Antigrammaticalization, antimorphologization and the case of Tura*

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This paper revises some of the central notions in grammaticalization studies by scrutinizing such key terms as *grammatical meaning, grammaticalization, degrammaticalization* and *antigrammaticalization*. It is argued that the alleged counterexamples to the unidirectionality hypothesis, described as cases of anti-grammaticalization by Haspelmath (2004), do not entail a change from less to more grammatical, since affixes are not necessarily more grammatical than free words. Such cases are interpreted here as representing only a qualitative decrease in morphological bonding, a change which is thus termed *antimorphologization*. Finally, as a sample case of (partial) antimorphologization, the paper discusses the verbal derivational suffix |-LÁ| from the Eastern Mande language Tura.

1. Introduction

In recent years, various scholars have questioned the validity of the unidirectionality hypothesis (e.g. Newmeyer 1998; Lass 2000; Campbell 2001; Janda 2001). On the whole, Haspelmath (2004) offers a convincing response to this criticism. While acknowledging the existence of counterexamples to unidirectionality, he

points out that the number of genuine cases of *reversal of grammaticalization*, referred to as examples of *antigrammaticalization*, is very small (he lists eight such cases) and, therefore, does not undermine the importance of unidirectionality for grammaticalization studies. Thus, he sees unidirectionality as "the most important constraint on morphosyntactic change" rather than as an "absolute universal." However, given the concession that counterexamples exist, the terms *tendency* or *statistical universal* (Haspelmath 2004:23), may be more appropriate. In the present paper, I will show that cases of alleged antigrammaticalization represent at best nothing more than an evolution from less to more morphological bonding. I will call such an evolution *antimorphologization* and illustrate it using an unusual case from the Mande language Tura. Antigrammaticalization, meanwhile, will be defined in terms of loss of obligatoriness in the marking of a category.

In Section 2.1, I will examine the terms *degrammaticalization*, *antigrammaticalization* and *grammaticalization* as they are currently used. I will also address the notion of *grammatical meaning*, which is of paramount importance for any discussion of (de-, anti-)grammaticalization, and propose a stricter definition of (anti-)grammaticalization in terms of obligatoriness. In Section 2.2, I will take a closer look at the cases of antigrammaticalization proposed by Haspelmath (2004) and will introduce the notion of *antimorphologization*. This relates to the more usual term *demorphologization* in the same way as *antigrammaticalization* relates to *degrammaticalization*. Finally, in Section 3, I will present a case of antimorphologization from Tura (Niger-Congo, Mande, Eastern Mande; Ivory Coast).

2. Terminology

2.1 De-, anti- and *simple* grammaticalization

In the conclusion of her paper on the history of the English *s*-genitive, Rosenbach (2004:89) cautions the reader:

> It should be stressed that the assessment of whether the *s*-genitive is a case of degrammaticalization is *interpretation* which heavily depends on how (de)grammaticalization is defined in the first place. As the discussion […] has shown, however, the defining properties of what should constitute a genuine case of (de)grammaticalization are not yet agreed on, and various interpretations are possible.

To this caveat we can add that part of the problem lies in the terms themselves: they are often too vague and inconsistent to demand any consistency of interpretations from the users. Moreover, the terms are overused and downgraded to the level of common language words with prototype-like semantics. Consequently, the epistemological value of such terms as tools of linguistic analysis is

low. The term *degrammaticalization*, for instance, has been used in the literature to refer to several different kinds of linguistic change. Heine (2003: 165) lists the following recurrent uses: (i) loss of grammatical meaning, (ii) mirror image reversal, (iii) lexicalization, (iv) euphemism, (v) exaptation, (vi) adaptation, (vii) replacement and (viii) upgrading. Haspelmath (2004) also mentions, among other processes, delocutive word formation, back-formation, conversion and retraction. In other words, the term *degrammaticalization* is extended to cover a number of quite heterogeneous phenomena, involving both "upgrading" and "downgrading." Haspelmath (2004: 27) goes even further and says that these processes do "not [. . .] have anything in common."

Several attempts have been made to narrow the term *degrammaticalization* and thus increase its explanatory and predictive power. Quite logically, all of them reduce degrammaticalization to the *reverse of grammaticalization*. Thus, Bybee et al. (1994: 40) and Hopper and Traugott (2003: 134) see degrammaticalization as a term that refers to changes which violate the following schematic cline: [phrases /words > non-bound grams > inflection]. Lehmann (2004: 170) defines degrammaticalization as "the reverse of grammaticalization [, as] a process in which a linguistic sign gains in autonomy, i.e. it becomes relatively free from constraints of the linguistic system." In keeping with the *reversal* idea of this narrower approach, Haspelmath (2004: 27–28) replaces *de*grammaticalization with *anti*grammaticalization, which he understands as "a change that leads from the endpoint to the starting point of a potential grammaticalization and also shows the same intermediate stages." He emphasizes that the term *antigrammaticalization* "is intended to cover any type of change that goes against the general direction of grammaticalization (i.e. discourse > syntax > morphology)."

