

# Reciprocals in the making: multiple grammaticalization in Manambu

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The aim of this paper is to illustrate the pathways of multiple grammaticalization of reciprocal meanings in Manambu, a Ndu language from the Sepik area of New Guinea. The reciprocal-associative marker 'each other; together' comes from a grammaticalized noun meaning 'side'. Reciprocal (but not associative) meanings can also be expressed with verbal directional markers, some of which come from grammaticalized verbs. The directional markers with a reciprocal reading refer to strictly defined directions and always involve movement 'away' from the speaker or the reference point (which is in itself typologically unusual). Multiple grammaticalization of essentially the same, reciprocal meaning results in the development of additional polysemous structures and multiple partial synonymy.

## 1. The problem: multiple grammaticalization

Grammaticalization presupposes the development of lexical items into grammatical forms, with concomitant phonological, semantic and other changes (see Lehmann 2002: 112–159). This may involve grammaticalization chains, and polygrammaticalization, whereby one lexeme is the source of more than one grammatical item. For instance, the auxiliary 'be at' in Ewe got grammaticalized as a preposition and as a present progressive marker (see Heine 1992: 354–355). The reverse can also happen: multiple exponents of essentially the same grammatical category can come from different sources. We propose to call this, hitherto undocumented, phenomenon, 'multiple grammaticalization'.

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The inherently polysemous reciprocal-associative marker 'each other; together' comes from a grammaticalized noun meaning 'side' (section 2). In addition, Manambu is in the process of reinterpreting combinations of verbal directional markers, themselves the product of grammaticalization

of compounded verbs, as reciprocals without any associative connotations. The functional motivation behind this clearly involves the necessity for disambiguation (section 3). The directionals with a reciprocal reading are typologically unusual, in that they refer to strictly defined directions and always involve movement 'away' from the speaker or the reference point (section 4). As a result of multiple grammaticalizations involving the reciprocal meaning, we are faced with a set of nearly synonymous structures each of which has additional polysemous patterns of its own.

## 2. Reciprocal and associative in Manambu

Manambu, spoken by about 2000 people in the Sepik area of New Guinea (see Aikhenvald 2008), is a highly synthetic, predominantly suffixing and agglutinating language, with a strong tendency towards verb-final constituent order. Its morphological make-up is quite complex. Nouns distinguish two genders, three numbers and nine case forms. Verbs have an array of grammatical categories, including several modalities, aspects and tenses fused with person marking, a complex system of negation, and of clause-chaining.

The major means of expressing a reciprocal meaning is by using a reciprocal-associative marker *awar-wa* 'each other; all together'. This comes from a comitative case-form of the inherently locational noun *awar* 'side, sideways direction'. The comitative case in Manambu has numerous meanings, including associative 'with' (e.g. *wun-a-wa* (I-LK-COM) 'with me'), and perlocative 'along; through' (e.g. *yaba-wa* (road+LK-COM) 'along the road'). The comitative *-wa* is also used with a few nouns, with the meaning of 'all together', e.g. *du-a-wa* (man-LK-COM) 'with man; all the men', *tap-a-wa* (village-LK-COM) 'the whole village'. That is, one can hypothesize that the reciprocal meaning of *awar-wa* is an extension of its more general collective meaning 'all together' (this is comparable to a reciprocal extension of the collective marker in Boumaa Fijian (Dixon 1988: 177–178) and other Oceanic languages).

Reciprocals, their functions, polysemy and origins, are among the major foci of typological studies today (recent surveys include König and Gast (eds.) forthcoming; Nedjalkov (ed.) 2007; and Fraizyngier and Curl (eds.) 1999; also see Heine and Kuteva 2002). None of these has so far reported a reciprocal originating from a comitative form of a locational noun.

