

MAPPING THE MEANING OF THE BE RID FORMATION IN BASSE MANDINKA

Alexander Andrason

University of Stellenbosch, South Africa
andrason@sun.ac.za

The present paper describes the meaning of the BE RID formation (a gram formed by means of the non-verbal predicator **be** and a participle in **-riŋ**) in a regional variety of Gambian Mandinka spoken in Basse in the Upper River Region. Employing principles of cognitive linguistics, the author defines the semantic potential of the construction as a complex network of the following “basic” senses: resultative-stative, stative, progressive-continuous and inclusive perfect – values that may be encountered within present and past temporal frames and that also connote the idea of actual, extended or permanent relevance. Additionally, making use of typological and diachronic universals that govern the grammatical life of resultative categories (such as the BE RID gram, itself), these senses – components of the semantic network of the locution – are chained and arranged into a logical map that reflects a plausible historical progression.

Le présent article décrit le sens de la forme BE RID (un *gram* formé par le prédicateur non-verbal **be** et un participe en **-riŋ**) dans une variété régionale du mandingue de Gambie, parlée dans la ville de Basse à l’est du pays. En utilisant des principes de la linguistique cognitive, l’auteur définit le potentiel sémantique de la construction comme un réseau complexe des valeurs «de base» suivantes: résultatif-statif, statif, progressif-continu et parfait inclusif; valeurs qui peuvent être rencontrées dans le cadre temporel du présent et du passé, et qui connotent aussi l’idée d’une pertinence actuelle, prolongée ou permanente. En plus, par la médiation des universaux typologiques et diachroniques qui régissent la vie grammaticale des catégories résultatives (comme le *gram* BE RID lui-même), ces valeurs – les composants du réseau sémantique de la locution – sont enchaînées et disposées suivant un modèle logique qui reflète une plausible progression historique.

0. INTRODUCTION – BASSE MANDINKA¹

Mandinka is the westernmost variety of Manding. Manding, itself, – a cluster of fairly mutually intelligible idioms such as, beside the aforementioned Mandinka, Bambara (spoken in Mali) and Malinké (employed in Guinea; Wilson 2000:109) – may be defined as a member of the western branch of the Mandé family (Kastenholz 1996:281, Vydrine, Bergman and Benjamin 2000 and Williamson and Blench 2000). A complete genetic classification of Mandinka and its relation to the Manding, Mandé and Niger-Congo groups may be posited in the following manner: Mandinka <² Manding-West < Manding < Manding-Mokole < Manding-Vai < Manding-Jogo < Central < Central-Southwestern < Western < Mande < Niger-Congo (Lewis 2009). According to the most recent study, Mandinka has 1,346,000 speakers – 510,000 live in Gambia, 699,000 in Senegal and 167,000 in Guinea Bissau (Lewis 2009).³

The idiom dealt with in the present paper corresponds to a regional variety of Gambian Mandinka employed in the Upper River Region, the easternmost part of the country. In particular, our linguistic samples reflect the vernacular used in Basse (the capital of the Upper River Division) and four neighboring villages (Mansajang, Bassenging, Manneh Kunda and Kaba Kama). For that reason, this local vernacular will henceforth be referred to as ‘Basse Mandinka’.⁴

¹ I would like to thank an anonymous reviewer and the editor for extensive comments on a previous version of this paper which have enabled me to improve my article.

² The symbol “<” stand for the relation of inclusion and shall be read as ‘x belongs to y’.

³ The quoted numbers reflect the situation from the year 2006.

⁴ The present article is a result of an extensive field research carried out by the author in the Upper River Region in 2010 and 2011, and whose principal aim was to write a Basse Mandinka grammar (cf. Andrason forthcoming). For that purpose, ten Mandinka native speakers have carefully been

Basse Mandinka is highly similar to Standard Gambian Mandinka – a relatively normalized uniform tongue, employed in grammar books and learning manuals (e.g. Gamble 1987, WEC 1988a and 2002, Lück and Henderson 1993 and Coley 1995), in dictionaries and wordlists (e.g. WEC 1988b and 1995), in literary works (e.g. WEC 1991) and especially in translations of Christian and Muslim religious texts (WEC 1989 and 1998 or IIP 1988) as well as in radio, television and in the Internet (e.g. www.mandinka.org and www.mandinkakango.wordpress.com).

However, despite the fact that the core of the grammatical structure of the two varieties is almost identical, it is still possible to identify several – although minor – characteristics which differentiate Basse Mandinka from the regulated “national” variant. Below, we will introduce a brief overview of the most distinctive features of the idiom used in the Upper River Division (for a detailed review of the differences between Standard and Basse Mandinka and for a discussion of the linguistic status of the variety used in Basse, see Andrason forthcoming).

As far as phonetic and phonologic systems are concerned, Basse Mandinka includes in its inventory the velar voiced stop [g] – a sound that is missing in the normalized language. This consonant especially appears at the beginning of a lexeme and in borrowed words that had [g] in a source language (in such cases Standard Gambian Mandinka regularly employs the phoneme [k]): **Gambiya** instead of the standard form **Kambiya** ‘Gambia’, **gañee** instead of **kañee** ‘win’ or **gaadiinoo** instead of **kaadiinoo** ‘garden’.

In respect to the morphosyntactical component of the language, one may quote the following peculiarities of Basse Mandinka as compared with the standardized tongue:

- a genitive-possessive and pronominal expression, formed by the postposition **ye**, e.g. **Laamin(i) ye motoo** ‘Lamin’s car’ (literal gloss: ‘Lamin for car’) or **A ye bukoo** ‘His book’ (lit. gloss: ‘he for book’). This is an alternative construction to the standard possessive locution **Laamini la motoo** ‘Lamin’s car’ (lit. gloss: ‘Lamin with/at/of car’) or **A la bukoo** ‘His book’ (lit. gloss: ‘he with/at/of book’);
- an interrogative and relative pronoun **joŋ** ‘who, which’ – a substitute of the normalized forms **jumaa** ‘who?’ and **meŋ** ‘who’;
- highly common conjunctions and prepositions such as **pasike** ‘because’ and **puuru** ‘to, for’ – alternatives to the Standard Mandinka lexemes **kaatun** ‘because’, **ye** or **la** ‘for’ and **fo** or **ka** ‘to, in order to, so that’;

selected so that they would represent different age groups, educational and professional backgrounds as well as ethnic origins. At the end of these research activities, a comprehensive database was assembled that consisted of 5.000 entries/phrases. Each such example was recorded with audio-video instruments and thoroughly discussed with the following informants: Keba Susso (13 years old, male, primary school student, Bassending), Malick Susso (18, male, high school student, Bassending), Musa Yaffuneh (24, male, watchman, Basse), Lamin Manneh (25, male, university student, Manneh Kunda), Mamanding Sanyang (27, female, nurse assistant, Basse – originally from Darsilameh on the other side of the river Gambia), Musa Sanneh (29, male, driver, Kaba Kama), Baba Kamara (30, male, teacher, Mansajang), Saikou Drammeh (45, male, nurse, Basse, originally from Brikama), Kumba Jallow (56, female, cook, Mansajang) and Mariama Mendy (32, female, nurse, Basse – originally from Fulla Bantang). As may be seen, beside the name of each informant, in the parentheses, we indicate his or her sex, age, occupation and residence place. The list has been arranged in accordance with the age of the speakers. Finally, it shall be noted that the last two informants are entirely bilingual: Fula-Mandinka and Manjago-Mandinka. Their ethnic background is Fula and Manjago, respectively.

- a negative habitual auxiliary **muka**, e.g. **A muka a loŋ** ‘He does not know it’ (lit. gloss: ‘he does.not it know’) – a by-form of the standard **buka**;
- prepositions / conjunctions **ke** and **ki** ‘to, in order to’, e.g. **N naata jaŋ ki motoo saŋ** ‘I came here to buy a car’ (lit. gloss: ‘I came here to car buy’) – by-forms of the regular **ka**;
- past tense auxiliaries **na**, **ñe**, **ne**, e.g. **Na/ne/ñe wo ke** ‘I did it’ (lit. gloss: ‘I.did that do’) – by-forms of the normalized morpheme **ŋa**;
- a possessive construction **n ne** ‘my, of me’, e.g. **N ne bukoo** ‘My book’ (lit. gloss: ‘I of book’) – a by-form of the normalized expression **n na**;
- the use of nouns with the suffix **-o(o)** or **-olu** in nominal progressive formations, e.g. **M be leetaroo mutoo la** ‘I am receiving the letter’ (lit. gloss: ‘I PRED letter receiving at’) or **M be yiroomu senoo / seneroo la** ‘I PRED cultivating trees’ (lit. gloss: ‘I be trees cultivating at’). The normalized variety usually employs the bar stem form);
- and certain peculiarities in the distribution of the short and long verbal nouns such as, **senoo** versus **seneroo** ‘cultivating, cultivation’ (cf. Andrason 2012a).⁵

1. OBJECTIVE, THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

1.1 OBJECTIVE

The current study aims at describing, in an exhaustive manner, the meaning⁶ of the Basse Mandinka verbal periphrasis – exemplified in (1.a and 1.b) – compounded of the non-verbal predicator **be** (in negative **te**) and the participle in **-riŋ**. Given its most salient structural characteristics, we will refer to this formation as to a ‘BE RII gram’.⁷

- (1) a. **A be katiriŋ**
 It PRED⁸ be.cut-PART
 It is cut
- b. **A te siinooriŋ**
 he NEG.PRED sleep-PART
 He is not asleep / he is not sleeping

Although no grammatical study has been devoted to the use of the BE RII gram in Basse and neighboring areas, the problematic of the meaning offered by this formation has received some attention of scholars. All of such, more or less extensive, analyses have discussed the value of the locution in what explicitly or implicitly corresponds to Standard Gambian Mandinka.

For example, Macbrair (1842:7) proposes that the BE RII locution expresses “the state of the object at the time of its being spoken of”, e.g. **Kewo be konkoriŋ** ‘The man is hungry’ (lit. gloss: ‘man PRED be.hungry-PART’) or **Kewo be laariŋ** ‘The man is laying / is lain down’ (lit. gloss: ‘man PRED lay-PART’). He maintains

⁵ One should note that some of these characteristics are not restricted to Basse Mandinka but may likewise be found among other territories.

⁶ On the sense of the notion ‘meaning’ and on the procedure of its description, see section 1.3 below.

⁷ The term ‘gram’ will be employed as synonymous to ‘grammatical formation’, ‘grammatical expression’, ‘grammatical construction’, etc.

⁸ As explained above, the Mandinka lexeme **be** is a non-verbal (locative) predicator corresponding to various uses of the English verb ‘to be’. In our glosses, it will be marked as PRED. Its negative variant **te** will be glossed as NEG.PRED.

that the formation – in his view, built on a “participial noun” (ibid.:22)⁹ – denotes present conditions or qualities. In this function, the gram clearly diverges from other verbal tenses and aspects that indicate properly dynamic actions and fientive¹⁰ ideas.