In order to discuss degrammaticalization, therefore, we need to agree on the definition of grammaticalization. Here are some recent definitions.[1]

> Grammaticalization is defined as the development from lexical to grammatical forms (or functional categories), and from grammatical to even more grammatical forms.
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> (Heine 2003: 163)

> [Grammaticalization] is a term referring to the change whereby lexical items and constructions come in certain linguistic contexts to serve grammatical functions and, once grammaticalized, continue to develop new grammatical functions.
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> (Hopper and Traugott 2003: 231)

> A grammaticalization is a diachronic change by which the parts of a constructional schema come to have stronger internal dependencies.
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> (Haspelmath 2004: 26)

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1. A more extensive overview of the extant definitions of grammaticalization can be found in Campbell and Janda (2001), for example.

> Grammaticalization of a linguistic sign is a process in which it loses in autonomy by becoming more subject to constraints of the linguistic system.
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> (Lehmann 2004: 155)

These definitions of grammaticalization differ in two main respects. The first point of difference is whether the definition explicitly makes use of the notion *grammatical* (and appeals explicitly to the notion of grammar, in general). The second is whether the definition allows for the inclusion of (i) syntactic change under the notion of grammaticalization, such as the change from a freer to a more fixed word order, and/or (ii) discourse-oriented changes, like the development of discourse markers. A positive answer to these questions is often not spelled out in the definition itself, but becomes apparent only when concrete cases of alleged grammaticalization are discussed. The question of what the notion *grammatical* actually signifies is usually touched upon only briefly or simply passed over as something supposedly obvious to everybody. Such equivocation leads to a proliferation of suggested types and tokens of grammaticalization.

Almost all interpretations of grammaticalization (and, consequently, of de- and antigrammaticalization) seem to have in common an inclination to a conscious or unconscious equation of *being* (*more*) *grammatical* with *being* (*more*) *morphologically bound*. Examples of this attitude abound; take, for instance, Hopper and Traugott's (2003) *cline of grammaticality* [content item > grammatical word > clitic > inflectional affix] or a comparable one by Bybee et al. (1994) [phrases/words > non-bound grams > inflection]. However, it is not clear to me why a *grammatical* word or a non-bound *gram* is less *grammatical* (or less grammaticalized) than an affix with the same function. A less abstract example of this approach would be Haspelmath's (2004) imaginary case of two related languages, one with a future-tense affix and another with a future-tense auxiliary, for which it is suggested that, in accordance with the unidirectionality principle, the future-tense affix has grammaticalized through a stage of a future-tense auxiliary, while the reverse development is rather unlikely. Here again, a question imposes itself: in what respect is a future-tense affix more grammatical than a full-fledged future-tense auxiliary? The difference lies in their morphological status on the bonding cline [free word > clitic > affix] rather than in their grammaticalization status. Both are linguistic signs which serve to express the same grammatical meaning.

Furthermore, it is preferable to restrict the term grammaticalization to changes affecting linguistic signs (morphemes as minimal linguistic signs and word-forms as maximally independent linguistic signs), thus excluding syntactic change. The latter is substantially different in that it affects relations between, and relative positions of, word-forms (in fact, not even concrete word-forms but their

categories, such as nouns, verbs, etc.).[2] Including syntactic change under the notion of grammaticalization significantly undermines the epistemological value of the unidirectionality generalization. *Defreeze* or *repragmatization* of word order is very different from regain of lost (lexical or derivational) information or deautomatization, which, according to Lehmann (2004: 183–184), are the main factors responsible for the unidirectionality of grammaticalization.

Definitions of (de-, anti-)grammaticalization which invoke the notion of grammatical meaning should be preferred. After all, the term at stake is *grammaticali*zation. The notion of grammatical meaning is best defined via the notion of obligatoriness: a meaning is grammatical in a given language if the speaker cannot choose to leave it unexpressed.[3] Strictly speaking, of course, it is not the meaning itself which is grammatical but a set of mutually exclusive meanings, a grammatical category, to which that meaning belongs (cf. Plungian 2000: 107). In other words, obligatoriness necessarily implies paradigmaticity and equipollent oppositions. An important consequence of this is that a given meaning is grammatical or non-grammatical only with respect to a particular linguistic system. It cannot be grammatical a priori, universally.[4] Admittedly, crosslinguistically some meanings turn out to be grammatical much more frequently than others and can thus be described as prototypical grammatical meanings, but still *prototypical* is not the same as *universal*. It is also important to notice that the criterion of obligatoriness does not necessarily imply that the border between the domains of grammatical and non-grammatical meanings is always strict and clear. As Plungian (2000: 105–106, 130) notes, obligatoriness can also be gradual. An interesting discussion of some often-cited counterexamples to the applicability of the obligatoriness criterion can be found in Plungian (2000: 136–140).[5]

Note also that *grammatical* is not the same as *inflectional* (as it is, for instance, for Mel'čuk 1993). Grammatical meanings can also be of a classifying type, such as

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2. Note that this does not equate grammaticalization with morphologization because it does not exclude word-forms expressing grammatical meanings analytically, such as auxiliaries.

3. The idea to use obligatoriness as a criterion for distinguishing grammatical meanings is not new. See, for example, Jakobson (1971).

4. That certain meanings are grammatical in any language (especially when expressed by affixes) often seems to be taken for granted. The following quote from Lass (2000: 219) is particularly illustrative in this respect because of its straightforwardness: "One could imagine a case where a prefix meaning 'motional' and one meaning 'directional' (*surely* 'grammatical items') could fuse into a verb meaning 'turn' or 'go'" (italics added).

