

Reciprocal marking in Wolof

Wolof is an agglutinative language with rich verbal morphology employed for different valence-changing operations [1,2,3]. In the literature, three different verbal suffixes are described as expressing reciprocity [1,4,5]: *-ante* for prototypical reciprocal events, *-e* for natural reciprocal events, *-oo* for reciprocal and sociative events. Yet, the distribution and the semantics of these morphemes are still unclear: little attention has been dedicated to the reciprocal configurations allowed by each suffix and to the constraints on their use.

This paper aims to fill this gap, providing an extensive overview of Wolof reciprocals, relying on novel data elicited from native speakers. We show that *-ante* is a productive morpheme that reciprocalizes the object of verbs retaining the meaning of the verb root (1). By contrast, *-e* and *-oo* are not productive; the former may give rise to non-compositional reciprocal readings (2) and the latter to non-compositional reciprocal (3a) or sociative (3b) readings. This suggests a certain degree of lexicalization of entries with *-e* and *-oo*, supported by their inability to appear on verbs with anticausative or natural reflexive entries. In Wolof, middle meanings denoting grooming or body-related actions are expressed with zero morphology (4a) or with the unproductive verbal morpheme *-u* (4b). Crucially, such entries can only be reciprocalized by *-ante*, and lead to ungrammaticality with *-e* and *-oo* (5), unless the reciprocal interpretation is non-compositional (3a). We therefore propose a treatment of *-ante* as a productive reciprocal morpheme, as opposed to *-e* and *-oo*, which we consider instead as markers of natural reciprocal and natural reciprocal/sociative entries, respectively.

We further illustrate that all three investigated morphemes can appear in the so-called ‘discontinuous reciprocal construction’, where the participants of the reciprocal configuration are split: partly encoded as syntactic subject, partly encoded as an oblique argument introduced by a comitative preposition (6). This observation challenges theoretical claims on the restricted nature of the discontinuous reciprocal construction, considered a prerogative of natural reciprocal verbs cross-linguistically; previously, the failure of this generalization was shown in Bantu [6,7].

We present novel Wolof data hinting at new generalizations on the productivity of reciprocal constructions and the nature of reciprocal morphemes in this language. The findings are relevant not only for the typology of reciprocal constructions and verbal morphology, but also for theoretical works in this area.

- (1) a. *Khady gis-ante na ak Fatou*
 Khady see-REC PFV with Fatou
 ‘Khadi and Fatou see each other’
- b. *Khadi ak Fatou ñoom naar dañu dagg-ante*
 Khady and Fatou 3PL two FOC.V.3PL cut-REC
 ‘Khadi and Fatou cut each other’
- (2) *Khadi ak Fatou ñoom naar dañu gis-e*
 Khady and Fatou 3PL two FOC.V.3PL see-REC
 ‘Khady and Fatou met’
- (3) a. *Khadi ak Fatou dañu dagg-oo*
 Khady and Fatou FOC.V.3PL cut-REC
 ‘Khadi and Fatou broke up’
- b. *Khadi ak Fatou dañu daj-oo*
 Khady and Fatou FOC.V.3PL find-REC
 ‘Khadi and Fatou gathered’
- (4) a. *jàñq jì dagg na*
 girl cl-the cut PFV
 ‘The girl cut herself (unintentionally)’
 [from[8],ID:5950]

- b. *Musaa wat-u na*
Musaa shave-RFM PFV
‘Musaa shaved’
[from[8],ID:5927]
- (5) *Khadi ak Fatou ñu ngi wat-ante/ *wat-e/ *wat-oo*
Khady and Fatou PREST.3PL shave-REC
‘Khadi and Fatou shaved each other’
- (6) a. *Khady gis-ante/ gis-e na ak Fatou*
Khady see-REC PFV with Fatou
‘Khady and Fatou saw each other/met’
b. *Khadi daj-oo na ak Fatou*
Khady find-REC PFV with Fatou
‘Khady and Fatou gathered’

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