

A Semantic Map of the Coptic Complementizer *če-* based on Corpus Analysis: Grammaticalization and Areal Typology in Africa

So Miyagawa¹ and Amir Zeldes²

¹CRC 1136, Universität Göttingen, and Kyoto University ²Georgetown University

Coptic forms the last stage of the Ancient Egyptian language, which constitutes by itself an independent branch of the Afro-Asiatic language family. The Coptic complementizer *če-* was grammaticalized from a bound form of the verb “say,” yielding a highly polysemous functional element. Next to continued homonymy with a form of the verb “say,” it is mainly used as a quotative marker introducing direct speech as in (1), but also to introduce names (2).

(1)	<i>peča-s</i> said-3SGF	<i>na-f</i> to-3SGM	<i>če-ou</i> če-what	<i>pe</i> COP.SGM	<i>pai</i> DEM.SGM
	<i>pa-šêre</i> POSS.SGM:1SG-son	...			

“He said, ‘what is this, my son, ...’” (Apophthegmata Patrum)

(2)	<i>hm-pou-ran</i> by-POSS.SGM:2SGF-name	<i>če-ap^ht^honia</i> če-Aphthonia
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“by your name ‘Aphthonia’” (Besa/To Aphthonia)

By a process of extension, *če-* came to mark object clauses of cognition verbs such as “know” (3), and perception verbs such as “see,” “hear” (4), as well as psych verbs such as “fear.”

(3)	<i>t^h-sooun</i> 1SG-know	<i>če-e-k-t^h-oubê-i</i> če-FOC-2SGM-give-against-1SG	<i>an</i> NEG
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“I know that it is not against me you fight,” (Shenoute/Not Because a Fox Barks)

(4)	<i>e-k-šan-sôtm</i> COND-2SGM-COND-hear	<i>če-a-u-bôk</i> če-PST-3PL-go	<i>e-m-ma</i> to-DEF.PL-place
	<i>n-šine</i> of-oracle	<i>n-n-daimôn</i> of-DEF.PL-demon	

“if you hear that they have gone to the oracles of demons,” (Shenoute/Not Because a Fox Barks)

Evolving beyond a complementizer for embedded speech, *če-* developed further functions including causal marking (saying the reason → supplying a reason, (5)), use as part of a lexicalized complex marker *ebol če-* “because” (lit. “out of saying,” (6)), as well as a generic complementizer, e.g. introducing subject clauses without lexical or discourse relation contributions (7).

- (5) *če-ntok* *pe* *teu-helpis*
če-2SGM COP.SGM POSS.SGF:3PL-hope

“because you are their hope” (Shenoute/Not Because a Fox Barks)

- (6) *ebol* *če-se-šône*
 out *če-3PL-sick*

“Because they are sick” (Apophthegmata Patrum)

- (7) *ou-katakrima* *na-k* *n-ouêr* *pe*
 INDEF.SG-condemnation to-2SGM of-how_much COP.SGM
- če-k-paraba* *hm-pe-hme* *n-hoou*
če-2SGM-transgress in-DEF.SGM-40 of-day

“How much of a condemnation is it to you, that you transgressed in the 40 days?” (Shenoute/Not Because a Fox Barks)

Shisha-Halevy (1991:202) indicated the adnominal usage of *če* which is a characteristic of Shenoutean Sahidic (8).

- (8) *mmn-ce-pistis* *mmn-ce-helpis* *n-hôb*
 NEG.EXIST-other-faith NEG.EXIST-other-hope of-thing
- n-agat^hon* *če-n-f-šoop* *na-s* *an*
 of-goodness *če-NEG-3SGM-belong* to-3SGF NEG

“There is no faith, there is no hope of goodness that does not belong to it” (Chassinat 1911:125.38ff. quoted and translated by Shisha-Halevy 1991:202)

Finally, Shisha-Halevy (1986:78) also suggests a possibility that there is a usage of *če-* denoting “as if” with a circumstantial clause (9).

- (9) *hn-t^hupokrisis* *če-e-u-šlél*
 in-DEF.SGF-hypocrisy *če*-CIRC-3PL-pray

“(They raise their hands) in the hypocrisy as if they were praying” (Leipoldt 1908:45.5, also quoted by Shisha-Halevy 1986:78, footnote 84)

In this paper, we explore the semantic map of *če-* in Coptic corpora from Coptic SCRIPTORIUM (<http://copticSCRIPTORIUM.org/>, cf. Schroeder and Zeldes 2016) using quantitative analysis across genres and periods. We analyze its grammaticalization process against the background of Pre-Coptic Egyptian corpora from the Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae (<http://aaew.bbaw.de/>), and draw a semantic map of this grammaticalization pattern. There are two possible scenarios of the historical change of *če-*: (i) developed from *r-dd* as in (10) (cf. Collier 2007:43-6), (ii) developed from *m-dd* as in (11). Stéphane Polis also discusses the grammaticalization path and the semantic conditions of the extension of *dd* to perception verbs at length in his Ph.D. thesis (Polis 2009:344-97).

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| (10) | <i>sdm(=j)</i> | | <i>r-dd</i> | | <i>nɜ</i> | | <i>rm̄</i> | | <i>hn</i> |
| | hear.PST(-1SG) | | <i>r-dd</i> | | DEF.PL | | people | | proceed.STAT |
| | <i>r</i> | <i>jr-t</i> | <i>hɜw</i> | <i>m</i> | <i>pɜj</i> | | <i>pr-n-s̄ɜ</i> | | |
| | to | take-INF | possession | in | DEM.SGM | | portable_chest | | |

“I noted that the people proceeded to take possession of this portable chest (i.e., funerary equipment).” (pMayer A rt. 1, 14-15, Junge 2001:219, quoted and glossed by Kramer 2012:102-3, ex. 55)

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| (11) | <i>jw=tw</i> | <i>r-rd-t</i> | <i>ʿrq</i> | <i>pɜ</i> | <i>z</i> | <i>2</i> | <i>m-dd (...)</i> |
| | COMP=DETR | FUT-give-INF | swear | DEF.SGM | man | 2 | <i>m-dd</i> |

“The two men shall be made to swear as follows: (...)” (P. UC 32055, ro 9, transcribed, glossed and translated by Stauder 2014:468, ex. 10)

Finally, we consider areal aspects of the phenomenon from a typological perspective based on Güldemann’s work on quotatives in Africa (Güldemann 2008).

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