5. Among other topics, Plungian discusses the Turkic and Iranian languages in which the markers of case and number have often been claimed to be facultative. He also examines some cases when *obligatoriness* is inappropriately used to refer to what can at best be described as *lexical obligatoriness* (Apresjan 1980: 17–19). I discuss a similar example by van Marle (1996) in footnote 7.

the substantival gender in languages like Russian. They can be subdivided into se-
mantic (*notional*) and syntactic (*relational*) meanings (cf. Zaliznjak 1967: 23–24;
Plungian 2000: 123–126). The main distinctive feature of the "syntactic gram-
memes" is that "strictly speaking, they do not express any meaning in the true
sense. That is, they do not correspond to any properties of the real world (unlike
grammemes of number, tense or aspect)" (Plungian 2000: 124). However, it is not
uncommon for a given grammeme to have both semantic and syntactic functions.

When defined in terms of the criterion of obligatoriness, grammatical mean-
ings are opposed to non-grammatical meanings as obligatory meanings vs.
non-obligatory meanings. As has already been pointed out, the way in which the
two kinds of meanings are expressed formally is of little relevance, since both
can be expressed with either root morphemes or non-root morphemes (affixes
or non-segmental morphemes). Phrased in more traditional terms, for the non-
grammatical meanings this formal distinction results in a division into lexical
meanings and derivational meanings respectively.[6] Note that in the Anglo-Saxon
linguistic tradition derivational meanings are often also subsumed under gram-
matical meanings. However, this makes the notion of grammatical meaning in-
consistent with that of grammatical category, because certain kinds of allegedly
grammatical meanings, i.e. those involved in derivation, then happen to be un-
able to form a grammatical category (Plungian 2000: 126–127). Consequently,
I view the difference between inflection and derivation as one between gram-
matical and non-grammatical meanings, since *grammatical* is defined in terms of
obligatoriness.

In accordance with the foregoing discussion, the following definition of gram-
maticalization can be proposed:

> Grammaticalization is a term referring to the change whereby linguistic signs
> with non-grammatical meanings come in certain linguistic contexts to encode
> grammatical meanings; *grammatical* being defined by means of the criterion of
> obligatoriness.

The definition of grammatical in terms of obligatoriness has several consequences
for the notion of grammaticalization. First, it excludes the development of deriva-
tional affixes.[7] Second, it excludes those cases in which words from open part-

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6. Plungian (2000: 120) notes that the difference between lexical and derivational meanings is
"purely formal," that is, "lexical meanings are expressed with root morphemes, while deriva-
tional with non-root morphemes (i.e. non-segmental morphemes or, more frequently, affixes)."
Of course, a root morpheme may form a word by itself.

7. One anonymous reviewer argues that "derivational affixes have been shown to be obliga-
tory in specific contexts," referring to van Marle's (1996) discussion of Dutch inhabitatives,
such as *Amsterdamm-er* 'Amsterdamer (male inhabitant of Amsterdam)' vs. *Amsterdam-se* 'Am-
sterdamer (female inhabitant of Amsterdam).' In particular, van Marle (1996: 72) notes that in

of-speech categories, such as nouns or verbs, acquire the status of a closed part-of-speech category, such as adverbs, adpositions, conjunctions, etc., since they do not form a paradigm *sensu stricto* (even an analytic one). For similar reasons, it excludes the so-called modal auxiliaries of the Germanic languages and the development of discourse markers. Among other things, it bars such alleged cases of antigrammaticalization as the preposition *out* becoming the verb *out* in English or *må* 'may' to *må* 'feel' in Swedish (cf. Andersson, this volume).

Antigrammaticalization, as the reverse of grammaticalization, refers then to the change whereby grammatical linguistic signs come in certain linguistic contexts to encode non-grammatical meanings.[8] This kind of reverse change is easier to conceive of for semantic grammatical meanings (for instance, plural and singular of the category number), than for purely syntactic ones (see above). The main reason is that semantic grammatical meanings are notionally quite similar to meanings typically expressed by derivational means, as, for instance, the plural and the singular are similar to the collective and the singulative respectively. Furthermore, semantic grammatical meanings are far more likely to come into conflict with the meaning of the lexeme with which they have to combine, as, for instance, the plural with mass nouns and the singular with collective and "corporate" (Corbett 2000: 188–191) nouns. These two factors may give rise to derivational uses of grammemes. For example, the form *drops* can refer not only to the plural of the word *drop*, but also to a (dose of) medicine measured by drops (e.g. *eye drops*). Similarly, *beads* can refer both to the plural of *bead* and to a string of beads used for counting prayers (especially the Roman Catholic rosary). The important thing, however, is that in the latter uses *drops* and *beads* are still grammatically

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Dutch "if a person in question is a woman, the female inhabitative *must* be used," although it would probably be more correct to say *inhabitative of feminine* (grammatical) *gender*. Thus, you can only say *Marie is een echte Amsterdam-se* 'Mary is a real Amsterdamer (feminine gender, female sex)' but not **Marie is een echte Amsterdamm-er* 'Mary is a real Amsterdamer (masculine gender, male sex).' At the same time, this is held to be possible with other kinds of personal derivatives, where the distinction is said to be between female sex vs. male/neutral to sex. Thus, you can say both *Marie is een goede vertel-ster* 'Mary is a good story-teller (feminine gender, female sex)' and *Marie is een goede vertell-er* 'Mary is a good story-teller (masculine gender, neutral to sex).' Note, however, that, in the case of the inhabitative derivational morphology, obligatoriness is of a rather different kind from that of grammatical meanings. It occurs at the level of lexical nomination, in the same way as does the difference between *verpleeg-ster* 'nurse (only female)' vs. *verpleg-er* 'nurse (only male)' (from the verb *verpleg-en* 'nurse'), or, to make things even more obvious, *moeder* 'mother' vs. *vader* 'father.' As with inhabitatives, in the latter two cases you can only say *Marie is een goede verpleeg-ster/moeder* 'Mary is a good nurse/mother,' but not **Marie is een goede verpleg-er/vader* 'Mary is a good (male) nurse/father.'

