

Repetition of the quotative index: a linguistic curiosity or a trivial coincidence?

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In Bambara and Guro, two Mande languages spoken in West Africa, there is a reported discourse construction where quotative index is repeated.

(1a) Guro

ka le tulu le bhóó'né à wí'nâ mà
 2PL QUOT usually QUOT deaf-mute COP sound-PROG please

[Song:] You always said that the deaf-mute speaks. Manfla_C3.080

(1b) Bambara

à kó kó alahu kibarú
 3SG QUOT QUOT Allah aqbar

He said (that) Allah Aqbar! An_ka_denmisenya-zup.repl.html

Reported discourse constructions with two homonymous quotative indexes are not an widespread phenomenon, nevertheless apart from Guro and Bambara they are attested in some other Mande languages (Kakabe *kó* (Nikitina, Vydrina 2020) and, rarely, in Mwan *dɔɔ* (Perekhvalskaya 2020)). In our talk, we will discuss morphosyntactic features of homonymous quotative indexes and grammaticalization processes which can give rise to a construction with two homonymous quotative indexes.

Based on the Narrative Corpus of Guro (Kuznetsova 2022) and Bambara Reference Corpus (Vydrin et al. 2009-2022), we show that repeated quotative indexes share similar features such as a higher number of verbal properties of the first quotative in comparison to the second one. The first quotative from (1 a-b) is predicative; it can have its own arguments and it can be modified by adverbs in both languages. The second one functions as a complementizer. In Guldemann's (2008) terms, the first one is a quotative predicator while the second one is a quotative complementizer.

We argue that quotatives in Guro and Bambara have a verbal origin and that they lost their predicative features (most likely through their usage in constructions, where discourse report is introduced by the speaker followed directly by a quotative, and then became a second quotative index in complementizer function whereas the its predicative counterpart is still used as the first quotative index. Such a development from a verb to a quotative and then to uses associated with complementizer has typological parallels (Heine & Kuteva 2002) and is also attested in Mande languages (Idiatov 2010).

Therefore, repetition of quotative does not seem to be a coincidence but a reflection of ongoing cross-linguistically common grammaticalization processes.

Table 1. Reported discourse constructions in Narrative corpus of Guro and Bambara Reference corpus

	Guro		Bambara	
	N	%	N	%

Constructions with lexical verbs	8	9%	67,807	54.3%
QUOT + addressee +QUOT + DR	27	30.3%	354	0.3%
QUOT + DR	51	57.3%	54,925	44%
QUOT + addressee + DR	3	3.4%	830	0.7%
QUOT + QUOT + DR	0	0%	838	0.7%
Total of DR constructions with quotatives	89	100%	124,754	100%

It should be noted that in Guro, two quotatives are never juxtaposed, while in Bambara it is possible, even if such a construction is not very common. Two languages also have a significant difference in distribution of constructions with lexical verbs and quotatives: they are almost equally distributed in Bambara, while in Guro there is a strong preference for constructions with quotative. The distribution is illustrated in Table 1.

We suggest that these differences are explained by the stage of grammaticalization which is more advanced for Guro than for Bambara.

References

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