ON THE NATURE OF pa IN CAPEVERDEAN CREOLE AND ITS POSSIBLE HISTORICAL SOURCE

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0. Introduction

This paper concerns the nature of pa in Capeverdean. It is designed to be a comparative response to Koopman and Lefebvre's (1982) study of the Haitian Creole pu. Section I presents the various functions of pa and an examination of the similarities and differences between pa and the Haitian pu. In the second part of this paper, we will explore the possible historical source of Capeverdean pa.

I. Functions, distribution and meaning of pa.

1.1 The preposition pa.

Capeverdean Creole has a preposition pa for introducing NPs as illustrated below.

(1) Faze kel favor pa bu mai.
    do this favor for your mother
    'Do your mother this favor'.

(2) E more pa nos.
    he died for us
    'He died for us'.

(3) E sta toma ramedi pa se dor di kabesa.
    he AUX take medicine for his pain of head
    'He's taking medicine for his headache.'

1 I am deeply indebted to Samuel Epstein, Susumo Kuno and Hoskuldur Thránisson for their constructive criticisms and numerous insightful comments on this paper. All errors remain of course my own.
Pa can introduce complements, either infinitival complements, as in (4) or finite as in (5):

(4) Ez ta papia Purtuges pa inkomoda ya pai. They Asp speak Portuguese for annoy my father 'They speak Portuguese to annoy my father.'

(5) Nu tive ki trabaja pa nos minizu fikaba na kel skola. we had to work for our children stay Tense in that school 'We had to work for our children to stay in that school.'

In (4) and (5), pa has a purposive interpretation, meaning "for the purpose of" or "in order that" while (1)-(3) have a beneficial meaning. Our assumption that this pa is a preposition is based on the fact that a wh-phrase can follow pa as illustrated in (6) and (8):

(6) Ing sta gardabu kel saku pa kuandu bu ten mestensa di yel. I Asp keep you this bag for when you have necessity of it 'I am keeping this bag for you for when you need it'.

We would then assume the tree representation in (6)'

We may observe here that this type of clauses involves a limited number of wh-phrases such as when in (6) and if in (8) (This is not uncontroversial: for an argument suggesting that whether is in Spec-CP while if is in Cₗ, refer to Kayne (1991)). The example Koopman and Lefebvre (henceforth K&L) give contains si ("if") and not when as illustrated below (K&L 1982:203)

(7) yo kite mwe mem ak ti-fi-a rete na salo-a they let me with girl-Det stay in living-room si ti-fi-a ge parol l di mwe for if girl-DET have word for she tell me. 'They let me stay in the living room with the girl in case she had something to tell me.'

In Capeverdean, this type of clauses is possible with when as illustrated in (6) and if (si) as in (8) below:

(8) Ez dichang fika na sala pa si menina tive un kuza pa frang. they let me stay in room for if girl had a thing to tell me 'They let me stay in the room in case the girl had something to tell me.'
Two observations are to be made regarding the sentence in (8) about the two expressions *dichang* and *frang* meaning respectively "let me" and "tell me". These clusters result from the pronoun *ing* incorporating into the verbs *dicha* ("to let") and *fra* ("to say"). Due to a phonological rule prohibiting two successive vowels, the vowel *a* from the verb takes over and leads to the deletion of the vowel *i* of the pronoun. This is in keeping with the tendency for the vowels of lexical words taking over the vowels of function words. A similar phenomenon is found in French where the vowel of the definite article is deleted when the following lexical item starts with a vowel:

French:
(9) *Le argent --> l'argent
'The money'

The second observation is that although the pronoun *ing* ("I") has an accusative counterpart *mi* ("me"), verbs like *dicha* and *fra* do not case-mark the pronoun as accusative as illustrated by the ungrammaticality of (10a). Instead, it remains nominative as in (10b).

(10) a. *Ya pai dicha me bai.
   my father let me go.
b. Ya pai dichang bai.
   'my father let me go'.

The data in (1)-(8) suggests that the base rule for PPs is:

(11) PP ---> P ________
     ^           \____________
     NP           CP

1.2 The Complementizer *pa*:

Contrary to the Haitian complementizer which occurs exclusively in tensed sentences, the Capeverdean complementizer *pa* may introduce both tensed and infinitival sentences as illustrated in (14a) and (14b). It is difficult to tell tensed sentences from infinitivals. The only ground we have to assume that the complementizer *pa* introduces tensed sentences is that we find tense particles like *ba* in such sentences. It was believed at some point that *ki* introduced finite clauses and *pa* infinitivals but the picture is no longer so clear cut, based on the presence of tense and aspect particles in sentences introduced by *pa*. The complementizer *pa* can occur after verbs. Examples of verbs followed by *pa* are given in (12) and (13):

(12) Ya parentes kre pang bai Cabu Verdi.
    my parents want for me go Cape-Verde
    'My parents want me to go to Cape-Verde'.

