbs that have a resultative reading (Colaço 2005)⁴, each conjunct being interpreted as part of the resulting element. This is shown in Portuguese by the contrast in acceptability between (13) and (14):

- (13) a. [O ouro **com** a prata] combinam-se facilmente.
 the gold with the silver combine.3PL-REFL easily
 ‘The gold and the silver combine easily.’
- b. [O João **com** a Maria] formam uma equipa imbatível.
 the João with the Maria form a team undefeatable
 ‘João and Maria form an undefeatable team.’
- c. [Dois **com** três] são cinco.
 two with three are five
 ‘Two and three are five.’
- (14) a. *[O ourives **com** o aprendiz] combinaram os metais.
 the goldsmith with the apprentice combined the metals
 ‘The goldsmith and the apprentice combined the metals.’
- b. *[O João **com** a Maria] são jogadores de futebol.
 the João with the Maria are players of football
 ‘João and Maria are football players.’

In contrast, in Capeverdean coordinative *ku* is independent of the semantic properties of the sentence predicate (see (15)):

- (15) a. [Orivi **ku** aprendis] kunbina metal.
 goldsmith with apprentice combined metal
 ‘The goldsmith and the apprentice combined the metals.’

³ Notice that the reflexive constituent, *si kabesa*, is singular, since it is bound by the subject, *Ana*.

⁴ In Portuguese, additive coordination is standardly expressed by *e* ‘and’ (cf. Matos 2003, Matos & Raposo 2013).

- b. [Djon **ku** Maria] bai Somada.
Djon with Maria go Somada
'Djon and Maria went to Somada.'
- c. [Ana **ku** Lita] staba duenti.
Ana with Lita be.PST ill
'Ana and Lita were ill.'

As expected, the corresponding examples in Portuguese are marginal (cf. (15) and (16)):

- (16) a. *[O João **com** a Maria] vão a Lisboa.
the João with the Maria go.3PL to Lisboa
- b. *[A Ana **com** a Lita] estavam doentes.
the Ana with the Lita were ill
'Ana and Lita were ill.'

In sum, in contrast with Portuguese, comitative coordination in Capeverdean is not restricted by the semantic properties of the predicate of the sentence where it occurs.

3.2. Comitative coordination of NPs

The examples in (17), like those of the previous sections, exhibit comitative coordination of NP subjects. These data could suggest that this is the only available option in Capeverdean, as it happens in some languages, for instance in some Spanish dialects reported by Camacho (2000).⁵

- (17) a. [_{NP} Ana] **ku** [_{NP} Maria] sta xintadu.
Ana with Maria be seated
'Ana and Maria are seated.'
- b. [_{NP} Mi] **ku** [_{NP} bo] nu ta studa djuntu.
me with you we HAB study together
'Me and you we study together.'

However, this is not the most spread pattern and most languages also exhibit comitative coordination of object NPs. This is the case of Capeverdean and also of Portuguese, although in the latter language comitative coordination of objects is much more restricted than in Capeverdean by the semantic class of the predicates. As it also happens with subjects, in Portuguese only resultative verbs may present comitative coordination of NP objects:

- (18) a. O ourives combinou o ouro **com** a prata.
the goldsmith combined the gold with the silver

⁵ Camacho (2000) assumes that examples presenting apparent object comitative coordination, like (i), from Peruvian Spanish, are better analyzed as cases of secondary predication, on the basis of the contrast of acceptability between (ii) and (iii):

- (i) Los invito a tí con María.
CL.2PL invite to you with Maria
'I invite you and Maria (to do something)'
- (ii) Les invito café.
CL.2PL invite coffee
'I will buy you coffee.'
- (iii) *Les invito a tí com María café.
CL.2PL invite to you with Maria coffee

- b. O ourives combinou-os
 the goldsmith combined-CL3PL.
 ‘The goldsmith combined them.’

Colaço (2005) also notices that, in cases like (18a), there is some structural ambiguity: the sentence may be interpreted as presenting comitative coordination, in which case the comitative conjunct may be referred by a plural pronoun, as in (18b), but it may also be analyzed as an object NP followed by a comitative PP, as in (19), where the accusative clitic only refers to *o ouro* ‘the gold’ in (18a):

- (19) O ourives combinou-o com a prata.
 the goldsmith combined-CL3SG with the silver
 ‘The goldsmith combined it with the silver.’

