GRAMMATICALIZATION OF VERB 'SAY' IN JUBA-ARABIC [1]

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1. *Introduction*

Grammaticalization is mainly perceived as a language -internal development and conceived as a slow, diachronic, progressive and unidirectional process (Traugott & Heine (1991); Hopper & Traugott (1993)). Synchronic variations are often regarded as reflecting diachronic development (Lehmann (1985); Plag (1992)). The grammaticalization of a verb 'say' functioning as a complementizer has been described in many different languages such as the African languages (Heine & Reh (1984); Lord (1976)), the South Asian languages (Saxena (1988)) and the Pidgin-Creole languages (Holm (1988); Kihm (1990); Manessy (1995)). In many languages it follows universal semantic constraints and a cognitive hierarchy (Saxena (1988, 1991) ; Heine, Claudi & Hünnemeyer (1991)). This implicational cognitive hierarchy is presented as follow by Saxena : quote < say < know < believe < hope < purpose < reason < question < embedded question < conditional < comparative marker. The verb 'say' is first used as a declarative verb and then is progressively inserted after verbs of enunciation, then verbs of cognition, then verbs of perception and can then introduce final or causal clauses.

According to Mühlhäusler (1986) and Romaine (1988) the use of 'new' grammaticalized items to introduce complement and embedded clauses appears in a later stage of development (i.e. expansion phase) in Pidgin and Creole languages. Pidgins (stable Pidgins or Jargons) don't have embedded sentences. During expansion different complementizers are created through the reanalysis of different items. The origin or the source of these new conjunctions is either attributed to internal innovation (Mühlhäusler (1986)) or to transfer from substrate languages (Hancock (1964:27); Cassidy & le Page (1967:396); Alleyne (1980:169); Manessy (1995); Kessing (1991)). Contrary to 'natural' languages, processes of grammaticalization in Pidgin-Creole languages occur less gradually. The issue of internal development versus calquing of substrate patterns is often very difficult to establish but in many instances grammaticalization in Pidgin-Creole languages seems to be the convergence of universal developments and features of the languages present in the contact situation (Bruyn (1996)).

The grammaticalization of the verb 'say' and more generally the embedding processes in Arabic-based pidgins and creoles have been hardly mentioned in previous studies (Versteegh 1984:101). It is mentioned by Owens (1977, 1996) for Nubi and shortly mentioned in Miller (1987) for Juba Arabic. The function of the verb 'say' (*gale/gali*) as a complementizer seems to be very similar in both JA and Nubi. However the grammatical

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[1] A fuller version of this paper is to appear in R. Nicolai (ed) 2000. *Leçons d'Afrique : Filiations, ruptures et reconstitutions des langues : un Hommage à Gabriel Manessy*.

status of 'say' in both languages remains problematic. In JA the use of verb 'say' as a complementizer is far to be systematic. It's very rare in what I refer to as 'the vehicular variety of JA' and it appears mainly in what I refer to as 'the vernacular variety of JA'. Moreover the use of 'say' as a complementizer does not follow the universal semantic constraints quoted above and this point raise the issue of the relationship between the vehicular and vernacular varieties of JA.

The following analysis is based of data collected in 1981 and 1984 in the Equatoria Province of Southern Sudan. A sample of 6 speakers have been selected and are presented as follow : **S.1** = Emmanuel, a Kakwa village chief, 40 years old. **S.2** = Sule, A Muslim Bari elder living in Juba **S.3** = Kiden, a Bari nurse working in Juba hospital **S.4** = Lado, a 15 years old bari informant living in Juba **S.5** = Nyekesi, a 15 year old Baka teenager living in Juba; **S.6** = broadcast from the Radio of Sudan Council of Churches, Juba. **S.1** & **S.2** represent rural or elder speakers to whom Juba Arabic is mainly a vehicular language while **S3** to **S6** represent younger or urban speakers to whom JA is mainly a vernacular language.