The reciprocal-associative marker is typically placed immediately before the verb (where one expects an adverb to go). The marker *awarwa* has lost its erstwhile nominal properties: it cannot take modifiers or trigger gender or number agreement. In other words, it has become reanalyzed as a marker of a purely grammatical category. This is akin to what Lehmann (2002: 114–118) termed 'desemantization' and 'morphological degeneration', processes known as indicative of grammaticalization.

The marker *awarwa* forms a word class of its own (see Aikhenvald 2008: Table 4.4). It shares a few syntactic properties with adverbs: it can modify both verbs and nouns. However, it lacks a number of crucial features most adverbs have: for instance, it cannot undergo reduplication or repetition, it cannot occur with the suffix meaning 'like', and cannot be used as a copula complement or be modified by the adverb *may* meaning 'real'.

Unlike a noun marked with the comitative case, *awarwa* can modify another noun: *awarwa ma:j* (REC/ASS story) means 'story (told) to or about each other; a joint story'. This highlights its inherent polysemy: (1) can have two readings, equally plausible:

- (1) *awarwa rak kur-na-bran*  
 REC/ASS joke make-ACT.FOC-IDU.SBJ.NPST  
 (a) 'We two joke about each other; we are in a joking relationship'  
 (b) 'We two joke together (about someone else)'<sup>1</sup>

The form *awarwa* can be used in both meanings with any verb, noun or adjective. Unlike reciprocals expressed with verbal affixes (e.g. Aikhenvald 2007) it has no effect on the verb's transitivity. The context typically determines whether the reciprocal or the associative reading of *awarwa* is appropriate. Consider (2): a man was attacked by a crocodile, and saved from imminent death by a group of friends who got together and pulled him out of the crocodile's mouth. In this context, *awarwa lagu-* can only mean 'pull together' (reading (a)). The reading (b) makes no sense in the given context.

- (2) [awarwa lagu-ma:r-ka-da]  
REC/CLASS pull-NEG.SUB-FUT-3PL.SBJ.NPST

[akas war-k-na-d]

NEG.IRR come-up-IRR-ACT.FOC-3M.SG.SBJ.NPST

- (a) 'If they had not pulled (him) all together, he would have never come up (ashore)'  
(b) \*'If they had not pulled each other, he would have never come up (ashore)'

In another context – as in (3), a command to children who were pulling at each other's clothes – only the reciprocal meaning is appropriate.

- (3) awarwa lagu-tukwa  
REC/ASS pull-PROH  
(a) 'Don't pull at each other!'  
(b) \*'Don't pull together (at something)!'

In its associative meaning, *awarwa* can be replaced with the adverb *na-kamib* 'all together', itself a lexicalization of *na-k-a-may* (one-LK-reat) marked with the terminative case *-b* with the meaning of 'exactly, up to, until'. (The terminative case is often used in adverb formation: Aikhenvald 2008: §4.4). In its reciprocal meaning, *awarwa* has no alternative synonym. But there are other ways out.

### 3. Directionals, and reciprocal meanings

Manambu has an articulate system of directional markers which may be suffixed to a verb root, e.g. *yaka-su* 'throw-upward', *yaka-saki* 'throw across away from speaker'. The directional markers *-su* 'upwards', *-sada* 'downwards', *-saki* 'across away from speaker or reference point', *-sapra* 'across toward speaker or reference point', *-sawala* 'towards inside or away from the reference point', *-saku* 'outwards' result from the grammaticalization of the verb *sa*- 'move' accompanied by directional suffixes *-da* 'down', *-u* 'up', *-dki* 'across away', *-apra* 'across towards', *-(a)wala* 'inside' and *-aku* 'outwards'.

These directional suffixes also occur on demonstratives, e.g. *a-l-aku* (that-F.SG-ACROSS.OUTWARD) 'that one across in the outward direction' and on a few archaic verbs, e.g. *kr-aku* (take-ACROSS.OUTWARD)

'take (something) outwards'. The verb *sa*- can take some directional suffixes, e.g. *sa-da* 'put down', the other two are *sa-wala* 'push inside', and *saku* 'push outside' (from *sa-aku*). That is, these directional forms can be viewed as grammaticalized verbal compounds. The origin of two further directionals, *-tay* 'sideways away from speaker or reference point' and *-tay* 'sideways toward the speaker or reference point', is as yet unknown.

