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NON-AFRICAN LINGUISTS BE LIKE, "THIS IS A NEW WAY TO QUOTE!"[1]

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Abstract

The objectives of this paper are to show that quotative **like**, while relatively new to colloquial varieties of (white) English, is attested in varieties of African speech of the continent (represented by Akan (Asante Twi)) and the diaspora (represented by Anti-American African (AAA))[2] decades, if not over a century prior. Secondly, we show that there are similar bases for grammaticalization for Akan (Asante Twi) **sɛ** and AAA **like** whereby they have gone from showing resemblance/approximation to serving as quotatives. Thus, we provide examples from AAA and Akan (Asante Twi) to demonstrate correlations between the two quotatives using primary text research and analyses based on a variety of sources placing the putative origin of quotative **like** into the collective African context. In doing so, we find that both AAA quotative **like** and Akan (Asante Twi) **sɛ** are attested prior to what seems to be the relatively recent adoption of AAA's pre-existing quotative into colloquial white American English, which is only first attested in the 1980s. We also find that quotative **like** and **sɛ** follow

[1] We would like to thank the organizers and participants of the 8th Linguistics Association of Ghana Annual Conference held in Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), Kumasi, for the opportunity to present and discuss our ideas in this paper. However, all errors remain our own.

[2] The commonly used term African-American is a marker of the integrationist tradition among Black people in the United States. However, we are of the view that the quotative **like** construction – before being absorbed into colloquial (white) American speech – was more reflective of the Anti-American African tradition in which Africans consciously and subconsciously maintained a distinct African identity in the face of enslavement, oppression and Eurasian linguistic and cultural hegemony. Also, due to the pioneering work of linguists like Lorenzo Dow Turner (1949), it has been demonstrated that varieties of speech of Africans of the Diaspora have maintained aspects of African languages from throughout the continent while conscientiously and sub-conscientiously remaining distinct from Standard (white) American English – a remarkable feat considering the extenuating circumstances under which they exist. Thus, Anti-American African (AAA) is preferred to other terms in the literature such as so-called African American Vernacular English/Black English.

similar trajectories in terms of grammaticalization. In conclusion, we argue that quotative **sɛ** and **like** represent a common African source of a similar linguistic phenomenon.

Keywords: quotative like, Anti-American African, grammaticalization, resemblance/approximation

1.0 Structure of Article

In this article, we will discuss correlations between quotative **like** in Anti-American African (AAA) speech and writing (also known as "Black English") and **sɛ** 'like (in the sense of be similar to), resemble' in Akan (Asante Twi dialect). In doing so we will provide a brief introduction, followed by a presentation of the specific research questions to be addressed (section 2). We will then provide a concise review of thematically-related literature in section 3. Our methodology will be explicitly delineated in section 4. As we are tracing the path of grammaticalization, sections 5.1 and 5.2 will show the source constructions for what later develops into full quotative **like** in AAA and Akan (Asante Twi), respectively. In section 5, each of our research questions will be addressed with data from each language and an analysis of these data. Sections 5.3 and 5.4 demonstrate a later stage along the grammaticalization path as **like** and **sɛ** 'like (in the sense of be similar to), resemble' are both used to report situations, manner and sounds. Sections 5.5 and 5.6 demonstrate the full quotative form for **like** and **sɛ** 'like resemble'. In section 6, we will provide our own hypothesis regarding the putative diachronic development of the grammaticalization of both **like** and **sɛ** 'like (in the sense of be similar to), resemble' from verbs of similarity/resemblance, which eventually become complementizers capable of introducing quotes. Finally, in section 7, we will make our conclusions and provide recommendations for potential directions this type of research should take in the future (section 8).

2.0 Introduction

In a January 25, 2015 Boston Globe article, a Globe Correspondent, Britt Petersen, reported that there is a developing trend in English which involves the use of the verb **like** "to introduce a quote, a thought, or a feeling" (Peterson 2015).[3] The

[3] We would like to express our profound gratitude to Dr. Beth Bennett, a visiting Fulbright Scholar at the Department of English, University of Ghana, Legon, who drew our attention to this Boston Globe article.

article noted that quotative **like** has become especially widespread in so-called "Black English" of the US. Even so, the use of '(be) like'[4] to introduce quotes, thoughts or feelings is taken by many non-African linguists to be a rather recent trend starting a few decades ago somewhere from the early 1980s (Butters 1982). However, as we will argue below, incipient examples of quotative **like** are attested in US varieties of AAA speech going back at least to the 1800s and early 1900s (Dunbar 1898, Chesnutt 1887, Project (1936-8) 2001, Chesnutt 1899). Thus, firstly, our main claim in this article is a radical departure from the null hypothesis that quotative **like** began in the 1980s. The decade of the 1980s is, rather, the earliest attestation of quotative **like** in colloquial white English that scholars have been able to find. We posit that their lack of ability to find quotative **like** is due to them restricting themselves to the limited sources—varieties of white English—while consciously or unconsciously ignoring AAA. Also, it is worth noting that the construction is still not fully accepted in Standard (white) American English and can be found predominantly in Colloquial (white) English. Secondly, we challenge the notion that quotative **like** developed from "focuser **like**" by tracing an alternate route of grammaticalization through what we term reportative **like** as found in AAA (Meehan 1991).

Similarly, from the other side of the globe in the region of Africa now known as Ghana, for well over a century, the development of the verb **sɛ** 'like (in the sense of be similar to), resemble' into quotative **like** has been attested and well-reported for Akan (Asante Twi) (Christaller 1875, Christaller 1881, Lord 1993, Riis 1854).

In light of this emerging information on the pre-existence of this phenomenon of quotative **like** and the possible correlations between and/or common African source of the Continental and Diaspora forms, our primary research questions are as follows:

1. What is the nature of the correlation between **like** in AAA varieties of speech and writing of the United States and **sɛ** in Akan (Asante Twi)?
2. Is quotative **like** a recent development as claimed by some non-African linguists?
3. What are the bases for the development/grammaticalization of **sɛ/like** into a quotative complementizer in Akan (Asante Twi) and AAA speech of the United States (so-called "African American Vernacular English/Black English")?

[4] Non-inflected **be** in AAA usage is necessary for a habitual reading more so than as an obligatory collocation with **like**.

