

FACTIVITY, PRESUPPOSITION AND THE RELATIVISED PREDICATE  
IN KRIO\*

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After a brief review of the literature on factivity and presupposition, the paper examines a case of asymmetry in the interpretation of a construction known as the relativised predicate (RP). Whenever the main verb of the sentence with RP is *mék* (= 'make'), the sentence may be interpreted in two ways, including one with "the fact that". However, if the matrix verb is other than *mék*, there is only one interpretation possible—without "the fact that". It is concluded that the dual interpretation is possible because the relative particle (which is also a complementizer linked to factive verbs) associates with the factive *mék*.

1. Factivity and Presupposition<sup>1</sup>

1.1. Kiparsky & Kiparsky [1968]. In their classic paper, Kiparsky and Kiparsky [1968] divide predicates into two categories, factive and non-factive. The

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\*I wish to thank an anonymous reviewer for *Studies in African Linguistics* for comments on an earlier version of this paper. Some of the issues raised here are also discussed in Nylander [1983] and Williams [1976, 1977]. Most of the data in the paper are from Krio, an "English-based" creole language spoken in Sierra Leone and elsewhere in West Africa. (The variety presented here is from a Sierra Leone dialect.) On pidgins and creoles in Africa, see Berry [1971]. On Krio more specifically, see Jones [1971]. One feature of Krio is that it is a tone language—see Berry [1961], Coker [1977], Coomber [1969], Fyle and Jones [1980], Johnson [1974], and Nylander [1979, 1983]. Tones are noted as follows: ` (low tone), ' (high tone). The transcription used is that of the International African Institute (IAI). The following abbreviations will be used: NOM = nominalising particle; PERF = perfective aspect; PROS = prospective mood; REL = relativising particle.

<sup>1</sup>Three different articles will be discussed in this section. Since it would take us too far afield to examine all the points made in each article, I have limited myself to what I consider most relevant for the discussion at hand.

Kiparskys point out a number of systematic differences between the two types of predicates. One of these differences is that only factive predicates are compatible with "the fact that". Thus, while the latter can combine with the factive predicate "be significant" (1a), it cannot associate itself with the non-factive predicate "be likely" (1b).

- (1) a. The fact that he left is significant.  
 b. \*The fact that he left is likely.

The Kiparskys also stress the relationship between factivity and presupposition. Factive sentences presuppose the truth of the embedded clause, whilst non-factive sentences do not. Thus, the factive (2a) presupposes (2b), but the non-factive (3a) does not presuppose (3b).<sup>2</sup>

- (2) a. I regret that it is raining  
 > b. It is raining  
 (3) a. I suppose that it is raining  
 \*> b. It is raining

1.2. Karttunen [1971]. Since the Kiparsky & Kiparsky paper, two other extremely important papers on factivity have been published. The common denominator of both papers is that they show that factivity is not as straightforward an issue as is usually assumed. The first of these papers is Karttunen [1971]. Karttunen shows, firstly, that presupposition cannot always be separated from the main sentence. For example, (4a) and (5a) can be analysed as (4b) and (5b), respectively:

- (4) a. Some senators regret that they voted for the SST  
 b. For some senators x, x regrets that x voted for the SST  
 (5) a. Some senators regret that some senators voted for the SST  
 b. Assertion: "For some senators y, y regrets that for some senators x,

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Unless otherwise stated, the examples in this section are taken from the articles referred to.

<sup>2</sup>The symbol > means "presupposes the truth of", \*> means "does not presuppose the truth of", ⊃ means "implies", and \*⊃ means "does not imply".

x voted for the SST."

Presupposition: "For some senators x, x voted for the SST."

However, (4a) and (5a) do NOT have the same presupposition, as can be seen by comparing (4a') and (5a'):

(4a') Some senators, perhaps even Yarborough, regret that they voted for the SST.

(5a') Some senators, perhaps even Yarborough, regret that some senators voted for the SST.

Kartunnen also shows that the *mood* of the main sentence is important. Consider, firstly, the sentences in (6). Both sentences presuppose that Harry's wife is not a virgin. In short, in sentences like (6), there is no difference in presupposition between *that*-complements and *poss-ing* structures, in the indicative mood:

(6) a. That his bride is not a virgin bothers Harry.

b. His bride's not being a virgin bothers Harry.