The directionals *-saki* 'across away' and *-saku* 'outwards' can combine with the directional *-sawala* 'towards inside or away from the reference point'. Examples are *yaka-saki-sawala* 'throw to and from' (across away from speaker-inside or towards speaker within limited space) and *yaka-saku-sawala* 'throw to and from' (involving outward movement; no defined space). The directional *-tay* 'sideways away from speaker or reference point' can be repeated, as in *yaka-tay-tay* 'throw back and forth (no defined space)'.

A combination of two directionals *-saki* 'across away' and *-sawala* 'towards inside or away from the reference point' can be used to mark reciprocal activities, with an additional overtone of multiple action involving multiple participants, e.g. *yya-saki-sawala* (lit-ACROSS.AWAY-INSIDE) 'hit each other back and forth', *wa-saki-sawala* (talk-ACROSS.AWAY-INSIDE) 'talk to each other back and forth between'.

So can the reduplicated directional *-tay*, e.g. *kui-tay-tay* (give-SIDEWAYS.AWAY-SIDEWAYS.AWAY) 'give to each other; give back and forth'. The directional *-saku* followed by *-sawala* refers to a reciprocal activity in just one idiomatic expression, *bla-saku-sala* 'debate among each other; perform ceremonial talk in men's house'.

Unlike *awarwa* 'reciprocal/associative', directionals in their reciprocal usage have an implication of multiple activity. A verb with a repeated directional in (4a) indicates that the action of 'giving' takes place over and over again. In (4b), a verb without a directional, accompanied by *awarwa*, refers to 'giving' happening just once:

- (4) a. *kanna:gw* *kui-tay-tay-an*  
food give-SIDEWAYS.AWAY-SIDEWAYS.AWAY-SEQ  
*ta-kwa-dian*  
stay-HAB-1PL.SBJ.NPST  
'We keep giving food to each other back and forth'

- b. *kanna:gw awarwa kai-n ta-kwa-dian*  
 food REC/ASS give-SEQ stay-HAB-1PL.SBJ.NPST  
 'We give food to each other (once)'

The reciprocal overtone of directionals is just one of their possible readings, and can be regarded as an extension. Yet the frequency of the reciprocal readings of directional combinations in the language (as it is used nowadays) points towards their conventionalization. New reciprocals with no associative overtones resulting from a reinterpretation of directionals are on the rise – this was exemplified in (4a).

Examples in (4a-b) constitute a minimal pair where different reciprocal strategies produce different meanings. These markers have the same effect with any verb (including stative verbs). Directional-reciprocal markers appear on verbs of all classes (with the exception of copula verbs).

#### 4. Unusual reciprocals

We mentioned above that grammaticalization of a reciprocal/associative marker from a locational noun marked with comitative in Manambu appears to be unique. The polysemy involving a reciprocal, 'each other', and an associative or collective marker 'together' is not. A similar polysemy has been described for Boumaa Fijian (Dixon 1988: 177–178), and various other Oceanic languages (also see Aikhenvald 2007, on a similar phenomenon in Tariana, from north-west Amazonia, and its neighbours).

Polysemy between directionals and reciprocal meanings is widespread in Oceanic languages. However, this typically involves marking of dispersive movement (happening all over the place), and/or occurring in several directions with overtones of repetition (as in Futunan: Moyse-Faurie 2007, and Mekeo: Jones 1993); or happening here and there, without specific direction or aim, as in Nêlêmwâ (Bril 2007) and Tô'aba'ita (Lichtenberk 2007). And Anejoñ (Oceanic: Lynch 2000: 75–76; 85–86) has a reflexive-reciprocal verb *ispā-* and also a set of suffixes which are said to encode 'random motion and reciprocity'.<sup>2</sup> A similar example comes from Tongan (Churchward 1953: 256); the verb *hiki* means 'to move from one place to another'; and a derived form *fe-hiki-taki* can either have a purely reciprocal meaning 'to change places with one another', or refer to random motion, meaning 'to move hither and thither'.