In Capeverdean the occurrence of an NP in object position is not restricted by the class of the predicates:

- (20) Ana kumpra [_{NP} pexi **ku** papaia]
 Ana buys fish with papaia
 ‘Ana buys fish and papaia.’

In addition, although *ku* corresponds to a conjunction and a preposition, when it occurs next to an object NP it is preferably interpreted as a conjunction, as shown by the oddity of (21), which could only be acceptable if Maria, like fish, is conceived as a buyable object. To convey the adjunct comitative meaning in this context, Capeverdean usually uses the expression *djuntu ku* ‘together with’, as shown in (22):

- (21) #Ana kumpra [_{NP} pexi **ku** Maria]
 Ana buys fish with Maria
 ‘Ana buys fish and Maria.’

- (22) Ana kunpra [_{NP} pexi] djuntu ku Maria.
 Ana buys fish together with Maria
 ‘Ana buys fish and Maria.’

3.3. Comitative coordination of categories other than NP

In Romance and Slavic languages like Portuguese or Russian, the comitative coordinator only coordinates NPs (Colaço 2005, McNally 1993), as shown in (23) for Portuguese:

- (23) a. [_{NP} A Ana] **com** [_{NP} o Pedro] fazem um lindo par.
 the Ana with the Pedro make a lovely couple
 ‘Ana and Pedro make a lovely couple.’

- b. *_[AdvP] Ontem] **com** _[AdvP] hoje] fazem o fim-de-semana.
 yesterday with today make the weekend.

In contrast, Capeverdean *ku* coordinates categories other than NPs. Thus, on a par with examples like (24), exhibiting NP coordination, this conjunction also conjoins AdvPs, as illustrated in (25):

- (24) a. [_{NP} Ana] **ku** [_{NP} Maria] sta xintadu.
 Ana with Maria be seated
 ‘Ana and Maria are seated.’

- b. [_{NP} Mi] **ku** [_{NP} bo] nu ta studa djuntu.
 me with you we ASP study together
 ‘Me and you we study together.’

- (25) [AdvP Onti] **ku** [AdvP Oji] faze friu.
 yesterday with today make cold
 ‘It was cold yesterday and today.’

Likewise, AP coordination with *ku* is possible in examples like (26).

- (26) a. Maria tene [NP buluza risku-risku [AP azul] **ku** [AP branku]].
 Maria have blouse strips blue with white
 ‘Maria has a blue and white striped blouse.’
- b. Kel buluza-li e [[AP azul] **ku** [AP branku]].
 DEM blouse-here be blue with white
 ‘This blouse is blue and white.’

Similarly, *ku*-coordination may apply to PPs, as shown in (27):

- (27) Maria faze dosi [PP di koku] **ku** [PP di papaia].
 Maria make jam of coconut with of papaia
 ‘Mary makes jam of coconuts and of papaia.’

Finally, **ku** may conjoin nominalized non-finite verbs, as exemplified in (28):

- (28) [Le] **ku** [skrebe] e simplis.
 read with write be simple
 ‘It is easy to read and write.’

This behavior correlates Capeverdean with the so called WITH-languages, which always use the comitative conjunction in additive coordination.

3.4. Iteration of the comitative conjunction

Similarly, in opposition to languages like Russian (29a) or Portuguese (29b), which only allow for binary comitative coordination (cf. (23a) vs. (29b)), *ku* may iterate in coordinative conjunction (cf. (30)), as is the case of its correlates in WITH-languages:

- (29) a. *Anna **s** Mašej **s** Natašej pridut. (McNally 1993)
 Anne.NOM with Mary.INSTR with Natasha.INSTR come.3PL
 ‘Anne, Mary and Natasha came.’
- b. ??O Zé **com** o Paulo **com** o Luís formam uma equipa imbatível.
 the Zé with the Paulo with the Luís form a team undefeatable
 ‘Zé, Paulo and Luís form an undefeatable team.’
- (30) Palu **ku** Pedru **ku** Manel **ku** Litu bai Praia.
 Palu with Pedru with Manel with Litu go Praia
 ‘Palu, Pedru, Manel and Litu went to Praia.’

