

Coordination in Dagaare

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of conjunctions in Dagaare is to join words, phrases and clauses. The use of these conjunctions can be intriguing as there are a host of them with various syntactic and semantic complications. This paper describes conjunctions used in the formation of compound constructions in Dagaare. These conjunctions have a dual function because they can conjoin lists and clauses. Dovetailing the study to compounding, the study observes that most conjunctions that coordinate clauses are found in medial position. It has been found in this study that conjunctions that conjoin clauses have selectional restrictions with regard to the words and the structure of clauses that they can coordinate. A comparative analysis of these coordinating conjunctions has further revealed that although some of these connectives may be complementary in the syntax and/or meaning, to some extent, there exist noticeable differences between them.

1. INTRODUCTION

Dagaare, a member of the Gur group of languages also known as the Mabilia group (Bodomo 2000), is the most widely spoken language in the Upper West Region of Ghana. Like most languages, Dagaare has a variety of dialects. The study covers some of these dialects, which may be labeled as the Central (CD) Southern (SD) and Northern Dialects (ND). These labels are neither based on political divisions nor on established linguistic boundaries, but are based purely on their geographical locations with regard to the Dagaare-speaking area in the region. The SD and CD are particularly close, and this makes their coordinators the same in both the syntax and meaning. The ND differs in some of its forms and uses of its coordinators. Most examples are given in the CD.

2. COORDINATION

For the sake of this paper I will adopt Payne's (1997:337) definition, which states that coordination is

two clauses are grammatically coordinated when each of them has, more or less, the same function in terms of the event structure of the text, e.g they both code events, and non-events, they both code foreground information ... background information and they are also conceptually linked in a way.

In Dagaare, a simple sentence contains only one clause, which is the main or principal clause, and a compound sentence is made up of two or more main clauses. While the main clause is one that has full meaning and can stand alone in a discourse, the subordinate clause cannot because it is not fully inflected. Coordination in Dagaare therefore involves the conjoining of two or more main clauses into one compound sentence (Bodomo 1997:128). What, then, is the structure of the sentence?

The Dagaare sentence has a SVO syntactic structure (Bodomo 1997:41). A simple statement will normally have a subject preceded by a verb, and the verb is followed by the object or complement. This is illustrated in (1).

- | | | | | | | | |
|-----|-----------------------------------|-------|----|-------|------|----|-------------|
| | S | | V | | O | | |
| (1) | À | pɔ́gé | // | sé́gé | là | // | gánè. |
| | DEF | woman | | write | FACT | | book/letter |
| | ‘The woman has written a letter.’ | | | | | | |

2.1 HYPOTHESIS OF THE COORDINATING CONJUNCTIONS

There are a number of language forms that function as connectives in Dagaare. In all the three dialects *à*, *nê/ànê* and *béé* are common. In the southern and central dialects (SD/CD) others are *kà*, *kyé* and two quasi-conjunctions, *à kyé* and *kyé ká* and its inverse *ká kyé*, and *kyé béé* and tri-conjunctions like *à kyé ká*, and *á kyé béé*. The ND dialect's equivalent of *kà* and *kyé* is *é*. It is important to note that these conjunctions can function as both coordinating and subordinating conjunctions depending on the clause types that are being conjoined. However this paper looks at them on the plane of coordination.

As mentioned above, the connectives, however, may consist of one word only, or they may have more than one word. The structure of the double-word and “triadic” conjunctions suggests that their formation

involves a regrouping of some of the single-word or cardinal conjunctions into some specific word order. It is beyond the scope of this paper to discuss the etymology of these conjunctions but one of them seems to suggest how it evolved.

Etymologically *né/àné* appears to be a commutative marker which has drifted towards a connective for NPs. It seems to have been drawn from *à* and *nê* which literally stand for *add* and *with* respectively. For instance, *à* is used with other forms like *à póc* ‘and add’, *à dé* ‘and take’, *à dɔglè* ‘and put on top’, etc. *Nê* may also mean ‘with’ in instances such as *nê nu* ‘with the hand’, *nê líbíè* ‘with money’. This combination, *à + nê*, could therefore literally mean ‘and with’, a phenomenon that is not uncommon in West African languages, like *kple* in Ewe.

Despite the possible differences in the etymology of the coordinating conjunctions, which we do not know much about, these forms are basically the same in distribution and meaning in speech. Data collected from the ND indicate that *nê* is more frequently used than *àné*.

3. THE SYNTAX OF COORDINATING CONJUNCTIONS

In coordination, in most cases, the conjunction normally occurs in between the conjoined items. However this is not always the case in subordination. The example below in (2a) shows one conjunction *kà* used, first, as a coordinator in (2b) and second as a subordinator in (2c).