Hamlyn (1935:14, 43) explains the construction, derived from the participial -**riŋ** form, as a present and continuous “tense” of intransitive and adjectival verbs, e.g. **A be siiriŋ satewo** ‘He is staying in the town’ (lit. gloss: ‘he PRED sit-PART town’; ibid.:7), **M be boyiriŋ** ‘I am falling’ (lit. gloss: ‘I PRED fall.down-PART’) and **A be jaariŋ** ‘It is dry’ (lit. gloss: ‘it PRED be.dry-PART’; ibid.:13 and 43). However, contradicting his own definition, the grammarian quotes one interesting example where the locution shows a habitual or durative (imperfective) value rather than a continuous sense: **A be jaariŋ nuŋ** ‘It used to be dry’ (lit. gloss: ‘it PRED be.dry-PART then’; ibid.:16).

Creissels (1983) observes that the entity in -**riŋ** is a “stative participle” that may be employed with non-verbal predicators **be** and **te** in order to describe the subject’s circumstance: **A be siiriŋ** ‘He is seated’ (lit. gloss: ‘he PRED sit-PART’). He also maintains that when the gram is derived from lexically stative predicates, it is synonymous with the TA formation. Namely, the phrases **A be kuurandiŋ** (lit. gloss: ‘he PRED be.sick-PART’) and **A kuuranta** (lit. gloss: ‘he be.sick-TA’) are claimed to be semantically equivalent and mean ‘He is ill’. On the contrary, in cases where the locution is formed with dynamic verbs, the BE RII and TA expressions are not fully synonymous. The former denotes a state or a condition while the latter conveys the idea of a dynamic activity that has led to the ongoing state: **A be teeriŋ** ‘It is broken’ (lit. gloss: ‘it PRED be.broken-PART’) versus **A teeta** ‘It is (got) broken’ (lit. gloss: ‘it be be.broken-TA’).

Gamble (1987:15) suggests that the BE RII formation – according to him, built on a “present participle” in -**riŋ** (cf. ibid.:29) – functions as a continuous present, being common with so-called descriptive verbs: **A be deeriŋ** ‘He is silent’ (lit. gloss: ‘he PRED be.silent-PART’), **A be looriŋ** ‘He is standing’ (lit. gloss: ‘he PRED stand-PART’), **Moolu bee be hawujiriŋ** ‘All the people are hurrying’ (lit. gloss: ‘people all PRED hurry-PART’) or **A be sinandiŋ** ‘He is wet’ (lit. gloss: ‘he PRED be.wet-PART’). When a dynamic action is to be conveyed, another continuous gram shall be used, for instance, the nominal BE LA construction (cf. Andrason 2012a). The linguist adds that a continuous action expressed by the BE RII form may also be located in the past: **Mansa be siiriŋ** ‘The king was sitting’ (lit. gloss: ‘king PRED sit-PART’; Gamble 1987:15). Gamble furthermore provides a remarkable example where the gram (although in Gamble’s view a continuous past) approximates the category of a durative imperfective past: **Kari fula a be laariŋ** ‘He was lying (ill) for two months’ (lit. gloss: ‘month two he PRED lay-PART’).

Similarly, Lück and Henderson (1993:42), Colley (1995:15, 18) and WEC (2002) classify the BE RII form as an expression of continuous actions or states. Namely, on the one hand, they detect a static or circumstantial sense, common with adjectival bases: **A be koyiriŋ** ‘It is white’ (lit. gloss: ‘it PRED be.white-PART’), **A be findiŋ** ‘It is black’ (lit. gloss: ‘it PRED be.black-PART’), **A be sutuyaariŋ** ‘He is short’ (lit. gloss: ‘he PRED be.short-PART’), **A be nunkuriŋ** ‘He is fat’ (lit. gloss: ‘he PRED be.fat-PART’) and **Ŋiŋ bukoo be beteyaariŋ** ‘This book is good’ (lit. gloss: ‘this book PRED be.good-PART’). On the other hand, they identify certain readings

⁹ The cursive stile is used to emphasize differences in the definitions of the -**riŋ** entity.

¹⁰ The term ‘fientive’ makes reference to a dynamic action performed by the subject. Fientive verbs are typically dynamic and/or action (and thus, non-static and non-adjectival) verbs (cf. Waltke and O’Connor 1990:371 and Williams 2007:57).

which seem to be slightly more dynamic: **Faatu be looriŋ** ‘Fatu is standing’ (lit. gloss: ‘Fatu PRED stand-PART’) or **Baagoo be dendiiŋ** ‘The bag is hanging’ (lit. gloss: ‘bag PRED hang-PART’; cf. Colley 1995:18).¹¹

Consequently, the meaning of the BE RII formation has usually been classified either as a stative (state, condition, circumstances; Macbrair 1842, Creissels 1983, Lück and Henderson 1993, Colley 1995 and WEC 2002) or a continuous aspect (Hamlyn 1935, Gamble 1987, Lück and Henderson 1992, Colley 1995 and WEC 2002). These two – usually viewed as exclusive¹² – main values seem to be found in present and past time frames. On the contrary, no clear statement in respect to a possible future temporal reference of the BE RII form has been formulated. Additionally, either implicitly (simply, by not mentioning it) or explicitly (by negating it), the BE RII gram is regarded as bereaved of any resultative undertone (cf. especially Creissels 1983). Finally, albeit “involuntarily” (i.e. due to provided examples), certain scholars suggest other possible senses, e.g. past durative, past habitual and even inclusive perfect.¹³

It must be observed that these traditional – yet highly valuable and relevant for the Mandinka scholarship – descriptions of the semantics of the BE RII gram present certain imperfections and inaccuracies. First, they are usually limited to a few general sweeping statements – inversely, they fail to provide a thorough analysis of the meaning of the locution (cf. in particular Macbrair 1842, Hamlyn 1935, Gamble 1987 and Colley 1995). Second, they either do not specify the model within such a description is conducted (cf. Macbrair 1842, Hamlyn 1935, Gamble 1987, Lück and Henderson 1993, Colley 1995 and WEC 2002) or employ a rigid structuralist framework with its principle of invariant inherent meanings and binary oppositions underlying the system and its components (Creissels 1983; for a criticism of this approach, see the next section). And third, – again following the traditional manner of “doing grammar” – they tend *per vim* to grasp the entire meaning of the formation within a single domain, looking for a constant and unvarying value.

Our proposal will correct these shortcomings, offering a more thorough description of the meaning of the BE RII gram. In order to do so, we will anchor the study in a concrete and fully explained theoretical model that is, in our view, more adequate than those which have traditionally been employed. Furthermore, the analysis will be more empirically oriented – a comprehensive list of examples will be provided in which the gram will be “tested” for various meanings, both for the stative or continuous-progressive senses and for other, usually marginalized, values (e.g. actuality, duration, persistency or inclusive perfect). In addition, we will offer an explanation that could conciliate the two main trends in the description and classification of the locution, showing that they may be perfectly accommodated within our framework. In that manner, our study – still improving the understanding of the gram – will be respectful within the grammatical tradition, incorporating its highly valuable findings to which the author is clearly indebted.

Following these requirements, let us start our analysis with a meticulous explanation of the model on which the description of the semantics of the BE RII gram will be based.

¹¹ It shall be noted that Coley (1995:18) treats the **-rii** entity as an adjective, i.e. derived by means of an adjectival suffix.

¹² I.e. linguists have frequently classified the gram either as a stative or a continuous.

¹³ For the explanation of these terms, see the next part of the article and, in particular, section 2.2.

1.2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

Cognitive linguistics and typological studies demonstrate that polysemy is the norm – a meaning normally offers more than one sense associated with it. Such a diversity of values, displayed by a single entity, is observed at all echelons of a language, including verbal formations usually referred to as aspects, tenses or moods. Polysemy emerges because a given form corresponds to a network of concepts (i.e. atomic concrete senses) instead of matching a single concept (Evans and Green 2006:169-170). Thus, the meaning of a verbal construction shall be conceptually represented as a compound of specific senses, elements of the gram's polysemy (ibid.:328, cf.). These more concrete and more precise values are conceptually related – one sense is derived from another by means of universal human cognitive mechanism (Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk 2007:140 and Evans and Green 2006:170, 331, 333; see also Taylor 2002:138-139 and Tuggy 2002:348-350). Consequently, the meaning of a realistic (i.e. existing in a language) verbal gram may be defined as a well-structured (because inter-connected) network, consisting of *all* multiple senses displayed by it – the form's entire semantic potential (and Evans and Green 2006:332; cf. also section 3.2, below).

Saying that a gram offers a concrete atomic sense, we mean that it is compatible with a particular context in which this value is activated. As noted by cognitive and grammaticalization scholars, meanings are invariably subject to context and textual or pragmatic settings always influence the nature of polysemy (Evans and Green 2006:352-253). Meaning is a context-bound phenomenon and, thus, its modelling as a network of senses must take the context into account (ibid.:368). All of this signifies that since every sense offered by a verbal construction is contextual, all such senses shall be treated as evenly relevant because all of them, jointly, construct the gram's meaning. Consequently, the division between the so-called inherent or invariant value and context-induced interpretations is eliminated (cf. Dahl 2000a:14 and Bybee 2010). Instead, another distinction emerges: a sense provided by a gram in a particular context *versus* the total meaning of the locution understood as a summation of its atomic values and spatially portrayed as a map enclosing all such specific context-dependent nuances. Thus, refining our definition, we may state that the overall meaning of a gram equals its entire *contextually induced* semantic potential, modeled as a network of related more specific (again!) *context sensitive* values (Nikiforidou 2009:16-17 and Croft and Cruse 2004:258).

Of course, a representation of *all* senses is scientifically impossible.¹⁴ Since a formation (at least in natural living languages) may appear in an infinite number of instances, it likewise provides an infinite spectrum of senses. It becomes impossible to gather all the cases where it is employed – the amount of examples ignored can equally expand *ad infinitum* (cf. Taylor 2003:147)! We are thus compelled to limit this infinity to a finite number of empirical facts – a limited corpus.

¹⁴ It should be observed that since a sense invariably depends upon contextual settings and that no two contexts are identical two senses will never be perfectly equal. Contexts always diverge in some pragmatic or physical features (Schneider and Sagan 2009:115 and 185-204). If we wish to describe a given context we would have to specify its parameters. However, since the number of constituents and interconnections in the real world is uncontrollable or *infinite* (Auyang 1998:344 and Schneider and Sagan 2009:55), that series can be always extended indefinitely (Wagensberg 2007:60). This means that since all systems of the real world are infinitively complex, there is no end to the longitude of an empirical sequence that aims at representing realistic phenomena, such as contexts in which a locution is uttered (Wagensberg 2007:56-57). This leads to the conclusion that two contexts can never be entirely identical and, thus, two senses will never be identical either.

As a result, when scholars develop scientific descriptions of reality such as grammatical analyses of languages and their components, they must generalize, establishing the limits of precision – they propose an approximation (Auyang 1998:344). The most important consequence of this approximation and, in fact, imprecision is a partially pre-conceived partition of reality. The pre-conceived categorization signifies that we divide (indeed, we *must* divide!) reality into certain theoretical boxes – concepts – that are artificial and external to the universe itself (Kothari 1975:5 and Prigogine 2009:37, 213). This partition of the real world inevitably underlies any “objective” empiricism. As commonly accepted, experiments are theory-laden (Rabinovitz 2001:125). On the other hand, although no systems and phenomena may be perceived, measured and analyzed with a perfect objectiveness (Auyang 1998:68), the categorization can be rationalized.