The data just presented show that *ku* has properties that differentiate it from comitative coordinators in several Romance and Slavic languages, and relate it to the comitative conjunctions in WITH-languages. We take this fact as indicating that Capeverdean *ku* is a full additive conjunction, whereas in languages like Portuguese or Russian the comitative coordinators have not yet fully achieved their grammaticalization process. In fact, in these languages, the comitative connective still retains some characteristics of the syntactic behaviour of the related preposition, such as the constraint to select NP as arguments (see the contrasts in (23)) and the ability to assign (Instrumental or Oblique) Case to the second term of the coordination, as illustrated in (29a), for Russian.

4. The distribution of *ku* and *y* in Capeverdean

Despite being a full additive conjunction, *ku* ‘with’ is not in free variation with *y* ‘and’, a much less used additive conjunction. Thus, comitative *ku* cannot coordinate predicative APs, in contrast with what happened with APs denoting a compound property, as those illustrated in (26) above. When the coordination involves predicative APs, *ku* is replaced by *y* (31)⁶:

- (31) a. Djon e [AP alto] y [AP forti]
 Djon be tall and strong
 ‘Djon is tall and strong.’
- b. *Djon e [AP alto] ku [AP forti]
 Djon be tall with strong

Similarly, *ku* cannot coordinate finite sentences or two (or more) verbal predicates with finite tense (TNS) or aspect (ASP) specification (Brito 2011, 2012, 2014). The variety of Capeverdean spoken in the Santiago Island marks temporal meaning through three overt morphemes, two of them preverbal (*ta e sata*), and another one postverbal (*-ba*). In Pratas (2010, 2012) it has been argued that the language also has a zero morpheme (\emptyset), without which some semantic contrasts would be hardly accounted for. The various temporal/aspectual interpretations available in the language are thus built through the presence or absence of *-ba* (in the first case we have a past reading, in the second case we have a non-past reading), combined with any of the preverbal morphemes. Therefore, we have⁷:

- \emptyset V (“bare” form) = roughly, this corresponds to a present perfect reading of the type ‘John has left’
ta V = present habitual (or future, depending on other information available in the sentence)
sata V = present progressive
 \emptyset V-*ba* = past perfect
ta V-*ba* = past habitual (or conditional, depending on other information available in the sentence)
sata V-*ba* = past progressive.

Returning now to the distribution of the comitative conjunction, the examples in (32) show that *ku* is banned from finite sentence coordination, which canonically exhibit an overt subject – Capeverdean is a non-consistent null subject language, which prohibits null referential subjects in all main clauses and only allows them in very specific embedded contexts (Costa & Pratas 2012).

- (32) *Ana skreve poema ku Maria le livru.
 Ana write poem with Maria read book
 ‘Ana wrote the poem and Maria read the book.’

The examples in (33) illustrate the exclusion of *ku* from tensed and aspect verbal coordination (cf. *le* and *skrebe* in (33b), and *ta le* and *ta skrebe* in (33b)):

- (33) a. *Djon le ku skrebe kriolu.
 Djon ASP/TNS.read with write Creole
 ‘Djon read and wrote Creole.’
- b. *Djon ta le ku ta skrebe kriolu.
 Djon ASP read with ASP write Creole
 ‘Djon reads and writes Creole.’

In these contexts, Capeverdean uses alternative kinds of coordination. Regarding full finite sentence coordination, *y*-coordination is the option available both in syndetic and asyndetic cases. In the latter case, as shown in (34b), an overt *y*-conjunction may be recovered:

⁶ Similarly, not all AdvPs may be coordinated by *ku*. While this coordination is acceptable with adverbs expressing time (e.g. *oji* ‘today’), it is impossible with modal adverbs (e.g., *sértamente* ‘certainly’). Adverbs in this language belong to different semantic classes with distinct distribution and properties. Their full understanding requires an in depth study, which is out of the scope of the current paper.

⁷ For more details on the complex temporal/aspectual system in the language, see Pratas (2010, 2012).