- (2) a. Ò nà wá lá + Tè nà gáá lá.
 3SG FUT come FACT + 1PL FUT go FACT
 ‘S/he will come. + We will go.’
- b. Ò nà wá lá *kà* tè gáá.
 3SG FUT come FACT CONJ 1PL go.
 ‘S/he will come and we will go.’
- c. *Kà* ónánɲ wà té nà gáá lá.
 CONJ 3SG-COND come 1PL FUT go FACT
 ‘If s/he comes we will go.’

3.1 *NÊ/ÀNÊ* AS A CONNECTOR OF NPS

Né/àné does not coordinate clauses but NPs and ADVPs. This connective is basically a group forming one. It may group entities like number, person or gender. Also its meaning is static, i.e it merely strings items together.

In the subject (S) and object (O) where S and O = (NP+NP), the sentences in (3) and (4), have conjoined *Dere* and *Ayuo* and *sheep* and *goat* respectively.

- (3) Déré *nê/àné* Áyúó wàé la.
 Déré CONJ Áyúó come–PERF FACT
 ‘Déré and áyúó have come.’

- (4) À dǒǒ táá lá pǎróó *nê/ànê* bǒǒ.
 DEF man COP FACT sheep CONJ goat
 ‘The man has a sheep and a goat.’

3.2 *NÊ/ÀNÊ* IN THE COUNTING SYSTEM

Dagaare has a counting system based on bases 10, 20, 100 and 1000. Subsequent bases and digits or units, from 1 to 9, are expressed with the use of either of these two conjunctions. For that matter, we shall, from now use only *nê* to mean either of them. It is seldom ellipted in the counting system, as demonstrated below.

Eleven (11) is expressed as 10 + 1.

- (5) Píé *né* bǒǒyǎnì.
 Ten CONJ thing-one
 ‘Eleven’

Thirty-three (33) is expressed as 20 + 10 + 3.

- (6) Lèzárè *nê* píé *nê* átà
 Twenty CONJ ten CONJ three
 ‘thirty-three’

One hundred and fifty-six (156) is expressed as 100 + (20 times 2) + 10 + 6.

- (7) Kǒǒ *nê* lèzǎé áyí *nê* píé *nê* àyǒǒbǒ.
 Hundred CONJ twenty-PL two CONJ ten CONJ six
 ‘One hundred and fifty-six’

3.3 *NÊ* AS AN INFINITE CONNECTOR

It is evident from the examples above that this conjunction can coordinate a series of NPs, whether simple or compound, from two to infinitum. Unlike medieval Chinese (Tao 1991:4), where simple juxtaposition can conjoin more than one NP, there is little, if any, juxtaposition in Dagaare NP coordination, as can be seen in (8) below.

- (8) Mùí *nê* bǎǎ *nê* kyí bǎ lá à dàà pǒǒ.
 Rice CONJ beans CONJ millet COP FACT DEF market inside
 ‘There is rice, beans and millet in the market.’

3.4 *NÊ* AS A CONNECTOR IN THE ADVERBIAL PHRASE

In the coordination of adverbials these conjunctions coordinate only groups of phrases. The study identified two types of adverbials that are coordinated by this conjunction. These include spatial and

temporal adverbials. These have been illustrated in the examples that follow.

In a complement where C = ADV + ADV

3.4.1 NÊ IN SPATIAL ADVERBIALS

(9) Ò bě lá kyé nê kyé.
3SG COP FACT here CONJ here
'S/he is here and there (everywhere).'

(10) À béŋε dèèlè lá dàvòró póo nê péé zû.
DEF beans spread out FACT yard inside CONJ roof top
'The beans are being dried in the yard and on top of the roof.'

3.4.2 NÊ/ÀNÊ IN TEMPORAL ADVERBIALS

Temporal adverbial phrases may comprise a single word or more. In examples (11a, b), we have identical adverbs, but these adverbs are modified in (11b).

(11) a. À bààlá gàá lá ásíbítì zààmêŋ nê zéε.
DEF patient go FACT hospital yesterday CONJ today
'The patient went to hospital yesterday and today.'

b. À bààlá gàá lá ásíbítì zààmêŋ zìmáánè nê zéε bágúó.
DEF patient go FACT hospital yesterday evening CONJ today morning
'The patient went to hospital yesterday evening and today in the morning.'

3.5 NÊ IN ADJECTIVES

Adjectives in Dagaare function either attributively or predicatively. In both forms, the morphosyntax indicates that the adjective post-modifies the NP. In the orthographic representation, some writers fuse the NP and the attributive adjective, as in *yilee* or *yi-lee* 'small house'. I may refer to this as *adjective nominal*. With the predicative, the NP and the adjective are separate. We illustrate this in sentences (12) and (13).

(12) Bìbílé nê bìkpôŋ lá gàà.
Child-small CONJ child-big FACT go
'A small child and a big child went.'

(13) À kpàrrè ě lá sɔg élo nê pèélé.
DEF shirt-PL COP FACT black-PL CONJ white-PL
'The shirts are made up of black and white colours.'