In our case, the partition of the meaning into atomic senses (or domains) is expected to follow three connected principles. First, it should use the nomenclature of taxis,¹⁵ aspectual and temporal domains – with all of their subdivisions – as commonly employed in language descriptions and studies devoted to linguistic typology. In other words, our semantic domains maintain the terminology employed in grammatical descriptions of the languages of the world, e.g. in African languages (Nurse 2008), Afro-Asiatic and Indo-European languages (Waltke and O’Connor 1990, Hewson and Bubenik 1997, Dahl 2000d) and in research dedicated to general linguistic issues (e.g., Heine, Claudi and Hünemeyer 1991, Bybee, Perkins and Pagliuca 1994, Dahl 2000d and Haspelmath et al. 2001). Second, when deconstructing the total semantic potential of the gram into specific senses, we expect that such senses would correspond to realistic objects. At least in certain languages, the labels employed to group atomic values shall be grammaticalized as independent categories. Put differently, we assume that they typologically exist. And third, an atomic sense should be “practical”, i.e. useful in a meaning demarcation. This implies that it shall enable scholars to establish an exact range of similarity or dissimilarity between two (or more) forms that, from a typological perspective, represent a highly similar category. For instance, the category of one-day (hodiernal and/or hesternal) definite past permits us to capture the semantic difference between the English and Spanish present perfects (Bybee, Perkins and Pagliuca 1994:98; for further rationale behind the determination of senses in our database, see section 2.2, below).

In light of the theoretical assumptions explained above, our objective may be narrowed in the following manner: we will describe the meaning of the BE RII gram, representing it as a complex but yet logical network of more specific senses that belong to the semantic domains of taxis, aspect and tense. For that purpose, the semantic potential of the gram will be portioned into more specific units (such as, present, past, future, stative, resultative-stative, continuous, progressive, inclusive perfect, actual-ongoing, durative and general-persistent; cf. section 2) and subsequently unified in a consistent and rational network (cf. section 3).

¹⁵ ‘Taxis’ is a term that is here employed to denote the semantic domain of perfects and similar formations where the concepts of anteriority, simultaneity and posteriority and their mutual arrangement are crucial (cf., Maslov 1988).

2. EVIDENCE¹⁶

Although the present paper principally aims at analysing the semantic potential of the BE RII construction “scanning” it for all possible taxis, aspectual and temporal values, it is important to pay some attention to structural characteristics of the gram. This will help us to understand certain typically semantic properties such as, in particular, a preference for or a tendency to convey stative meaning and, hence, reluctance to express a properly fientive dynamic sense.

2.1 STRUCTURAL PROPERTIES¹⁷

As mentioned previously, the BE RII formation consists of the auxiliary non-verbal predicator **be** (in the negative **te**) and the participle of a meaning verb. Participles are derived by adding the suffix **-riŋ** to the basic verbal form or, in other words, to the bare stem: **bataa** ‘be tired’ > **bataariŋ** ‘[being] tired’ or **siinoo** ‘sleep’ > **siinooriŋ** ‘sleeping, asleep’ (cf. 2.a and 2.b). If a given verbal stem ends in the consonant **-ŋ**, the participle uses an alternative shape in **-diŋ**: **kuuraŋ** ‘be sick’ > **kuurandiŋ** ‘[being] sick’ or **bambaŋ** ‘be strong’ > **bambandiŋ** ‘[being] strong’ (cf. 2.c).

- (2) a. **A** **be** **bataariŋ**
 he PRED be.tired-PART
 He is tired
- b. **A** **te** **kamfaariŋ**
 he NEG.PRED be.angry-PART
 He is not angry
- c. **A** **be** **kuurandiŋ**
 he PRED be.sick-PART
 He is sick

It shall be acknowledged that the BE RII gram exclusively admits intransitive constructions (3).

- (3) a. **M** **be** **sabatiriŋ** **Basse**
 I PRED live-PART Basse
 I am living in Basse
- b. **M** **be** **siiriŋ**
 I PRED sit.(down)-PART
 I am sitting / I am seated

This invariably intransitive character signifies that roots which may be employed transitively (e.g. **a safee** ‘write (it)’ or **a tiŋaa** ‘spoil (it)’) make a regular use of their

¹⁶ As already mentioned, the Mandinka examples provided in this paper are extracted from the database developed by the author in 2010 and 2011. All these examples can be divided into three different types, depending on their “conceptual origin”: a) sentences which were spontaneously constructed by our informants; b) sentences which were produced by native speakers under the request of the author; c) sentences which were inspired by literary texts, specially by the Mandinka Bible – informants were asked to pronounce, comment on and/or reformulate certain examples extracted from the Mandinka Bible (WEC 1989); cf. for instance examples, 30.b (Acts 17.7), 30.c (Luke 20.27), 30.d (Acts 17.28) and 37.b (Acts 8.23) as well as examples 39 and 40.

¹⁷ Under the term ‘structural’, we will understand characteristics that are not directly related to verbal semantics of taxis, aspect, tense and mood.

intransitive and, thus, passive varieties (cf. 4.a-d; see however reflexive verbs below in this section). Alternatively, we may state that the participle of verbs in (4.a and 4.c) is derived from intransitive predicates **safe** ‘be written’ and **tiñaa** ‘be spoiled’. As a result, the entity which, in the function of a direct object, would precede the verbal stem cannot appear in the BE RII locution (cf. 4.b and 4.d).

- (4) a. **A be safeeriŋ**
 it PRED be.written-PART
 It is written
- b. ***A be a safeeriŋ**
 he PRED it write-PART
- c. **A be tiñaaariŋ**
 it PRED be.spoiled-PART
 It is spoiled
- d. ***A be a tiñaaariŋ**
 he PRED it spoil-PART

On the other hand, the intransitive nature of the gram does not imply that the construction may be formed with all intransitive predicates. The BE RII locution is regularly used with adjectival verbs (e.g. **koyi** ‘be white’; cf. also **bataa** ‘be tired’ and **kuuraŋ** ‘be sick’ in 2 above) and with intransitive verbs that possess a transitive equivalent (cf. **safe** ‘be written’ vs. **a safe** ‘write (it)’ and **tiñaa** ‘be spoiled’ vs. **a tiñaa** ‘spoil (it)’). It is also quite commonly employed with intransitive roots that express processes or less dynamic situations, such as **siinoo** ‘sleep’, **loo** ‘stand’ or **sabati** ‘stay at, live’. However, intransitive predicates of motion display a certain reluctance to appear in the BE RII gram. While some movement verbs are regularly found in this formation (e.g. **naa** ‘come’ and **boyi** ‘fall’ in 5.a and 5.b) others, such as the highly common verb **taa** ‘go’, cannot be used in the BE RII gram (5.c):

- (5) a. **A be naariŋ**
 he PRED come-PART
 He is coming
- b. **A be boyiriŋ**
 he PRED fall.down-PART
 He is on the floor / He is fallen down
- c. ***A be taariŋ**
 he PRED go-PART
 Intended meaning: He is going

In yet further cases, our informants disagreed in the admissibility of certain intransitive verbs (especially, movement or process verbs) in the BE RII locution. While some judged such uses as entirely correct, others regarded them as unacceptable.¹⁸ Below, we provide examples of the predicates that had not been admitted by all the speakers in the BE RII gram:

¹⁸ The informants who are originally from the area outside the Basse region (Darselameh or Fulla Bantang) regarded these forms as incorrect. Persons from Basse (as well as from Manneh Kunda, Bassending and Kaba Kama), especially the young ones judged these examples as admissible.

- (6) a. **A be sayiriŋ**
 he PREDreturn-PART
 He is back
- b. **A be boriŋ**
 he PREDleave-PART
 He has left / he is absent
- c. **A be taamariŋ**
 he PREDtravel-PART
 He is travelling / He has left for travelling
- d. **A be jeleriŋ**
 he PREDsmile-PART
 He is smiling
- e. **A be faaniyaariŋ**
 he PREDlie-PART
 He is lying

Additionally, it shall be noted that certain reflexive verbs, such as **i kuu** ‘wash oneself’ or **i doŋ** ‘dance’, may also be employed in the BE RII gram. In such cases, the typical object-place is occupied by the pronominal reflexive entity, e.g. **n** ‘myself’. Again, not all the informants considered such a usage as admissible.

- (7) a. **M be n dondiŋ**
 I PREDREFL dance-PART
 I am dancing
- b. **M be n kuuriŋ**
 I PREDREFL wash-PART
 I am clean / I am washing myself

Finally, several reflexive verbs are used intransitively in the BE RII form. See, for instance, the predicate **i laa** ‘to lie down (oneself)’ which in the BE RII locution “loses” its reflexive pronoun:

- (8) **A be laariŋ**
 he PREDlie.down-PART
 He is lying

2.2 SEMANTIC PROPERTIES

While structural characteristics are easily observable, senses or semantic properties are determinable in a significantly less straightforward manner. In this paper, the following procedure of the sense determination has been adopted.

In accordance with our research strategy outlined in section 1.2 above, the BE RII construction will be “tested” for various – to an extent universal – senses, where a sense is understood as a contextually induced compatibility with a given semantic – again, universal – domain.¹⁹ This technique agrees with the cognitive approach to verbal semantics, where the total meaning of a gram is deconstructed into a semantic space composed of several atomic contextual senses which make use of universal

¹⁹ The rationale that determined the choice of the universal semantic domains and, hence, the categorization adopted in this study have been explained in section 1.2, above.

semantic domains such as tense, aspect, taxis and mood. It is important to note that senses correspond to semantic domains that may not be equalled with grammatical categories. Each sense profiles a different type of semantic information provided by the gram. In this manner, the analysis of the semantic potential and, in particular, the split of the total meaning of the gram into various concrete atomic senses is not achieved from the viewpoint of the English language as the English translation could imply. Quite the reverse, as already mentioned, it consists of deconstructing the total meaning of the formation into specific senses where a particular piece of information is profiled. These senses will be made explicit by employing overt expressions – typical for a given semantic domain – in a respective English translation. (The same methodology has extensively been employed in Dahl 2000b and 2000c where grams are “tested” for their compatibility with numerous semantic domains or senses).

However, when determining a sense of the BE RII gram in a given example the following, closely related, questions arise: how do we know that the formation conveys a determined sense and how do we know that it is compatible with given domain? Two solutions – commonly used in cognitive linguistics – to this issue will be adopted. One consists in constructing an overt context that would explicitly indicate and, hence, prove that the gram can express a certain value. For instance if we want to corroborate the statement that the BE RII gram can express past activities or states, it is enough to show that it may appear with past time adverbs or locutions that overtly locate the verbs in the past. This procedure is especially common in demonstrating senses that are less common and thus relay on special contextual features (cf. section 1.2 above and the characteristic context-dependency of all the senses). The other possibility in the determination of a sense refers to what in cognitive sciences is called ‘prototypicality’ or ‘prototypical sense’. Prototypical sense is the sense that is the most frequent (of course, in a determined type of text e.g. in spoken language, discourse, personal narration, written narrative etc.) and that is first-to-come-to-mind (it is the sense most easily associated with a given construction).