8. For the same reasons as those discussed by Haspelmath (2004), this excludes delocutive word formation, back-formation, conversion and phonogenesis with a grammeme as the source, as well as developments from semantically empty parts of morphemes to full-fledged morphemes.

plural. Therefore, this particular derivational use of the plural grammeme hardly qualifies as antigrammaticalization. The situation would be somewhat different, however, if *drops*-medicine and *beads*-rosary had become grammatically singular. We would then obtain a perfect proportion *drop-$\emptyset_{SG}$:drop-s-$\emptyset_{SG}$=bead-$\emptyset_{SG}$:bead-s-$\emptyset_{SG}$* (the so-called *Greenberg square*), which would imply that *-s* here is a collective derivational affix homophonous to, and originating in, the plural grammeme *-s*. In other words, this would be an example of *branching* antigrammaticalization. I call it branching because, in this case, the original grammeme is preserved intact in the language.

If, on the other hand, the grammeme is lost, the antigrammaticalization appears as non-branching or *linear*.[9] As an example of this kind of antigrammaticalization, the Swedish property-bearer suffix *-er*, as in *dummer* 'stupid person' vs. *dum* 'stupid,' which, according to Norde (1997:230), goes back to the Old Norse nominative suffix, seems to present a good case.[10] This example is cited by Haspelmath (2004:32) under the rubric "loss of an inflectional category with traces," but dismissed because for Haspelmath derivation is as grammatical as inflection. Note, however, that not all traces count as antigrammaticalization, but only those which are non-grammatical morphemes at the same time. A subsequent decrease in morphological bonding in such an antigrammaticalized linguistic sign is also possible as well, but would require some rather fortuitous concourse of circumstances (cf. Section 2.2 below). A direct change from a linguistic sign with a grammatical meaning to a linguistic sign with a lexical meaning without any intermediate derivational stage is somewhat more difficult to imagine, but it should not be excluded a priori. In my view, the chances of a process of this kind occurring are highest when the grammeme is expressed by a clitic or an autonomous word.

Given that derivational uses of grammemes are relatively common and that grammemes are far from immune to becoming obsolete, it would not be surprising to find a relatively high incidence of antigrammaticalization from grammemes to derivational linguistic signs in the languages of the world. Nevertheless, unlike grammaticalization, antigrammaticalization appears to be much more a matter of chance than of tendency, because the processes which presumably contribute to it most, such as reanalysis and, particularly, loss of grammemes, are rather accidental themselves.

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9. In principle, I would anticipate that a change appearing as a linear antigrammaticalization (always?) presupposes a branching antigrammaticalization at an earlier stage, although more research is surely needed here. Note, however, that there is an important potential pitfall: it is too easy to explain away the absence of a branching antigrammaticalization at an earlier stage as being due to the lack of evidence needed to reconstruct it.

10. In Modern Swedish, nouns have preserved only one overtly marked case, the genitive.

2.2 Antigrammaticalization and antimorphologization

As noted in Section 2.1 above, there is a tendency in the literature to identify gram-
maticalization to a great extent with morphologization, that is, a change from an
autonomous word-form to an affix (usually via the stage of a clitic). A parallel
trend of identifying de- or antigrammaticalization with the reverse of morpholo-
gization seems to be even stronger. Consider, for instance, the various definitions
given in Section 2.1, as well as Haspelmath's (2004: 29) "real exceptions" to the
unidirectionality generalization cited below:

a.   English and Mainland Scandinavian genitive suffix -*s* > clitic =*s*.
b.   Irish first person plural subject suffix -*muid* > independent pronoun *muid*.
c.   Japanese adverbial subordinator -*ga* 'although' > free linker *ga* 'but.'
d.   Saami abessive suffix *-*ptaken* > clitic =*taga* > free postposition *taga*.
e.   Estonian question marker -*s* > clitic =*es* > free particle *es*.
f.   English infinitive prefix *to*- > proclitic *to*=.
g.   Modern Greek prefix *ksana*- 'again' > free adverb *ksana* 'again.'
h.   Latin rigid prefix *re*- 'again' > Italian flexible prefix *ri*- (e.g. *ridevo fare* 'I must
     do again').