Along similar lines, Mandarin Chinese has a construction VERB-*lai*-VERB-*qu* (VERB-come-VERB-go) meaning 'VERB all over again, back and forth, always, here and there; reciprocal' (Liu 1999; especially p.129 and example (16)). Here, 'the reciprocal sense (of *lai-qu* construction) is not part of the core meaning, but an implicature from the particular situation'.

Manambu is somewhat like Mandarin Chinese in that the reciprocal meaning of the directionals can still be seen as an implicature and not (yet) as their core meaning.

However, the unusual feature of the Manambu directionals used in reciprocal meaning is that, unlike all the examples above, the directionals with reciprocal overtones refer to strictly defined directions and NOT to random direction and motion. Manambu does have a construction referring to random motion. This construction, VERB-*yi*-VERB-*ya* (VERB-go-VERB-come) means 'VERB back and forth, randomly, all over the place' and is structurally similar to that in Mandarin Chinese. But in Manambu it does not warrant a reciprocal interpretation.

The directionals which develop reciprocal extensions (*-saki-sala-* 'across away-inward' and *-tay-tay* reduplicated directional 'to side away') involve movement away or outwards and never up or down.<sup>3</sup> That the directional with the meaning 'to side away' has developed overtones of reciprocal action is congruent with the fact that the major reciprocal marker *awarwa* is associated with the noun meaning 'side'. The reason for this, cross-linguistically unusual, development is as yet unknown.

Different means of expressing reciprocal meanings interact in a number of ways. While one verb cannot be marked for different directional-reciprocals simultaneously, it is not impossible for *awarwa* 'REC/ASS' and a directional-reciprocal to occur in one clause. An example is in (5): the marker *awarwa* emphasizes the reciprocity of the joint action, and the directional serves to express the idea of 'going back and forth' in a dialogue:

- (5) *awarwa wa-tay-tay-an*  
 REC/ASS say/speak-SIDEWAYS.AWAY-SIDEWAYS.AWAY-SEQ  
*ta-di*  
 stay-3PL.SBJ.NPST  
 'They talk to each other back and forth'

There are no other ways of expressing reciprocal meanings. In contrast to many other languages, none of the reciprocals in Manambu has a reflexive meaning. A reflexive-emphatic meaning can be expressed with the adverb *ka:p* 'by itself, by oneself' or with a reduplicated pronominal stem, e.g. *da da-ka* (the he-OBL) 'he himself'. Just occasionally an emphatic pronoun has a reflexive meaning, as illustrated in (6).

- (6) *amaɣɪk* mother+LK+DAT      *wika-ku* miss-AFTER.SS      *da* he      *da-ka* he-OBL  
*ɣa-sapa-ku,*      *ata* then      *kɪɣad* die+3M.SG.SBJ PAST  
 hit-hit.body-AFTER.SS      then      die+3M.SG.SBJ PAST  
 'Then he having missed (his) mother, he having hit himself (lit. he himself having hit) died'

The existing reflexive strategies never have any reciprocal overtones.

### 5. Multiple grammaticalization, and its outcomes

The grammatical expression of reciprocals in Manambu can be described as multiple grammaticalization. A locational noun 'side' has grammaticalized into a polysemous reciprocal/associative marker. There is a special associative adverb 'all together', but no specialized reciprocal. Combinations of directional markers involving movement 'away' and 'outwards' are developing an unequivocally reciprocal meaning (without losing their directional implications). The polysemous patterns associated with various ways of expressing reciprocals and related meanings are summarized in Figure 1. The top line indicates the origins of each form.

