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SAY transmitting intentions in Mwan

The presentation deals with the comparison of strategies of transmitting the cited speech and expressing "internal" intentions and decisions in Mwan (South Mande < Mande < Niger-Congo). It is shown that in both cases the verb *pe* 'to speak' is used as a matrix verb; however, the constructions differ drasticaly by their structure. Thus, it is necessary to distinguish two different meanings of the verb *pe*.

Mwan belongs to this type of languages where the verb of speech *pe* is used to express not only the actual speech, but the whole bunch of meanings including intentions and decisions (see: Güldemann; Matić, Pakendorf). It is used in to introduce: verbatim citation of pronounced words, approximate citations; orders and instructions; common opinions and common truths; interpretations and explainations; decisions, desires and intentions.

Ex. (1) *È   pē   à   nὲ   nī   dɔ̄ɔ̄   kà   zīnà*

     3SG say 3SG.NSBJ small DAT that   2PL.IMP come.down

    'She said to the children, that they (lit. "you.Pl") would come down.'

The two types of constructions differ fundamentally: a. the use of SAY for the transmission speech or thoughts, and b. SAY transmitting desires, decisions or intentions. The second type is charecterized by: 1) lack of quotative particle (*dɔ̄ɔ̄* or *káá*); 2) indexical shift.

Ex. (2) *È   pē   è   sɔ̰̄sí-lé* ...

    3SG   say   3SG   laugh-INF

    'He tried to smile [but his mouth turned out to be toothless]'.

Discussion. This difference helps to avoid reference conflicts. Perhaps, there are deeper reasons. Words and partly thoughts, regarded as inner speech (Vološinov), are already formulated therefore they can be transmitted as quotations even if the latter are not exact. Intentions or desires are not uttered, often not formulated and therefore they cannot be quoted.

Conclusion. The deep cognitive distinction between pronounced words and non-pronounced intentions is reflected in Mwan and in a number of other languages.