

## The role of discourse practice in the spread of linguistic features: The case of logophoricity

### 1. Introduction

Logophoric markers in sub-Saharan Africa: an areal phenomenon? (Güldemann 2003, 2008a)

(1) Wan (Southeastern Mande, Nikitina 2012a):

- a. *bé à nɔ́ gé bā bé gōmɔ́*                      b. *bé à nɔ́ gé è gā*  
 then 3SG wife said LOG DEM understood                      then 3SG wife said 3SG went  
 ‘then his wife said she<sub>LOG</sub> understood that’                      ‘then his wife said he<sub>PERS</sub> left’

Logophoricity: an unlikely candidate for direct borrowing (cf. tone, ATR harmony, word order):

- infrequent in discourse, and mostly occurs in specific speech genres;
- in some languages, restricted in their grammatical function;
- commonly optional; e.g., they may alternate with first person pronouns;
- no evidence of borrowed markers; typically go back to old pronouns and demonstratives.

Dimmendaal (2001: 155): “Logophoric markers are an archaic discourse feature of the Niger-Congo and Nilo-Saharan language families, most likely going back to their common ancestor.

<...>[f]ormally distinct, though functionally similar, logophoric markers occur in neighbouring Afroasiatic languages.”

#### Goals of this talk:

- address the status of logophoricity in sub-Saharan Africa;
- show how African logophoricity differs from “logophoric” uses of reflexive pronouns; relate it to a special discourse reporting strategy (neither direct nor indirect reporting);
- relate logophoricity to the interactive oral performance of traditional sub-Saharan Africa.

### 2. Properties of West African logophoricity

African logophoricity: commonly treated as a feature of indirect reporting (Culy 1997; Sells 1987; Andersen 1999; Schlenker 2003; Oshima 2011, inter alia); alleged function: encoding co-reference between a participant of the speech report and a participant of the main clause (Hedinger 1984; Coulmas 1986; Dimmendaal 2001; Güldemann 2003, 2008b, among others). African logophoricity is treated on a par with “logophoric” uses of reflexive pronouns in Japanese, Latin, or Italian, which disambiguate sentences such as *John<sub>i</sub> said that he<sub>i,j</sub> was in a hurry*:

Properties distinguishing West African logophoricity from “logophoric” uses of reflexive pronouns and from markers of indirect discourse (Nikitina 2012a,b):

- Logophoric markers are normally optional, alternating with 1<sup>st</sup> person markers:

- (2) *bé è gé éé! bāā kē é, lā nɔ̀ni-á ñ j m̀.*  
 then 3SG said yeah LOG.EMPH this DEF 2SG lose-STAT.PERF 1SG at  
*éé! Tóli yā gé, náá gá lé kɔ̀ŋ-tā...*  
 yeah tomorrow PRT PRT 1SG+COP go PROG walk-at  
 ‘He said: Yeah, as for myself<sub>LOG</sub> here, you are unable to recognize me<sub>PERS</sub> [lit. ‘you get lost at me’] Yeah! Now tomorrow I<sub>PERS</sub> will go for a walk...’

- Logophoricity does not depend on a main verb; logophoric clauses are not subordinated:

- (3) *bé è àà tālí kɔ̀lé é dī é ló ságla.*  
 then 3SG 3SG.ALN stranger man DEF cow DEF eat started  
 ‘Then he [the hyena] started eating the cow of his [the hare’s] guest’

*á gē! pō á lāā dī é tē á gē! <...>*  
 that here.is thing that 2SG.ALN cow DEF killed that here.is  
 [Hare speaking:] ‘Here it is! Here’s what killed your cow!’

*lā zē bō bā tā á!*  
 2SG affair leave LOG on NEG  
 ‘Don’t blame me<sub>LOG</sub>!’ (lit., ‘Do not leave the affair on me<sub>LOG</sub>.’)

- Logophoric markers cannot encode 1<sup>st</sup> person participants (Hyman & Comrie 1981; Wiesemann 1986; Curnow 2002: 11; von Roncador 1992: 166).