In this paper, various senses are determined by means of such an intuitive prototypicality. For example, the expression **a be katiriŋ** (lit. gloss: it PRED be.broken) employed without any specific contextual settings is analysed in terms of the intuitive prototypicality, i.e. as ‘it is broken’. Thus, the translation corresponds to the sense that comes first to their mind of the native interviewed speakers.²⁰ However, in several cases, the overt (and more objective) “context based” procedure in the determination of senses will be employed. Put differently, by constructing a specific semantic, syntactic or pragmatic environment, a given sense will be made explicit. In this manner, it will be possible to differentiate it from the most prototypical – intuitive – value.²¹

Finally, it should be noted that we will typically provide a positive type of evidence showing that a verb – viewed as a member of one of the classes distinguished in this study (cf. section 2.2.2) – has a given sense in the BE RII construction.

²⁰ Certainly more corpus linguistic studies are needed in order to confirm this intuitive prototypicality by statistical analyses (statistical or quantitative prototypicality).

²¹ Contextual settings also concern the verbal root (adjectival verbs, movement verbs, process verbs and transitive verbs) employed in the BE RII gram. Semantic properties of the predicates that belong to these four classes are partially dissimilar when used in the BE RII form. Namely, some types fail to convey the senses offered by the verbs belonging to the other groups.

2.2.1 General facts

The most regular function of the BE RID gram is to convey the stative meaning. Namely, the locution denotes a state or a condition in which the subject of the BE RID clause remains. This non-dynamic sense persists in a broad variety of contexts and with an immense majority of roots.

- (9) a. **A be saasaariŋ**
 he PRED be.sick-PART
 He is sick
- b. **A be siinooriŋ**
 he PRED sleep-PART
 He is asleep
- c. **A be katiriŋ**
 it PRED be.broken-PART
 It is broken
- d. **M be boyiriŋ**
 I PRED fall.down-PART
 I am fallen down / I am on the floor

The temporal reference of a given state or condition may be either present (10.a and 10.c) or past (10.b and 10.d):

- (10) a. **A be siinooriŋ saayiŋ**
 he PRED sleep-PART now
 He is sleeping now / he is asleep now
- b. **Kunuŋ talaŋ 8.30 a be siinooriŋ**
 yesterday hour 8.30 he PRED sleep-PART
 Yesterday at 8.30, he was sleeping / he was asleep
- c. **M be kuurandiŋ**
 I PRED be.sick-PART
 I am sick
- d. **Seruŋ m be kuurandiŋ**
 last.year I PRED be.sick-PART
 I was sick last year

In contrast, it is usually not possible to use the BE RID gram within a future time frame:

- (11) ***Kana naa saama! Saama, talaŋ 8.30 m be siinooriŋ**
 do.not come tomorrow! Tomorrow, hour 8.30 I PRED sleep-PART
 Do not come tomorrow! Tomorrow at 8.30, I will be asleep / I will be sleeping

In order to use participles in **-riŋ** in a future temporal sphere and thus in order to provide a future stative meaning, the verb **tara** ‘be, remain’ (instead of the predicator **be**) in the so-called BE LA construction or in other “future-like” expressions must be employed (cf. Lück and Henderson 1993 and Andrason 2012b):

- (12) a. **A be tara la siinooriŋ**
 he PRED remain to sleep-PART
 He will be asleep / he will be sleeping

- b. **A be tara jee la looriŋ**
 he PREDremain there to stand-PART
 He will be there

Beside this predominant stative value – which may be detected in an immense number of instances where the BE RII gram is employed –, the formation conveys other, more specific, shades of meanings. In the following section, we will discuss such more individual senses. Since, these concrete readings partly depend on the semantics of a given verbal stem which is employed in the BE RII locution, we will analyze values of the gram in respect to four major classes of predicates: adjectival verbs (**koyi** ‘be white’), intransitive verbs of motion (**naa** ‘come’), intransitive process verbs (**siinoo** ‘sleep’) and intransitive verbs that possess a transitive homologue (**safe** ‘be written’ vs. **a safee** ‘write (it)’).

2.2.2 Specific meanings

In the present section, all the verbs which can “participate” in the BE RII gram will be divided into four groups: adjectival verbs, intransitive verbs of movement, intransitive verbs of process and verbs that possess a (semantically equivalent) transitive counterpart. The selection of these four classes has both typological and language-specific motivation. Cross-linguistic studies teach us that adjectival verbs, intransitive movement verbs and transitive verbs behave in a dissimilar manner when employed in resultative formations (cf. Nedjalkov 2001: 928-932): adjectival roots typically offer stative readings (the resulting state is profiled), movement roots offer resultative interpretations (the prior action triggers some resultative inferences) and transitive roots offer intransitive or de-transitive resultative-proper values (a transitive verb offers an intransitive “bi-polar” sense where two semantic components are equally relevant: a prior action on the object triggers its current static condition; for similar distinctions in Semitic languages, see Huehnergard 2005). These three classes are also important for Mandinka itself. Namely, the verbs belonging to these three groups (especially, adjectival verbs and movement verbs) offer distinct semantic values in certain progressive constructions (cf. Andrason 2012e). Additionally, the subtype of intransitive process verbs has been distinguished due to the fact that such verbs present a slight deviation from the semantic properties offered by movement verbs in the BE RII gram.

On the other hand, it must be emphasized that, as already explained in section 1.2, any categorization is external to the language itself, being imposed by human cognitive necessity. More importantly, depending on a researcher’s needs, categories may be more microscopic (fine-grained) or, on the contrary, more macroscopic (coarse-grained). This means that each category (or conceptual “box”) includes more specific sub-types and, inversely, atomic sub-categories can be grouped into larger “mega-types”. At the most detailed analysis, there are as many classes as individuals (there are as many categories as verbs because each verb is semantically somehow different), while at the most general analysis, only one class can be distinguished (all the verbs belong to the same category). As a result, no class is perfectly homogenous. The behaviour of a class refers to an exemplary tendency that accounts for the majority of the verbs that belong to a given taxonomical type. Certain discrepancies may occur because, as mentioned, verbs that form a class fail to be semantically identical; for example, motion verbs may have different Aktionsart (lexical aspects) which could explain their distinct behaviour in the BE RII form.

2.2.2.1 Adjectival verbs

The BE RID gram, derived from adjectival verbs, regularly denotes qualities of the subject. These traits – located in the present and past temporal spheres – may be portrayed either as actual (i.e. restricted to or pertinent for the current state of affairs; cf. 13.a-e) or, on the contrary, as durative (spanning larger periods of time; 14) and persistent (referring to the subject's general and constant characteristics or conditions; cf. 15.a-f).

- (13) a. **Kewo ñiŋ be kamfaariŋ saayiŋ**
man that PRED be.angry-PART now
The man is angry now
- b. **Ɗa dokuwo ke baake. M be bataariŋ**
I.did work do a.lot I PRED be.tired-PART
I have worked a lot. I am tired.
- c. **Tiloo be kandiŋ**
day PRED be.hot-PART
It is hot [now]
- d. **Ite be deyriŋ. Munne ye a tinna?**
You PRED be.quite-PART what did it cause?
You are quiet. Why?
- e. **Saayiŋ m be jusudiyaariŋ baake**
now I PRED be.happy-PART much
I am happy very much now
- (14) a. **Seruŋ m be kuurandiŋ kari fula**
last.year I PRED be.sick-PART month two
Last year, I was sick for two months
- b. **Ɗiisemba karoo le kono a be kanfariŋ**
December month EMPH in he PRED be.angry-PART
He used to be angry in December
- (15) a. **N na suwo be koyiriŋ**
I of house PRED be.white-PART
My house is white
- b. **I la dendikoo be findiŋ**
you of shirt PRED be.black-PART
Your shirt is black
- c. **Ñiŋ bukoo be betayaariŋ ne**
this book PRED be.good-PART EMPH
This book is good
- d. **Moolu ñinnu be jawuyaariŋ**
people these PRED be.bad-PART
These people are bad
- e. **Tubaabulu bee be jawuyaariŋ**
white.people all PRED be.wicked-PART
All whites are wicked

- f. **Wo tumoo duniyaa be diyaariŋ**
 that time world PRED be.nice-PART
 At that time, the world was good

In certain cases, the present actual quality of the subject may be understood as resultant from a previously performed action. In such cases, the reading seems to be slightly more fientive or actional. Namely, the semantic component of an on-going state suggests that this present condition has emerged due to a prior performance of a dynamic activity:

- (16) a. **Samaa naata. M be sinandiŋ saayiŋ!**
 rain has.come I PRED be.wet-PART now
 It has rained. I am wet/soaked now! (because I have become / got wet)!
- b. **Da a fita. Bari a be nooriŋ saayiŋ!**
 I.did it sweep. but it PRED be.dirty-PART now
 I (has) swept it. But it is dirty now! (because it has become / got dirty)

Nevertheless, this – very subtle – value of a result is always secondary and constitutes rather a type of conversational implicature than a genuine element of the semantic load of the gram.²² In order to express a resultative value in a more explicit manner, one employs adjectival verbs in the so-called TA formation (cf. Andrason 2011c). To illustrate this fact, let us compare the use of the verb **koyi** ‘be white’ in sentence (17) below. While the expression **be koyiriŋ** indicates a general persistent quality of the shirt (its colour is white), the locution **maŋ koyi** (the negative variant of the TA gram **koyita** ‘is white, clean’) denotes a transitory recently acquired condition (it is not white right now, i.e. it is not clean):

- (17) **I la dendikoo be koyiriŋ**
 you of shirt PRED be.white-PART
 Your shirt is white
- bari saayiŋ a maŋ koyi**
 but now it be.not white
 but now it is not white (clean)

Additionally, adjectival verbs in the BE RII gram may be used with the force of an inclusive perfect, denoting that a given situation began in the past but has been continuing into the present:

- (18) a. **A be kuurandiŋ kabiriŋ dimaasoo**
 he PRED be/sick-PART since Sunday
 He has been sick since Sunday

²² Following cognitive linguistics, I have previously argued against a distinction between semantics and pragmatics affirming that all senses are contextual. A question thus arises of how one can justify that a value is subtle stemming from implicature and not-subtle being more stable (it forms a solid component of a given semantic network). This is one of the most debated questions in semantics and scholars disagree at which point a sense fails (or ceases) to be an implicature and corresponds to a stable constituent of the semantic potential of a form. In this article, by employing the term subtle, I understand the following: a given sense is not intuitively obvious to the respondents – not only concrete but also very particular contexts were necessary to make this sense more recognizable. As for examples 15.a-b, the sense of a state resulting from a previous action (resultative-stative) is very subtle because it relies on an extremely particular environment (the prior action should be overtly expressed) and, even then, the simple stative value with no resultative undertones is the first one that comes to the mind of the native speakers. Only after a careful discussion, they agreed that the nuance of a previous action was also available.