3.0 Literature

The earliest attestation of **be like** in quotative function is Butters (1982: 149), who reports that American speakers use '**to be**' (usually followed by **like**) where what is quoted is an unuttered thought, as in **And he was like 'Let me say something'** or **I thought I was going to drown and I was (like) 'Let me live, Lord'** (Buchstaller 2013:5, emphasis ours)

Indeed, noted specialist of quotatives in white English, Buchstaller's (2004) earliest attestation of quotative **like** is Zappa and Zappa (1982). According to D'Arcy (2007: 393, italics in original), "*be like* is an innovation, representing ongoing change." Current research on the origins of quotative **be like** has suggested that it developed (or grammaticalized) from "focuser **like**," as in **We watched this John Wayne movie that was like really bad** (Underhill 1988, Meehan 1991, Romaine and Lange 1991, Ferrara and Bell 1995, Eriksson 1995, Buchstaller 2001, Cukor-Avila 2002: 3, also see Buchstaller 2004 for a derivation of Quotative **like** from Focuser **like**). However, we argue that quotative **like** is not used in this focuser role in either AAA speech of the US or Akan (Asante Twi) and that such comparatively recent usage is typical of non-standard colloquial white American varieties of English (perhaps due to a re-analysis or misinterpretation of the way quotative **like** was originally used in AAA). Further, we argue that quotative **like** is derived from what we term "reportative **like**" which reports the manner in which an event or situation occurred. Reportative **like** is, in turn, derived from **like** of similarity or resemblance.

On the Akan (Asante Twi) side, there has been an ongoing debate in terms of some scholars arguing that the quotative complementizer **sɛ** is derived from **se** 'say' (Amfo 2010, Osam 1994, Osam 1996: 99, 102, Osam 1998, Duah 2013)[5], while others argue that Akan (Asante Twi) complementizer **sɛ** is derived from **sɛ** 'like (in the sense of be similar to), resemble' (Riis 1854, Christaller 1875, Christaller 1881, Lord 1993). It should be noted that the generalized complementizer and the quotative complementizer are one and the same in Akan (Asante Twi). While we will not address the contentious issue of whether or not this complementizer is derived from **se** 'say', we are of the opinion that even if ultimately derived from **se** 'say', quotative **sɛ** may, itself, represent a diachronic reanalysis - possibly a phonetic and semantic

[5] One of the arguments, which has been adduced to support the grammaticalization of the lexical verb **se** 'say' into a complementizer **sɛ** 'that' is that such an analysis is "typologically sound" and in line with the cross-linguistic fact that in various languages, including those that are very close to Akan areally and/or genetically, the complementizer which can be translated into English as 'that' developed from the verb meaning 'say' (see Lord 1993, Osam 1996: 99, 102, Güldemann 2008: 525). However, Güldemann (2008:80-81) notes that "several default QI-verbs [i.e. quotative index verbs] are synchronically or derive diachronically from something other than a generic speech verb."

convergence with the preexisting **sɛ** 'like (in the sense of be similar to), resemble' in the language.

In the following section, we will provide the data that supports this type of analysis.

4.0 Methodology

We engaged in purposive selection of attested examples from various existing texts including transcriptions of interviews, commonly attested proverbs and other published works for **like** in AAA from late-19th century to date (Delany 1859-62, Chesnutt 1887, Turner 1949, Green 2002) as well as for quotative **sɛ** 'like (in the sense of be similar to), resemble' in Akan (Asante Twi) (Twi dialects), e.g. (Opoku 1969, Appiah, Appiah, and Agyeman-Duah 2001), Agyekum (2008) and Edward (2015).

5.0 Data and Preliminary Analysis

The first of our three research questions to be addressed is "What is the nature of the correlation between **like** in AAA of the United States and **sɛ** in Akan (Asante Twi)?" In addressing this question, it is most helpful to delineate the properties of approximation, reportative and quotative **like** and **sɛ** to see convergences and divergences. First in terms of properties of **like**—which has an original semantic domain expressing similarity and from which, we argue, the quotative **like** is ultimately derived—we find that **like** as a quotative complementizer introduces a quotation or impersonation giving the manner in which an utterance occurred. This is done through what has been referred to as a sort of quotation by means of comparison (Buchstaller 2001). Given that it signals an approximation, as the examples below will show, it functions less as a direct quotation than a kind of provision of an overall general feel.[6] **Like** collocates with verbs like **be**, **say**, **think**, **go**, etc. (Butters 1980, Buchstaller 2001, Cukor-Avila 2002, Fox and Robles 2010, Peterson 2015). According to D'Arcy,

As a quotative, *like* occurs with the dummy form *be* to support inflection and to satisfy the requirement that the clause have a lexical verb (see Romaine and Lange 1991, 261-62). This collocation performs the specialized role of introducing reported

[6] This phenomenon is discussed in Buchstaller (2004).

speech, thought, and nonlexicalized sounds, among a range of other content (2007: 446, italics in original).

However, this collocation is not mandatory in AAA as quotative **like** can be used without **be**[7] or any other verbs, as in the following examples:

1. AAA:
   a. **And then he like, "Damn, there go that bastard again, he the (Postman)"** (Wayne 2006)
   b. **And then she like "bring back my change"** (correction_queen_ 2015)

Thus, non-inflected **be** in AAA usage is necessary for a habitual reading more so than as an obligatory collocation with **like**.[8] Copula-less AAA sentence structure parallels similar structures found in African languages—particularly in the case of adjectival verbs—where no copula occurs (Duah, Ayiglo, and Blay 2011, Kambon 2015). Further, **like** is used for enactments which extend to verbal and non-verbal mimetic performances, including, but not limited to, ideophones, gestures, movements and facial expressions (Fox and Robles 2010). We will return to this point below in our discussion of Internet memes.

Sɛ 'like (in the sense of be similar to), resemble' similarly introduces a quotation or impersonation which seems to imitate the manner in which an utterance was made. According to Romaine and Lange, "When *like* is used in a quotative function, it allows the speaker to retain the vividness of direct speech and thought while preserving the pragmatic force of indirect speech" (1991: 228, italics in original). As in the case of AAA speech **like**, we find that it is not limited to faithfulness to a direct quotation but rather gives a general feel or approximation. In terms of collocation, **sɛ** 'like (in the sense of be similar to), resemble' tends to collocate with verbs like **ka** 'speak', **bisa** 'ask', **dwene** 'think', **ne** 'be' etc.[9] Also like **like**, **sɛ** 'like (in the sense of be similar to), resemble' is utilized in enactments of both verbal and non-verbal mimetic performances.

As such, we argue that Akan (Asante Twi) **sɛ** 'like (in the sense of be similar to), resemble' is very much like what may be referred to as the AAA "quotation through simile,"[10] with a root meaning of **sɛ** 'resemble, be like.' Appealing to grammaticalization theory, we view this transition as exemplification of semantic

[7] In AAA, **be** is not a dummy form, but is necessary for an aspectual (habitual) reading.
[8] For a discussion on the use of Habitual **be** in AAA, see Green (2002: 44).
[9] See Boadi (2005: 55-58) for a comprehensive list of predicates which collocate with **sɛ**.
[10] See Addison (1993), Fishelov 1993) for more on simile – from literal to figurative meanings and the structure, semantics and rhetoric of simile in English.

persistence (see Section 6 below) (see Hopper 1991: 28-30, also see Romaine and Lange 1991: 244 for a trajectory of grammaticalization similar to the one discussed here).

