Grammaticalization of Tense in the Upper Guinea Creoles

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Goals

• To introduce the three Upper Guinea Creoles (UGCs)

• To provide an overview of the syntax and semantics of temporal \( \text{ba}(\eta) \) in the UGCs

• To discuss substrate languages as a source for UGCs past marker

• To propose a grammaticalization scenario of \( \text{ba}(\eta) \) across the UGCs

• To argue for a verb movement analysis in Kriyol
The Upper Guinea Creoles

- The following creole languages belong to the Portuguese-related Upper Guinea Creole group (UGCs)
  - Capeverdean Creole
  - Kriyol (Guinea-Bissau Creole)
  - Casamancese Creole (Casamance region, Southern Senegal).
The formation of the UGC

• A common protolanguage for the UGC is typically assumed in light of the high level of shared lexicon and grammatical features (e.g. Holm & Patrick 2007; Jacobs 2011; Michaelis et al. 2013; Quint 2000)

• Development of an UG pidgin from the mid-15th century on from the contact between Portuguese and continental Africans, which were predominantly Wolof and Mandinka speaking slaves

• Primary hypotheses regarding proto-UGC (cf. Jacobs 2011)
  – Insular hypothesis: the proto-language formed on the island of Santiago (Cape Verde) and spread to the continent through a luso-African trade network
  – Continental hypothesis: the proto-language formed in the rivers of Senegambia/Guinea-Bissau and expanded through a luso-African trade network

• Casamancese Creole is a later offshoot of Kriyol (17th century)
Tense marking in the UGC

UGCs stand out among Atlantic Creoles insofar they exhibit a postverbal past tense morpheme $ba(ŋ)$
- Attached to dynamic verbs, $ba(ŋ)$ yields a pluperfect reading
- Attached to stative verbs, $ba(ŋ)$ yields a simple past reading

1. Omi kume pon. (dynamic verb)
   ‘The man ate bread.’
2. N tene un primu na Cacheu. (stative verb)
   ‘I have a cousin in Cacheu.’
3. Omi kume-ба pon. (dynamic verb)
   ‘The man had eaten bread.’
4. N tene-ба un primu na Cacheu. (stative verb)
   ‘I had a cousin in Cacheu.’

(Kriyol examples)
Tense marking in the UGC

• Among UGCs, there is an important difference as to the grammatical status of tense morpheme $ba(ŋ)$
  – In the leeward varieties of Capeverdean (CVC), -$ba$ is a suffix (e.g. Baptista 1997; Quint 2000)
  – In Kriyol and Casamancese, $ba$ and $banŋ$ respectively, are usually labeled ‘free morphemes’ (e.g. Biagui 2012; Kihm 1994)
-ba in Capeverdean Creole

- Past tense marker –ba is a suffix
  - Object pronouns cliticize on bare verbs (5) but not onto -ba (6)
  - In a grammaticalized sequence of suffixes (-da), -ba occurs in rightmost position (7)

(5) Omi da-l/*el pon.
    ‘The man gave him/her/it bread.’

(6) Omi daba el/*l pon.
    man give.PST 3SG bread
    ‘The man had given him/her/it bread.’

(7) Dja m flada…
    already 1SG tell.PASS.PST
    ‘I was told…’

(da <*du-ba (attested in the 19th century)
(adapted from Quint 2000:235)
ba in Kriyol

- Kriyol past marker *ba* has developed into a clitic – less common in post-object positions (but cf. Kihm 1994)
  - Object clitics intervene between the verb and *ba* (8)
  - *ba* preferentially precedes strong pronouns (Themes) in Double Object Constructions (cf. 9a vs. 9b)
  - As in Capeverdean, *ba* is the outermost morpheme in clusters (10)

(8)  
*Omi da-l-ba* pon.
man give-3SG-PST bread
‘The man had given him/her/it bread.’

(9) a.  
*Omi da-nu-ba* el. (preferred reading)
man give-1PL-PST 3SG

b.  
*Omi da-nu el ba*.
Both: ‘The man had given it to him.’

(10)  
*Yagu firbi-nti-du-ba*.
water boil-CAUS-PP-PST
‘The water had been boiled.’
**baŋ in Casamancese**

- Casamancese *baŋ* shows a similar behavior to Kriyol *ba*
  - *Baŋ* in Casamancese is separated from the verb by clitics (11)
  - *Baŋ* may precede or follow strong pronouns (Themes) in Double Object Constructions (12 vs. 13)

(11) *Ladron yentrá-nos baŋ, pabiya janela yabri-du baŋ.*
   thief enter-1PL PST because window open-PASS PST
   ‘The thief had gotten in because the window was open.’

(12) *Saliña na kumé-bu baŋ yel buk*
   squirrels CONT eat-2SG PST 3SG IDEO
   ‘The squirrels have completely eaten it (from you).’

(13) *Pádur fasí-nu yel baŋ.*
   priest do-1PL 3SG PST
   ‘The priest had done this for us.’