2. *The origin and formation of Juba Arabic (JA) : a brief summary* [2]

An Arabic-based pidgin, the ancestor of present day Juba Arabic and Nubi, is believed to have appeared in Southern Sudan (and more precisely in the Rejaf Gondokoro area) between 1854 and 1888. This formative period covers the opening of Southern Sudan by the army of Mohammed Ali, the then ruler of Egypt and the establishment of military and slave trade centres. In 1888 the defeated army of Emin Pacha fled to Ouganda and Kenya where the black soldiers established themselves and became known as Nubi. In Southern Sudan this Arabic Pidgin known first as Bimbashi Arabic or Mangalese Arabic during the Colonial Period is labelled Juba Arabic since Independence. The Nubi language (also known as Ki-Nubi) is the mother tongue of the members of the Nubi ethnic group in Kenya and Ouganda. Juba Arabic is both a vehicular used in inter-ethnic communication in rural areas and a mother tongue of first language used as a dominant language in urban areas. The actual linguistic similarities between Nubi and Juba Arabic seem to indicate that the former military Arabic pidgin developed and stabilised before the split of the two varieties in 1888. However they can also indicate a parallel development.

3. *Complement clauses in JA : juxtaposition versus embedding*

The grammaticalization of the verb 'say' in Juba Arabic (JA) is very similar to what has been described in many other languages. The verb *gale* can be used as a declarative verb and as a complementizer after verbs of enunciation, cognition and perception. 186 complement clauses have been analysed. In 59 sentences, the complement clause is directly juxtaposed to the main verb. In 127 sentences, the verb *gale* 'say' is introduced between the main verb and the complement clause. Juxtaposition of the complement clause is the dominant feature of speakers S1 & S2 while embedding of the complement clause through the use of the verb *gale* 'say' as a complementizer is the dominant feature of speakers S3,S5,S6. (details according to speakers are available in the full version). *Gale* 'complementizer' has been found after the following verbs: *kelem* 'say', *asuma* 'ear', *ayinu* 'see', *arefu* 'know', *fekeri* 'think', *aba* 'refuse', *ligo* 'find', *kore* 'cry', *sedek* 'believe', *zeker* 'remember', *wori* 'show', *katibu*

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[2] More details on the socio historical aspects of Arabic based pidgins and creoles can be found in Heine (1982), ,Mahmud (1983), Miller (1984), ,Owens (1977 & 1996)

'write' , *rudu* 'desire'. The list is not exhaustive as it is restricted to my data and may potentially include many more verbs. The use of *gale* is more systematic after verbs of quotation or declaration (*kelem*), after the verb 'to show' (*wori*) and is quite frequent after verbs of perception (*asuma, ayinu*) and cognition (*arefu, fekeri*). It is variable after verb of action (*ligo*) and is never to be found after verb of order, wish or desire.

3.1 *gale after a declarative verb*

As in many languages, *gale* as a declarative verbs cannot be followed by *gale* complementizer. Thus *gale* 'declarative verb' is always followed by a juxtaposed complement clause reporting either a direct or indirect speech :

> *1. Amin zalan gal inta loro inta ma indik awlat*   (S1)
> Amin angry say you Loro you not have children
> 'Amin was angry and said 'You Loro don't you have children?'

> *2. inta gal inta ma dayer kwondo (S.6)*
> you say you not want kwondo
> 'You say (that) you don't want cassava's leaves'

On the opposite the declarative verb *kelem* 'say, speak' is obligatory followed by *gale* .