It has been shown in an earlier section that *né* is a truncated form of *ànê*. Although *nê* is preferred in discourse and *ànê* in writing, both have equal status in grammar. A noticeable syntactic preference again is for *ànê* to precede the final conjoint, if there are more than two conjoints. At that level, it seems to

emphasize on the last conjoint or conjoints in the series, and at the same time, focus on the lexical item or expression it precedes. It is, however, not unusual to use either of them alone or interchangeably in piecing phrases together.

4. KYÉ/É IN COORDINATION

This conjunction is a multi-functional one that may stand for *and*, *but*, *before*, *until* etc. It coordinates items at both phrasal and inter-clausal levels, but unlike *nê/ànê*, it does not coordinate NPs but VPs and ADVBs. At the phrase level verbs can be coordinated if they share the same syntactic argument structure. Furthermore, there should be completeness and coherence between the verbs.

4.1. KYÉ/É AS ‘AND’

This coordinating conjunction functions as ‘and’, when used to conjoin positive statements. Also the subject is omitted in the second or subsequent clause of the compound sentence so constructed. This is illustrated in (14) and (15a).

(14) Ò nà gàá lá kyé wà.
 3SG FUT go FACT CONJ come
 ‘S/he will go and come.’

(15) a. Ò ñmé lá à dǒǒ kyé dàà lǒǒ.
 3SG beat FACT DEF man ONJ push throw-down
 ‘S/he beat/hit the man and pushed him down.’

b. *Ò ñmé kyé bàrè lá à dǒǒ.
 3SG beat CONJ leave FACT DEF man
 ‘S/he beat and left the man.’

In (15a), the conjunct of the compound structure is regarded as a grammatically valid expansion of the core structure, because both verbs *ñmé* ‘beat/hit’ and *dàà* ‘push’ take identical thematic roles, i.e., agent and patient. They are also used transitively, and are in the same aspect. The last verb *lǒǒ* ‘throw down’ is used as a causative verb, as it refers to the outcome of the two verbs. Since all the syntactic requirements of all verbs are satisfied, the coordination is grammatically intact. In contrast, in (15b), the verbs *ñmé* ‘beat’ and *bàrè* ‘leave’ do not present a natural order of action on the same patient and therefore would make the sentence (15b) ungrammatical.

To make a compound sentence in which there is only one referent, it is required that each verb relates well to the referent and at the same time the verbs agree in terms of the sequence of action. In the absence of that, the verbs must have different patients. The sentence in (15b) has been rephrased in (16) below.

(16) Ò ñmé la à dǒǒ kyé bàrè à pǒǒ.
 3SG beat FACT DEF man CONJ leave DEF woman
 ‘S/he beat the man but/and left the woman.’

In example (17) below all the three verbs relate in action and share the same object.

- (17) Ò túóé lá kyé màrè kyé pɛglè à túóbú.
 3SG carry-PERF FACT CONJ carry on back CONJ carry on side DEF load
 ‘S/he is carrying the load on his/her head, back and on his side.’

In Dagaare certain verbs go with certain objects. Therefore there are selectional restrictions of the verb in relation to the referent. For instance, the dictionary entry for *dì* means ‘to eat’, but in discourse the semantics indicates that it is used for certain types of food only. We eat (*dì*) paste-like foods and fruits but to eat meat, yam, rice etc. is to chew (*òò*). See the illustrations in (18a, b).

- (18) a. Bà dì lá sáábó kyé òò wààré.
 3PL eat FACT flour-paste CONJ chew yam-PL
 ‘They ate saabo and ate yam.’
- b. Tè nyú lá búúlún kyé òò bòròbòrò.
 1PL drink FACT porridge CONJ chew bread
 ‘We drank porridge and ate bread.’

Kyé may coordinate two clauses which share a common verb but have different objects as illustrated in (19a) and (19b) below.

- (19) a. Ò òó lá mùí kyé òò nénè.
 3SG chew FACT rice CONJ chew meat
 S/he ate rice and/then/also ate meat.
- b. Ñ nà gàá lá àŋkàrà kyé tè gàà Nàgyéíyà.
 1SG FUT go FACT Accra CONJ COP go Nigeria
 ‘I will go to Accra and continue to Nigeria.’

Verbs in separate clauses may have different lexical forms but if they share the same object the object is not repeated in the second part of the compound sentence. But where each of the clauses has its own object, each object has to be expressed. See (20) and (21) below.

- (20) Ò wáálè lá à nénè kyé kyéè.
 3SG steam FACT DET meat CONJ fry
 ‘S/he steamed the meat and (then) fried it.’
- (21) Ò dógéró lá zèéré kyé m̀ónó sáábó.
 3SG boil-IMPERF FACT soup CONJ stir-PROG grain paste
 ‘S/he is cooking soup and at the same time cooking grain paste.’

