Reconstruction of the PAN morpheme *ka- and its grammaticalization in the Formosan languages

Abstract

Blust (2003, 2009/2013) has shown at length that different *ka- can be reconstructed at the PAn and PMP levels. In particular, it was reconstructed at the beginning of the 20th century as an allative marker (and more specifically an adverbial formative) by Brandstetter (1916) at the PMP level (Blust 2003:444), cf. PAn *ka-wanaN 'right side', *ka-wiRi 'left side'. The reconstruction of this marker at the PAn level has not been totally demonstrated and its grammaticalization in the Formosan languages has not been fully investigated either. This paper intends to fill the gap.

We first show that this prefix is found in a great number of Formosan languages (Saisiyat, Paiwan, Rukai, Puyuma, Bunun, Kavalan, Amis (and Sakizaya), Kanakanavu and Saaroa) as *ka-*, e.g. Saisiyat *ka-baala'* 'walk along the riverside' (Zeitoun et al. 2015), or *ma-ka-* (*~pa-ka-*), e.g. Atayal *ma-k-hakri'* 'walk across a bridge' (Wu 2013), and can thus be reconstructed at the PAn level as *ka 'allative'. We further follow and develop Wu's (2013) analysis in demonstrating that *ka- has further undergone grammaticalization from space to time. We first show that in some languages (e.g. Saisiyat, Amis (and Sakizaya), Atayal, Paiwan, Bunun, Kavalan and Thao), *ka-* is still used as an allative prefix – Wu (2013) talks about a "path verb" – but its behavior and distribution vary in these languages. To give but a few examples, in Saisiyat and Amis, it exhibits a similar distribution and occurs specifically when a verb is marked as negative or causative, e.g. Saisiyat *'oka'='i-k lobih* 'do/did not return', *pa-k-lobih* 'make…return'. In Atayal, Thao, Paiwan, Bunun, Kavalan, it co-occurs with the AV prefix *ma-* (alternating with *pa-*) and attaches to unmarked locations to form verbs, e.g. Mayrinax Atayal *ma-k-hakri'* 'walk across a bridge'. In many languages, it has grammaticalized as a temporal prefix ("temporal" being used here in the sense of time frame, always in the realis) but again we find a quite varied distribution: in Saisiyat, for instance, we note that it occurs on verbal stems, e.g. *ka-s<m>ia'el* 'be eating' as well as derived nominals, e.g. *ka-sh-k<in>o-in-awaeh* 'inst. to open (a) door (INSTNMLZ)' (Zeitoun et al. 2015); in Paiwan, it occurs on temporal adjuncts, e.g. *katiaw* 'yesterday'; in Paiwan, Rukai, Atayal, Bunun, Kanakanavu etc, it encodes temporal duration, e.g. Paiwan *maka-tjelu-l* 'for three days' or frequency, e.g. Mayrinax Atayal *ma-k-na-tuu-l* 'three times'; last but not least, in both Paiwan and Rukai, it expresses an accomplishment and is best glossed as 'finish' (e.g. Mantauran Rukai *maka-kane* 'finish eating' Zeitoun 2007:473). The aim of this paper is thus two-fold: (i) analyze all the use and functions of PAn *ka-

'allative' and (ii) explain its grammaticalization path in the Formosan languages.

Selected references

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