> *3. uwo be kelem gale kalas kalam de gedimu le abu taki*   (S3)
> he Asp. speak say enough words this present to father your
> 'He says 'it's enough present this matter to your father'

> *4. Uwo kelem gal uwo bija* (S4)
> he speak say he Asp-come
> 'he said that he will come'

The distribution of *gale* + complement clause or *kelem+gale*+complement clause is not linked with a distinction between direct or indirect reported speech as illustrated by the above examples. Both structures can be followed by direct or indirect speech. It's a sociolinguistic variable : JA vehicular speakers tend to never use *kelem-gale* while JA vernacular speakers tend to have a quasi systematic use of *kelem-gale*

3.2 *gale after a verb of perception, cognition, action*

With non declarative verbs the use of *gale* is optional as shown by the following examples :

> *5. biniya ligo kalat welet num ma uwa*   (S3)
>   girl find already boy sleep with him
>   'the girl find (that) the boy slept with her'
> vs.
> *6 ita ligo gali jama itnin del kan raba de bejowju de kaman* (S3)
>   you find say people two those if raise this Asp-marry this also
>   "You find that these two perons when they grow up they will marry'

> *7. iftakir ita gi rija min ini* (S5)
>   he thinks you Asp come back from here
>   'he thinks (that) you came back'
> vs.
> *8. uwa feker gale imkin asset de awuju akulu uwa* (S5)
>   he think say maybe lion this want eat him
>   'he thinks that maybe the lion wants to eat him'

The grammatical status of *gale* after these verbs is questionable. *gale* is never preceded by a verbal particle or a pronoun, a fact that indicates it's delexicalization. But in many sentences the complement clause still appears as a quotation :

> 9 *yalla asat de bizakir gali aa gibel durubu ana hini*   (S5)
>   thus lion this Asp-think say aa before hit me here
>   'thus the lion remembers 'aa before they hit me here'
> vs.
> 10. *uwa pokir gale imkin asset de awuju akulu uwa*   (S5)
>   he think say maybe lion this want eat him
>   'he thinks that maybe the lion want to eat him'

In many cases the combination of the main verb+ *gale* forms a syntactic unit and is very similar to serial-type constructions cf. *wori-gale* show-say -> 'to tell' :

> 11. *ita beja wori le uwa gale weledi ana kan keda bodiri*
>   you Asp-come show say son-mine I was like-this early
>   'You will tell him : my son I was like this before'

But in other examples *gale* clearly lost his lexical meaning :

> 12 *ana asuma gal sultan kelem gal keli ma karabu moya*
>   I hear say sultan speak say let not spoil water
>   'I hear that the Sultan said that (people) must not spoil the water'

4. *Further implications*
4.1 *Implicational hierarchy and languages uses*

The concept of implicational hierarchy indicates that if the verb 'say' appears at a certain level *x* of the hierarchy, it necessarily occupies all the levels below this level *x*. If *gale* appears after verbs of perception it means that it must appears after verbs of declaration and cognition. This hierarchy seems to function with speakers who speak JA as a vernacular but not with speakers who speak JA as a vehicular. Those people have a non predictable use of 'say' like S1 and S2 who sometimes use *gale* after a verb of perception (*asuma* 'hear') but never after *kelem* 'speak'. This indicates that in case of pidgin-creole context, the progressive and unidirectional conception of grammaticalization is inadequate. In many cases instances of grammaticalization are due to language transfer and not to internal evolution. In the JA case it means also that there isn't a linear continuum from the vehicular uses (more pidgin-type) to the vernacular uses (more creole type) but rather that the actual vehicular variety seems to be an approximation of the vernacular variety

4.2 *Language evolution and grammaticalization*

Comparison between Juba Arabic and Nubi indicates a very similar use of 'say' as a complementizer. Both languages have had separate development since 1888. As the 'proto-form of both languages is attested to have started in 1854, it could mean that this Arabic pidgin had a very quick linguistic development. Again grammaticalization here cannot be viewed as an internal development. In the case of *gale* it seems that the influence of the local vernacular language (Bari) was effective. But we don't have any testimony for this specific point in early documents... So we cannot assure that *gale* was already used as a complementizer in 1888. We remain with the open question of a putative separate development versus a common origin.

5. *Conclusion*

The analysis of gale as a complementizer needs to be systematically applied to a larger corpora before definite conclusion can be reach. But already it proved to be a very interesting case of language development and language contact.

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