- b. **A be kuurandiŋ luŋ saba**
 he PRED be.sick-PART day three
 He has been sick for three days

2.2.2.2 Intransitive verbs of motion

When verbs of motion – i.e. predicates that express the idea of movement towards or from a place in the space – are employed in the BE RII gram, they commonly indicate the condition of the subject, understood as acquired due to the accomplishment of the action denoted by the underlying verb. In other words, they may provide a resultative-stative (or resultative proper) value where both the resultant state and the action from which that state has emerged are equally important in the information conveyed by the utterance (Nedjalkov 2001). In this function, the gram may not be confounded with the category of a dynamic resultative perfect, a sense that is typically conveyed in Mandinka by the TA and YE constructions: **a naata** ‘he has come’ (literal gloss: he come-TA) and **a ye a ke** ‘he has done it’ (literal gloss: he YE it do). The resultative-stative contains two evenly relevant semantic components: a prior action and ensuing state. The resultative perfect, on the contrary, highlights the dynamic event whose effects are still available and relevant to the current situation.

- (19) a. **Dindiŋ be boyiriŋ**
 child PRED fall.down-PART
 The child is fallen (because he or she has fallen down)
- b. **Ì be wuliriŋ**
 they PRED stand.up-PART
 They are arisen / they are up (i.e. standing) (because they have stood up)
- c. **A be jiiriŋ**
 he PRED descend-PART
 He is down / downstairs (because he has come down)
- d. **A be sayiriŋ**
 he PRED return-PART
 He is returned / he is back (because he has come back)

Quite commonly, however, the resultant state may be interpreted as a currently on-going situation or continuous activity. In such cases, resultative connotations and undertones are weakened, failing to be pertinent for the entire situation:²³

- (20) a. **M be siiriŋ nuŋ suwo kono kabiriŋ a naata**
 I PRED sit.down-PART then house in when he came
 I was sitting at home when he came
- b. **Da a je jee**
 I.did him see there
 I saw him there

²³ The verbs **sii** ‘sit down’ and **laa** ‘lay [oneself] down’ can be understood in Mandinka as movement verbs where the action of movement towards a given posture is profiled. In this paper, I will classify them as movement verbs being however aware of their particularity if compared with other prototypical verbs of motion such as **naa** ‘come’ or **taa** ‘go’.

- c. **A be laariŋ nuŋ basoo kaŋ**
 he PRED lay.down-PART then mat on
 He was lying on a mat

It shall be noted that, in yet other instances (e.g. with the verbs **naa** ‘come’ and **taama** ‘travel’), the gram may offer a progressive reading indicating an on-going dynamic process rather than a static situation or non-dynamic activity:

- (21) a. **A be naariŋ**
 he PRED come-PART
 He is coming
- b. **I be taamariŋ minto?**
 you PRED travel-PART where
 Where are you traveling to?

Quite commonly, when intransitive verbs of movement are employed in the BE RII gram, the state of the subject (accompanied sometimes by other shades of meaning) is actual at the reference time. This especially holds for cases where the resultative-stative sense is patent (cf. 19.a-d above). However, in determined cases where no resultative value is palpable, a given situation or activity may be portrayed as temporarily extended, giving rise to durative uses:

- (22) a. **Ñinaŋ Maalik be taamariŋ**
 This.year Maalik PRED travel-PART
 Malik travels (is travelling) this year
- b. **A be laariŋ kari saba**
 he PRED lay.down-PART month three
 He was lying for two months

Finally, motion verbs, employed in the BE RII gram, may express the inclusive perfect sense:

- (23) a. **Ntelu be taamariŋ fo tili luulu**
 we PRED travel-PART for day five
 We have been travelling for five days
- b. **A be laariŋ jaŋ kari saba**
 he PRED lie.down-PART here month three
 He has been lying here for three months

2.2.2.3 Intransitive verbs of process

In the class of intransitive process verbs we include predicates that are not properly adjectival or that do not express the idea movement toward or from, and that moreover normally do not possess a straightforward transitive homologue (in other words, they are not simple passive variants of active transitive predicates). Such verbs quite regularly provide two equally defensible readings: one properly stative and the other more dynamic. In the latter case, the gram approximates a progressive (when employed with dynamic predicates, e.g. **ke** ‘happen, occur’) and/or continuous aspect (when used with non-dynamic predicates, for instance, verbs of situation or feelings: **loo** ‘stand’ and **sila** ‘fear’):

- (24) a. **A jii bee! A be korontoriŋ**
 him look! he PRED be.in.hurry-PART
 Look at him. He is in a hurry / he is hurrying up
- b. **Moolu be hawujiriŋ**
 People PRED hurry.up-PART
 People are in a hurry / they are hurrying up
- c. **A be looriŋ buŋo daala**
 he PRED stand-PART house close.to
 He is standing by the house
- d. **Wo tumoo m be looriŋ hoteloo daala**
 that tme I PRED stand-PART hotel close.to
 At that time, I was (standing) by the hotel
- e. **Ì bee be hameriŋ ne ka a ke**
 they all PRED desire-PART EMPH to it do
 All are eager in doing it / want to do it
- f. **M be silariŋ ñiŋ na**
 I PRED fear-PART this at
 I am scared of this / I fear this (lit. "I am fearing")
- g. **M be suulariŋ ñiŋ na**
 I PRED need-PART this at
 I am in need of this / I need this (lit. "I am needing")
- h. **M be dasariŋ kodoo la**
 I PRED lack-PART money at
 I am in the lack of money / I lack (lit. "I am lacking")

Sometimes, the stative value may be additionally accompanied by very subtle resultative undertones or implicatures. Again, a more actional progressive-continuous sense is equally possible:

- (25) a. **A be siinooriŋ**
 he PRED sleep-PART
 He is asleep (i.e. fallen asleep) / He is sleeping
- b. **M be pasiriŋ**
 I PRED fed.up-PART
 I am fed up (because I got fed up) / I am being tired of it
- c. **A be jaakaliriŋ**
 he PRED be.surprised-PART
 He is surprised / He is wondering
- d. **M be jiyaariŋ hoteeloo le to**
 I PRED lodge-PART hotel EMPH at
 I am lodged at the hotel / I am staying at the hotel (cf. 31.a and 31.b)

Nevertheless, in various cases, the progressive value of an on-going action gains in relevance becoming clearly predominant. In such instances, the stative reading and, in particular, resultative connotations are significantly weakened or simply absent:

- (26) a. **M be bibiriŋ**
 he PRED stammer-PART
 He is stammering
- b. **M be lafiriŋ ki taa Banjunu**
 I PRED want-PART to go Banjul
 I want to go to Banjul (lit. "I am wanting")
- c. **A be jeleriŋ**
 he PRED laugh-PART
 He is laughing
- d. **A be faniyaariŋ**
 he PRED lie-PART
 He is lying
- e. **Saayiŋ, a be sabatiriŋ Basse**
 now he PRED living-PART Basse
 Now, he is living in Basse

The progressive value is especially palpable in the case of the verb **ke** 'happen, occur':

- (27) a. **Muŋ ne be keriŋ?**
 what EMPH PRED happen-PART
 What is happening?
- b. **Hani feŋ te keriŋ**
 even thing NEG.PRED happen-PART
 Nothing is happening
- c. **Wo tumoo konkoo be keriŋ**
 that time hunger PRED happen-PART
 At that time, people were suffering hunger (lit. the hunger was happening)
- d. **Tabiroo be keriŋ**
 cooking PRED happen-PART
 Cooking is going on
- e. **Domoroo be keriŋ**
 eating PRED happen-PART
 Eating is going on
- f. **Kacaa be keriŋ**
 chatting PRED happen-PART
 Chatting is going on

Also certain reflexive verbs that may be found in the BE RII formation select a progressive reading rather than the value of a state:

- (28) **M be n dondiŋ**
 I PRED REFL dance-PART
 I am dancing

States or activities expressed by the verbs belonging to the presently analysed category are frequently actual – they indicate current or on-going (at the reference time) phenomena:

- (29) a. **Kendoo be kerin**
 heat PRED happen-PART
 It is hot (now) (lit. the heat is happening)
- b. **Kee doo be loorin jee**
 man certain PRED stay-PART there
 A man was standing there
- c. **A be baluurin ne**
 he PRED live-PART EMPH
 He is alive / he is living

However, the temporal span of such activities expressed by the BE RII gram may also be extended to larger periods of time. Hence, the locution may indicate durative or even general activities and situations (cf. examples 30.a-c). One shall, for instance, observe that in (30.d), the formation is found in the company of two constructions that commonly express habitual, constant and perpetual facts (the KA form and the YE gram when employed with certain predicates, such as **a soto** 'have', cf. Andrason 2012c and 2012d):

- (30) a. **Ñinañ a be sabatirin Basse**
 this.year he PRED live-PART Basse
 This year, he lives in Basse
- b. **Mansa doo le be kerin men too mu Yeesu ti**
 King other EMPH PRED be-PART who name is Jesus EXIS
 There is another king whose name is Jesus (Acts 17.7)
- c. **Wo moolu ko saayaakoolaa wulindiroo te kerin**
 that people say after.death rising NEG.RED happen-PART
 Those people say that there is no resurrection (Luke 20.27)
- d. **M be baluurin ne anin n ka taama**
 we PRED live-PART EMPH and we do walk
 We live and move
- anin na niyo soto ka bo nin ate la**
 and we do being have through him with
 and have our being in him (Acts 17.28)

Finally, the gram may be used with the force of an inclusive perfect:

- (31) a. **Kabirin Diisemba m be jiyaarin Basse**
 since December I PRED lodge-PART Basse
 I have been lodging in Basse since December
- b. **M be sabatirin Basse kari luulu**
 I PRED stay-PART Basse month five
 I have been living in Basse for five months
- c. **Ñinañ m be sabatirin n teeri le yaa**
 this.year I PRED stay-PART my friend EMPH at
 This year, I have been staying at my friend's place
- d. **A be siinoorin waatitan**
 he PRED sleep-PART hour ten
 He has been sleeping for ten hours

2.2.2.4. Intransitive verbs with transitive equivalents

Intransitive verbs that possess a transitive counterpart most frequently convey a resultative-stative meaning. They express that a certain state results from a previously performed action. In such cases, both components of the semantics of the gram – i.e. a prior event (a dynamic activity) and a posterior result (a stative quality or condition) – are equally relevant. This is what in scientific literature is referred to as a resultative proper construction (Nedjalkov 2001):