Thus, in terms of grammaticalization of AAA **like** of the United States and in Akan (Asante Twi) **sɛ** 'like, resemble,' both are used primarily to signal resemblance/similarity/ approximation, then as reportative (of manner) **like/sɛ** and finally as quotative **like/sɛ** (see Meehan 1991, also see Buchstaller 2002, Buchstaller 2004 for an illustrative model of this claim). Each of these types of usages will be given in the next section with examples to illustrate the putative diachronic development of the form across each of these stages.

5.1 'like' of Similarity/Resemblance/Approximation

First, we will provide examples of **like** of similarity, resemblance and/or approximation as the first step in the grammaticalization process as we posit a development from similes to quotatives. It should be noted that **like** as it occurs in the following AAA examples is different from the more recent use of **like** in colloquial (white) American English, some of the first instances of which are related to focus. According to Meehan (1991), when **like** is used in recent colloquial (white) English in this way, it can be omitted without the remaining construction being rendered ungrammatical or without fundamentally changing the meaning of the construction. That is not how **like** is being used in the constructions below as removing it would turn the simile (≈) into a metaphor (=)[11] (cf. 2a, 2c), which gives a different reading, or would result in an ungrammatical utterance (2b). Different from Focuser **like**, **like** of similarity/resemblance/approximation is crucial for the quotation through simile, as we will show in section 5.6.

2. AAA:
   a. **"I don't mean to brag; I don't mean to boas', but we're like hot butter on a breakfas' toast."** (Green 2002: 156)

   b. **"He may be very sexy, or even cute, But he looks like a sucker in a blue an red suit."** (Green 2002: 157)

   c. **"bɪg, wʊɪt hol, lʊɪk ə grew; lʊɪk ə grew."** (Turner 1949: 268)
   Standard American English: 'big white hole, like a grave; like a grave.'

[11] Here, we are using mathematical operators ≈, which denotes similarity between that which occurs before and after and =, which denotes identity/equality between the two elements.

d. **"I was lookin like a ol man."** (Green 2002: 252)

e. **"You a stone junkie just like the rest."** (Wideman 1984: 94)

In each of these examples, a simple simile-type of comparison is made in various contexts with various types of nominals. It should be noted that (2a, 2c, 2e) are different syntactically from (2b, 2d) in that in the former, the equivalence/approximation relationship seems to be between the whole main NP and the post-**like** NP with no linkage via a verb, but primarily **like**.[12] This has been referred to as bare **like** and can be illustrated as NP ≈ NP, where ≈ represents similarity. The fundamental point of using **like** in this instance is to hedge to show that the two NPs are similar, but not equal. The functional utility of such hedging is carried over into reportative and quotative **like**. According to Buchstaller (2013: 21), "the hedging function of approximative/comparative quotative frames is especially useful for the reporting of stance, feelings or attitudes, opinions or point of view." Indeed, we posit that this type of simile construction forms the prototypical source of the subsequent two types of constructions to be discussed below—reportative **like** and quotative **like**. In (2b, 2d), **like** is used as a preposition which compares two noun phrases; thus, **like** maintains its lexical properties. We will show that a comparable situation obtains in the case of Akan (Asante Twi) **sɛ** 'like (in the sense of be similar to), resemble' with regard to the use of **sɛ** for nominal comparison.

5.2 sɛ 'like (in the sense of be similar to), resemble' of Similarity/Resemblance

In Akan (Asante Twi) **sɛ** 'like (in the sense of be similar to), resemble' is used in similar ways for illustrating a comparison typically between two nominals. As shown in the examples in (3), **sɛ** 'like (in the sense of be similar to), resemble' of similarity functions as a lexical verb, much like it does in AAA, showing verbal trappings such as negation, motional markers and person marking. Furthermore, as the examples in Akan (Asante Twi) demonstrate, **sɛ** 'like (in the sense of be similar to), resemble' of similarity does not require any other verb to be able to link two noun phrases which are being compared.

[12] It should be noted that, unlike in Standard (white) American English, in this and other instances in AAA, **like** may, indeed, have verbal properties.

3. AKAN:

a. **Ɔba sɛ ɔse, nanso ɔ-wɔ abusua.**[13]
child like father DISJ 3SG-possess matriclan
'A child resembles its father, but he/she has a matriclan.'
(Appiah, Appiah, and Agyeman-Duah 2001: 14)

b. **Ɔba n-sɛ oni a, ɔ-sɛ ɔse.**
child NEG-like mother COND, 3SG-like father
'If a child doesn't resemble mother, he/she resembles father.'
(Appiah, Appiah, and Agyeman-Duah 2001: 14)

c. **Adowa/eyuo n-wo ba na**
royal antelope/black duiker NEG-birth child CONJ
ɔ-n-kɔ-sɛ ɔwansane.
3SG-NEG-EGR-like bushbuck
'The royal antelope/black duiker doesn't give birth to offspring that resembles a bushbuck.' (Appiah, Appiah, and Agyeman-Duah 2001: 98)

Each of the above examples is a classic example of **sɛ** functioning as a simile or approximation between the first element and the second element of the construction. Although this typically corresponds to NP ≈ NP, there is no hard rule that suggests that both the first and last elements must be NPs. The key aspect to be noted is that **sɛ** 'like, resemble' expresses approximation and not equivalence just as in the case of **like** in AAA (and even in Standard (white) English). The key point to remember here, however, is that African languages like Akan (Asante Twi) are, we would argue, closely genetically related to AAA, and not to Standard (white) English (Turner 1949, Duah et al. 2011, Kambon 2015). Thus, similarities between Akan (Asante Twi) and AAA can be explained by this relation whereas similarities to Standard or colloquial English would likely be attributable to areal contact phenomena. Chronology of attestation of a particular linguistic phenomenon is, thus, crucial in understanding the direction of influence between AAA and colloquial and/or Standard (white) English. This point is particularly important due to the fact that the last major sustained contact between Akan (Asante Twi) and AAA may have occurred 150+ years ago during the waning years of the chattel enslavement period in

[13] The following glosses are used in the (Akan) examples: 1/2/3 = first/second/third person, CAUS = causative, COND = conditional marker, CONJ = conjunction, CONS = consecutive, DISJ = disjunction, EGR = egressive, FUT = future, IDEO = ideophone, IMP = imperative, INA = inanimate, INTR = intransitive, OBJ = object, NEG = negation, PST = past, PRF = perfect, PROG = progressive, PL = plural, POSS = possessive, PRT = particle, REL = relativizer, SBJ = subject, SG = singular.

which continental Africans were still being kidnapped and transported to the western hemisphere.