4.2 KYÉ AS 'BUT'

It can be observed in all examples given so far with *kyé* that there has not been a subject element, although inferred, in any of the second clauses of the compound sentences. In a coordinate structure where there is a repetition of the subject in the first clause or an occurrence of a different subject in the second clause, *kyé* functions as 'but'. Compare (22) to (23) and also see (24) below.

(22) Áyúó gàá lá dàà *kyé* wà.
 Ayuo go FACT market CONJ come
 'Ayuo went to the market **and** came back./ Ayuo has gone to the market **and** come back.'

(23) Áyúó gàá lá dàà *kyé* ò wàè lá.
 Ayuo go FACT market CONJ 3SG come-PERF FACT
 'Ayuo went to the market **but** she has returned.'

Again *kyé* functions as 'but' in the compound sentence where either one of the clauses or both are negated or where there is an element of contrast between the clauses, as in (24a, b) and (25a, b) below.

(24) a. Ìménéáá bá pùrì *kyé* tólón èré lá.
 Sun NEG burst CONJ heat do-IMPERF FACT
 'There is no sunshine but it is hot.'

b. Ìménéáá púurèè lá *kyé* tólón bà èré.
 Sun burst FACT CONJ heat NEG do-IMPERF
 'There is sunshine but it is not hot.'

(25) a. Ì bá dì *kyé* kòṅ bá kpé mà.
 1SG NEG eat CONJ hunger NEG enter 1SG
 'I have not eaten but I am not hungry.'

b. Ì diè lá *kyé* kòṅ kpé má lá.
 1SG eat FACT CONJ hunger enter me FACT
 'I have eaten but I am hungry.'

It should be noted that there is one negative marker *tá* which always means 'don't'. It may be used in imperative sentences. It can occur at the initial position of either of the clauses in the compound sentence. In the same position this negative marker may be preceded by a subject or not, but always precedes a verb. The NPs in brackets in the sentences below indicate this possibility. When used in the first clause with *kyé*, the conjunction still functions as 'and' but if it occurs in the second clause *kyé* functions as 'but'. See (26a, b) below.

(26) a. (Bayuo) Tá gàà *kyé* bare má.
 (Bayuo) NEG go CONJ leave me
 '(Bayuo) do not go and leave me.'

- b. À bíé kònó lá kyé fo tá dé ò.
 DEF child cry-IMPERF FACT CONJ 2SG NEG take him/her
 ‘The child is crying but you should not take him/her.’

kyé also coordinates clauses that have direct and indirect objects. When the indirect object of the first clause is repeated in the second clause *kyé* behaves as ‘and’. On the contrary where a different indirect object occurs in the second clause *kyé* may assume a different function other than ‘and’. These are illustrated in sentences (27) and (28) respectively.

- (27) Ò kó má lá gánè kyé kó má libiè.
 3SG give 1SG FACT book CONJ give 1SG money
 ‘S/he gave me a book and also gave me some money.’

- (28) Ò kó má lá gánè kyé kó bà libiè.
 3SG give 1SG FACT book CONJ give them money
 ‘S/he gave me a book and/ but gave them money, OR S/he gave me a book and gave others money.’

As stated above, the listener may read two meanings into it. For instance if the speaker’s focus is on the objects then *kyé* is ‘but’, but if giving is the main thrust projected then the conjunction functions as ‘and’.

4.3 KYÉ AT SENTENCE-INITIAL POSITION

Kyé may appear at the clause-initial position of a coordinate structure. The problem, though, is that it makes meaning clearer only in a discourse continuum, i.e. when the speaker is responding to a situation that despite a certain hold-up s/he would come along to go, as shown in (29).

- (29) Kyé Ñ nà wà lá kà té gáá.
 CONJ 1SG FUT come FACT CONJ 1PL go
 ‘But I will come and we go.’

5. À/É AS COORDINATORS

This coordinating conjunction is closer to *kyé* with regard to the elements it coordinates. In addition to coordinating clauses, it can also coordinate verb phrases. Syntactically it is similar to *nê*, since it also coordinates infinite verb elements. Indeed it is possible to use *à* as a coordinating conjunction in between a series of verbs, although such constructions are clumsy. It is probably possible to suggest that some serial verb constructions in Dagaare can be traced to asyndetic coordination, ‘where coordinators are absent but could be supplied’ (Quirk and Greenbaum 1987:53). In Dagaare, it is possible to omit this conjunction between all or some of the VPs to de-emphasize the verb that is preceded by the conjunction. In sentences (30a, b, c) this conjunction is used at different levels.

- (30) a. Ò ñmă lá à nénè à pégè à dógèlè.
 3SG cut FACT DEF meat CONJ wash CONJ put on
 ‘S/he cut the meat and washed and put on fire.’

- b. Ò ñmǎ lá à nénè à pégè dógélè.
 3SG cut FACT DEF meat CONJ wash put on
 ‘S/he cut the meat and washed put on.’
- c. Ò ñmǎ lá à nénè pégè dógélè
 3SG cut FACT DEF meat wash put on
 ‘S/he cut the meat, washed and put it on fire.’