Consider, now, both sentences in the *subjunctive mood*.<sup>3</sup> Sentence (7a) presupposes that Harry's wife is not a virgin, as confirmed by the \* in the section in brackets, but (7b) carries no such presupposition. In fact, (7b) does not even presuppose that Harry is married:<sup>4</sup>

(7) a. That his wife is not a virgin would bother Harry if he knew about it.  
(\*Luckily, she is a virgin.)

b. His bride's not being a virgin would bother Harry if he knew about it.  
(Luckily, she is a virgin.)

1.3. Givón [1973]. Givón [1973] makes a distinction between cognition verbs (C-verbs) and modality verbs (M-verbs). He points out that it is incorrect to

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<sup>3</sup>The term *subjunctive mood* is Kartunnen's. It might be better to talk of *conditional tense/mood* rather than *subjunctive mood* in reference to the sentences in (7).

<sup>4</sup>Kartunnen also makes a distinction between true factive verbs and semi-factive verbs. True factive verbs include *regret*, *forget*, and *resent*. *Realise* is a semi-factive verb, since it loses its factivity in conditionals. Verbs like *discover*, *find out*, and *realise* are also semi-factive, since they permit both factive and non-factive interpretation in questions.

assume that presupposition is linked to C-verbs only and implication to M-verbs only. Givón shows that C-verbs are not, in fact, a uniform group of verbs. Three types of C-verbs can be distinguished: factive (e.g. *regret*), negative-factive (e.g. *pretend*) and non-factive (e.g. *decide*). Factive verbs presuppose the truth of the embedded clause, as shown in (8). A negative-factive verb presupposes the falsity of the complement clause, as in (9). Non-factive verbs do not presuppose the truth of the embedded clause, as in (10).

- (8) a. I regret that she was hurt  
> b. She was hurt
- (9) a. She pretended that she was sick  
> b. She was not sick
- (10) a. She decided to go  
\*> b. She went

Givón also divides M-verbs into three classes: implicative (e.g. *manage*), negative-implicative (e.g. *forget*), and non-implicative (e.g. *want*). Implicative verbs imply the truth of the complement clause, as in (11). Negative-implicative verbs imply the falsity of the complement clause, as in (12). Non-implicative verbs imply neither the truth nor the falsity of their complement clauses, as in (13) and (14).<sup>5</sup>

- (11) a. John managed to kiss Mary  
⊃ b. John kissed Mary
- (12) a. John forgot to wash the dishes  
⊃ b. John did not wash the dishes
- (13) a. John wanted to kiss Mary  
\*⊃ b. John kissed Mary

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<sup>5</sup>Givón also examines presupposition and implication in relation to what he calls the "time-axis phenomenon". An examination of these facts is unwarranted for the purposes of this paper. Givón continues his 1973 work in a later [1980] article.

(14) a. John didn't want to kiss Mary

\*▷ b. John didn't kiss Mary

## 2. Factivity and the Relativised Predicate

In Krio, the form *wé* acts as a relative (REL) particle:

(15) a. *dì mán wé bìn kám nà mì pàdí*  
the man REL PAST come be my friend

'the man who came is my friend'

b. *dì búk wé ì bìn báy bìn díyà*  
the book REL he PAST buy PAST be dear

'the book that he bought was dear'

The particle *wé* also acts as a relative particle in a construction known as the relativised predicate (RP). The particularity of RP is that the relativised element is a copy of the main verb of the relative clause.<sup>6</sup>

(16) *dì álà wé ì bìn álà bìn wék ólmán*  
the shout REL he PAST shout PAST awake everyone

'his shouting (shouts) awoke everyone'

One particularity of RP in Krio is the following. Whenever the matrix verb of the sentence is *mék* 'make' as in (17a) and (17b), there are two possible ways of interpreting the sentence, one with and the other without "the fact that":

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<sup>6</sup>RP is attested in at least two other languages, Haitian Creole (HC) and Yoruba. On RP in HC, see Dreyfuss [1977], Lefebvre [1982], Piou [1982b], and Sylvain [1938]. Example (i) below is from HC [Sylvain 1938]. On RP in Yoruba, see Bamgbose [1975] and Dreyfuss [1977]. See Williams [1976, 1977] for a comparative analysis of RP in Krio and Yoruba. Example (ii) below is from Yoruba [Bamgbose 1975].