- (32) a. **A be katiriŋ**
 it PRED be.broken-PART (vs. **a kati** ‘break (it)’)
 It car is broken (because someone has broken it)
- b. **Motoo be tiñaariŋ**
 car PRED be.spoiled-PART (vs. **a tiña** ‘spoil (it)’)
 The car is spoiled (because someone has spoiled it)
- c. **A be sitiriŋ**
 it PRED be.tied-PART (vs. **a siti** ‘tie (it)’)
 It is tied (because someone has tied it)
- d. **Bundaa be sorondiŋ**
 door PRED be.closed-PART (vs. **a soron** ‘close (it)’)
 The door is closed (because someone has closed it)
- e. **Palanteeroo be yeleriŋ**
 window PRED be.open-PART (vs. **a yele** ‘open (it)’)
 The window is open (because someone has opened it)
- f. **Buŋo be fitariŋ**
 room PRED be.swept-PART (vs. **a fita** ‘sweep (it)’)
 The room is swept (because someone has swept it)
- g. **Siipaanoo be sooriŋ**
 bucket PRED be.punctured-PART (vs. **a soo** ‘puncture (it)’)
 The bucket is punctured (because someone has punctured it)
- h. **A be kuuriŋ**
 it PRED be.washed-PART (vs. **a kuu** ‘wash (it)’)
 It is washed (because someone has washed it)
- i. **Ì be kafuriŋ ñoo ma**
 they PRED be.gathered-PART together with (vs. **a kafu** ‘gather (it)’)
 They are gathered (because “someone” has gathered them)

If a given verbal root offers both transitive and intransitive forms and, moreover, if the intransitive variety possesses a value that is not a straightforward passive variant of the active transitive form, two readings are frequently possible. Namely, the BE RII gram may express both a resultative-stative sense (common for intransitive verbs – passive homologues of their active underlying forms; cf. the previous paragraph) and a progressive value (cf. intransitive verbs of non-dynamic activities):

- (33) a. **A be jiyaariŋ hoteloo to**
 he PRED be.accommodated-PART hotel in (vs. **a jiyaa**
 'accommodate')
 He is accommodated in a hotel
- b. **A be jiyaariŋ hoteloo to**
 he PRED lodge-PART hotel in (**jiyaa** 'lodge, cf. 24.d)
 He is lodging in a hotel
- (34) a. **A be kerin**
 It PRED be.done-PART (vs. **a ke** 'do (it)')
 It is done
- b. **A be kerin**
 it PRED occur-PART (**ke** 'happen', cf. 26.a-f)
 It is happening

Moreover, in certain instances, where there are two related underlying verbal forms, one reflexive (e.g. **i kuu** 'wash oneself') and the other transitive (e.g. **a kuu** 'wash something or someone'), the BE RIIḡ gram may employ reflexive and intransitive (passive) constructions without any difference in meaning: both the reflexive and intransitive (passive) locutions offer a resultative-stative reading:

- (35) a. **M be kuuriŋ**
 I PRED be.washed-PART
 I am washed / I am clean(ed)
- b. **M be n kuuriŋ**
 I PREDREFL wash-PART
 I am washed / I am clean(ed)

With a high frequency, the resultant – as hence post-transitory – state is portrayed as actual and pertinent to the currently occurring situation:

- (36) a. **Jaloo niŋ be faariŋ niŋ ñewolu la**
 Net this PRED be.full-PART with fishes with
 The net is filled with fishes / full of fishes
- b. **A buloolu be sitiriŋ**
 his hands PRED be.tied-PART
 His hand are tied
- c. **Daalu be sorondiŋ nuŋ**
 doors PRED be.locked-PART then
 The doors were locked
- d. **Daalu be yeleriŋ nuŋ**
 doors PRED be.open(ed)-PART then
 The doors were open(ed)
- e. **Ì be maaboriŋ nuŋ**
 they PRED be.hidden-PART then
 They were hidden

However, the subject's condition may also be conceived as persistent or permanent, surpassing the actual moment in the present or past. Thus, the BE RIIḡ gram can denote durative and/or general situations. In such cases, the resultative

undertone – and the importance of an anterior dynamic event – is significantly weakened. On the contrary, the prominence is given to its stative effects:

- (37) a. **Kuwolu bee, mennu be safeeriŋ, i be timmandi la**
 things all which PRED be.written-PART they PRED be.fulfilled to
 All things which are written will be fulfilled (i.e. all things that are permanently known for people, not those that have been written now)
- b. **I be faariŋ kurunyyaa baa le la**
 you PRED be.filled-PART wickedness great EMPH with
 You are filled with great wickedness (i.e. your character is generally evil, not only right now – you are a wicked man) (Acts 8.23)
- c. **Ñinaŋ be jiyaariŋ hoteloo to**
 this.year PRED be.accommodated-PART hotel at
 This year I am lodged in a hotel

In consonance with the other types of roots, also this class of verbs may be employed with the force of an inclusive perfect, expressing durative activities that span from a moment in the past to the enunciator's present:

- (38) a. **A be londiri kabiriŋ duniyaa foloodulaa**
 it PRED be.known-PART since world beginning
 It has been known from the beginning of the world
- b. **Daalu be sorondiri kabiriŋ kunuŋ**
 doors PRED be.locked-PART since yesterday
 The doors have been locked since yesterday

2.2.2.5. Translation evidence

Translations of certain literary texts (in particular of the Bible) provide some interesting evidence as far as the question of the semantic potential of the BE RII formation is concerned.²⁴ First, it shall be observed that the gram (39.c) is commonly employed in order to render both the Greek resultative proper (εἰμι 'be'+ middle-passive participle; 39.a) and the reduplicative perfect (39.b):

- (39) a. **ἔστιν γεγραμμένον** (John 6.45)
 it.is written
 It is written
- b. **γέγραπται** (Mark 1.2)
 write-PERFECT.MIDDLE
 It is (has been) written
- c. **A be safeeriŋ** (John 6.45 and Mark 1.2)
 it PRED written
 It is (has been) written

²⁴ Although one could object that this kind of evidence primarily concerns Standard Gambian Mandinka, all the quoted examples (extracted from the Mandinka Bible) have been discussed with and uttered by the ten native speakers from the Basse area. This means that since sentences (39.a) and (40.b, d, f, h, j) undoubtedly belong to the grammatical repertoire of the Basse Mandinka speakers, they may also be employed in our linguistic analysis.

Since the Greek expression **γέγραπται** is also translated in the Mandinka Bible by means of a dynamic resultative (perfect) construction, i.e. the TA gram, (e.g. **safeeta** ‘it has been written, it is written’, Acts 7.42), the form **a be safeeriŋ** must be understood as, although predominantly stative, likewise capable of providing certain resultative shades of meaning (cf. examples 32.a-i above).

On the other hand, a clearly non-resultative – stative, progressive or continuous – value may be observed in instances where the BE RII gram is used in order to render the Greek progressive or imperfective (past and present) constructions: imperfective participle (40.a-b), periphrasis ‘be’ + imperfective participle (40.c-d), imperfective infinitive (40.e-f), imperfective present (40.g-h) and imperfective past (40.i-j):

- (40) a. ...**τούς ὄντας ἐν τοῖς τόποις ἐκείνοις** (Acts 16.3)
 these be-PART in the places those
 ...these who were (living) in those places
- b. ...**mennu be sabatiriŋ**
 who PRED live-PART
 ...who were living
- c. **ἄνθρωπος τις ἦν ... ἐστὼς** (Acts 16.9)
 man certain was stand-PART
 A man was standing
- d. **Kee doo be looriŋ jee**
 man certain PRED stand-PART there
 A man was standing there
- e. **βασιλέα ἕτερον λέγοντες εἶναι Ἰησοῦν** (Acts 17.7)
 king another saying be-INF.IMPF Jesus
 Saying that there is another king named Jesus
- f. **Ἴ κο Μανσα doo le be keriŋ,**
 they say king another EMPH PRED happen-PART
 They said: another king exists (there is another king),
 meŋ too mu Yeesu ti
 whose name is Jesus EXIS
 whose name is Jesus
- g. **Ἐν αὐτῷ γὰρ ζῶμεν** (Acts 17.28)
 in him for live-PRES.1pl
 For we live in him
- h. **Μὲ be baluuriŋ ne**
 we PRED live-PART EMPH
 We live / are alive
- i. **ἔσπευδεν** (Acts 20.16)
 hasten-IMPERFECT.3sg
 He was hastening
- j. **A be korontoriŋ ne nuŋ**
 he PRED hasten-PART EMPH then
 He was hastening

3. CONCLUSION

3.1 MEANING OF THE BE RII GRAM– THE NETWORK OF SENSES

Our evidence shows that although the stative meaning – located within present and past temporal frames – predominates, the BE RII formation conveys other not less important senses. Adjectival verbs, almost invariably employed in the stative function, introduce qualities of the subject: actual, durative or persistent. However, they can likewise offer certain subtle secondary resultative nuances (a type of conversational implicature) as well as the value of an inclusive perfect. Intransitive verbs of motion, when used in the BE RII gram, function either as a resultative-stative (and a stative) or as a continuous and progressive aspect. A given static or dynamic situation is usually actual (this especially holds for the resultative-stative sense) and currently on-going. However, in the continuous-progressive use, the activity may span larger periods of time. Additionally, this class of verbs may be employed with the force of an inclusive perfect. Other intransitive predicates (verbs of process) provide properly stative and/or continuous-progressive senses. The stative value may sometimes be accompanied by subtle resultative undertones. A given (in some cases, resultant) state or activity is frequently actual and on-going. Nevertheless, durative or permanent situations are expressed with an equal frequency. In addition, this group of verbs may be used in the function of an inclusive perfect. The last category (viz. intransitive verbs that possess transitive equivalents) prototypically offers a resultative-stative value and indicates currently resultant states. However, the gram formed with these verbs may also express durative-persistent and permanent situations. In such cases, the – otherwise patent – resultative undertone is weakened. Again, as in all the subgroups analyzed previously, the construction provides the value of an inclusive perfect. All of these senses and their use with determined types of predicates may be summarized in the following manner:

Type of verb \ Provided sense	Resultative-stative	Stative	Continuous-progressive	Relevance		Inclusive perfect
				Actual	Durative or permanent	
Adjectival	(subtle)	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Motion	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Process	(subtle)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Transitive	Yes	No ²⁵	No	Yes	Yes	Yes

Table 1: Senses of the BE RII gram with four classes of verbs

Finally, as far as the evidence found in biblical translations is concerned, the BE RII formation may render the Greek resultative proper and perfect. In these cases, it is employed with the force of a resultative-stative. On the other hand, it may likewise be used in translations of the Greek non-resultative progressive and continuous constructions. In such instances, the resultative value of the gram is clearly missing – the relevant piece of information corresponds to a stative, continuous or progressive category.

²⁵ Cf. however examples 37.a-c where the prominence of the resultative sense and hence the importance of an action that has led to the present state are significantly reduced.

Consequently, we may affirm that the meaning of the BE RID formation consists of four specific senses: resultative-stative, stative, continuous-progressive and inclusive perfect, all of them located in the present and past temporal spheres. Furthermore, the situation introduced by the gram can be actual, extended or permanent. While resultative-stative and stative senses allow the three readings (on-going, durative and permanent)²⁶, the continuous-progressive use normally permits the extension only from the current actuality to a durative value. All of this signifies that although the stative value predominates (it is explicitly found with three types of verbs while in the fourth it appears as a component of the resultative-stative sense), other shades of meaning are also important in the gram's sematic load and may not be ignored or marginalized.