In reduplication of verbs, the same phenomenon seems to operate when this conjunction is used for emphasis but could be omitted as illustrated in sentence (31).

- (31) a. Tè zòè lá à zò à zò à tè bàlè.
 1PL run-PERF FACT CONJ run CONJ run CONJ COP tired
 ‘We ran and ran and ran until we were tired.’
- b. Tè zò zò zòè lá tè bàlè.
 1PL run run run-PERF FACT COP tired
 ‘We ran and ran and ran until we were tired.’

6. *KÀ/É* AS A COORDINATING CONJUNCTION

This is yet another conjunction which may function as ‘and’ in coordinating clauses but which displays its own syntactic specifications. It coordinates clauses which have different subjects but which share a common verb. This indicates that both subjects perform the same action but at different times. Example (32a) below is reproduced from Dakubu (2005:23).

- (32) a. Dér wàè lá kà àdàmú mènɲ wà.
 Dér come-PERF FACT CONJ Adamu also come
 ‘Dere came and Adamu also came.’

This conjunction does not link two independent clauses whose predications are unrelated or whose verbs are in complete opposition. For instance, we could not say

- b. *Dér wàè lá kà àdàmú mènɲ gàà.
 Dér come-PERF FACT CONJ Adamu also go
 ‘Dere came and Adamu also went.’

The sentence is incorrect because of the difference in the verbs, *wa* and *gaa*, in the clauses. This conjunction may however coordinate clauses which have different verbs but in such sentences the second clause is a result of or is in anticipation of the first. This is illustrated in examples (33a, b).

- (33) a. Sáá míé lá yágà kà yîè lè.
 Rain rain-PERF FACT plenty CONJ house-PL fall
 ‘It rained heavily and as a result houses collapsed.’

- b. À báá ðígí lá à bíé kà ò zò.
 DEF dog chase FACT DEF child CONJ 3SG run
 ‘The dog chased the boy and he ran away.’

When used in a construction in which one of the clauses denotes the future *kà*, identifies itself with *so that*. In sentences (34a), the first clause has the future marker while in (34b), the future marker is in the second clause. In either case, the function of the conjunction is unchanged.

- (34) a. Bà nà wà la kà tè gàà.
 2PL FUT come FACT CONJ 1PL go
 ‘They will come so /in order that we go.’

- b. Bà wàε lá ká té nà gáá.
 2PL come-PERF FACT CONJ 1PL FUT go
 ‘They have come so that we may go.’

Like the other coordinating conjunctions *kà* can coordinate a series of constructions. But unlike the others it coordinates clauses and not lexemes or phrases. It is shown in (35) below, that although we have different referents in all the clauses, the verb is common to all.

- (35) Déré wáé lá kà Áyúó wà kà Kógí méŋ wà.
 Dere come-PERF FACT CONJ Ayuo come CONJ Kogi also come
 ‘Dere came, Ayuo came and Kogi also came.’

In some constructions *kà* may be comparable to the English correlative pair of *neither nor*. One should hasten to add that this is on the plane of semantics. However in the syntax index they are not quite the same. We illustrate, in (36) below, the two structural components of the two using the same sentence.

Sentence : I will neither go to the market nor to the farm.
 English structure : S + VP + CONJ + VP + OBJ + CON + VP + O. as in,

- (36) Ñ kón gáà dàá kà wèé.
 Dagaare structure : S + NEG + VP + OBJ + CONJ + OBJ
 ‘I will neither go to the market nor to the farm.’

From the analysis it may be prudent to point out that although the basic structures of the two are similar (S+VP + OBJ) the Dagaare structure uses a negative marker to realize the meaning while in English the conjunction itself denotes negation.

6.1 THE HORTATIVE KÁ

There is the high-toned *ká* which is different from the low-toned one discussed above. The examples given so far, using *ká* in the above, illustrate open statements. But in those that follow in the pairs of sentences in (37b) and (38b) they express the hortative case in which the first clause is exhorting the second to see to him/her.

- (37) a. Ò wàε lá kà Ñ yèlì kò ò.
 3SG come-PERF FACT CONJ 1SG say give 3SG
 ‘S/he came and I told him/her.’
- b. Ò wàε lá ká Ñ yèlì kò ó
 3SG come-PERF FACT CONJ 1SG say give 3SG
 ‘S/he came (has come) so that I tell him/her (She came demanding/requesting that I tell him/her).’
- (38) a. Ò wàé lá kà Ñ nyé ò.
 3SG come-PERF FACT CONJ 1SG see 3SG
 ‘S/he came and I saw him/her.’
- b. Ò wàε lá ká Ñ nyé ó.
 3SG come-PERF FACT CONJ 1SG see 3SG
 ‘S/he came so as (in order that) I see him/her.’

Used as a hortative, this is one of the few coordinating conjunctions that can be used to introduce a free clause. But like the dependent conjunction *le* in Kulango (Elders, 2003:43), it is not easy to draw a clear dichotomy between its function as a coordinator and as a subordinator, as in (39).