Several remarks are in order here. First, for some of the cases of antigrammat-
icalization, the existence of an upgrading change is still disputed (see Traugott
2001; Heine 2003; Lehmann 2004). Second, for another segment of them, it has
still to be shown that the original affix did express a grammatical meaning. For
instance, the Latin rigid prefix *re*- 'again' is at best a derivational affix: its mean-
ing is not a grammatical one. Finally, the semantics of the antigrammaticalized
elements hardly differs from that of their predecessors or is at least not less gram-
matical than that of their predecessors. Importantly, this is the case no matter
how the notion of grammatical meaning is understood, unless one equates hav-
ing grammatical meaning with being an affix, which hardly anybody has done
explicitly yet. In other words, the difference between the modern elements and
their predecessors in (a) to (h) above lies in their morphological status on the
bonding cline [free word > clitic > affix] and, in a few cases, perhaps in some mi-
nor semantic developments along the way.[11] Therefore, I believe that it is more
correct to refer to the alleged antigrammaticalizations listed in (a) to (h) as cases

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11. For instance, a shift from 'although' to 'but' in the case of Japanese *ga* or the development
of a restriction on the '*s*-marked possessors to the preposed position, which has matched the
restriction on co-occurrence of articles with noun phrases containing a referential/definite pre-
posed modifier/specifier (cf. [*the] *my house*, [*the] *this house*, [*the] *John*, [*the] *John's house*,
etc.).

of *antimorphologization*, or decrease in morphological bonding.[12] The term *morphologization* is thus understood as increase in morphological bonding on the cline [free word > clitic > affix].

Reanalysis appears to be an important factor in antimorphologization and, since "there are no limits on reanalysis itself" (Detges and Waltereit 2002: 191), there should in principle be no limits on antimorphologization either. However, it is clear that possibility is not the same as necessity, let alone predisposition. What is more, as a rather accidental process, reanalysis as such is not the best candidate for creating predispositions. Interestingly, however, the linguistic signs involved in the changes in (a) to (h) do seem to have something in common. The first observation, which admittedly may be somewhat trivial, is that they all lie along the outer border of their host, making it easier for them to split away. The second observation concerns semantics rather than form, although it is indirectly related to the first observation. In the majority of cases, the meanings of the elements involved in the changes in (a) to (h) could be characterized as being of low *relevance* to the lexical meanings of their hosts, in the sense of Bybee (1985). Thus, case marking, as the genitive in (a) and the abessive in (d), is assigned to the noun phrase as a whole in a given syntactic context with usually little impact on the semantics of the noun itself. Nominalization marking, as the adverbial subordinator in (c) and the infinitive marker in (f) can be broadly defined, would normally just give the verbal phrase the syntactic possibilities of an adverbial or a nominal without having much influence on the meaning of the verb itself. Similarly, the interrogative marker in (e), the subject marker in (b) and 'again' in (g) and (h) would not usually be expected to have much impact on the lexical meaning of their hosts. In other words, even if antimorphologization on the whole is indeed a matter of chance rather than a tendency, bound linguistic signs with less relevant kinds of meanings may, all things being equal, be more likely to undergo antimorphologization. Furthermore, when the antimorphologization of a given linguistic sign is accompanied by the acquisition of a radically new meaning, it is the low relevance of the target meaning that may prove decisive, rather than the degree of relevance of the original meaning. This appears to be the case with the (partial) antimorphologization of the verbal derivational suffix |-LÁ| from the Eastern Mande language Tura described in Section 3 below. The original, valence-decreasing meaning of |-LÁ| is clearly much

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12. I am somewhat reluctant to call the change in (h), the development of the Italian flexible prefix *ri-*, a case of antimorphologization. Firstly, however flexible it may be, *ri-* is still a prefix. Secondly, I wonder whether *ridevo fare* and *devo rifare* really mean exactly the same thing. In other words, I wonder whether in the first case the idea of repetition does not rather relate to the obligation (i.e. one was obliged to do the action the first time and now one is again obliged to do the same action), while in the second case it relates to the action but not necessarily to the obligation (i.e. there was no obligation to do the action when one did it for the first time, but now one is obliged to do the same action again).

more relevant to the meaning of the verb than its new focalizing/nominalizing function. Admittedly, the notion of relevance is not unproblematic, but it seems to be a step in the right direction.

3.   A case of antimorphologization in Tura

3.1   Tura verbs in |-LÁ|: Preliminaries

In Tura, 24 verbs from a total of about some 200 end in |-LÁ|. The notation |-LÁ| here stands for (i) *-lɔ́* after *ɔ*, as in *dɔ̂lɔ́* 'stop' (related to the verb *dɔ̂* 'stand; wait; stop'); (ii) for *-ná* after a nasal vowel, as in *zînná* 'put down; come/go down, descend' (related to an intransitive verb *zîn* 'touch'); and (iii) for *-lá* elsewhere, as in *seelá* 'turn'.[13] In example (1) |-LÁ| behaves like a suffix in that the verbal TAM-marking attaches to its right before any postverbal constituents.

(1)   Tura
  òô   *dɔ̂-lɔ̂-'*   (*yáálé*).
  3SG.SBJ.NEG.TAM   stand.LÁ\TAM-TAM   yesterday
  'He did not stop (yesterday).'