5.3 Manner/Situation-Reportative 'like'

The next usage of **like** in AAA is that which is followed by an expression of the manner or the nature of a situation. This is referred to by Buchstaller (2001: 7) as a situational **like** in that it works in a similar manner to Standard (white) American English 'as if' or 'as though' or, much more recently, the "new" colloquial (white) American English 'like.' The following examples can be linked conceptually through the concept of epistemicity. Epistemicity relates to the "speaker's attitude regarding the reliability of the information, the judgment of the likelihood of the proposition, the commitment to the truth of the message" (Macerata 2012). By means of hedging using quotation through simile, the speaker is then able to report a sense of what transpired or what was heard. It should be noted that ideophones, exemplified below, are introduced by **like** just like any other words, phrases and sentences. Thus, the grouping below is for the sake of organization and presentation of data more than due to language-internal motivation apart from on the basis of word class or phrase type that follows **like**. Below, we group the two types of reportativity in terms of whether the report is a situational or an auditory event. Although the following examples are arranged chronologically for the sake of presentation, it should be noted that there is nothing linguistically different between the 1800s (examples (4a-e)) and the examples from the 1980s (f-g) and after. Rather, we have a case of continuity throughout for AAA.

Reportative of that which transpired (situational):

4. AAA:
   a. **"Case den da would'n be so many ole wite plantehs come an' look at us, like we was show!"** (Delany 1859-62: Ch 18)
      STANDARD (WHITE) AMERICAN ENGLISH: 'Because then there wouldn't be so many old white planters coming and looking at us as though we were for show (i.e. entertainment).'

   b. **Mars Dugal' ax 'im, sorter keerless, like es ef he des thought of it.** (Chesnutt 1887: 7)
      STANDARD (WHITE) AMERICAN ENGLISH: 'Master McAdoo asked him, in a sort of careless way, as though he had just thought of it.'

c. **Sho nuff, when Henry begun ter draw up wid de rheumatiz en it look like he gwine ter die fer sho, his noo master sen' fer Mars Dugal.** (Chesnutt 1887: 7)
STANDARD (WHITE) AMERICAN ENGLISH: 'Sure enough, when Henry began to come down with rheumatism and it looked as though he was going to die for sure, his new master sent for Master McAdoo.'

d. **Bimeby here come Marse Dugal' hisse'f, mad as a hawnit, acussin' en' gwine on like he gwine ter hurt somebody.** (Chesnutt 1887: 64)
STANDARD (WHITE) AMERICAN ENGLISH: 'After a little while here comes Master McAdoo himself, as mad as a hornet, accusing and going on as though he was going to hurt somebody.'

e. **Mars Dugal' sorter smile' en laf ter hisse'f, like he 'uz might'ly tickle' 'bout sump'n.** (Chesnutt 1887: 54)
STANDARD (WHITE) AMERICAN ENGLISH: 'Master McAdoo sort of smiled and laughed to himself, as though he found something very humorous.'

f. **He come walking in here like he owned the damn place.** (Spears 1982: 852)
STANDARD (WHITE) AMERICAN ENGLISH: 'He came walking in here as though he owned the damned place.'

g. **They come walking in here like they was gon' make us change our minds.** (Green 2002:79)
STANDARD (WHITE) AMERICAN ENGLISH: 'They came walking in here as though they were going to make us change our minds.'

Reportative of the nature of the sound:

h. **Harry, Nuny and me are making sounds like "whew!" and we're slapping five.** (Cole and Black 1971: 271)

i. **"when I saw Willie, it was like — whew"** (Daly and Bergman 1975: 79)

j. **Zoom, I hit the mic like boom** (Smith 1993)
STANDARD (WHITE) AMERICAN ENGLISH: 'Zoom, I'll hit the mic making a sound like boom.'

k. I'll fuckin - I'll fuckin tie you to a fuckin bedpost with your ass cheeks spread out and shit, right, put a hanger on a fuckin stove and let that shit sit there for like a half hour, take it off and stick it in your ass **slow like *Tsssssssss***. (Smith 1993)
STANDARD (WHITE) AMERICAN ENGLISH: 'slowly, making a sound like Tsssssssss'

l. **Coming like rah ooh ah achie kah**. (Smith 1993)
STANDARD (WHITE) AMERICAN ENGLISH: 'Coming making a sound like rah ooh ah achie kah.'

As can be seen in reportative **like** (4a-g), consistency with the manner in which the situation or event transpired is preferred. Further, we can see that this type of usage even includes ideophones, as in (4h-l). This is significant in that it highlights the utility of this usage of **like** given the oral moment wherein a vivid enactment of the manner in which a situation or event transpired as can be reported by the speaker to the presumed auditory delight of the listener. With regard to epistemicity, (4c) specifically can be thought of as an instance of visual epistemicity in which the speaker reports the situation based on the information to which he/she has access (see Spronck 2012 for a discussion of speaker attitudes in quotative constructions). In this function, **like** tends to collocate with verbs such **ax** 'ask', **look**, **gwine on** 'going on', etc. However, in the case of ideophones as a word category, concepts may be understood as being linked to specific sounds. In many African languages, ideophones can be thought of as a word category unto themselves (Childs 1996, Agyekum 2008, Kranenburg 2014).

5.4 Reportative sɛ 'like (be similar to), resemble'

Similarly, in Akan (Asante Twi), we also have cases of **sɛ**, which may be glossed as 'like (in the sense of be similar to), resemble' followed by expression of manner or nature of situation. Essentially, this type of usage indicates that one situation is like or resembles another. Consider the following examples in (5).

5. AKAN:

a. **Ohiani di**	**pɔw-adeɛ**	**a,**	**ɛ-te**	**sɛ**
Pauper eat	coin-thing	COND,	3SG.SBJ.INA-feel	like
ɔ-a-di	**dwan.**			
3SG.SBJ-PRF-eat	sheep			

(Appiah, Appiah, and Agyeman-Duah 2001: 124)
AAA: 'If a bum eat cheap food, 's like he ate mutton.'
STANDARD (WHITE) AMERICAN ENGLISH: 'If a poor man eats a small coin's worth of something, it's like he eats mutton.'

b.