- (39) Ká à bié wà kà té gáá.
 CONJ DEF child come CONJ COP go
 ‘That the child should come and/so that we go.’

7. *BÉÉ* AS A COORDINATING CONJUNCTION

This connective carries a question tag and may also be comparable to *yaa* in Lobire (Kambou 2001:167). In addition, it presents an alternative condition. If the clauses have the same subject, the subject may be repeated in the second clause. The VPs are different. This also presupposes that it can coordinate NPs and VPs. This is shown in (40a, b, c) below.

- (40) a. Bà àrè béé bà zèŋ?
 3PL stand CONJ 3PL sit
 ‘Are they standing or sitting down?’
- b. Bà àrè béé zèŋ?
 2PL stand CONJ sit
 ‘Should they stand or sit?’
- c. Báýúó béé Áýúó lá wà?
 Bayuo CONJ Ayuo FACT come
 ‘Is it Bayuo or Ayuo that has come?’

Other interrogative sentences may result when clauses have different subjects, verbs or objects or when any of the clauses denote negation, as illustrated in (41-44).

- (41) Áyúó lá dì *béé* Kógi lá dì?
 Ayuo FACT eat CONJ Kogi FACT eat
 ‘Is it Ayuo who has eaten or Kogi?’
- (42) Áyúó dì lá kápàlà *béé* sáábó?
 Ayuo eat FACT yam-paste CONJ corn-paste?
 ‘Did Ayuo eat yam or corn paste?’
- (43) À bíé kónò lá *béé* ò lààrá lá?
 DEF child cry-IMPERF FACT CONJ 3SG laugh-IMPERFFACT?
 ‘Is the child crying or laughing?’
- (44) Fò díé lá *béé* fò bá dì?
 2SG eat-PERF FACT CONJ 2SG NEG gaa
 ‘Have you eaten or not?’

In constructions that have future tense, the sentence could either be interrogative or a declarative. This will usually be in the answer to a question. Let us see the following examples in (46a, b) with the question ‘Who is to go?’. Even though the sentence is grammatically correct in discourse the sentence is better constructed as a complex sentence, by starting it with the subordinator *kaapɔge* as in (45b).

- (45) a. Fõõ lá nà gáá *béé* máá lá nà gáá.
 2SG FACT FUT go CONJ me FACT FUT go
 ‘You or I will go.’
- b. Káápɔgè fõõ la nà gáá *béé* máá lá nà gáá.
 May be 2SG FACT FUT go CONJ me FACT FUT go
 ‘May be you will go or I will go.’

8. QUASI-COORDINATORS

These are coordinators usually formed by two or more lexeme coordinators, each of which still functions as a single coordinator. This involves a regrouping of *simple* conjunctions in ways that are unique to the various combinations applicable. With the exception of *à* which cannot combine with *kà* and *béé*, and *kà* with *béé*, the rest can combine to form other coordinators. These are their syntactic structures and cannot be altered. In most cases, there may be a slight shift in the meaning of the sentences they coordinate but not a complete distortion or deviation from their original meaning. The various possible combinations are:

$\grave{a} + ky\acute{e} = \grave{a} ky\acute{e}$; $ky\acute{e} + k\grave{a} = ky\acute{e} k\grave{a}$; $ky\acute{e} + b\acute{e}\acute{e} = ky\acute{e} b\acute{e}\acute{e}$;
 $\grave{a} + ky\acute{e} + k\grave{a} = \acute{a} ky\acute{e} k\grave{a}$; $k\grave{a} + ky\acute{e} = k\grave{a} ky\acute{e}$; $\grave{a} + ky\acute{e} + b\acute{e}\acute{e} = \grave{a} ky\acute{e} b\acute{e}\acute{e}$.

The distribution of these compound conjunctions is not different from that of the single forms described so far. However, we have observed that there are some syntactic constraints with regard to their use. Some of these constraints overlap and therefore one would have thought that they cannot occur together in the same slot. Usually out of the group of such combined coordinators, at least one of them could

function in the slot alone, while in others more than one. Under the circumstances, it appears the complementation occurs with each coordinator modifying the co-conjunction it precedes. We may refer to this as the head of the compound coordinator. We shall, as usual, look at them in turns.

8.1 À KYÉ

In (46a), either of the connectives, *à* or *kyé*, could be used in coordinating the clauses without any significant change in meaning. In all three examples, there is the basic concept of going and coming. However, (46a) projects the action as being continuous while (46b) breaks it into two separate events and (46c) is emphatic of (46b). According to our discussion above, we would say that *à* is a complement to *kyé* in (46c).

- (46) a. Ñ gààé lá à léé wà.
 1SG go-IMPERF FACT CONJ turn come
 ‘I went and then came back.’
- b. Ñ gààé lá kyé léé wà.
 1SG go-IMPERF FACT CONJ turn come
 ‘I went and came back.’
- c. Ñ gááé lá à kyé léé wà.
 1SG go-IMPERF FACT CONJ turn come
 ‘I went but then I returned.’