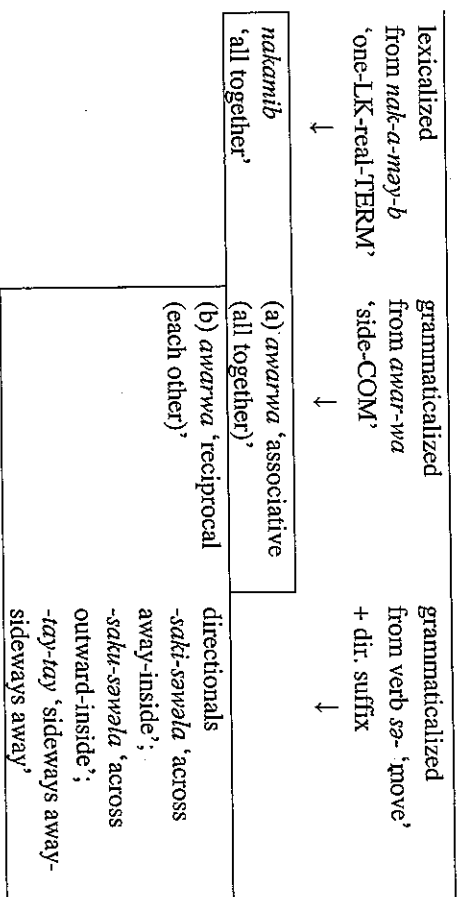


Figure 1. Forms with reciprocal meanings in Manambu, and their polysemous patterns

Multiple grammaticalization in Manambu has resulted in partial disambiguation of polysemous patterns. Further polysemous structures are on the rise, each following a somewhat idiosyncratic path. The existence of several items with similar meanings in a language is not unusual per se. What is unusual in the Manambu case is the co-existence of several grammatical mechanisms, with different origins, expressing various facets of one grammatical meaning: the reciprocal. These grammatical mechanisms are not fully synonymous (see especially examples (4a) and (4b)). Each of them has an additional overtone, and their interaction helps resolve existing polysemous patterns.

In terms of relative chronology of the varied expressions of reciprocity in Manambu, the grammaticalization of *awarwa* appears to be the oldest extant means of reciprocal marking. A similar form is attested with the same meaning in some languages of the family (e.g. Iatmul: Gerd Jendraschek, p.c.). In contrast, reciprocal meanings for the directionals appear to be a Manambu-specific phenomenon which is frequently attested in the spontaneous speech of younger and innovative speakers. This suggests a relatively recent origin of the — cross-linguistically unusual — polysemy of directional and reciprocal meanings.

How widespread multiple grammaticalization is cross-linguistically remains an issue for further study.

## Notes

1. I am grateful to my Manambu friends who taught me their language, to R. M. W. Dixon for comments and suggestions, and to Jessica Cleary-Kemp for editorial assistance.
2. Lichtenberk (1999: 55f) convincingly argues that the polysemy of the marker of 'plurality of action' as distributive, repetitive, dispersive and reciprocal goes back to Proto-Oceanic.
3. The order of directionals deserves a mention. In Manambu, if two directional specifications follow each other within one clause or one word, the order is typically 'far'-'close', similarly to the 'go come' construction and to the directional sequences discussed here, and not the other way round. It appears that languages of the world have different preferences as to the relative ordering of 'far' and 'close'. For instance, the preferred order in English *this and that, here and there, come and go* is opposite to that in Manambu. But the order in Manambu is reminiscent of Tok Pisin *go kam*, and in other languages in New Guinea (such as Barupu, from Sko family; Mim Coris, p.c.). This question requires an in-depth typological investigation (also see Liu 1999 on the order 'come-go' in Mandarin Chinese, and *el ir y el venir* in Spanish; cf. similar patterns in French and Portuguese).

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