- (34) a. Ana skreve poema y Maria le livru.
 Ana write poem and Maria read book
 ‘Ana wrote the poem and Maria read the book.’
- b. Rapasinh u ta ben la di stranjeru ku si mo finu,
 young.man ASP come there from abroad with his hands delicate
 (y) nhos ta dexa-l pega na inxada pa kiria npólma.
 (and) you ASP let-3SG take in.the hoe to create blister
 ‘The young man came from abroad with delicate hands (and) you let him take the hoe to hurt his hands.’ (cf. Tavares 2010:35)

Note that in both examples in (34) we may see a relation between the events denoted by the clauses. In (34a), the speaker may be referring to two simultaneous events, occurring in the same room. In (34b), we have two sequential events that are somewhat related (or at least the speaker sees some relation between them).

In the case of verbal projections with aspect (ASP) specification or finite tense (TNS) interpretation, only a specific type of asyndetic coordination is possible, where a discourse pause between the connected predicates is characteristically absent and the additive conjunction may not be recovered⁸, as shown by the contrast between (35a) and (35b)⁹:

- (35) a. Djon ta le ta skrebe kriolu.
 Djon ASP read ASP write Creole
 ‘Djon reads and writes Creole.’
- b. *Djon ta le y ta skrebe kriolu.
 Djon ASP read and ASP write Creole
 ‘Djon reads and writes Creole.’

Therefore, our proposal is as follows. We claim that the exclusion of *ku* from the contexts illustrated in (31) and (32) follows from its intrinsic meaning. Although *ku* is an additive conjunction, it also has a comitative interpretation. This implies that it operates over constituents which denote entities, bringing them together into a group entity, as in the case of referential arguments, or denote properties that are interpreted as forming a compound property.¹⁰

⁸ This paratactic connection, which resembles a specific type of asyndetic coordination, recalls some serial constructions presented in the literature (see Muysken & Venestra 2006, and for Capeverdean, Brito 2011, 2012). The study of these constructions is out of the scope of the current paper.

⁹ Notice that (35b) is ungrammatical as a case of sentence coordination, with a null subject in the second term of the coordinate structure. As we have mentioned, Capeverdean is a non-consistent null subject language: it allows for expletive null subjects and also for a particular type of referential null subjects in embedded contexts, where the null subject is bound by an operator. The relevant point here is that it does not allow for referential null subjects in main clauses (cf. Pratas 2002, Pratas 2007, Costa & Pratas 2012). Thus, (35b) would be grammatical only if the second coordinated element had a clitic pronoun in the subject position, as in (i), below. In this case it would be interpreted as a well formed finite sentence:

- (i) Djon ta le y e ta skrebe kriolu.
 Djon ASP read and 3SG ASP write Creole
 ‘Djon reads and writes Creole.’

¹⁰ Our proposal differs from others that study languages where comitative coordination is restricted to subject NPs (Camacho 2000) or only conjoins NPs (e.g. McNally 1993, Darymple et al 1998, Skrabalova 2003). Camacho (2000) assumes that in Spanish the comitative expression denotes a collectivity, in the sense that the involved entities jointly participate in an event. McNally (1993) claims that in Russian and Polish the collective interpretation is not required, but the comitative coordinate expression must denote that the individuals involved are together in a relevant sense. In Capeverdean comitative coordination is not restricted to NPs. However, its distribution suggests that although the more severe restrictions that operate over NP Comitative Coordination do not show up, the core value of comitative coordination still prevails.

This meaning prevents *ku* from coordinating predicative APs denoting related but independent properties or from applying to related finite sentences or verbal projections which denote simultaneous or sequential events. In none of these cases the resulting coordination would denote a group entity or a compound property.

5. Conclusions

All the empirical evidence presented in this paper leads us to conclude that the form *ku* in Capeverdean recovers two distinct classes of words with a comitative meaning but a distinct syntactic behavior: an additive conjunction and a preposition. Like other comitative conjunctions across languages, *ku* conjoins NPs producing a coordinate structure that denotes a plural entity and obeys the Coordinate Structure Constraint. In opposition to comitative conjunctions in languages like Portuguese or Russian, and like WITH -languages, coordinative *ku* is not sensitive to the semantic properties of the sentence main verb, may coordinate categories other than NPs and may iterate. This shows that it behaves as a full additive conjunction. However, *ku* is excluded from tensed verbal predicates and sentence coordination, a fact that we impute to its meaning: having a comitative value, *ku* may only apply to elements that denote entities or properties to derive constituents that denote group entities or compound properties. Thus, it is excluded from contexts where the coordination would derive expressions that denote independent conjoined predicates, as well as (simultaneous or sequential) events or situations.

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