8.2 KYÉ KÀ AND KÁ KYÉ

We have observed that *kyé* functions as *and* when it connects clauses in which the second clause does not have a subject, but behaves like *but* when (i) there is a subject in the second clause; or (ii) when an expression of contrast is expressed in the light of the first clause; or (iii) when either of the clauses is in the negative. In some instances, the two coordinators seem to be complementary in the syntax but their meanings may differ slightly. Examples (47a, b, c) illustrate this.

- (47) a. Ñ nyú lá kōō kà ò nyú dáà.
 1SG drink FACT water CONJ 3SG drink beer
 ‘I drank water and s/he drank beer, i.e. we both drank.’
- b. Ñ nyù lá kōō kyé ò nyú là dáà.
 1SG drink FACT water CONJ 3SG drink FACT beer
 ‘I drank water but s/he particularly drank beer.’

This second sentence makes a specification between the subject or the object or both. In (47c), it is a point of emphasis to (47b).

- c. Ñ nyù lá kōo kyé kà ò nyú là dáà.
 1SG drink FACT water CONJ 3SG drink FACT beer
 ‘I drank water and/ but s/he drank beer.’

The inverse of this double conjunction has an element of *but that*. It is interesting to note that both of these conjunctions can begin a main clause and in the same vein the compound can also form the initial of the independent clause. See (48a, b).

- (48) a. Ká ò wónj à lá ká kyé ò bá wàaná.
 That 3SG hear them FACT CONJ 3SG NEG come-IMPERF
 ‘That s/he has heard it but that s/he is not coming.’
- b. Ká kyé ó wà kà té gàà.
 CONJ 3SG come CONJ 2PL go
 ‘But that s/he should come and we go.’

8.3 À KYÉ KÀ

The tri-connector is formed from double coordinators *à kyé* and *kyé kà*. While *à* and *kyé* can combine to form a coordinator, the same is not true of *à* with *kà*, but *kyé* may combine with *kà*. This is illustrated in (49).

- (49) Ñ gáá lá wéé à kyé kà ò wà.
 1SG go FACT farm CONJ 3SG come
 ‘I went to the farm and then / before s/he came.’

Here, *á* functions as a modifier to *kyé* because it is permissible for the two to form a coordinator while it is *kyé* that can also form a conjunction with *kà*. It is ungrammatical for *á* to join up with *kà* for obvious reasons stated in section 5 above. The analysis indicates that *kyé* or *à kyé* in turn modifies *kà* in that sequence.

One characteristic of these double coordinators is that it makes it possible for such a coordinator to grammatically coordinate clauses which hitherto could not be coordinated by only one of them alone.

8.4 KYÉ BÉÉ

Our hypothesis in section 7 indicates that *béé* connotes a questioning quality. In sentence (50), the sameness of the verb in both clauses precludes the use of *kyé* as a sole coordinator but *béé* could, alone, conjoin the clauses and therefore *béé* is the head of the coordinator *kyé béé*.

- (50) Bà nà wá lá kyé béé bà kòŋ wá ?
 3PL FUT come FACT CONJ 3PL NEG come
 ‘Will they come or not? (Emphatic)’

Another characteristic of these double coordinators is that they are used to signal the last of a series of

coordinated items in the sentence, as in example (51).

- (51) Ò tùó lá kóó- à pégìlè dógè à kyé màrè bíé.
 3SG carry FACT water CONJ carry on side pot CONJ carry on back child
 ‘S/he is carrying water, a pot and also carrying a child.’

Significantly, Dagaare uses a lot of conjunctions in the construction of sentences and this may account for the many varieties of conjunctions in the language. Sentence (52) is a combination of some of these coordinating conjunctions.

- (52) Ñ wáé lá à wà nyé ò kà ó gāŋ kyé kònó
 1SG come-PERF FACT CONJ come see 3SG CONJ 3SG lie CONJ cry-IMPERF
 kyé kà à díí bú bìŋ.
 CONJ DEF food put down
 ‘I came and saw him/her lying down crying while the food was sitting there.’

9. THE SEMANTICS OF COORDINATING CONJUNCTIONS

It has been observed that the principal function of most of these conjunctions is to connect clauses. Indeed we have already described how some of them affect the meaning of the compound sentences. The connective *né/ànè* is an inclusive coordinator that coordinates words and phrases only and therefore does not bring about any semantic differences in the construction of sentences. However, there are others which may cause significant difference in meaning in discourse. In this part of the discussion, we show some shades of meanings that are portrayed by these coordinating conjunctions. We shall again consider them in turns but where there is the need for comparison we will do so.

9.1 KYÉ

Kyé has the qualities of exclusiveness and contrast. In our discussion in section 4 we note that *kyé*, when used in coordinating clauses, may suggest several meanings such as *and*, *but*, *before*, *yet*. That is, if used in one sentence it may still suggest more than one meaning.