Ohiani	**pam**	**akoroɔ**	**a,**	**na**	**ɛ-yɛ**
Pauper	mend	bowl	COND	PRT	3SG.SBJ.INA-do

no	**sɛ**	**ɔ-didi**	**sanyaa.**
3SG.OBJ	like	3SG.SBJ-eat.INTR	tin plate

(Appiah, Appiah, and Agyeman-Duah 2001: 125)
AAA: 'When a bum fix his wood bowl, 's like he eatin' off a tin plate.'
STANDARD (WHITE) AMERICAN ENGLISH: 'When a poor man repairs his broken wooden bowl, it seems to him like he ate off a tin plate.'

c.

Obi	**bɔ**	**wo**	**dua**	**sɛ**	**"Ma**
someone	strike	2SG	stick	like	CAUS

ɔ-n-wu!"	**a,**	**ɛ-n-yɛ**	**ya**
3SG.SBJ-IMP-die	cond	3SG.SBJ.INA-NEG-do	pain

sɛ	**ɔ-se**	**"Ma**	**ohia**	**n-ka**	**no!"**
like	3SG.SBJ-say	CAUS	poverty	IMP-touch	3SG.OBJ

AAA: 'If somebody cuss you like: "Let 'im die!" it don't hurt like if he say: "Let 'im be po(or)!"
STANDARD (WHITE) AMERICAN ENGLISH: 'If someone curses you saying 'Let him die!' it's not as painful as if he says "Let him be impoverished!"
It should also be noted that, as a word category in Akan (Asante Twi), the ideophone "may occur sentence-finally as an adverb or as a sentential noun phrase complement" as in the following examples (Agyekum 2008: 116):

6. AKAN:

Akwasi	**tea-a**	**mu**	**sɛ,**	**ka-a-a-a-e! (ka-a-a-a-e-e!)**
Akwasi	shout-PST	inside	like	ka-a-a-a-e! (ka-a-a-a-e-e!)

'Akwasi shouted/indicated that *he was in serious pain/danger*.' (Agyekum 2008: 116)

7. AKAN:
   Adehyeɛ nyinaa a-gye a-to mu de stamp
   royals all PRF-take PRF-throw inside take stamp
   a-bɔ so sɛ pǎn!
   PRF-hit on like IDEO
   'All royals have accepted and stamped it IDEO.' (recorded voice) (Edward 2015: 78)

8. AKAN:
   Ɛ-ma wo honam ani yɛ sɛ nahanaha
   3SG.INA-give 2SG.SBJ skin. eye do like IDEO
   'It makes your skin brighter IDEO.' (Advert on Pure Skin body cream.) (Edward 2015: 79)

What is apparent in the above examples (6-8) is the epistemic/reportative quotative complementizer use that was exemplified in (4h-l) to introduce sound. Reportative **like/sɛ** is used to report the nature of a situation or the manner in which a sound was made. By logical extension, the report of sounds, which forms a word category in African languages, is extended to utterances (which are obviously also sounds). We argue that this is the nexus between reportative **like/sɛ** and quotative **like/sɛ**.

5.5 Quotative 'like'

This brings us to our second research question which asks "Is quotative **like** a recent development as claimed by some linguists?" The simple answer is that it is not recent by any means in AAA, although, as claimed by non-African linguists, it may certainly be new to colloquial (white) American English, and it is yet to make substantive inroads into Standard (white) American English as it is still actively resisted in the standard register (Peterson 2015). Indeed, we find early attestations of quotative **like** in AAA speech going all the way back to the 1800s. We further speculate that if AAA speech had benefitted from better written documentation, it may be traced back even further than that—perhaps all the way back to the continental Africans who introduced it from the pre-existing structures in their native languages. Nevertheless, we argue that these attested examples of quotative **like** are a logical extension of situational/manner-reportative **like**—discussed in the previous section—which reports the similarity of manner in which a situation was experienced or a sound was heard from the subjective view of the speaker (Buchstaller 2001). In

an extension of this basic semantic core idea, quotative **like** reports an approximation of the manner in which an utterance was made, again through the intentionally subjective lens of the speaker, which is related to notions of epistemicity and evidentiality (see Meehan 1991, Buchstaller 2002, Buchstaller 2004). The following are quotes exclusively from AAA—not white speech—from the late 1800s and early 1900s in which quotative **like** introduces direct quotes of various types of utterances (9a-e). What is notable here is the fact that all of the following data precedes the null hypothesis of non-African authors who trace the origin of quotative **like** only to the earliest attestations that they can find in colloquial (white) American English from the 1980s while intentionally ignoring and/or being ignorant of the source construction in AAA and the African languages from which the source construction may have been derived.

9. AAA:

   a. **Him sez brave lak, "Ise know what it am, it am simple. Youse have heah of de person dat can throw de voice, aint youse?"** (Mauchison 1936-38)
   STANDARD (WHITE) AMERICAN ENGLISH: 'He said bravely, "I know what it is, it is simple. You have heard of a person who can throw his voice, haven't you?"'

   b. **"[…] an' say, jes' ez solerm-lak 'When I gits big, I gwine to ma'y Nellie.'"** (Dunbar 1898: 139)
   STANDARD (WHITE) AMERICAN ENGLISH: '"[…] and say, just as solemnly 'When I get big, I'm going to marry Nellie.'"'

   c. **"His pappy jump lak he was shot, an' tu'n right pale, den he say kin' o' slow an' gaspy-lak, 'Don't evah let me hyeah you say sich a thing ergin, Tho'nton Venable.'"** (Dunbar 1898: 139-40)
   STANDARD (WHITE) AMERICAN ENGLISH: '"His father jumped as though he was shot, and turned quite pale, then he said kind of slowly and gaspingly 'Don't ever let me hear you say such a thing again, Thornton Venable.'"'

   d. **She come right down dem steps 'mongst all dem mad folks an' say, calm an' lady-lak, 'Gent'mun, my brother-in-law is here, cert'ny.'** (Henry 1936-38: 43)
   STANDARD (WHITE) AMERICAN ENGLISH: 'She came right down those steps among all those mad folks and said calmly and lady-like, 'Gentlemen, my brother-in-law is here, certainly.''

e. **"W'en dey comes to de home wid de chil's, dey says p'lite lak, 'Sir, Ise brought your chil's safe home.'"** (Thompson 1936-38)
STANDARD (WHITE) AMERICAN ENGLISH: '"When they come to the home with the child, they say politely, 'Sir, I brought your child home safely.'"'

The above examples illustrate the development of quotative **like** used like a possible adverbial suffix **-ly**. Etymologically, **-ly** is derived from **liche** meaning 'having the form of'. As such, it may be understood as a syntactic reanalysis in which the adverbial reading of adj + **like** = adv is replaced by one in which **like** comes to be understood as a stand-alone complementizer. In this position, it would regularly occur in a position in which it would necessarily introduce quotations. However, below in example (10), we will provide additional examples from AAA wherein such an adverbial reading is not possible.