Having reached this conclusion we may intend to design a logical model of the semantic network of the gram. As explained, the stative value appears as central to the formation, being found in properly stative uses as well as the in the resultative-stative function. Both components (i.e. stative and resultative-stative) may be actual and by extension durative or persistent. When resultative undertones are missing, a state may be interpreted dynamically – especially in cases where the location is derived from process verbs and verbs of movement –, generating continuous and progressive uses. Again, an activity, principally currently on-going, can be extended to denote larger periods of time, giving rise to a durative value. Finally, resultant or “simple” states and activities not only include the speaker's here-and-now but can also incorporate a certain portion of the past temporal domain into the enunciator's cognitive actuality (the value of an inclusive perfect). Accordingly, the entire semantic potential of the BE RID formation that contains all central and peripheral values may be represented by the following network of senses:

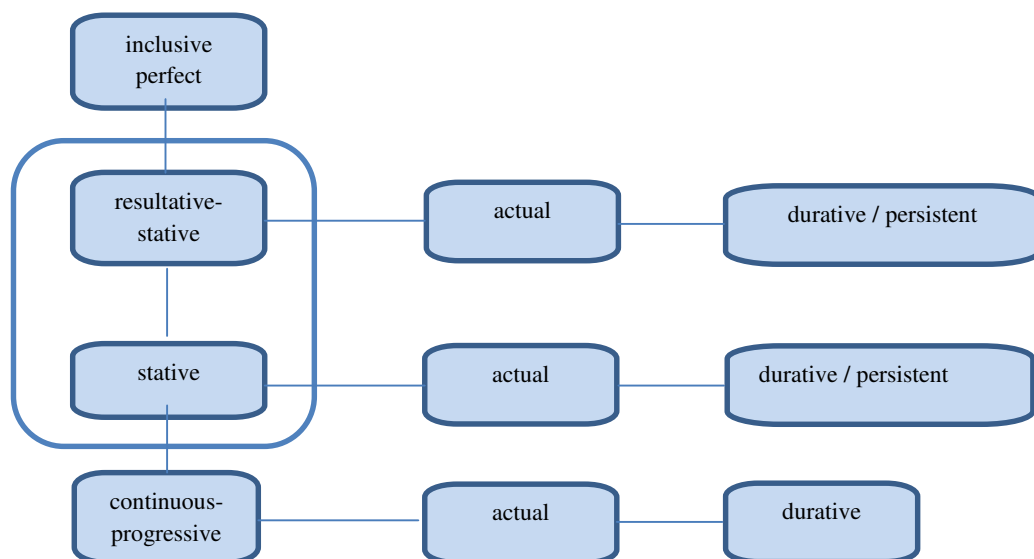


Figure 1: The meaning of the BE RID mapped as a network of senses²⁷

²⁶ The permanent relevance seems to be less typical for resultative-stative sense. When exemplary resultative-stative uses are employed in order to denote general or persistent situations, the importance of the resultative nuance in the information provided by the gram is weakened (cf. examples 27.a-c)

²⁷ The area that included the resultative-stative and stative senses (i.e. the zone surrounded by the blue line) corresponds to the core or prototypical value of the gram.

3.2 EXPLAINING THE MAPPING

We have stated that the meaning of a form shall be represented as a semantic map, i.e., as a spatial *logical* network of senses that are rationally connected. Within such a network, some components are central (more prototypical) while other are peripheral and cognitively derivable from the core sense. However, the distinction among central and peripheral senses is not only conceptual (as posited in the previous section in order to design and justify the model in Figure 1) but also and, actually, primarily historical. Thus, the chaining that connects constituents of a given semantic network reflects a concrete evolutionary process during which new senses are consecutively acquired. According to this view, prototypical senses (i.e. central senses in a map) correspond to earliest attested values (i.e. to the proto-meaning of an input formation), while peripheral ones match a posterior extension and spread (cf. Taylor 2002, Tyler and Evans 2003 and Evans and Green 2006:344-346).²⁸ Since polysemy is a result of a historical development, the mapping of a synchronic diversity of senses should reproduce such diachronic changes (Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk 2007:140; cf. also cf. Heine, Cladi and Hünemeyer 1991:221-255, 227-228 260-261, Bybee, Perkins and Pagliuca 1994:15-19, Tyler and Evans 2003:344-346, Van der Auwera and Gast 2011:186-188 and Bybee 2010:198-199). Consequently, the chaining of senses within a network is required to copy a concrete evolutionary process where peripheral posterior senses arise from more central and more archaic values.

Quite commonly, however, we do not possess direct historical evidence that could ensure the chaining of a semantic map. This is the case of the Mandinka language that lacks any straightforward and explicit testimony (for instance, texts) which could show the diachronic development of the idiom through the centuries. Although historical data are unavailable, it is still possible to posit a diachronic binding mechanism (see Heine 1991). In such cases, in order to consistently chain senses observed synchronically, we may employ the framework of typological tendencies or “universal paths” (cf. Bybee, Perkins and Pagliuca 1994, Dahl 2000d and Andrason 2011a). Such trajectories provide a model of developmental propensities or typological laws that govern the evolution of formations that belong to similar classes. In other words, they specify, for instance, how aspects or tenses emerge or what the grammatical fate of original progressive expressions is. Since polysemy is a consequence of diachronic meaning changes, we can use “universal” diachronic paths in order to establish the connection among the elements of a concrete synchronic network. In other words, we can compare the synchronic polysemy with certain evolutionary patterns and order the senses included in a network in accordance with available “exemplary” trajectories.

If our analysis is correct and the core of the meaning of the BE RII gram is composed by the resultative-stative and stative senses, the formation most probably is a type of an original resultative location. This assumption harmonizes with an important typological tendency. Namely, according to typological studies, resultative verbal adjectives such as the Mandinka participles in *-riŋ* and resultatives built on them, commonly display a non-agentive character and a de-transitive effect on the underlying verbs (Haspelmath 1994:159 and Nadjalkov 2001:928). Put differently, when resultative adjectives or resultative proper grams are derived from underlying

²⁸ This conceptual “centrality” does not imply a frequent incidence. Original – systematically central – senses may be statistically marginal at a given historical time. The central position in a network makes reference to their conceptual “supremacy” because such central values constitute foundations of further semantic extensions.

transitive verbs, the argument structured is rearranged and they usually offer a passive value. Such a de-transitive force is what links resultatives to present passives.²⁹ This fact is also observable in Mandinka where the BE RID – as an exemplary resultative-stative form – cannot derive transitive uses. Quite the reverse, in cases where active transitive verbs are available, the locution may employ exclusively their intransitive, and thus passive, variants (cf. section 2.1 above). In such instances, it is possible to assume that the gram displays a de-transitive force.

As demonstrated by various scholars (Nedjalkov and Jaxontov 1988, Maslov 1988, Bybee, Perkins and Pagliuca 1994, Dahl 2000d, Nedjalkov 2001 and Andrason 2010, 2011a and 2011b), resultative inputs may undergo a complex development into two distinct directions, being gradually converted into past or present tenses. The former value emerges as a consequence of the so-called “anterior path” while the latter is a result of the “simultaneous trajectory”. Both clines are models of a grammatical life of original resultative formations and specify the order in which new senses (axis, aspectual, temporal, etc.) are incorporated into the semantic potential of an initially resultative construction.

The anterior path states that resultative proper grams first develop into perfects (at the beginning, inclusive and resultative present perfects, later frequentative, experiential and indefinite varieties) and next into past tenses (initially, recent and discursive, subsequently general, remote and narrative). Additionally, during the transformation from a present perfect into a definite past tense, the gram may sometimes acquire an explicit aspectual perfective sense (cf. Bybee, Perkins and Pagliuca 1994:55-57, 98, 104-105, Squartini and Bertinetto 2000:406-407, 414-417 and 422, Dahl 2000a:15 and Heine and Kuteva 2006:151). The simultaneous path, parallel the anterior track in the manner that both trajectories traverse the verbal domains of axis, aspect and tense in a similar sequence. However this time, the final product of the cline is not the definite past, but rather the present tense (cf. Maslov 1988:70–71, Bybee, Perkins and Pagliuca 1994:74–78 and Drinka 1998:120). Accordingly, certain resultative proper grams develop into simultaneous resultative present (the main emphasis is put on the resulting state while the prior action is only merely suggested), next into a stative present (resultative undertones are unavailable anymore and the only patent value is a static quality or situation) and finally into a general or simple present tense (for a more detailed discussion of the simultaneous path, see Andrason 2011a:40-45 and 2011b:13-15). As noted by Bybee, Perkins and Pagliuca (1994:74–78), the transformation of resultatives into present tenses and thus the evolution along the simultaneous cline usually affects static predicates or verbs whose resultative uses can logically trigger static readings. This evolutionary scenario, moreover, shows a concurrent semantic extension from an actual situation (either currently resultant or simply available) to more persistent and permanent (and hence towards simple present tenses). The value of actuality is included in the original resultative proper locution which indicates results that are currently available (i.e. at a given reference time) and cognitively pertinent to the speaker’s here-and-now. Afterwards, the actuality gives way either to persistence (present tense sense on the simultaneous path) or a cognitive and temporal distance (past tense on the anterior path).

Bearing in mind the diachronic model of the two trajectories that determine the grammatical life of resultative proper inputs, we can now impose an order in the

²⁹ This relation may also be perceived in the fact that in certain languages, resultatives and passives of transitive verbs display the same form or that passive is employed to express the resultative meaning (so-called ‘statal passive’; Maslov 1988 and Nedjalkov 2001:937).

semantic network of the BE RII gram and connect senses, indicating input (historically more original) and output (historically posterior) values.

The actual resultative-stative sense could be regarded as the proto-meaning, i.e. as the original value of the BE RII gram. From it, – when the resultative nuances have been marginalized – stative uses arose. Even later, stative situations were interpreted as more dynamic (probably, in accordance with the original value of underlying process and motion verbs), triggering continuous and progressive senses. As for the cognitive-temporal relevance, resultant and simple states initially referred to current situations. Subsequently, the relevance could be extended to larger periods of time and permanent facts.

All of these changes correspond to the development codified by the simultaneous trajectory. It shall be noted that in our model, for the simplicity sake, we do not make a distinction between the resultative proper and simultaneous resultative. Both values are encompassed under the label of resultative-stative.³⁰ The simultaneous resultative could nevertheless be detected in the subtle resultative sense provided by adjectival verbs, as explained in section 2.2.2 above. The development in the direction of a stative and towards more persistent values is, as expected, particularly marked with adjectival roots. However, other predicates (especially process and motion verbs) also undergo this type of growth, triggering – when dynamically interpreted – not stative but continuous and progressive senses (i.e. non-static on-going activities). Such dynamic uses can further generate a durative value. On the other hand, they are not normally employed in order to express habitual, customary or permanent activities. Consequently, the stage of a simple present has not been reached.

The inclusive perfect value suggests that the gram has also been developing into an alternative direction following the anterior path. As explained, the inclusive perfect sense is the first stages on the anterior trajectory, located immediately after the resultative proper (in our case, resultative-stative) phase. It shall also be observed that in conformity with another typological fact, dynamic action verbs (i.e. underlying active transitive verbs or, in other words, active homologues of intransitive passive predicates used in the BE RII locution) are less propitious to undergo the evolution following the simultaneous path. They regularly express both elements of the resultative proper sense and almost invariably contain in its meaning some information concerning a dynamic event that is the origin of the present situation. Such verbs more typically follow the development predetermined by the anterior track. On the other hand, it must be noted that the inclusive perfect function is available with all verbal roots, not only dynamic ones.

