

The Mankanyan suffix *-ar ~ -ir ~ -ad*: from directional to reciprocal.

Mankanya (knf, mank1251) is an Atlantic language (Niger-Congo Phylum), originally spoken in Guinea-Bissau, nowadays also spread in Senegal, Gambia; and diaspora. There are two main varieties of Mankanya, named with respect to the localities where they are spoken, we will focus on the main one: the Hula from Bula. Atlantic languages are agglutinative and characterized by a very rich and complex verbal morphology. Mankanya is a non-tonal language, with a quite strict SVO word order.

This talk aims to provide a synchronic description of the Mankanyan verbal polyfunctional and polysemic suffix *-ar ~ -ir ~ -ad* (the allomorph is selected following the form of the verbal stem). The meaning of the suffix changes depending on the verbal stem it is attached to, so that the meaning of the derived verb is co-constructed by the stem and the suffix. The suffix occurs with motion verbs whose stems express motion of the subject; the derived verb expresses motion of the subject with regards to the object (goal), with a nuance of purpose, the suffix has a directional meaning.

- (1) *Apoşar du katoḥ*
a- poş **-ar** d- -u ka- toḥ
3SG- walk **-DIR** EXT- -DIST CL3SG- house
“He is walking towards the house.”

(Gaved 2020: 146)

However, the suffix does not occur with all motion verbs. Considering that Mankanya is a verb-framed language and that the verb encodes not only motion but also direction and/or manner, the suffix only occurs with basic motion verbs, i.e. the verbs that only encode motion without direction nor manner. The directional suffix allows the expression of a direction with a verb not encoding direction in its stem.

In addition, this suffix is also used for benefactive (only with transitive verbs, without subject restrictions) and for reciprocal (only with plural subjects). Both of these uses change the valency of the verb, increasing it for the benefactive, reducing it for the reciprocal.

- (2a) *Şompi alemḥ*
Şompi a- lemḥ
PN 3SG- work
“Shompi works.”
- (2b) *Şompi alemḥar Naala*
Şompi a- lemḥ **-ar** Naala
PN 3SG- work **-BEN** PN
“Shompi works for Naala.”

(Gaved 2020: 71)

- (3a) *p-ḥal* “to love”
(3b) *p-ḥal-ad* “love one another”

(Gaved 2020: 71)

The study of this suffix gives an example of typical grammaticalization path of spatial morphemes: directional (allative, pure spatial use with motion verbs) > benefactive (metaphoric use with non-motion verbs) (Kuteva et al. 2019). A third step has been added to the chain: benefactive > reciprocal. The link between benefactive and reciprocal is attested in other languages, like Degema (Kari 2016) or Yup'ik (Mithun 2000), in which reciprocals also imply a plural subject. Through this case study, we will analyse the evolution of the suffix, including its historical development, i.e its grammaticalization pathway, and its semantic changes. The particularity of the Mankanyan suffix is this three step path way, other languages having either the evolution allative > benefactive, or benefactive > reciprocal, but not the global chain like in Mankanya. Considering the unidirectionality principle of grammaticalization, we will analyse the language-internal processes leading to the development of the suffix, using two data collection strategies: gathering data from grammars (Trifkovič 1969, Gaved 2020) and collecting data with dedicated tools such as the Questionnaire of the Berlin-Utrecht Reciprocals Survey (Dimitriadis 2008).

References

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Abbreviations

BEN: benefactive; CL: nominal classifier; DIST: distance DIR: directional; EXT: external; PN: proper noun; SG: singular.

Presentation will be: I **haven't decided yet** if it will be in person or online.