The semantics of |-LÁ| often appears to be rather vague. Thus, Bearth (1971: 170) analysed it, for lack of a better term, as a derivational suffix with an intensive meaning ("valeur intensive"). However, in many instances |-LÁ| can be analysed as a special kind of valence-decreasing morpheme. For the purposes of the present paper it suffices to characterize it broadly as a derivational morpheme meaning 'somewhere, anywhere,' as illustrated in (2) and (3) with the verb *yaa* and its derivative *yalá*, both meaning 'to sit down.' Roughly speaking, |-LÁ| marks deletion (or sometimes facultativity) of the location adverbial which is normally obligatorily expressed with the base verb as an indirect object or circumstantial. Usually, this derivation concerns motion verbs and (change of) posture verbs (for a discussion, see Idiatov 2003). A comparable derivation affecting a direct object has been described in the literature as *deobjective*, *indefinite object deletion* or *absolutive* (cf. Haspelmath and Müller-Bardey 2004: 1131). By analogy, a few labels could be suggested for the derivation at issue here, for instance, (*locative*), *deobliquative* (or *deoblique*), *delocative*, *indefinite location adverbial deletion* or *locative absolutive*.

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13. In conformity with the practical orthography, tones in the examples are marked as follows: *á* (high tone), *â* (mid-high tone), *a* (mid-low tone), *à* (low tone) and ...' (a high or mid-high toned morpheme consisting of a copy of the preceding vowel).

(2) Tura
    a.   *yalá!*
        sit.down.LÁ
        'Sit down!'
    b. **yaa!*
        sit.down

(3) Tura
    a.   *yaa   gbààné tà (zé)!*
        sit.down chair   on here
        'Sit down on the chair (here)!'
    b. *?yalá   gbààné tà (zé)!*
        sit.down.LÁ chair   on here
        'Sit down on the chair (here)!'

Historically, |-LÁ| goes back to a demonstrative root *tá 'there,' which evolved into the demonstrative *láà* 'that' in Present-day Tura. Cognates of this affix are represented throughout Eastern Mande, both in its Southern branch, where it typically has the form |-LÁ|, and in its Eastern branch, where it often has the form |-L**Ɛ́**|. The latter element goes back to another demonstrative root *té 'there,' which evolved into the demonstrative *té/lé* 'there (not far)' in Present-day Tura.

3.2 Tura verbs in |-LÁ|: A case of antimorphologization

The suffix |-LÁ| has undergone partial antimorphologization in Tura. This manifests itself in the development of the possibility for Tura verbs ending in |-LÁ| to be split up by adnominal modifiers. In such cases |-LÁ| is analysed as a weakly autonomous word, as illustrated in (4), which contains the verb *dɔ́lɔ́* 'stop' as in (1) above. This construction is used primarily for the purpose of predicate focus and in order to give a predicate the combinatorial possibilities of a noun. The same results can be achieved by placing the verb in direct object position relative to the auxiliary verb *wô* 'accomplish, do,' which in turn takes all the tense-aspect-modality marking of the verb, as in (5). Following Bearth (1971: 171–176), this construction is called *wô-transposition* ("transposition en *wô*") and the former – |-LÁ|-*transposition* ("transposition en -*lá*").

(4) *òô   dɔ́   déê kê   lɔ́-'.*
      3SG.SBJ.NEG.TAM stand new a.certain -LÁ [=TRNS]\TAM-TAM
      'He did not stop again.'

(5) *òô   dɔ́-lɔ́   déê kê   wô-'.*
      3SG.SBJ.NEG.TAM stand.LÁ new a.certain do[=TRNS]\TAM-TAM
      'He did not stop again.'

|-LÁ|-transposition exists as an alternative to the regular *wô*-transposition. The two kinds of verb-transposing construction are functionally identical, except in one case. According to Bearth (1971: 174–175), in one type of subordinate clauses the *wô*-transposition of a verb ending in |-LÁ| implies a causal 'since'-reading of the subordinate clause in question, as in (6), whereas the |-LÁ|-transposition of the same verb implies a temporal 'when'-reading, as in (7). Note that |-LÁ| of *dɔ̂lɔ́* 'stop' in (4) and (7) preserves its form *lɔ́* even when separated from the verb root.

(6)	*é*	*dɔ̂-lɔ́-'*	*wô-'*	*láà*
	3sg.sbj.tam	stand.LÁ.foclz	do[=trns]\tam-tam	tm[14]
	'since he stopped'			

(7)	*é*	*dɔ̂-'*	*lɔ̂-'*	*láà*
	3sg.sbj.tam	stand.foclz	LÁ|[or trns]\tam-tam	tm
	'when he stopped'			

The morphological status of |-LÁ| in examples like (4) and (7) is exceptional: it is a derivational morpheme, which is an integral part of the verb *dɔ̂lɔ́* 'stop,' and at the same time it is a word used to transpose the verbal word of which it is part. The situation is even stranger in (8), where the transposed verb is *gbálá* 'thunder; roar, shout.' The element |-LÁ| in *gbálá* (and several other verbs) is not, and, as comparative evidence seems to confirm, has never been, an affix. In (8), |-LÁ| does not have any meaning of its own. Thus, it is a necessary, but meaningless part of the verb *gbálá* (which is indicated by a Ø-sign as one of its possible glosses) and, at the same time, it is a word which is used to transpose the verbal word of which it is part.[15] Idiatov (2003, 2005) proposes the terms *quasi-* or *pseudo-word*(*form*) to characterize the morphological status of such elements.[16,17]

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14. TM stands for terminal marker, which serves the function of marking certain types of clauses.