(i) *pu mize žã l-te mize li te-dwe pote lavale kay-la*  
for dawdle kind she-PAST dawdle she PAST-should bring value house-the

'with all her dawdling, she should have brought enough to fill the house'

(ii) *rírá tí mo ra ìwé dára*  
NOM-buy REL I buy book be-good

'the fact that I bought a book is good'

- (17) a. dì á|à wé ì bìn á|à bìn mék ólmán véks  
 the shout REL he PAST shout PAST make everyone be angry  
 (i) 'his shouting (shouts) angered everyone'  
 (ii) 'the fact that he shouted angered everyone'
- b. dì tíf wé John bìn tíf dì kópò bìn mék à šém  
 the steal REL John PAST steal the money PAST make I be ashamed  
 (i) 'John's stealing the money made me ashamed'  
 (ii) 'the fact that John stole the money made me ashamed'

However, whenever the matrix verb is other than *mék*, as in (16) (repeated here as (18a)) and (18b), there is only one possible interpretation, without "the fact that":

- (18) a. dì á|à wé ì bìn á|à bìn wék ólmán  
 the shout REL he PAST shout PAST awake everyone  
 (i) 'his shouting (shouts) awoke everyone'  
 (ii) \*'the fact that he shouted awoke everyone'
- b. dì kráy wé dèn bìn kráy bìn fós àm fò gó  
 the cry REL they PAST cry PAST force him to go  
 (i) 'their crying forced him to leave'  
 (ii) \*'the fact that they cried forced him to leave'

Let us now try to account for this asymmetry in interpretation.

### 3. Complementation in Krio<sup>7</sup>

3.1. Complementizer selection. One particularity of Krio is that the choice of complementizer depends on the semantic value of the matrix verb. There are three *that*-complementizers in Krio: *sé*, *wé* and *mék*.<sup>8</sup> The complementizer

<sup>7</sup>For further work on Krio complementation, see Givón [1980], Larimore [1976], Nylander [1981, 1982a, 1982b, 1983], and Williams [1976].

<sup>8</sup>There is actually a fourth *that*-complementizer, *lé*, which is found in the same contexts as *mék*. Givón [1980] establishes a hierarchical difference between *mék* and *lé*. In my dialect of Krio, however, the two have the same status (see Nylander [1981]). Three of the four *that*-complementizers in Krio are also verbs. These are *sé* 'say'/'that', *mék* 'make'/'that', and *lé* 'let', 'allow'/'that'. See Nylander [1981, 1983]. On the relationship between verbs and *that*-complementizers, see Lord [1976].

sé is used with three groups of verbs: utterance verbs, e.g. álà 'shout'; cognition verbs, e.g. mémbà 'think'; and sensory verbs, e.g. yèrí 'hear'.

The use of sé is illustrated in (19):

- (19) a. ì gò álà sé ì táyà 'he will shout that he is tired'  
 he PROS shout that he be tired
- b. à bìn mémbà sé ùnà sík 'I thought that you were sick'  
 I PAST think that you be sick
- c. dèn bìn yèrí sé ùnà dón kám 'they heard that you had come'  
 they PAST hear that you PERF come

The complementizer wé is used with factive verbs, e.g. dàmú 'be surprised', gládì 'be happy', and véks 'be angry'. The use of wé is illustrated in the following examples:

- (20) a. ì bìn dàmú wé à wín 'he was surprised that I won'  
 he PAST be surprised that I win
- b. à gládì wé ì dón kám 'I am happy that he has come'  
 I be happy that he PERF come
- c. dèn bìn véks wé wì bìn tók 'they were angry that we spoke'  
 they PAST be angry that we PAST talk

The third complementizer, mék, is more difficult to classify. It can be associated with volition (21a) and intention (21b). However, it can also be associated with completed actions (21c).

