



Goal–source asymmetry and crosslinguistic grammaticalization patterns: a cognitive-typological approach

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ABSTRACT

In this paper, the patterns of semantic extensions of ALLATIVE markers are compared with those of ABLATIVE markers from a cognitive-typological perspective. Despite the symmetry the two notions appear to exhibit semantically, GOAL and SOURCE exhibit asymmetry and the prevalence of the former over the latter can be seen in a wide range of linguistic and cognitive phenomena. Previous studies indicate that speakers tend to produce GOAL-oriented events much more frequently than SOURCE-oriented events. GOAL markers are often associated with an extensive array of functions and usages as well. Building on these findings, the present study investigates how such a prevalence of GOAL-markers over SOURCE-markers may or may not be reflected in their grammaticalization patterns. Do ALLATIVE markers exhibit more robust patterns of semantic extension across domains compared to ABLATIVE counterparts? What are the patterns of semantic extension of the ALLATIVES and the ABLATIVES, and how do they differ from each other? The synchronic usage patterns of the ALLATIVE and ABLATIVE markers from 24 languages including English, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin, Spanish, Polish, and Tamil are examined. The results indicate that GOAL-markers have generally undergone a more extensive semantic development than SOURCE-markers, thus providing more evidence for GOAL-bias in human cognition.

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1. Introduction

The asymmetry between the GOAL and SOURCE, or more specifically, the prevalence of GOAL OVER SOURCE, has been documented in a wide range of linguistic phenomena (Ikegami, 1987; Lakusta and Landau, 2005; Stefanowitsch and Rohde, 2004). Stefanowitsch and Rohde (2004) found that speakers tend to produce GOAL-oriented events much more frequently than SOURCE-oriented with verbs like *go*, which are neutral in terms of the directionality of the motion. Lakusta and Landau (2005) found that both children and adults include GOAL (e.g., ‘into the pitcher’) more frequently than SOURCE (e.g., ‘out of the bucket’) in describing motion events. In a study of grammaticalization patterns of ALLATIVE markers in 44 languages, Rice and Kabata (2007) found that ALLATIVES exhibit an extensive array of functions, including DATIVE/BENEFACTIVE, and PURPOSIVE. Moreover, LOCATIVE-ALLATIVE syncretism was three times more frequent than ABLATIVE-ALLATIVE syncretism and the latter was observed mostly where the former also exists.

The present study aims to determine how the cognitive prevalence of GOAL OVER SOURCE may be reflected in the grammaticalization patterns of the grammatical morphemes marking the two notions. The study is conducted within a framework of cognitive-typology, which maintains that speakers of different languages share the same conceptual system that enables them to experience and interact with their surroundings, including language, in much the same way (e.g., Croft, 2003). While cross-linguistic variation is expected because of the particular manifestation of each linguistic convention, it is nevertheless restricted by cognitive principles. Moreover, grammaticalization is cognitively motivated, and is the flip-side of the same

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coin as synchronic polysemy, which manifests either at an intervening stage or at the end-result of language change. The approach taken here is very similar to that of Narrog (2010), who showed how information on the (uni-)directionality of semantic extension should be included in 'semantic maps', which would otherwise be of little information value besides showing spatial adjacency between meanings or functions. By examining the synchronic semantic behaviors of the ALLATIVE and ABLATIVE markers from 24 languages that are genetically and geographically diverse, it can be determined what the common patterns of grammaticalization of the ALLATIVES and the ABLATIVES are, and how they differ from each other. Are the patterns of interaction found between GOAL- and SOURCE-type senses in the spatial domain observed in more abstract domains? The ultimate goal of this study is to propose a set of implicational hierarchies that capture the crosslinguistically common grammaticalization patterns involving ALLATIVES and ABLATIVES.

Defined rather broadly, the term grammaticalization is used here to refer to 'the process whereby lexical items and constructions come in certain linguistic contexts to serve grammatical functions, and, once grammaticalized, continue to *develop new grammatical functions* (emphasis mine)" (Hopper and Traugott, 1993, p. xv). Thus, rather than addressing the issues of grammatical morphemes as the endpoint of a grammaticalization process that starts as a lexical item, be it a body part noun or a verb, this study takes the basic ALLATIVE and ABLATIVE senses as our starting point, and examines what sense types are most likely to have developed out of them.