(13) Ya parentes kre dichang bai Cabu Verdi.
    my parents want let me go Cape-Verde
    'My parents want me to let me go to Cape-Verde'.
(13) Ya parentes fra pang bai Cabu Verdi.
  my parents told for me go Cape-Verde
  'My parents told me to go to Cape-Verde.'

(14) Fin. a. El fra pa bu odjaba bu mai.
  he tell for you see Tense your mother
  'He told you to see your mother'.

Inf. b. Ez fra pa fika li.
  they said for stay here
  'They said to stay here.'

At this point, we may wonder how to tell the preposition pa apart from the homophonous complementizer pa. Recall earlier that we assumed that the first pa in (1) through (8) was a preposition, based on the fact that it could precede a wh-word. We hypothesized that the wh-word was in Spec-CP and pa the head of PP. Note that in the same way that verbs do not case-mark the pronoun ing as accusative, pa in (13) does not either and we observe here the same phonological phenomenon as in (8) where the vowel i to the pronoun ing deletes by incorporating with the preposition pa yielding pang.

Interestingly, as seen in (13), when pa introduces an IP and the subject of IP is the first person pronoun ing, ing is not case-marked accusative. However, if pa has a benefactive meaning (to do something for the benefit of someone), then pa does case-mark the pronoun accusative as illustrated in (15).

(15) a. Faze keli pa mi
    Do this for me.

b. *Faze keli pang.

This may provide us with a clue to distinguish between the preposition and the complementizer pa. We can tell them apart thanks to the exceptional change in morphology of the first person singular. Due to poor morphological variation, the other pronouns keep the same form regardless whether they are assigned nominative or accusative case. The preposition case-marks the pronoun as accusative and the complementizer does not. The pronoun gets its nominative case from an Infl node.

Pa is found with a few performative verbs such as kre ("to want") and fra ("to say"), pregunta ("to ask") but not with promete ("to promise"), espera ("to hope") and regreta ("to regret").

(16) a. E regreta ki se avo more.
    He regreted that his grand-mother died.
    'He regreted his grand-mother's death'.

b. *E regreta pa se avo more.
   *he regrets for his grand-mother die

We also find pa in sentences that could be analyzed as infinitival relatives:
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(17) Ing ten un kuza pa mostrabo.
I have a thing to show you
'I have something to show you.'

(18) a. Ing kre pel ben.
I want for him come
'I want him to come.'
b. Ing kre keli.
I want this
'I want this one.'
c. *Ing kre pa keli.
I want this.
d. El kre pang bai.
he wants for me to go
'He wants me to go'.

The verb kre takes a pa-complement in (18a). There are two possibilities: either this is a prepositional complement and the pa obviously is a preposition or it is a CP-complement introduced by the complementizer pa, in this case kre does not take a PP complement. The fact that (18b) is grammatical and (18c) ungrammatical indicates that kre does not take a PP complement and that pa in (18a) is hence not a preposition but a complementizer. Being a complementizer, it will not assign accusative case to the first person pronoun as illustrated in (18d).

1.3 The AUX or TENSE pa?:

Pa combined with sta also occurs as a particle with the meaning of futurity.

(19) El sta pa ten fidju.
she AUX about have child
'She is expecting a child.'

(20) El sta pa ser professor.
he AUX about be professor
'He is planning on becoming a professor.'

One observation is to be made at this level: if the expression sta pa is not followed by ten or ser, it may not express intentionality or controllability on the part of the agent as illustrated in (21):

(21) El sta pa more.
he is about die
'He is dying.'

We may wonder what the position of this pa is. Is it in AUX with sta or is it in TENSE? So far, we have shown that there are several types of pa in Capeverdean: first, the preposition introducing NPs and clauses, second, pa the complementizer
subcategorized by certain verbs (in infinitival relatives) and third, pa the marker occurring in AUX with the AUX sta.

At this point it would be relevant to review K&L’s analysis of the Haitian modal marker pu. On the grounds that the Haitian auxiliary ap and pu never cooccur, hence are in complementary distribution, K&L hypothesize that they occupy the same position, namely, the Haitian modal marker pu is in AUX. In contrast, in Capeverdean, the AUX sta and pa cooccur adjacently. At least two analyses regarding the position of pa are possible. The first analyzes pa in AUX together with sta as no word or constituents may intervene between both elements as illustrated by (22):

(22) *El sta manya pa ten fidju.
She Aux tomorrow pa have a child.

The other possibility would be to hypothesize that pa occupies the position in Tense by AUX by virtue of its connotation of futurity. However, at this point, I do not have enough evidence to choose one position over the other.

