

The following quotation from Manfredi (1991, 175) is cryptic but explicable—thanks to J. Maché for noticing:

The factative effect is not general across [Greenberg-] Kwa. In Àbè and Yorùbá, eventive verbs are temporally ambiguous, while in Àk[a]n temporal ambiguity is found with stative verbs (Christaller 1875, 58).<sup>1</sup>

The finite forms in (1), inflected with intriguingly unaccented (H-less) prosody of the predicate root (deserving of analysis by Àkan specialists someday) express “continuance of (active or inactive) state in the present or past time” and the same freedom of temporal reference obtains for similarly inflected forms of reduplicated *-yí-ye* ‘good’, *-sò-so* ‘big’, *-sù-sua* ‘small’, *-wò-ware* ‘long/tall’ and *sè-sè* ‘resemble’ (Christaller 1875, 58, 67). Apparently all these items belong to a larger set whose members are not enumerated in available descriptions but whose lexical diacritic “[+ STATIVE]” hints a shared component of conceptual semantics—also considering that the same inflection and associated temporal freedom fails to occur with *-bá* ‘come’ among an open set of predicates accordingly labeled [– STATIVE, + ACTIVE] (Schachter & Fromkin 1968, 123).

- (1)a. Ì wà. Twi (Àkan, BK1, Christaller 1875, 58, cf. for tonemarking)  
3S have  
‘S/he has’ OR ‘... had’
- b. Ì kura(c).  
3S hold-FIN  
‘S/he holds’ OR ‘... held’

Finite interpretive outcomes consistently differ in Àbè (western Àkan periphery, neighboring the Kru cluster) as well as in Benue-Kwa 2 (BK2) e.g. Standard Yorùbá (cf. Manfredi 2009). In these languages, even lexico-semanticly active predicates like ‘eat’ (2) yield in their bare finite form a systematic temporal ambiguity between simple preterite and “extended-now” (cf. McCoard 1978, Rathert 2001), although this vagueness is usually overlooked in the analytical literature.

- (2)a. Mo jẹ irẹ̀sì. Standard Yorùbá (representative in this respect of the rest of BK2)  
1S eat rice  
‘I {ate [then]/have [now] eaten} rice’
- b. Mò dí saka. Àbè (Àkan, BK1, Manfredi 1988, 87)  
1S eat rice  
‘I {ate [then]/have [now] eaten} rice’

Back in Àkan, Welmers points to temporal ambiguity in a different inflected form, for “verbs with an inceptive meaning” (1973a, 256) as in (3), lexico-semanticly resembling the Èdó pattern in (4) modulo the different inflectional contexts.<sup>2</sup>

- (3)a. Ò é bíf. Fante (Àkan, BK1, Welmers 1973a, 256, 1973b, 347)  
3S PF black  
‘It is black’ OR ‘... has become black’
- b. Ò á fúná.  
3S PF tired  
‘S/he is tired’ OR ‘... has become tired’
- (4)a. Ò gó-(r)è. Èdó (BK1, Òmórúyì 1986, 291, cf. Wescott 1963, 145)  
3S bend-CL  
‘It bent [then]’ OR ‘... is [now] crooked’
- b. Ò guòghó-(r)è.  
3S break-CL  
‘It broke [then]’ OR ‘... is [now] broken’
- b. Ò vboó-(r)ò.  
3S ripe-CL  
‘It ripened [then]’ OR ‘... is [now] ripe’

That even BK1 has the temporal ambiguity in (3) and (4) shows that (2) is not some free semantic rule but the outcome of syntactic derivation. If the crosslinguistic difference between (2) and (1) arose from the phase-bifurcation that defined BK2 (Manfredi 2009), then Àbè (2b) is predicted only if inflection eroded there *secondarily*, perhaps in *Sprachbund* with Kru.

## References

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1. Christaller gives “Àkán” LH (1875, x, xv) but that may be a prosodic anglicism so provisionally I now write the *difficilior lectio*, Àkan LL.

2. The Èdó finite, harmonising suffix *-(r)è/-(r)ò* is the historical and formal counterpart of Igbo *-rV* (Manfredi 2022 and refs. cited there).