One of the central hypotheses about grammaticalization is that changes are largely *unidirectional*, in that lexical items acquire a morphological function by first serving discourse and/or syntactic functions but not vice versa, and that grammatical morphemes develop from more concrete meanings to less concrete and more abstract meanings. This does not mean that changes have to happen, however, as clarified by Hopper and Traugott (1993, p. 95), nor that changes never take place in the opposite direction, either, as demonstrated in studies of 'degrammaticalization' (e.g., Norde, 2009); while still arguable, English *dare* and *need* are claimed to have developed lexical verb uses out of their modal (Norde, 2009, p. 136).

Some cases of grammaticalization involve *multiple developments*, whereby "a single form develops different grammatical functions in different constructions" (Hopper and Traugott, 1993, p. 112). One example of such a phenomena is *bang* 'go' in Rama, which, according to Craig (1991), has developed into both an aspect marker and a postposition marking PURPOSE, the latter of which has further developed into a subordinator. Another characteristic of grammaticalization relevant to the current study is *layering*, which is considered as "the synchronic result of successive grammaticalization of forms" (*ibid.*, p. 124). This may lead to the co-existence of a full and a reduced form, or to a polysemous state with multiple related meanings. As will be shown in this paper, many of the ALLATIVES and ABLATIVES examined in the present study are associated with multiple senses and often with multiple functions.

In the following, I will first discuss previous studies of the notions of GOAL and SOURCE in various disciplines in Section 2. Section 3 deals with the present study, including the methodology and language data, followed by discussion of the results in Section 4. Suggestions for future studies will conclude the study in Section 5.

2. Evidence of asymmetry of goal and source markers: literature review

GOAL and SOURCE markers appear to demonstrate symmetrical relations semantically. Crystal (2008) defines GOAL as "the entity or place towards which something moves", and SOURCE as "the entity or place from which something moves" (p. 428). In its grammatical description, the notion of GOAL is most often indicated by ALLATIVE, which is defined as "a type of inflection which expresses the meaning of motion 'to' or 'towards' a place" (Crystal, 2008, p. 19), whereas SOURCE is indicated by ABLATIVE, which is "typically used in the expression of a range of LOCATIVE OR INSTRUMENTAL meanings" (Crystal, 2008, p. 2).

Despite the symmetry these paired notions appear to exhibit semantically, GOAL and SOURCE manifest themselves in a non-symmetrical relation in various linguistic and cognitive phenomena. Such asymmetry, or to be more specific, the GOAL-bias in human conception, may not be surprising when considering that the "goal is invariably the most natural and more dominant element, while the source is uncertain and instable [sic]" as argued by Ikegami (1987, p. 135), or that the GOAL carries more information value than the SOURCE and therefore the mentioning of it is essential, whereas the SOURCE is often known or implied in many contexts. Regardless of the reasons, the cognitive asymmetry, which Ikegami termed as *goal-over-source* principle, has attracted many researchers who were interested in how such a bias influences speakers' choice of sentence patterns (Ikegami, 1987; Lakusta, 2005; Lakusta and Landau, 2005; Langacker, 1991; Stefanowitsch and Rohde, 2004), as well as case marking patterns (DeLancey, 1981). One piece of evidence was presented by Ikegami (1987), who argued that in Japanese the GOAL marker *ni* can be used where logically the SOURCE marker *kara* would be expected. Ikegami further argued that such a GOAL-bias also accounts for the alternation between GOAL and SOURCE markers in English, such as *averse from/to*, *different from/to*, where one would logically expect the SOURCE marker from a logical point of view, claiming that "the use of *to* is gradually on the increase at the sacrifice of *from*" (1987, p. 125).

Further evidence for such GOAL-over-SOURCE bias has been reported by Stefanowitsch and Rohde (2004), who used corpus data to demonstrate that speakers tend to produce GOAL-oriented events much more frequently than SOURCE-oriented with verbs like *go*, which are neutral in terms of the directionality of the motion. In similar fashion, Lakusta and Landau (2005) conducted a series of experiments where participants were asked to describe videotaped events, and found that the participants included the GOAL (e.g., 'into the pitcher') more frequently than the SOURCE (e.g., 'out of the bucket') and also used verbs that take a GOAL-type entity, such as 'give' and 'sell', rather than verbs that take a SOURCE-type entity, such as 'receive' and 'buy'.

An experimental study by Ihara and Fujita (1997) also shows patients with Broca's aphasia used the GOAL-marking *ni* correctly

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