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## Applicatives in Austronesian Languages

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## Preface to the Special Issue of NUSA on applicatives in Austronesian languages<sup>1</sup>

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In the grammar of many Austronesian and Papuan languages, applicatives are a prevalent morpho-syntactic construction, but also play a role beyond its morpho-syntactic function of promoting a peripheral semantic role to direct object as the “applied phrase”. Work investigating the morphosyntax of applicative constructions in Austronesian languages in particular has explored the types of semantic roles applicative morphology targets, the role of stacking or doubling of different applicative morphology, as well as its role in relation to its use in deriving causative constructions (e.g., Donohue 2001; Kroeger 2007; Son & Cole 2008; Chang 2015; Nie 2019, among many others). In addition, several authors have explored non-syntactic functions of applicative morphology (cf. Pacchiarotti & Zúñiga 2022). Among these functions are pluractionality, iteration, topicality of the applied phrase, specificity of the applied phrase, completeness of the event or affectedness of the applied phrase. These functions, while less studied, seem to be common cross-linguistically. Moreover, applicative morphology and structures are an important avenue of research with respect to pathways of change and variation into and/or beyond applicatives (e.g., Peterson 2007), which provide insights into better understanding the relations across the languages of this region.

There are four papers that address different topics within this theme:

- i. *Diachronic development of the Nuclear Austronesian locative and patient applicatives* by Edith Aldridge
- ii. *The road to opacity: Reflexes of Proto-Oceanic \*-akin in northern Vanuatu* by Daniel Krauß and Alexandre François
- iii. *Usage-based perspective on argument realisation: A corpus study of Indonesian BUY verbs in applicative construction with -kan* by Gede Primahadi Wijaya Rajeg and I Wayan Arka
- iv. *Case, Pivohood, and the Tboli Applicative* by Gérard Avelino

This special thematic issue of NUSA on *Applicatives in Austronesian Languages* arose out of a thematic session as part of the 14th annual *Austronesian and Papuan Languages and Linguistics* conference (APLL14). The event was co-hosted by Leibniz Centre of General Linguistics (ZAS) and the Humboldt University of Berlin on June 9–11, 2022. This special issue is also supplemented by the article by Rajeg and Arka, originally presented at the workshop on *Austronesian argument alternations in discourse* at the

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The first two papers, by Aldridge and by Krauß and François, both take a diachronic approach in investigating the development of applicative morphology, but in different areas of the Austronesian language family and also from different perspectives of historical development. Aldridge's paper proposes reconstructions and diachronic developments of applicative constructions. It focuses on the Nuclear Austronesian subgroup, with an emphasis on Formosan languages and dialects (16 of them) and with data coming from Philippine language as well. Krauß and François examine Oceanic languages spoken in Vanuatu, distantly related to the languages in Aldridge's paper, and show five different pathways of *\*-akin*, one into the applicative use, and four pathways beyond the prototypical applicative use.

The last two papers, by Avelino and by Rajeg and Arka, are case studies on the applicative construction in two different languages, also spanning different areas of the Austronesian language family. Avelino shows how case and pivot morphology in Tboli gives important clues as to the structure of applicative constructions in this Philippine-type language. He analyzes both applicatives in Tboli as low applicatives, where the applied argument is structurally introduced within the VP (Verb Phrase), within the Generative grammar framework. Rajeg and Arka's paper moves to Indonesian, and investigates the use of the verb *beli* 'buy' in the *-kan* applicative construction across Actor Voice and Passive Voice, using a usage-based and constructional grammar approach. One of the main results is that the applicative construction with *beli* 'buy' in usage is most often realized with only one overt internal argument (as monotransitive), in comparison to the typically reported double-object construction as the standard. Moreover, Rajeg and Arka found that the use of this verb in the Passive Voice (*di-beli-kan*) shows a unique argument realization with the role of RATE used as the subject argument, which is otherwise not found in Actor Voice.

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