

## Using deictics as clause linkers: evidence from Gawwada

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The presentation investigates the different values of the deictic affixes *-a* (labeled OUT) and *-u* (IN) in Gawwada (a Cushitic language of Southwest Ethiopia; ISO 639: gwd).

*-a* and *-u* basically make reference to the location of an entity in respect to the speaker or center of attention. As such, they correspond to many similar particles within the Afroasiatic language family and beyond, and which are variously labelled distal vs. proximal, allative (or andative) vs. ventive, or still centrifugal vs. centripetal. Still, the situation in Gawwada is markedly different.

First, while in most languages similar deictic elements attach to verbs and may be regarded as verbal extensions (cf. Mettouchi, Savà and Tosco forth. for an overview of Afroasiatic), Gawwada *-a* and *-u* are also frequently used in noun phrases and as markers of co- and subordination. Second, different from what seems to generally be the case, centrifugal *-a* is by far the most frequent member of the opposition.

The presentation proceeds from the use of *-a* and *-u* in noun phrases in order to express location proximal to, or movement towards, the speaker or the center of attention. Albeit very common, this use is restricted to a number of “spatial nouns” (cf. Tosco 2013), where a noun stem followed by a deictic particle (especially centrifugal *-a*) is often lexicalized:

<i>kut-a</i>	‘away from here in the direction of the mountains’	<i>kaatt-a</i>	‘near; to the side’
uphills-OUT		side-OUT	

More frequent is the clausal use of *-a* and *-u* in a verbal phrase. The state of affairs expressed by the verb applies here to an external entity, and *-a* and *-u* are preceded by an element =*n* (glossed MOV for “mover”). As is common in many languages, the centripetal element *-u* becomes, inter alia, a benefactive marker; as to centrifugal *-a*, it is again much more common, and ranges in meaning from ablative to a general marker of external location, to partitive:

<i>k'aw-ādā-e</i> [...]	<i>ʔa=n-a=sih-i=pa</i> /	‘the guns [...] were taken out (of them), and...’
gun-PLUR-PL	GEN=MOV-OUT-take_away-PFV.3M=LINK	

<i>n-a=kāl-a</i>	<i>sor-a</i>	‘I was running downhill out (=after him/her/them)’
MOV-OUT=downhills-OUT	run-IPFV.1SG	

<i>ʔi=n-a=raf-i</i>	‘he slept out (=on it/there)’
SPEC=MOV-OUT=sleep.PFV.3M	

*n-a=ʕuk* ‘drink out (=a bit) of it!’  
MOV-OUT=drink\IMP.SG

*n-u=ʕuk* ‘drink for (him/her/them)!’  
MOV-IN=drink\IMP.SG

The most radical departure from canonical deixis is found in the use of *-a* and *-u* (again, much more frequently the former than the latter) as clause linkers (Tosco 2008), preceded again by *=n*:

*ʔan=gap-i=n-a /*                      *ʔi=riir-i=pa*                      *ʔi=y-a=n-a /*  
SBJ.1=catch-PFV.1SG=MOV-OUT    SPEC=cry-PFV.3M=LINK    SPEC=say-IPFV.3M=MOV-OUT  
*qaw-h-o*      *ye=pok-a=ye*                      *ʔokaay-a=pa /*  
man-SING-M    OBL.1SG=kill-IPFV.3M=LINK.IMP      come-IMP.2PL=LINK

‘as I caught him, he started to cry, saying “The guy is killing me! Come and...”’

The deictic may be used with a verb in the Perfective (*ʔan=gap-i=n-a*) or the Imperfective (*ʔi=y-a=n-a*): in both cases the state of affairs marked by *=n-a* is backgrounded, sliced *out* of the flow of events (“as I caught him... “saying...”), in yet another instantiation of the Lakoffian TIME IS SPACE metaphor.

It is well possible that the reason for the relative rarity of centripetal *-u* vs. centrifugal *-a* lies in the presence in Gawwada of a productive Middle (Autobenefactive) extension, which takes over most of the roles associated with involvement by, or benefit for, the speaker which are held by deictic elements in other languages. More importantly, the different uses of *-a* and *-u* may still be subsumed under the general labels of location and movement, albeit in a very abstract sense.

## References

- Mettouchi, Amina, Graziano Savà and Mauro Tosco (forth.). Cross-linguistic comparability and language-specificity in CorpAfroAs. In: Amina Mettouchi, Dominique Caubet and Martine Vanhove (eds.), *CorpAfroAs: A Corpus for Afro-Asiatic Languages*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
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