- (4) a. *ñ gé náá gá lé*                      b. *\*ñ gé bāá gá lé*  
 1SG said 1SG+COP go PROG                      1SG said LOG+COP go PROG  
 ‘I said I’m going.’                      ‘I said I<sub>LOG</sub>’m going.’

- Logophoric markers appear in clauses that are otherwise “direct” (deictic features are reported from the perspective of the reported situation; cf. von Roncador 1988: 290-93, 1992; Stirling 1993; Nikitina 2012b; also Hagège 1974; Hedinger 1984; Boyeldieu 2004):

- (5) a. *bé è gé éé! bāā bō á dīdīā yā*  
 then 3SG said yeah LOG.EMPH passed COP just.now there  
 ‘and he said: yes, it was me<sub>LOG</sub> who passed by just now’

b. *dēgbè, m̄-mū é, áá tí dé! Ké lāá nè,*  
 friend people-PL DEF 3PL+COP many IDPH if 2SG+COP at.place

*bāá nè ǔ, srò!*  
 LOG+COP at.place NEG IDPH  
 ‘Man, those people, they are many! [Even] if you’re [staying] here, I<sub>LOG</sub> am not [staying].’

c. *ké lā zò-á bā biàgà nè, zē zānā dī!*  
 if 2SG come-STAT.PERF LOG wake PURP word true say  
 ‘If you’ve come to wake me<sub>LOG</sub> up, tell the truth!’

d. *è gé zò bé lā bā pólì*  
 3SG said come then 2SG LOG wash  
 ‘She said: come and wash me<sub>LOG</sub>.’

e. *bé gé bāá kā tógōlē dō té-ñ*  
 that said LOG+COP 1PLEXCL elder.brother one kill-PROSP  
 ‘He acted as if he<sub>LOG</sub> was going to kill one of our elder brothers.’

- (6) Donno So, Dogon (Culy 1994: 123; Curnow 2002):

*Oumar [inyeme jembō paza bolum] miñ tagi*  
 O. LOG sack:DEF drop left:1SG 1SG:OBJ informed  
 ‘Oumar told me that he had left without the sack.’

#### Logophoric markers:

- do not mark co-reference;
- are not part of a subordinate context;
- appear in a special “logophoric” mode of reporting (neither direct nor indirect discourse; also different from the known cases of “semidirect” styles, Nikitina 2012b);
- distinguish self-reference by the story’s performer (encoded by 1<sup>st</sup> person pronouns) from self-reference by the story’s characters (encoded by logophoric markers); also useful for the purposes of West African triadic communication (Ameka 2004, Ameka & Breedveld 2004).

### 3. Origins of logophoricity

Logophoric markers commonly derive from old 3<sup>rd</sup> person pronouns and demonstratives (Hyman 1979: 51 on Aghem; Dimmendaal 2001).

Some languages use 3<sup>rd</sup> person pronouns in a logophoric function, in otherwise “direct” clauses:

(7) Obolo, Cross River; Aaron 1992:

ògwú úgá okékító ító ikíbé gwún kàn, òmò ikátùmú  
this mother was.crying cry say child 3SG.POSS 3SG not.told

inyí òwù yé íbé òwù kàgòk ifit ifit yí  
give 2SG Q say 2SG not.follow play play this

‘The mother was crying, saying: My child, did I not tell you not to join in this dance group?’

“Logophoric reporting style” is often edited out of texts. Herauld (1978: 171-3) on Adioukrou:

“Exemple suivant est extrait de la version enregistrée et non corrigée du conte <...>; il illustre un usage curieux (et non isolé) des personnels de l’énonciation libre, les premières personnes deviennent des troisième personnes comme on s’y attend, mais les deuxième personnes restent ce qu’elles sont <...>

“La version revue et corrigée, jugée plus correcte par notre informateur principal bien que le maintien des 2<sup>ème</sup> personnes soit tout à fait acceptable, transpose les deuxième personnes à la troisième et ce sans aucune ambiguïté de référence <...>”

### 4. Areal morphosyntactic properties of West African storytelling

Logophoricity: but one of a family of morphosyntactic strategies transmitted through traditional genres. Other characteristic features include:

- the use of ideophones:

(8) è bī á blèkó lé kàlà kàlà  
3SG PAST COP run PROG IDPH IDPH  
‘He ran very quickly.’