Particularly in narration, the quotative **like** illustrated in (9) approximates the manner in which a quote (esp. song) took place. This is a similar phenomenon to that of approximation **like** and situational/manner-reportative **like**. The functional utility of this type of construction is through approximation, which allows for the leeway of quotation through simile (≈). A deixis-based explanation of quotative **like** has also been articulated that

> *like* draws the listener to the internal state of the speaker in introducing constructed dialogue that dramatizes internalized feelings […] In this respect the grammaticalization process, whereby *like* comes to introduce a mimetic performance, is […] motivated since in its traditional meaning *like* means 'similar to' (Romaine and Lange 1991: 266, italics in original; also see Clark 1974).

As such, it becomes clear that quotative **like** results from reportative (a situational **like** of manner; mimesis of situation and/or sound) which, in turn, arises from similarity/approximation/resemblance **like** (cf. Meehan 1991, Buchstaller 2001). While we find that these earlier attestations of quotative **like** are compelling, at the same time, we must take into account that oftentimes, enslaved Africans were not allowed to write under threat of torture or death. This pervasive situation of oppression and repression is relevant with regard to why the quotative **like** of AAA speech may not have been appropriated into colloquial white speech until the 1980s (Jones 1990). As such, although we have found many examples of quotative **like** in just this cursory survey of available literature on AAA, we would doubtlessly have thousands more examples if not for the constraining nature of the prevailing historical

circumstances that curtailed documentation of AAA speech of the United States. With this in mind, we will continue to present a few further examples illustrating the manner origins of quotative **like** in AAA going back to the late 1800s and early 1900s. This relates directly to our second research question, which asks if quotative like is a recent phenomenon from the 1980s as is universally stated in the literature. It should be noted that the examples below have no possible suffixal/adverbial interpretation and are thus, instantiations of true quotative **like**:

10. AAA:

    a. **"You could hear 'em singin' a mile away dem old songs lak: 'On Jordan's Stormy Banks I Stand,—Roll, Jordan Roll.'"** (Crew, Bunch, and Price (1936-8) 2014: 33)
    STANDARD (WHITE) AMERICAN ENGLISH: '"You could hear them singing a mile away those old songs, such as: 'On Jordan's Stormy Banks I Stand, —Roll, Jordan Roll.'"'

    b. **"He would git 'em started off singin' somethin' lak, 'Sallie is a Good Gal,' an' evvybody kept time shuckin' an' a singin'."** (Thomas 1936-38: 8)
    STANDARD (WHITE) AMERICAN ENGLISH: '"He would get them started off singing something like, 'Sallie is a Good Gal,' and everybody kept time shucking and singing.'" (http://www.gutenberg.org/files/18485/18485-h/18485-h.htm)

    c. **"Us march' 'roun' de room an' sorter sing—lak, 'De Yankees is comin'! De Yankees is comin'!"** (Henry (1936-8) 2006: 64)
    STANDARD (WHITE) AMERICAN ENGLISH: '"We marched around the room and sort of sing (in a manner like) 'The Yankees are coming! The Yankees are coming!'"'

    d. **I use to sing a few songs dat I heard de older folks sing lak:**
    "Cecess [Secession, i.e., Southern] ladies thank they mighty grand
    Settin' at de table, coffee pot of rye,
    O' ye Rebel union band, have these ladies understan'
    We leave our country to meet you, Uncle Sam." (White 1936-38: 290)
    STANDARD (WHITE) AMERICAN ENGLISH: 'I used to sing a few songs that I heard the older folks sing like:
    "Secession ladies think they're very grand

Sitting at the table, coffee pot of rye,
O ye Rebel union band, have these ladies understand
We leave our country to meet you, Uncle Sam."'

In shoring up our claim with data, it should be readily apparent that quotative **like** in AAA is attested long before the conventional wisdom of the null hypothesis of non-African linguists as has been postulated for colloquial (white) English. In terms of the manner origins of quotative **like**, it should be noted in the examples above, as they are quotes of songs, there is a heavier emphasis on approximation of how the song was actually sung. This is in perfect alignment with the approximative meaning of **like**. As similar structures are readily apparent in continental African languages, it is likely that AAA speakers drew upon the limited lexical tools available within the English language to accomplish the type of approximation that they already knew of as being possible in African languages from which such constructions likely originated.

In arguing for the manner origins of modern quotative **like**, in AAA, which we argue has been co-opted into colloquial (white) American varieties of English among other (white) varieties of English, it seems as though **like** has the ability to function as a sort of shorthand for "**like this**" in which the speaker makes it known to the listener that he or she is going to attempt to approximate the manner in which the following utterance was made (see Macaulay 2001). An example of this is found in (11) below.

11. **"Dere am a song 'bout de Patter Rollers. Ise can't 'membahs it as 'twas, but its somethin' lak dis: 'Up the hill and down the holler'"** (Thompson 1936-38).
    STANDARD (WHITE) AMERICAN ENGLISH: "'There is a song about the patrollers. I can't remember it as it was, but it's something like this: 'Up the hill and down the holler'"

Having shown copious examples of instantiations of quotative **like** prior to the 1980s, we will now turn our attention to more modern examples which permeate memes generated on the Internet. Attributed to Richard Dawkins (1976), the word "**meme**" actually originates in scientific literature but has since been appropriated into popular culture on the Internet. Modeled on the word gene, meme is an abbreviation of the word ***mimeme*** from Greek **μίμημα** ***mīmēma*** 'imitated thing' from **μιμεῖσθαι** ***mimeisthai*** 'to imitate' and ultimately derived from **μῖμος** ***mimos***, 'mime' (Pickett 2000). Popular memes are relevant to our discussion of quotative **like** as the quotative **like** typically occurs on the top of the image, while the quoted phrase is typically featured on the bottom (with or without quotation marks). Further, a meme

represents/enacts the feeling/emotion of the sender/poster via a written quotation introduced by **like**. Thus, the meme, like mimetic (re)enactment, creates a holistic impression via approximation in line with the intrinsic lexical/semantic properties of **like**.

Figure 1: Memes with quotative **like**

a.

Women be like "nope I ain't mad" (Anonymous 2015b)

b.

Girls be like "you my one and only" (Anonymous 2013b)

c.

Girls be like "yeah, I know how to cook" (Anonymous 2013a)

d.

