

Bipartite Reciprocal Markers: Classification and Sources

Thomas Hanke, Free University Berlin

As is well known, the four most common types of monoclausal strategies of reciprocity use affixal, deverbal, (pro)nominal, and “bipartite quantificational” markers like *each other*, German *einander*, Russian *drug druga*. Some of these markers can be combined with each other. (cf. König and Kokutani 2006, Evans to appear)

My talk zooms in on bipartite reciprocal markers (BRMs). For a general account, I define BRMs with recourse neither to specific sources nor to structural properties: they are originally composed of two main elements from the same category. BRMs commonly show traits comparable to (simple) nominals, or adverbs. A preliminary sample of over 200 languages includes more than 100 relevant constructions – some use two or more BRMs.

Surprisingly, this talk is tripartite:

First I present a typological classification of position(s) and morphosyntactic properties. A major point is that case sometimes behaves like an agreement category, while agreement categories like gender and number diverge from normal rules. Another is the common occurrence of BRM parts in otherwise non-existent positions.

The second part presents the attested sources of BRMs, and offers correlations with morphosyntax. The broad definition includes constructions with two adpositions or adverbs; they may be specialized for spatial relations, e.g. in Mongolian for asymmetric chains.

More common are BRMs which origin in two elements from the nominal domain: quantifiers (‘one’, rarer ‘someone’, ‘each’, ‘either’) and alterity expressions (‘other’), but also demonstratives, pronouns, reflexives, and nouns with relational meanings like ‘friend’.

The third part makes a proposal for the development of most nominal BRMs excepting those with reflexive and distributive sources.

For BRMs with distributive quantifiers, there exists a well known account with the distributor (really or apparently) floating to a position directly before the second part. This talk will not say much about the applications of this account from formal semantics to historical studies.

Recently, such a floating account has been considered responsible for the origin of other BRMs, in particular those composed of elements meaning ‘one’ and/or ‘other’ (cf. Plank to appear for Germanic, Evans to appear: 17-18). From my perspective, there are some obstacles for such a monoclausal account, not least the apparent non-existence of source constructions with items like *(the) one* and *that* floating away from a definite (plural) noun phrase.

I will argue for an origin of BRMs in constructions with a higher complexity than a single clause that describe a situation between two participants. My scenario intends to account for BRMs from all sources but distributives and reflexives, and for a number of recurrent features:

- the assignment of the same case to two phrases
- the occurrence of parts in unusual positions, e.g. before a preposition
- the predominance of singular expressions
- definite first parts
- last but not least: BRMs as extensions to complete clauses

The observed morphosyntactic variation is accounted as resulting from:

- source constructions, e.g. clauses with reduced vs. unreduced slots; use of prepositions,
- properties of source elements, e.g. options for plural,
- different degrees of grammaticalization

References

- Evans, Nicholas. to appear. Reciprocal constructions: towards a structural typology. In E. König & V. Gast, eds., *Reciprocals and Reflexives: cross-linguistic and theoretical explorations*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- König, Ekkehard, and Shigehiro Kokutani. 2006. Towards a typology of reciprocal constructions: focus on German and Japanese. *Linguistics* 44, p. 271-302.
- Plank, Frans. to appear. Thoughts on the origin, progress, and pronominal status of reciprocal forms in Germanic, occasioned by those of Bavarian. In Ekkehard König & Volker Gast, eds., *Reciprocals and Reflexives: cross-linguistic and theoretical explorations*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.