(9) è wlàngbà pú pá pá klà á é tã  
3SG shirt white IDPH IDPH put STAT.PERF REFL on  
‘He put on a shiny white fine shirt.’

- fixed reference of demonstratives:

(10) ké [bè] yrē kē é kē mǎ mǎ], bé gǎ é dō mǎ,  
then that work this DEF gave to PRT that go CNV one PRT

ké è η bò préñ!  
DEICT.SHIFT 3SG PERF finish IDPH

‘And **she**<sub>DEM</sub> gave him that work, then when **she**<sub>DEM</sub> once went [to the field] – **he**<sub>PERS</sub> had already finished, preñ!’

ké è bé éη mǎ yā gē, parceque bé á zò lé  
DEICT.SHIFT 3SG that voice heard here PRT because DEM COP come PROG

cǎñ, sà gē, bé bé é dīnā wāñē òó òó  
far.away there PRT then that REFL stop there greetings! CNJ greetings!  
‘[for] **he**<sub>PERS</sub> had heard **her**<sub>DEM</sub> voice there, since **she**<sub>DEM</sub> comes from far away there, then **she**<sub>DEM</sub> stops down there: greetings-oh-greetings!’

bé è lāá é kǎñ mū é yrō blèyā, bé à zò klà à mǎ  
then 3SG PRTREFL hair PL DEF called quickly then 3PL.PROSP put 3SG at  
‘then **he**<sub>PERS</sub> quickly calls his hair, in order for them to place themselves [back] on **him**<sub>PERS</sub>’

- temporal shifts (Nikitina 2007):

(11)a. è zō ké à η gǎ  
3SG came DEICT.SHIFT 3PL PERF go  
‘When he came, they were [already] gone.’

b. wǎtí kē é gó ké yāá kàgà lé mǎ yā  
time this DEF in DEICT.SHIFT 3SG+COP scratch PROG at here  
‘At that time, he was [all] scratching.’

- complex repetitive sentence structure (corresponding to complex information structure):

(12) bé à gē pō kē é, bé pō kē é, à gē  
then 3PL COP thing this DEF that thing this DEF 3PL COP

blèkó lé bé klā, bé à bé kē à mǎ yā gē  
run PROG that after then 3PL that gave 3PL to here DEICT  
‘And they gave them that thing that they were running after.’ (Literally, ‘And they – the thing, that thing – they are running after it – then they gave it to them there’)

(13) bé à dè gé [ kǎlé kē é gē bāā bā é ó-η  
then 3SG father said man this DEF COP LOG.ALN field DEF finish-PROSP

éli dō ], bā-á bā nùñ é kē-η béé mǎ  
day one LOG-COP LOG daughter DEF give-PROSP DEM-EMPH to  
‘And her father said: I’m going to give my daughter [only] to the man that is going to finish [cultivating] my field in one day.’ (Literally, ‘And her father said: this man is going to finish myLOG field in one day, ILOG am going to give myLOG daughter to himFOCUS’)

### 5. Conclusions

- The notion of logophoricity should be extended beyond the use of specialized markers; languages without logophoric markers use 3<sup>rd</sup> person pronouns as part of a *logophoric style* (distinguishing self-reference by the narrator from self-reference by characters).
- Morphosyntactic phenomena may show areal distribution without being directly borrowable; the use of *logophoric style* precedes the development of specialized logophoric markers.
- Many West African morphosyntactic strategies are grounded in specific types of communicative practice, transmitted through traditional genres. Their spread across genetic family boundaries need not depend directly on linguistic borrowing.

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