(Adapted from Biagui 2012:175f.)
19th century sources

- The oldest data of Capeverdean and Kriyol from the late 19th century show that the contemporary patterns already existed

(14) *N ta mostraba nho.*
1SG HAB show.PST 3SG.formal
‘I was showing him.’
(Capeverdean, adapted from Schuchardt 1888)

(15) *Fomi na kastiga-l-ba.*
hunger CONT punish-3SG-PST
‘He was suffering severe hunger.’
(Kriyol, adapted from Schuchardt 1888; *castigalba* in the original)
Nonverbal *ba*

- In Kriyol and Casamancese, but not in Capeverdean, *ba(ŋ)* may follow nominals or adverbials and may occur in sentence-final position.
- In such cases, *ba(ŋ)* contributes a meaning of past and a sense of completion (Kihm 1994).

(16) *Kil omi ba i kin?*  
DEM man PST PRED who  
‘Who is that man (who was there)?’

(17) *Purmeru ba nan, e ta da-ba na nan.*  
first PST indeed 3PL HAB give-PST indeed  
‘In fact, previously, they used to give [scholarships].’

(18) *...e ta fala basi di analisi linguistika ba.*  
3PL HAB say base of analysis linguistic PST  
‘...they used to call ‘Introduction to linguistic analysis.’

(19) *Anos tu du di la baŋ na Sindon.*  
1PL all of there PST in Sindone  
‘All of us were from Sindone.’
The origins of *ba*

- **Hypothesis:**
  - *ba*(η) started out as a free morpheme, without a specialized host, related to the temporal interpretation in the (expanded?) pidgin-stage and started acquiring functional status during the nativization process

- **Second Language Acquisition:**
  - The **lexical** stage: bare verbs, time reference is provided by temporal and locative adverbs and certain connectives
  - The **morphological** stage: appearance of verbal morphology
    (Cf. Winford 2011 and references therein)
The origins of \textit{ba}

- Against several previous claims, we dismiss Portuguese imperfective -\textit{va} (e.g. \textit{fala}va \text{‘spoke’}) as the source for \textit{ba(ŋ)}
  - Pidgins shed inflectional morphology
  - Creoles do not develop tense markers from imperfective morphology
  - Semantic mismatch (imperfective vs. perfective)

- In support of a previous free morpheme status
  - Syntactic flexibility of \textit{ba(ŋ)} in the contemporary UGCs
  - \textit{Ba} is the most external suffix/clitic in Capeverdean and Kriyol morphological clusters
  - Pronouns cannot cliticize to Capeverdean suffix –\textit{ba}, despite availability of a clitic paradigm
  - Possible connection with Portuguese \textit{acabar} ‘to finish’ (Rougé & Kihm 2008)
    \rightarrow \text{cf.} Perfect forms derived from \textit{done, finish} in English Creoles (e.g. Winford 2011)
Ba and the substrate

• The form and syntax of $ba(\eta)$ are arguably substrate-related

• Substantial evidence for a historical and linguistic founder role of Wolof and Mandinka in the formation of proto-UGC (e.g. Jacobs 2011; Lang 2004; Quint 2008; Peck 1988; Rougé 2004; Soares & Torrão 2007)

• Examples of Wolof and Mandinka substrate influence
  – Main sources of African lexicon in the UGCs
  – Syntactic passives without passive auxiliary (Wolof)
  – Causative morphology (Mandinka)
  – Complex pronominal systems with strong/weak contrasts (Wolof)
  – ...


Tense/Aspect in Wolof

- Wolof exhibits an identical basic dynamic/stative contrast as in the UGCs
  - Unmarked dynamic verb forms → perfect
  - Unmarked stative verb forms → simple present

(20) *tiit-na-a*
    be.afraid-na-1SG
    ‘I’m afraid.’

(21) *dem-na-a*
    go-na-1SG
    ‘I left.’ / ‘I have left.’
Tense/Aspect in Wolof

- Wolof exhibits remote past forms (pluperfect) which overlap semantically with \( ba(\eta) \)
  - affix –oon
  - clitic/free morpheme woon

(22) `tiit-oón-na-a.

be.afraid-PST-na-1SG
‘I was afraid (but I am not now).’

(23) a. `lekk-oon-na-a.

eat-PST-na-1sg
‘I had eaten’

b. `lekk-na-a woon.

eat-na-1sg PST
‘I had eaten’

(Torrence, 2005:51)
Tense/Aspect in Wolof

- Wolof exhibits a morpheme *ba* which takes on several functions related to remoteness
  - Distal deictic marker in the nominal domain
    (24) *xale ba*
    child DEF.DIST
    ‘that child’
  - Past temporal conjunction (when, until)
    (25) *Ba ma waxee, ñu dem.*
    ‘When/after I had spoken, they left.’
  - Completion marker in semi-lexicalized chunks
    (26) *Añ naa ba pare.*
    lunch na.1SG until finish
    ‘I already had lunch.’
Mandinka