15. A reviewer has suggested a parallel with the change in colloquial American English of the verb *hiccup*, "in which the -*up* part is etymologically just a part of the root [...] but is treated by some speakers as if it were the particle *up*," as in *He was hiccupping*, *He was hicking up*. Although, admittedly, the two cases considerably resemble each other, there is at least one important difference as well. The "liberation" of -*up* from *hiccup* creates a new lexical entry, *hick up* (instead of, or for some speakers probably side by side with, the original *hiccup*), while this is hardly the case with *gbá ... lá*, which is just a form of *gbálá* under transposition (cf. also the paragraph preceding examples (13) and (14)).

16. The notion of pseudo-words is related to a more general discussion of the so-called sub- or quasi-morphemic entities. A good introduction to this topic can be found in Kubrjakova (2000).

17. Idiatov (2005) also discusses a comparable phenomenon in Tura numerals and gives some typological parallels of pseudo-words.

(8) lâ-'   gbá   déê kê   lâ-'.
     rain.PREDM thunder₁ new a.certain thunder₂[=Ø=TRNS]\TAM-TAM[18]
     'It thundered again.'

The |-LÁ|-transposition must have appeared as a result of the development of a possibility for an alternative structural analysis of the verbs ending in |-LÁ| as consisting of an ordinary verb and its transposer. A prerequisite for such a development would have been the existence of an ordinary *wô*-transposition, particularly of its bare variety, that is, a *wô*-transposition where the verb transposed by *wô* is not modified by anything (e.g. a focalizer or an adnominal modifier). Since the semantic difference between a verb ending in |-LÁ| and its base verb is subtle, the verb ending in |-LÁ| may well appear to be structurally identical to such a construction. Only the transposer varies, |-LÁ| instead of *wô*. Furthermore, the development of |-LÁ|-transposition must have been facilitated by a certain bleaching of the original semantics of |-LÁ|. The process just described is illustrated by examples (9) to (12).

(9)   òô   gwɛɛ bân-'   zúlú-lèè   bhà.
      3SG.SBJ.NEG.TAM stone drop\TAM-TAM wash-place\L on
      'He did not drop the stones in the washing place.'

(10) òô   gwɛɛ bân wô-'   zúlú-lèè   bhà.
      3SG.SBJ.NEG.TAM stone drop do[=TRNS]\TAM-TAM wash-place\L on
      'He did not drop the stones in the washing place.'

(11) òô   gwɛɛ bân-nâ-'   (séé   tà).
      3SG.SBJ.NEG.TAM stone drop.LÁ\TAM-TAM ground on
      'He did not drop the stones (on the ground).'

(12) òô   gwɛɛ bân nâ-'   (séé   tà).
      3SG.SBJ.NEG.TAM stone drop LÁ\TAM-TAM ground on
      'He did not drop the stones (on the ground).'

Examples (9) and (10) illustrate the use of the verb *bân* 'drop' (or 'fall,' when used intransitively) without and with the *wô*-transposition, respectively. The verb *bân* has a |-LÁ|-derivative *bânná* 'drop' (or 'fall,' when used intransitively), as in (11). The semantic difference between these two verbs is subtle, just as between most other base and |-LÁ|-derived verbs. Speakers are usually unaware of any difference and will claim that they mean the same. Yet, these verbs are far from being freely interchangeable. Generally speaking, *bânná* usually implies that there are several objects falling and, in contrast to *bân*, accentuates the idea that the exact end-point of their falling is not relevant. This tends to translate into the idea of dispersion of

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18. PREDM stands for predicative marker, which is an auxiliary-like morpheme with a sentence-constituting function.

the falling objects. The washing place referred to in (9) and (10) is a small, clearly defined site in the Tura village which is covered with stones and where a Tura man washes himself. Consequently, the stones are conceived of as being dropped all together in a single clearly defined place, whereas in (11) the stones are dropped somewhere on the ground, for instance, just to get rid of them.

Being quite similar semantically, examples (10) and (11) may also easily appear to be structurally identical as far as their predicates are concerned. Thus, a further step allowing for an alternative analysis of (11) as (12) is very easy to conceive. Once such a choice becomes available, there is nothing to restrain the first part of a |-LÁ|-derived verb from being modified by any kind of adnominal modifiers, as is possible for their *wô*-transposed base verbs. It should be mentioned in this respect that, strictly speaking, there is no way to decide for the verbs ending in |-LÁ| whether one is dealing with a transposition or not when the first part of such a verb is not modified by anything. Only indirect arguments indicate that, at least in the modern language, the analysis in (11) should be preferred to that in (12). Firstly, the transposition has a clear functional load in Tura. It pertains to the domain of focalization, which is very prominent in this language. Consequently, it would be somewhat strange for a whole class of verbs to be permanently ambiguous between focalized and non-focalized forms. Secondly and most importantly, for most Tura verbs which do not end in |-LÁ|, the *wô*-transposition without even a focalizer modifying the verb, as in (10), is not very natural, though not impossible. In addition, there are a few largely idiomatized exceptions. For instance, for the verb *kuan* 'steal' a bare *wô*-transposition, as in (13), is very common, in fact even more common than the use of the verb *kuan* on its own, as in (14). Note in this respect that *kuan* is also one of the few verbs which can be used as a noun (meaning 'theft') outside of the *wô*-transposition without any additional morphology. In other words, a construction like (13) could also be glossed as 3PL + 'theft' (i.e. 'theft of them') + 'do.'