The similarities and differences of the Haitian pu and the Capeverdean pa are summarized in (23):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Haitian pu</th>
<th>Capeverdean pa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I Preposition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) Before NPs.</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) Before finite complements</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii) Before infin. complements</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II Complementizer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) in Tensed clauses</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) in infinitival clauses</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) Modal</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) AUX</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

II. The assumed syntactic historical source of the complementizer pa.

K&L investigated whether the Haitian Aux pu is derived from the complementizer or from the homophonous modal pu which occupies AUX. In other words, is the change from AUX to COMP or from COMP to AUX? They dismiss considering whether it is derived from the preposition pu based on the fact that its usage is too limited in the language.

They base their findings on Sylvain and Faine. In Sylvain (1936) they find instances of pu in AUX but none in CP. In Faine (1937), they find instances of pu in both AUX and CP with the majority
of occurrences in AUX. In Hall (1953) though, they find 16 occurrences of pu in CP but only one in AUX. Based on these data, K&L conclude then that the change is from AUX to COMP as the position of pu in COMP becomes stronger.

I tried to follow the same methodology by consulting Black Slaves’ speech as it is reported in the writings of the 16th century Portuguese playwright Gil Vicente. He reports the speech of black slaves who are believed to be the ancestors of the Capeverdeans among other lusophone colonized people (Sao-Tome, Guinea Bissau).

I found a condensed compilation of his work in the impressive study "La Langue de Gil Vicente" by the French author P. Teyssier. I found 6 occurrences compiled in Teyssier (1959) of para apparently later reduced in Capeverdean to pa. Incidently para in the Black speech corresponded to the Portuguese pera in the 16th century. Later on, para apparently was reduced to pa in Capeverdean while it became para in Portuguese. The occurrences were the following:

(24) Frágoa d’Amor (1524)
   a. para mim
      'for me'
   b. para bossa cama
      'for your bed'

(25) Nao d’ Amores (1527)
   para male benturaro
   for bad venture
   'for misfortune'

(26) Clérigo da Beira (1529? 1530?)
   a. Para que?
      for what?
      'why’?
   b. Para come?
      for eat
      'To eat?'
   c. Para que furta
      for what steal
      'Why steal?'

Although the data I have access to so far from the 16th century is quantitatively infinitesimal, (further research is definitely required), we may tentatively make the following assumption. Given that in these data as limited as they may be, (three occurrences of para introduce NPs, one introduces a wh-word and two others introduce infinitival verbs) we may assume that pa or rather para was the head of PP. Hence, this might suggest that the Capeverdean COMP pa is historically derived from the preposition para. Although these Black slaves are believed to have been the African ancestors of both Capeverdeans and Sao Tomenses (among others) we have to remember that we are not dealing
with the only possible ancestors to the Capeverdeans. Besides, this is not really a comparable analogy to K&L's study as they were studying much more contemporary data (Sylvain and Faine in the mid 1930's and Hall in the early 50's).

It seems that the link between the preposition pa introducing NPs and complements, and the homophonous complementizer pa is a possible one. In other words, the complementizer pa may have derived from the preposition pa in Capeverdean.

We may suggest the hypothesis in (27) as it is formulated in K&L (1982:215)

(27) (i) Complementizer may derive from prepositions introducing final complements.
(ii) Complementizer may derive from modal markers.

(i) may be valid for some creole languages such as Capeverdean whereas (ii) seems to be valid for Haitian as claimed by K&L.

III. Conclusion, assumptions and further research:

The analyses above have led us to assume that what makes pa the preposition distinguishable from pa the complementizer is its case assignment property. Pa as a preposition is a governor and is a Case-marker for the following NP. In spite of the poor morphological variation of Capeverdean, such an observation could be made due to the exceptional morphological change of the first person pronoun, the nominative ing and the accusative me. The preposition pa can assign accusative to an NP as illustrated in (28a) or introduce CP as in (28b). In this respect, the position of pa preceding a wh-phrase allows us to identify it as a preposition.

The complementizer pa is not a case assigner and the NP is assigned nominative by INFL as shown in (28c).

As far as the historical development of pa is concerned, the data we found in Gil Vicente lead us to assume that pa was first a preposition (as in (28a)) introducing NPs only before introducing CPs (as in (28b)) and was in its last stage reanalyzed as a complementizer (as in (28c)). (See trees in (28) on the next page).
To corroborate this assumption, more data from 16th century Black Speech need to be collected for further research.

The analysis of the type of clauses introduced by pa revealed that it may introduce both infinitival and finite clauses. It would be interesting to examine within the minimalist framework to what extent the Portuguese inflected infinitivals as described by Raposo (1987) has influenced the behavior and reanalysis of pa.
REFERENCES


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