- (21) a. à bìn wán mék dèn kám 'I wanted them to come'  
 I PAST want that they come  
 (lit: 'I wanted that they come')
- b. ì bìn síŋ mék à dás 'he sang so that I could dance'  
 he PAST sing that I dance
- c. à bìn fós àm mék ì gó 'I forced him to go'  
 I PAST force him that he go

3.2. Establishing a hierarchy of complementizers. The complementizers in the preceding section can be classified in relation to presupposition. Complement clauses introduced by sé never presuppose the truth of the embedded clause. For example, (22a) (= (19b)) does not presuppose (22b). Complement clauses introduced by wé always presuppose the truth of the embedded clause. For example, (23a) (= (20b)) presupposes (23b). The case of mék is less straightforward.

ward. It sometimes presupposes the truth of the embedded clause, e.g. (24a) (= (21c)) presupposes (24b). However, (25a) (=21a)) does not presuppose (25b).

- (22) a. à bìn mémbà sé ùnà sík 'I thought that you were sick'  
I PAST think that you be sick
- \*> b. ùnà bìn sík 'you were sick'  
you PAST be sick
- (23) a. à gládì wé ì dón kám 'I am happy that he has come'  
I be happy that he PERF come
- > b. ì dón kám 'he has come'  
he PERF come
- (24) a. à bìn fós àm mék ì gó 'I forced him to go'  
I PAST force him that he go
- > b. ì bìn gó 'he went'  
he PAST go
- (25) a. à bìn wán mék dèn kám 'I wanted them to come'  
I PAST want that they come
- \*> b. dèn bìn kám 'they came'  
they PAST come

On the basis of the above examples, we can establish a hierarchy of complementizer "strength". The top of the hierarchy will be occupied by wé, which always presupposes the truth of the embedded clause, and the bottom by sé, which never presupposes the truth of the embedded clause. In the middle will be mék, which sometimes presupposes the truth of the embedded clause. The hierarchy is given in (26), where < means "is less strong than":

(26) se < mek < we<sup>9</sup>

#### 4. Complementizers and the Relativised Predicate

The observant reader will already have noticed something, namely that wé is at once a relative particle and a complementizer. The obvious question to ask, then, is whether sé and mék can also function as relative particles. The answer is negative. Thus wé in (27) (= (15a)) and (28) (= (17a)) cannot

<sup>9</sup>Givón [1980:341] also concludes that mék is stronger than sé (there is no reference to wé in Givón's article).



be replaced by *sé* or *mék* :

- (27) *dì mán wé/\*sé/\*mék bìn kám nà m̀̀ pàdí*  
 the man REL PAST come be my friend  
 'the man who came is my friend'
- (28) *dì á|à wé/\*sé/\*mék ì bìn á|à bìn mék ó|mán véks*  
 the shout REL he PAST shout PAST make everyone be angry  
 (i) 'his shouting (shouts) angered everyone'  
 (ii) 'the fact that he shouted angered everyone'

The fact that *sé* is unacceptable in (27) and (28) raises other problems. In a number of languages, e.g. English (29), French (30) and Spanish (31), the same form is used for relative clauses and for introducing the complements of cognition-utterance verbs:<sup>10</sup>

- (29) a. The man that came is my friend  
 b. I know that he came
- (30) a. l'homme qu'elle a vu est mon ami 'the man that she saw is my friend'  
 b. je sais que tu es venu 'I know that you came'
- (31) a. el hombre que viene 'the man that is coming'  
 b. se que está casada 'I know that she is married'

The fact that Krio does not allow the complementizer for cognition-utterance verbs to act as a relative particle, unlike the above languages, indicates that in an identical *syntactic* environment, the "more factive" *wé* was extended to relative clauses rather than the syntactically more likely *sé*. Put another way, there seems to have been a fight (for the post of relative particle) between the syntactically more likely *sé* and the semantico-pragmatically more likely *wé*, with *wé* winning the fight.

##### 5. The Riddle Solved

Let us now return to the central theme of the paper, namely, accounting for the asymmetry in interpretation between sentences like (32) (= (17a)) and (33) (= (18a)).

<sup>10</sup>This also applies to Italian *che* [Cinque 1981] and Hebrew *še* .