- Mandinka exhibits a form *ban* (often written as *bã* or *ban*)
  - Nominal: ‘end, limit’
  - Adverbial: ‘up to now, so far’
  - Verbal: ‘to end, to complete, to finish’, expressing completion and result

(27)  
- a. *A kɛ-ra ka bã* (Delafosse 1955)
  ‘it is entirely concluded’

- b. *A ye k’-ya kɛ bã* (idem)
  ‘he finished the act of working’

In sum, morphophonetic, semantic and syntactic features of Wolof and Mandinka appear to have been crucial in shaping the UGCs Tense/Aspect system and may have converged to some extent with Portuguese *acabar* ‘to finish’
Grammaticalization of *ba*

- The UGC reflect different stages of grammaticalization and possibly also different adstrate effects

1. Casamancese *ban* → temporal adverbial [+PAST, +COMPLETION] (?)

2. Kriyol *ba* → clitic tense marker [+PAST] → temporal adverbial [+PAST, +COMPLETION]

3. Capeverdean *-ba* → tense suffix in Capeverdean [+PAST]
Verb movement

Pollock (1989) and subsequent work

• Several syntactic tests, such as sentence negation, adverb placement and quantifier floating show that verbs in English and in French are in different structural positions

  – English lacks V-to-T movement

  – French exhibits V-to-T movement
Verb movement in creoles

(i) Creole languages lack verb movement (e.g. Roberts 1999)
   - Lack of inflectional morphology
   - Preverbal particles block V-to-T (otherwise violation of the HMC)

(ii) Yet, for some Creole languages V-to-T analyses have been proposed:
   - Mesolectal varieties of Louisiana French (Rottet 1992)
   - Capeverdean Creole (Baptista 2002)
V-Movement in Kabuverdianu

Baptista (2002: 203)

This analysis has been discussed by Pratas (2007) and Alexandre (2009):
• Order V-ADV-OBJ is severely restricted
• Quantifier floating is restricted to monoargumental predicates

(Note that Capeverdean varieties appear to exhibit variation wrt these tests)
V-Movement in Kabuverdianu

Pratas (2007: 149)

Affixes are lowered to V°

Alexandre (2012: 27)

Affixes hop to V° + agreement relation T-V
Kriyol: Adverb placement

• Kriyol shows unrestricted adverb placement between verb and object, irrespective of the presence of –ba

(28) Na Bisau, Barbosa ta kumpra sempri arus ku kana…
in Bissau Barbosa HAB buy always rice and rum
‘In Bissau, Barbosa always buys rice and rum …’ … (ECU 2009: 3)

(29) I kumpu dja vinti kasas.
3SG build already twenty houses
‘He has already built twenty houses.’ (BGB, 2010: 128)

(30) I solteru, i ka tene inda fidjus… (BGB, 2010: 50)
3SG bachelor 3SG NEG have yet children
‘He is a bachelor, he doesn’t have children yet….’

(31) Alunu studa diritu/ben si lison.
student study well POSS lesson
‘The student studied his/her lesson well.’ (Maria 2013: 29)
Kriyol: Quantifier floating

- Kriyol exhibits generalized quantifier floating

(32) a. **Tudu mininus lei librus.**
   all children read books
   ‘All the children read books.’

b. **Mininus tudu lei librus.**
   ‘The children all read books.’

c. **Mininus lei tudu, librus.** (Maria 2013: 30)

(33) (**tudu**) alunus (**tudu**) kuri (**tudu**)  
   ‘All the students ran.’ (Maria 2013: 31)
Kriyol: Clitic+Ba constructions

• The position of clitics with respect to clitic -ba

(34) a. Omi ta da-ba mininu pon.
    man HAB give-PST boy bread
    ‘The man used to give the boy bread.’

b. Omi ta da-l-ba pon.
    man HAB give-3SG-PST bread
    ‘The man used to give him bread.’

• Altogether, Kriyol exhibits several syntactic properties that are considered indicative of verb movement

• Proposal:
  – Ba is the head of an aspectual projection (AspP)
  – Kriyol exhibits generalized verb movement to Asp°
**Derivation**: *Omi ta da-ba mininu pon*. ‘The man used to give the boy bread.’

Asp probes the V feature in V; the V-feature is strong, hence V is (always) attracted to Asp.
Derivation: Omi ta da-l-ba pon ‘The man was giving him bread’/’The man used to give him bread.’
Final remarks

• The UGCs arguably show ongoing change from an isolating to a agglutinating typology through universal processes of grammaticalization and primary and secondary contact with agglutinating languages (Kriyol and Casamancese).

• Grammaticalization processes, such as the development of clitic past marker -ba in Kriyol, may lend additional support to syntactic analyses

• Kriyol in particular contradicts the idea that creole languages lack verb movement altogether and that verb movement is related to (rich) inflectional morphology

• The lexically filled AspP-shell agreeing with an empty T formalizes the idea that aspectual information is prominent in Creole languages
References