(13) *òô*   *àŋ*   *kuan wô-*'.
      3SG.SBJ.NEG.TAM 3PL steal do[=TRNS]\TAM-TAM
      'He did not steal them.'

(14) *òô*   *àŋ*   *kuan-*'.
      3SG.SBJ.NEG.TAM 3PL steal\TAM-TAM
      'He did not steal them.'

At the same time, it seems reasonable to suppose that "bare" *wô*-transpositions, as in (10), were more common previously. In other words, the use of a modifier (especially a focalizer) within this construction must have become more or less conventionalized for most verbs only at a later stage. At first, the predicate was focalized using only the 'do'-periphrasis (*wô*-transposition). Over the course of

time, the emphatic nature of this structure became somewhat bleached. In fact, it is not unlikely that this natural process of *attrition* was hastened by the aforementioned ambiguity. As a result, the structure in question needed to be reinforced by an explicit focalizer for it to have a clear emphatic reading. The same bleaching favoured the use of all kinds of adnominal modifiers with the transposed verb when no special emphasis on the predicate itself but rather on its modifying property was implied. This path of development seems to me to be most plausible because of its iconicity.

Once |-LÁ|-transposition became fully established alongside with the *wô*-transposition, it became available to verbs like *gbálá* 'thunder; roar, shout,' where |-LÁ| is not a suffix, by analogy with the other verbs ending in |-LÁ|, where |-LÁ| is a suffix, a development which no doubt further contributed to the blurring of the original semantics of |-LÁ|.

On the functional level, the partial antimorphologization of |-LÁ| described above can be viewed as an instance of *adaptation* (Heine 2003) or, maybe more accurately, *reparadigmatization* (Vincent 1995).[19] In other words, in addition to its original valence-decreasing derivational meaning, |-LÁ| has acquired the possibility of acting simultaneously as a transposer, a function which used to be the preserve of the regular transposer *wô*.

4.   Conclusion

In the present paper I have scrutinized the terms *grammaticalization*, *degrammaticalization* and *antigrammaticalization*. It has been shown that, in their current use, these terms often suffer from vagueness and internal inconsistency, which translates into a proliferation of their extensions, undermines their epistemological value as tools of linguistic categorization and makes the unidirectionality tendency look weaker than it really is. For these terms to remain viable and meaningful, more restrictive definitions are desirable. Since it is *grammaticali*zation that is at stake, I have advocated a definition based on the notion of grammatical meaning, the latter being best defined in terms of obligatoriness. This excludes from the scope of grammaticalization, among other things, the development of derivational affixes. I also believe that grammaticalization should be restricted to changes affecting linguistic signs, because syntactic change is substantially different. A definition of grammaticalization which encompasses both types of change is, I fear,

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19. Note, however, that in the case of Tura the reparadigmatization has been driven by formal and not by functional *matching* of the two structures, *wô*-transposition and a simple verb ending in |-LÁ|. For Vincent (1995: 439), the two structures *match* when they have "the same morphosyntactic dimensions – be they number, person, case or whatever."

bound to be too abstract to remain sufficiently valuable from an epistemological point of view.

In turn, antigrammaticalization, as the reverse of grammaticalization, refers to the change whereby grammatical linguistic signs come in certain linguistic contexts to encode non-grammatical meanings. It is also possible to distinguish between branching antigrammaticalization (when a grammeme undergoes anti-grammaticalization in certain linguistic contexts but, on the whole, is preserved by the language) and linear antigrammaticalization (when the grammeme as such disappears from the language). This distinction may prove to be epiphenomenal in the end, since a linear antigrammaticalization is likely to presuppose a branching antigrammaticalization at an earlier stage. Still, it may be useful to have this distinction for descriptive purposes.

Reasoning on the basis of the proposed definition of antigrammaticalization, I have argued that the few alleged cases of antigrammaticalization, which Haspelmath (2004) qualifies as the only real antigrammaticalizations discovered until now, are at best only cases of what I proposed to call *antimorphologization* or decrease in morphological bonding. Finally, I also presented in detail an interesting case of (partial) antimorphologization of the verbal derivational suffix |-LÁ| from the Eastern Mande language Tura.

Although Haspelmath's (2004) cases of antigrammaticalization are better described as cases of antimorphologization, this does not mean that antigrammaticalization is not possible at all. In principle, nothing seems to preclude antigrammaticalization, and in all probability it does occur here and there in the languages of the world. However, unlike grammaticalization and morphologization, both antigrammaticalization and antimorphologization appear to be much more a matter of chance rather than of tendency. To a large extent, this seems to be due to the accidental nature of the processes which contribute to them most, such as reanalysis and obsolescence. It would also appear that linguistic signs of certain kinds of meanings may be more likely than others, all things being equal, to become involved in antigrammaticalization or antimorphologization. Thus, antigrammaticalization is most easy to conceive of for semantic grammatical meanings than for purely syntactic ones, while antimorphologization seems to prefer linguistic signs whose meanings have low relevance to the lexical meanings of their hosts.

Abbreviations

3	third person	SBJ	subject
FOCLZ	focalizer	SG	singular
L	grammatical low tone	TAM	tense-aspect-modality
NEG	negation	TM	terminal marker
PL	plural	TRNS	transposer
PREDM	predicative marker		

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