

Reported Speech in Ut-Ma'in

Rebecca Paterson

CNRS-LLACAN and SIL International

Using narrative data from Ut-Ma'in [gel], a Kainji language of northwestern Nigeria, I first present two main strategies for speech reporting: the prolific SAY-construction and the SPEECH VP + $\bar{9}z\bar{9}$ SAYING-construction. Second, I discuss uses of the SAYING-construction that have extended beyond the reported speech domain.

The SAY-construction uses a form of the verb $z\bar{9}$, which can occur with the full range of verbal suffixes. The reported speaker (RS) occurs in the preverbal subject position. An optional reported listener (RL) occurs in the postverbal primary object (O_1) position, typically used for recipients in ditransitive clauses. The speech report (Report) occurs after any optional reported listener. This is parallel to the location of the secondary O_2 , typically used for theme arguments in ditransitive clauses. Prosodically, certain speakers pause or adjust pitch immediately before the Report. Pause and pitch adjustment are not features of other ditransitive clauses which highlights questions of constituency.

(1) S V O_1 O_2
RS $z\bar{9}$ -TNS (RL) (#pause/pitch) (Report)

In the SAYING-construction, the form $\bar{9}z\bar{9}$, which is transparently related to the verb $z\bar{9}$ ‘say’ and yet never takes verbal inflection, occurs between the optional RL and the Report, as in (2). The main verb is often a speech related verb like ‘tell’, ‘ask’, or ‘shout’. Any prosodic pause or shift in pitch follows $\bar{9}z\bar{9}$, and immediately precedes the Report as in the SAY-construction.

(2) S V O_1 O_1
RS V (RL) $\bar{9}z\bar{9}$ (#pause/pitch) (Report)

In the final section, I present a broad range of uses of the complementizer $\bar{9}z\bar{9}$ and the various mono-clausal and bi-clausal constructions in which it is found with predicates of perception and cognition like ‘hear’, ‘know’, or ‘think’, as well as clauses expressing result, reason, hypothetical condition, and definition. Evidence for the grammaticalization of $\bar{9}z\bar{9}$ comes from change in meaning, function, and adjustments to prosodic boundaries.