Dudes be like "your beautiful" I be like "you're" (Anonymous 2015a)

Each one of these memes shows the quotative **like** in various contexts and also what we argue to be the logical extension of the transition from **like** of similarity to reporting the manner in which the situation occurred (reportative **like**) to quoting the manner in which the quote was made (quotative **like**). It is to be noted that oftentimes in speech situations, the quote features an imitation of the speaker's tone of voice and/or movements/behavior. In the case of memes, however, the mimesis is provided by the facial expressions and physical presentations in the image—similar to the function of in-person gesticulations—which serve to provide a sense of (re)enactment to go with the quote introduced by **like**. It should be noted that the above memes happen to have non-inflected **be** collocating with **like** providing a habitual reading in standard AAA. However, when the habitual reading of AAA non-inflected **be** is not called for, **like** readily collocates with other elements such as in **he all like**…, **she straight (up and down) like**, etc. Such forms have not yet been as thoroughly coopted into colloquial (white) American English to the degree of inflected **be like**. However, as we have demonstrated above, quotative **like** is attested in AAA at least as far back as the 1800s and it most likely occurred in the language well before this time. Indeed, below we will show that a parallel form exists in the Akan (Asante Twi) language of West Africa, which may well have been transported by kidnapped and enslaved Africans to the Americas.

5.6 Quotative sɛ 'like (in the sense of be similar to), resemble'

We now turn our attention to the (**ne**) **sɛ** '(be) like' quotative in Akan (Asante Twi). There are various instances of quotative **sɛ** in Akan (Asante Twi). As in the case of quotative **like**, **sɛ** may collocate with **ne** 'be', **frɛ** 'call', **bisa** 'ask', **se** 'say' and a whole host of other verbs. Thus, we find that quotative **sɛ** in the Akan (Asante Twi) context is similar to quotative **like** as attested in AAA of the United States. As in the case of quotative **like**, quotative **sɛ** 'like (in the sense of be similar to), resemble' provides an approximative rendering of the gist of the speech act. It should be noted that the examples in (12) are not (yet) full quotative uses of **sɛ** 'like (in the sense of be similar to), resemble' in that the primary role of the semantic notion of reportativity is carried by the verbum dicendi (or a verb of 'saying'). For **like** to be fully quotative, it would need to occur without a verbum dicendi, as in (13) below.

12. AKAN:

a. **"Asɛm a ɔ-ka-e ne sɛ: 'Kwaku, sɔre**

word REL 3SG.SBJ-speak-PST be like: Kwaku rise
na wo-re-yɛ a-wu'"
PRT 2SG-PROG-do CONS-die
(Opoku 1969: 145)
AAA: 'What he/she said was like 'Kwaku, get up cuz you fin'ta die.''
STANDARD (WHITE) AMERICAN ENGLISH: 'What he/she said was: 'Kwaku, get up because you are on the verge of death.''

b. **Ayie ba a, na yɛ-frɛ ɔbɛtwani sɛ**
funeral come COND PRT 1PL-call palm-wine-tapper like
"Nana."
grandparent
(Appiah, Appiah, and Agyeman-Duah 2001: 310)
AAA: 'If a funeral come, we call the palm wine man like "Elder."'
STANDARD (WHITE) AMERICAN ENGLISH: 'If a funeral comes, we call the palm wine man "Elder."'

c. **Yɛ-re-yi wo agorɔ mu a, wo-n-se sɛ**
1PL-PROG-remove 2SG game inside COND, 2SG-NEG-say like
"M-a-kae dwom."
1SG-PRF-remember song
(Appiah, Appiah, and Agyeman-Duah 2001: 310)
AAA: 'When we kick you out the show, you don't say like "I remember a song."'
STANDARD (WHITE) AMERICAN ENGLISH: 'When you are removed from the performance, you don't say "I have remembered a song."'

In (13) we illustrate examples wherein **sɛ** 'like (in the sense of be similar to), resemble' carries the semantic force of reportativity as it occurs without a verbum dicendi.

13. Akan:

a. **"Bra bɛ-hwɛ bi" n-kyerɛ sɛ "Bɛ-hunu**
come INGR-look some NEG-show like INGR-see
sene me."
pass 1SG
AAA: '"Come check it out" don't mean like "See it betta than me"'

STANDARD (WHITE) AMERICAN ENGLISH: 'Telling someone "come and look at something" doesn't mean "see it better than me."'

b. **Wo** **biribi** **ne** **akyenkyena** **a,** **anka** **ɛka**
2SG something be allied hornbill COND, would debt

re-m-pa **wo** **so** **da,** **ɛ-firi** **sɛ**
FUT-NEG-wipe 2SG top never, 3SG.INA-from like
obi **re-pae** **n'adeɛ** **a,** **a-gye**
someone PROG-split 3SG.POSS.thing COND, PRF-receive
ma ne **ho** **sɛ:** **"Mea!** **Mea!"**
give 3SG body like: "Just.me! Just.me!"
(Appiah, Appiah, and Agyeman-Duah 2001: 48)
AAA: 'If yo relative a hornbill, you won't neva be outta debt 'cause when somebody shout 'bout his (missin') thang, he a-been done admitted to it fo' his own seff like "It was me! It was me!"'
STANDARD (WHITE) AMERICAN ENGLISH: 'If your relation is an allied hornbill, then you will not stop paying debts, because whenever someone is shouting for a lost thing, it takes responsibility crying: "It is I! It is I!"'

c. **Aboa** **abirekyie** **na** **a-bu** **ne** **bɛ**
animal goat PRT PRF-break 3SG.POSS proverb
sɛ **"Ade** **pa** **na** **yɛ-kata** **soɔ."**
like thing good PRT 1PL-cover top."
(Appiah, Appiah, and Agyeman-Duah 2001: 52)
AAA: 'Da goat break off his proverb like "Good thangs, we cova 'em up."'
STANDARD (WHITE) AMERICAN ENGLISH: 'The goat has a proverb which says: `"A good thing is sure to be covered over."'

d. **Deɛ** **ɔ-re-pɛ** **da-berɛ** **n-kyerɛ**
REL 3SG-PROG-search sleep-place NEG-show
n'akyi **sɛ** **"Me-dwonsɔ** **kɛtɛ** **so."**
3SG.POSS.back like 1SG-urinate mat on
(Appiah, Appiah, and Agyeman-Duah 2001: 82)
AAA: 'Somebody that want a place to sleep don't let nobody know like "I pee the bed."'
STANDARD (WHITE) AMERICAN ENGLISH: 'He who wants a sleeping place does not reveal: "I am a bed wetter."'