- (32) dì álà wé ì bìn álà bìn mék ólmán véks  
 the shout REL he PAST shout PAST make everyone be angry  
 (i) 'his shouting (shouts) angered everyone'  
 (ii) 'the fact that he shouted angered everyone'
- (33) dì álà wé ì bìn álà bìn wék ólmán  
 the shout REL he PAST shout PAST awake everyone  
 (i) 'his shouting (shouts) awoke everyone'  
 (ii) \*'the fact that he shouted awoke everyone'

Recall that *wé*, as a complementizer, only associates with factive verbs. In (32) and (17b), *wé* associates with *mék*, which can be regarded as the factive verb *par excellence*. The verb *make* shares the semantics of (factive) predicates like *regret*, *be happy* and *be sad*, in that 'X was sad that [p]' is translatable as '[p] made X sad' or '[p] caused X to be sad'. Under this analysis, the absence of a second interpretation for sentences like (33) and (18b) is simply due to the fact that there is no factive verb for *wé* to associate with in the sentences.

## 6. Further Remarks on the Relativised and Cleft Predicates

6.1. The status of the relativised element in RP. Consider (34a), to which (34b) (= (17b)) is related:

- (34) a. John bìn tíf dì kópò  
 John PAST steal the money  
 'John stole the money'
- b. dì tíf wé John bìn tíf dì kópò bìn mék à šém  
 the steal REL John PAST steal the money PAST make I be ashamed  
 (i) 'John's stealing the money made me ashamed'  
 (ii) 'the fact that John stole the money made me ashamed'

What is the exact status of the relativised element in (34b)? The answer lies in the sentences in (35):

- (35) a. \*dì bìn tíf wé John bìn tíf dì kópò bìn mék à šém  
 b. \*dì tíf dì kópò wé John bìn tíf dì kópò bìn mék à šém

Examples (35a) and (35b) show that the relativised element is not a verb, since

it is compatible neither with an auxiliary marker (35a) nor with a direct object (35b). In short, the relativised element is a deverbalised form. It can also be regarded as a nominalised form, since the relativised element in (34b) is preceded by the definite article, which can only associate with nominal forms. In short, RP involves two processes, deverbalisation and nominalisation.

6.2. The cleft predicate. Alongside ordinary cleft sentences, e.g. (36a), there is a construction in Krio known as the cleft predicate (CP), illustrated in (36b).<sup>11</sup>

- (36) a. *nà búk ì bìn báý* 'what he bought was a book'<sup>12</sup>  
 it is book he PAST buy (lit: 'it is a book that he bought')
- b. *nà báý ì bìn báý dì búk* 'he actually bought the book'<sup>13</sup>  
 it is buy he PAST buy the book (lit: 'it is buying that he bought the book')

A comparison of (34b) and (36b) reveals one basic difference between RP and CP. Whilst the relativised element is a copy of the main verb of the relative clause in RP, the cleft element in CP is a copy of the matrix verb of the sentence. The status of the cleft element in CP must now be examined. Consider (37a) and (37b), alongside (36b).

- (37) a. \**nà bìn báý ì bìn báý dì búk*  
 b. \**nà bàý dì búk ì bìn báý dì búk*

<sup>11</sup>For studies on CP, see Bynoe-Andriolo and Yillah [1975], Lefebvre [1982], Nylander [1983], Piou [1982a], and Williams [1976, 1977].

<sup>12</sup>An anonymous reviewer for *Studies in African Linguistics* has questioned my translation of (36a) and claimed that the literal translation is fine. According to the reviewer, the pseudocleft translation corresponds to the following Krio sentence:

- (i) *dì tìn wé John bìn báý nà búk*  
 the thing REL John PAST buy be book

(i) is NOT a native Krio sentence. As far as I can see, only people belonging to one of two groups would utter such a sentence: (a) native speakers of English who have learned Krio; (b) Sierra Leoneans whose mother tongue is other than Krio (e.g. Mende, Susu, Temne) and who know Krio and English.

<sup>13</sup>The implication is that he did not steal it, borrow it, etc.

The above sentences show that the cleft element in CP is a deverbalised form, since it is compatible neither with an auxiliary (37a) nor with a direct object (37b). The cleft element can also be considered to be a nominalised form, since it is preceded by the clefting particle *nà* 'it is'. As shown in (38), *nà* can associate with a noun (38a), but not with a verb (38b). CP, like RP, therefore involves two processes, deverbalisation and nominalisation.

- (38) a. *nà* *búk* 'it is a book'  
it is book
- b. \**nà* *és* 'it is lift up'  
it is lift up

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