Kyé may suggest inclusiveness when used as *and* but at the same time it may suggest that one event is chronologically precedes the other. In (53), one could see it as expressing two actions while on another dimension it is expressing the sequence of the events.

- (53) Ò nà írí lá kyé dé à bíé.
 3SG FUT get up FACT CONJ take DEF child
 ‘S/he will get up and take the child. Or S/he will get up before s/he takes the child.’

When an idea, an action or a characteristic is different from another or when an expectation is prompted in the first clause and not realized in the second clause, *Kyé* is also used.

- (54) À kyáánáá lèè lá kyé ò bá ŋmàrè
 DEF bottle fall-PERF FACT CONJ 3SG NEG break
 ‘The mirror has fallen but it is not broken.’

9.2 À, KYÉ and KÁ

It is noted that *à*, *kyé* and *ká* may all function as *and* but, as we have seen, not only are their clause structures sometimes different, but they may also assume meanings that are different. In (55), whose main themes of the clauses are ‘going to the market’ and ‘buying of rice’, we can make several meanings out of the compound sentences using the various conjunctions.

- (55) a. N̄ gàá lá dàá à té dà mùí.
 1SG go FACT market CONJ COP buy rice
 ‘I went to the market and bought rice.’
- b. N̄ gàá lá dàá kyé té dà mùí.
 1SG go FACT market CONJ COP buy rice
 ‘I went to the market and there I bought rice.’
- c. N̄ gàá lá dàá ká té dà mùí.
 1SG go FACT market CONJ COP buy rice
 ‘I went to the market in order to buy rice.’

In (55a), the speaker went to the market and while s/he was there, s/he bought rice. In (55b), the buying of rice was a secondary event and in (55c), the speaker went to the market purposely to buy rice.

On other occasions, the difference in meaning is more difficult to determine. Sometimes meaning may be derived from context and not based on the syntax of the sentence, like in (56a, b). In both sentences the idea may be that the two events are in mutual co-existence. Another view may be that the speaker is making a clear separation of the events, maybe, in terms of time-lag in between the two actions in (56b).

- (56) a. À pɔ̀gèlɛ́é sɔ̀ lá kóɔ̀ à zɛ káà.
 DEF girl bath FACT water CONJ rub oil
 ‘The girl had her bath and applied pomade to her body.’
- b. À pɔ̀gèlɛ́é sô lá kóɔ̀ kyé zɛ káà.
 DEF girl bath FACT water CONJ rub oil
 ‘The girl had a bath after which she applied pomade to her body.’

9.3 KÁ AND À

These coordinators may be noted for their ability to function as *and* in negative compound constructions. In sentences (57a, b), the second clause in each is negative and yet the conjunctions express inclusiveness.

- (57) a. Tè wáéé lá à bá nyé ó.
 1PL come-PERF FACT CONJ NEG see 3SG
 ‘We came and did not see him/her.’

- b. Tè wáé lá kà ó kyé bé.
 IPL come-PERF FACT CONJ 3SG there not
 ‘We came and s/he was not there.’

Another similarity between these two conjunctions is that they may both compound a sentence in which one of the clauses is a result of the other. The examples in (58a, b) illustrate this.

- (58) a. À bíé léé lá kà ò nû kɔɔ.
 DEF child fall-PERF FACT CONJ 3SG hand break
 ‘The child fell and his/her hand got broken.’

- b. À bíé léé lá à kɔɔ ò nû.
 DEF child fall-PERF FACT CONJ break 3SG hand
 ‘The child fell and broke his/her hand.’

The syntactic structures of the two sentences are different. This is because *kà*, when functioning as an ‘and’ coordinator, always precedes the nominal in the second clause immediately, while *à*, functioning in the same capacity, is followed by a verb.

10. CONCLUSION

This paper has discussed coordination in Dagaare. We have seen that, in Dagaare, there is a range of conjunctions that has a twofold function i.e. listing objects, actions, phrases and conjoining clauses into complex or compound sentences. These conjunctions are made up of cardinal and compound conjunctions with *kyé* being very versatile in the formation of the compound conjunctions. Their distributions and functions in the various constructions indicate that although a few can be used to introduce a free clause, most of them are medial. From the survey, we have observed that one of these coordinators, *né/ànè*, coordinates NPs only. It has also been noted that some of their behaviors, in the environments they occur, may overlap but that their primary functions remain the same. Their functions have been discussed to the effect that their occurrence in compounding is tied to certain syntactic rules based on the structures of the clauses that they coordinate. The paper has further shown that, with the exception of *né/àne*, which does not vary in meaning, most of the others have the potential to change the meaning of the resultant sentence depending on the clause environment that it appears in. A careful analysis of their meaning suggests that although some of them may be substitutable in a sentence the meanings may be similar but not quite the same.

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