6.0 Grammaticalization path of 'like' and 'sɛ'

The development of lexical words into functional and/discourse words, particles and affixes is a prominent feature of language (see Hopper and Traugott 2003). This process, referred to as grammaticalization, represents a high level of functional organization in language where pre-existing words, which encode clearly delineated, usually concrete, concepts are extended in their usage to refer to other related and/or relatable concepts via some specific cognitive processes. As we have shown above, like in AAA and sɛ 'like (in the sense of be similar to), resemble' in Akan (Asante Twi) have uses and functions beyond their core meaning. Figures 2 and 3 illustrate the path of grammaticalization that we believe the two forms like and sɛ 'like (in the sense of be similar to), resemble' have undergone. First, as has been demonstrated above, there are substantive similarities in the development and use of quotative sɛ and like. Primarily, both seem to start from a root meaning of similarity, which is the underlying meaning of the lexical verb. However, as noted by Romaine and Lange (1991), like can also be used as an auxiliary and a preposition as in Figure 2 for AAA. Since grammaticalization takes place in stages, it is reasonable to expect that the function of like as an auxiliary will precede that of a preposition, since auxiliaries can be considered a subset of verbs in many languages. In Akan (Asante Twi), however, there is no evidence of sɛ used as an auxiliary or a preposition (indeed, Akan (Asante Twi) lacks the category of prepositions altogether with the exception of wɔ 'be, exist, LOC', see Osam 1994; Osam, Duah and Blay 2011). Nevertheless, we see a further development of the root meaning of like/sɛ to function as a reportative complementizer, which provides the manner in which a situation or event occurred. As a further development, like/sɛ are both used as quotative complementizers, which derive their utility via the flexibility and expressiveness of "quotation through simile." In this function, the complementizer allows for a greater degree of hedging. It also incorporates the expressiveness of enactment rather than the adherence to the constraint of the reproduction of an exact quote word-for-word. We argue that these points of utility, to a large degree, form the bases for the extensive grammaticalization of like/sɛ. Consequently, in Akan (Asante Twi), sɛ has developed into a generalized complementizer which can be used to express a wide range of other propositions (see Figure 3).

Figure 1: Putative diachronic development of AAA Quotative Like:

Like

main verb > (auxiliary > preposition >) reportative/manner complementizer > quotative complementizer (> verbum dicendi)

Figure 2: Putative diachronic development of Akan (Asante Twi) Quotative **Sɛ**:

Sɛ

main verb > reportative/manner complementizer > quotative complementizer (> generalized complementizer)[14]

7.0 Conclusion

In this article, we have addressed our three primary research questions, which were: (1) What is the nature of the correlation between **like** in Anti-American African varieties of speech and writing of the United States and **sɛ** in Akan (Asante Twi)? In section 5.0, we argued that both AAA **like** and Akan (Asante Twi) **sɛ** are used primarily to express similarity, resemblance and/or approximation and to report the manner or nature of a situation and ultimately as a grammaticalized quotative complementizer. (2) Is quotative **like** a recent development as claimed by some non-African linguists? We answer no, it is not a recent development in Anti-American African (AAA) speech. More likely, the construction has, rather, recently been adopted into colloquial (white) American English, but remains outside of the pale of standard (white) American English with African languages with which AAA is genetically related, such as Akan (Asante Twi), as the ultimate source. (3) What are the bases for the development/grammaticalization of **sɛ/like** into a quotative complementizer in Akan (Asante Twi) and Anti-American African speech of the United States (so-called African American Vernacular English/Black English)? On this question, we argue that the primary basis is approximation from a simple simile (≈) extended into other domains (approximation of likeness, situations, sounds, and utterances). Having addressed our three primary research questions through the course of this paper, we conclude that both quotative **like** and **sɛ** 'like (in the sense of be similar to), resemble' appear to provide a common African (Continental and Diaspora) solution to a common linguistic problem. Thus, there are functional bases for the initial development of quotative **like** and **sɛ** 'like (in the sense of be similar to), resemble' which predate hitherto commonly accepted dates in colloquial (white)

[14] Parentheses indicate that each may also be used in this way, but not exclusively nor obligatorily.

English typically attested in the literature (i.e. the 1980s). However, beyond this discussion of anteriority, the poignant correlation between Akan (Asante Twi) and AAA speech calls for linguists in general and African linguists in particular, to problematize Standard (white) English as the global standard after which all other languages are evaluated or into which they are glossed/translated. Similarly, it may prove useful to problematize glossing African languages into white varieties of English over varieties of African = Black speech, such as AAA, which may be more similar and may mutually provide synchronic and diachronic insights that may otherwise be obscured by taking a circuitous and tangential journey through Standard (white) English. In this vein, we may ask ourselves "So why not translate from African languages directly into AAA and vice versa rather than take a detour through the elusive hypernym, 'English?'"

8.0 Future directions

In the future, we would like to do further research into the extended grammaticalization found in AAA of the US in the case of the non-obligatory collocation where **like** alone can be used as a complementizer. Examples of this include:

14. AAA:

    a. **And then he like, "Damn, there go that bastard again, he the (Postman)"** (Wayne 2006)
    STANDARD (WHITE) AMERICAN ENGLISH: 'And then he says, "Damn, there's that bastard again, he's the (Postman)"'
    b. **And then she like "bring back my change"** (correction_queen_ 2015)
    STANDARD (WHITE) AMERICAN ENGLISH: 'And then she says "bring back my change"'

In this and other instances, we find that **be** in **be like** is primarily necessary for a habitual interpretation rather than for collocation with a verb as is found in other cases outlined above and in Akan (Asante Twi). Thus, it is necessary to disaggregate the quotative **like/sɛ** from other verbs with which they may or may not collocate in any given situation. In other words, in the context of AAA speech, it may be a misnomer to speak of quotative **be like** whereas, it may be more appropriate to talk of

quotative **like** that happens to collocate with non-inflected/habitual **be** in addition to various other verbs and parts of speech[15] (cf. Cukor-Avila 2002, Buchstaller 2013).

On the Akan (Asante Twi) side, we look forward to engaging in further research into related items which feature **sɛ** 'like (in the sense of be similar to), resemble' such as **sɛdeɛ** 'the manner in which', **sɛnea** 'the manner in which', **asɛ** 'seems like' and **sei** (**sɛ eyi**) 'like this.'

15. AKAN:

a. **mi-gyina** **hɔ** **sei** **'gonn.'**
1SG-stand there like-this 'gonn.'
(Opoku 1969:14)
AAA: 'I stand there like 'yo.''
STANDARD (WHITE) AMERICAN ENGLISH: 'I stand there 'ta-daa.''

b. **wo-bɛ-yɛ** **sei** **'gonn.'**
2SG-FUT-do like-this 'gonn.'
(Opoku 1969:14)
AAA: 'You'll be like 'yo.''
STANDARD (WHITE) AMERICAN ENGLISH: 'You will do 'ta-daa.''

These are particularly interesting lines of inquiry in that each one extends the discussion of the similarity of manner origins for the "quotation by simile" evident in quotative **like/sɛ** as discussed in the current paper.

[15] Note aforementioned AAA examples like **he all like**…, **she straight (up and down) like**.

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