Summa summarum, the senses belonging to a network that codifies the overall meaning of the BE RII gram may be diachronically chained as follows:

³⁰ The terms resultative-stative (instead of the resultative proper) is also chosen in order to conceptually preserve the traditional understanding of the gram as a stative.

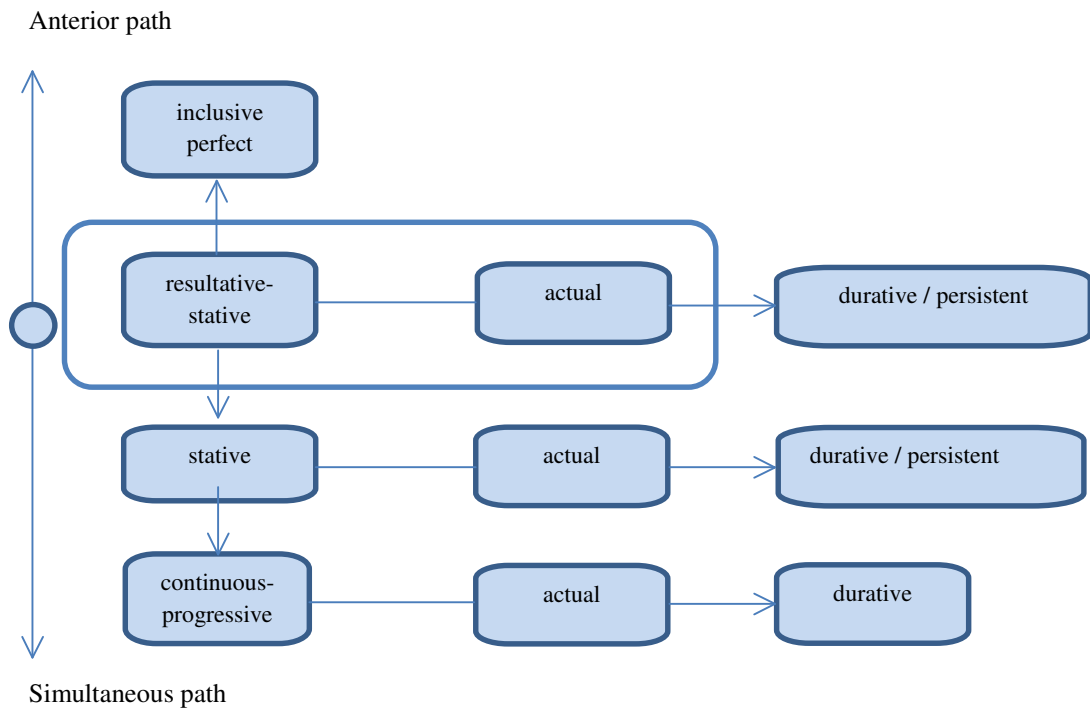


Figure 2: The meaning of the BE RII mapped as a network of senses³¹

To conclude, we may state that our study has reached its principal objective. We have a) provided a model of the network of senses displayed by the Basse Mandinka BE RII gram and b) chained its components by employing “universal” diachronic paths. We are convinced that this representation is more scientific, more comprehensive and more trustful than the traditional descriptions, in particular as far as empirical data and typological evidence are concerned. Namely, our model takes into consideration a broad number of samples and a great variety of contexts, offering a consistent, unifying and scientifically based explanation for the entire semantic potential of the BE RII form. Additionally, within this representation, the issue of whether the BE RII locution is a stative or a continuous aspect disappears. The formation cannot be limited to a stative or continuous category because its semantic potential covers the two semantic domains.

Moreover and in a clear contrast with the analyses elaborated thus far, our representation provides some important pieces of information concerning the diachrony of the Basse Mandinka tongue. It posits a participial resultative proper construction as a historical source of the BE RII gram. Furthermore, our solution is also predictive.³² It enables us to calculate (of course within a margin of error, inevitable in any linguistic prediction) new senses that may be absorbed into the semantic potential of the construction in the future. They will simply match

³¹ The blue circle to the left represents the diachronic origin or a starting point for the anterior and simultaneous paths. The domains enclosed by the blue line correspond to the proto-sense displayed by this input locution. The arrows indicate the historical progression (consecutively acquired stages/senses). The three simple non-arrowed lines indicate that two domains are inseparable – they formed a concrete sense at a given historical stage.

³² Of course, we are aware of the fact that *prediction* is not the main aim of “traditional” linguistics.

subsequent segments of the anterior and simultaneous paths. Finally, it permits us to estimate that the values provided by cognate forms of the Basse Mandinka BE RID locution in the normalized idiom as well as in other regional varieties shall similarly be networked and mapped as an amalgam of stages of the anterior and simultaneous trajectories. The exact portion of the two path-ways may certainly vary as new stages-senses are incorporated or, on the contrary, missing. The network's backbone, however, will remain identical, corresponding to the two diachronic scenarios that govern the development of original resultative inputs. Therefore, the results of this study are relevant not only for the understanding of the verbal system of Basse Mandinka, but may also be employed in order to cast new light on the meaning of the BE RID formation in the standard language. Additionally, a comparative study of the semantics of the BE RID gram in other cognate languages (in those where it exists) could add important evidence to the proposal offered in this article. To be exact, it could demonstrate that our hypothesis is not only synchronically (the variation in Basse Mandinka) and typologically (correspondence with universal paths) based but is also corroborated by the comparative data. This would, importantly, strengthen the conclusion of this paper.

ABBREVIATIONS

PART	Participle
EMPH	Emphatic focus particle
EXIS	Existential particle

REFERENCES

- Andrason, Alexander. 2010. The Akkadian Iprus from the unidirectional perspective. *Journal of Semitic Studies* 55(2):325-345.
- _____. 2011a. Qatal, yiqtol, weqatal y wayyiqtol – modelo pancrónico del sistema verbal de la lengua hebrea bíblica con el análisis adicional de los sistemas verbales de las lenguas acadia y árabe. Madrid: Publicaciones de Universidad Complutense.
- _____. 2011b. The Biblical Hebrew Wayyiqtol – a dynamic definition. *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures* 11(7):1-50.
- _____. 2011c. Semantics of the ta construction in Basse Mandinka. *Linguistica Copernicana* 6: 221-244.
- _____. 2012a. The structure and meaning of the Nominal BE...LA “tense” in Basse Mandinka. *The Annals of Ovidius University Constanta* 23(1):21-38.
- _____. 2012b. The Basse Mandinka “Future”. *Studies in African Linguistics* 41(1):1-33.
- _____. 2012c. The meaning of the (BU)KA- form in Basse Mandinka. *Folia Linguistica et Litteraria* 6:1-11.
- _____. 2012d. The meaning of the YE constructions in Basse Mandinka. *Philologia* 10:21-38.
- _____. 2012e. The KAD verbal form in Basse Mandinka – structure and meaning. *Studia Linguistica Universitatis Jagellonicae Cracoviensis* 129:35-48.
- _____. forthcoming. Introducción a la gramática del mandinka de la región de Basse.
- Auyang, Sunny. 1998b. *Foundations of Complex-system Theories*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bybee, Joan. 2010. *Language, Usage and Cognition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bybee, Joan, Revere Perkins and William Pagliuca. 1994. *The Evolution of Grammar*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Colley, Ebrima. 1995. *Mandinka Grammar Manual*. Banjul: Peace Corps The Gambia.
- Creissels, Denis. 1983. *Éléments de grammaire de la langue mandinka*. Grenoble: ELLUG.
- Croft, William and Alan Cruse. 2004. *Cognitive Linguistics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Dahl Östen. 2000a. The Tense and Aspect Systems of European Languages in a Typological Perspective. In Östen Dahl (ed.), *Tense and Aspect in the Languages of Europe*, 3-25. Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

- _____. 2000b. The Perfect Questionnaire. In Östen Dahl (ed.), *Tense and Aspect in the Languages of Europe*, 800-810. Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
- _____. 2000c. The Future Time reference Questionnaire. In Östen Dahl (ed.), *Tense and Aspect in the Languages of Europe*, 789-799. Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
- _____. (ed.) 2000d. *Tense and Aspect in the Languages of Europe*. Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Drinka, Bridget. 1998. The Evolution of Grammar: Evidence from Indo-European Perfects. In Monika Schmid, Jennifer Austin and Dieter Stein (eds.), *Historical Linguistics 1997*, 117-133. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Evans, Vyvyan and Melanie Green. 2006. *Cognitive linguistics: an introduction*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Gamble, David. 1987. *Elementary Mandinka* (Gambian Studies 20). San Francisco: Gamble.
- Hamlyn, Willaim. 1935. *A Short Study of the Western Mandinka Language*. London: The Crown Agents for the Colonies.
- Haspelmath, Martin. 1994. Passive Participles across Languages. In Barbara A. Fox and Paul J. Hopper (eds.), *Voice: Form and Function*, 151-177. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Haspelmath, Martin et al. (ed.) 2001. *Language Typology and Language Universals*. Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter
- Heine, Bernd, Ulrike Claudi and Friederike Hünemeyer. 1991. *Grammaticalization. A Conceptual Framework*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Heine, Bernd and Tania Kuteva. 2006. *The changing languages of Europe*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hewson, John and Vit Bubenik. 1997. *The tense and aspect in Indo-European languages: theory, typology, diachrony*. Amsterdam studies in the theory and history of linguistic science. Series IV. Current issues in linguistic theory. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Huehnergard, John. 2005. *A Grammar of Akkadian*. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns.
- IIP Islam International Publications. 1988. *Selections from the Writings of the Promised Messiah*. Tilford: Islam International Publications LTD.
- Kastenholz, Raimund. 1996. *Sprachgeschichte im West-Mande: Methoden und Rekonstruktionen*. Köln: Rüdiger Köppe Verlag.
- Kothari, Daulat Singh. 1975. *Some Thoughts on Truth*. New Delhi: Indian National Science Academy.
- Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk, Barbara. 2007. Polysemy, Prototypes, and Radical Categories. In Dirk Geeraerts and Hubert Cuyckens (eds.), *Handbook of Cognitive Linguistics*, 139-169. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Lewis, M. Paul. (ed.). 2009. *Ethnologue: Languages of the World*. Dallas: SIL International.
- Lück, Marlies and Linda Henderson. 1993. *Gambian Mandinka: a learning manual for English speakers*. Banjul: WEC International.
- Macbrair, Maxwell. 1842. *A Grammar of the Mandingo Language*. London: The Wesleyan-Methodist Missionary Society.
- Maslov, Jurij. 1988. Resultative, Perfect and Aspect. In Vladimir Nedjalkov (ed.), *Typology of resultative constructions*, 63-85. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Nedjalkov, Vladimir (ed.). 1988. *Typology of resultative constructions*. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- _____. 2001. Resultative constructions. In Martin Haspelmath et al. (eds.), *Language typology and language universals: An international handbook*. Vol. 2., 928-940. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- Nedjalkov, Vladimir and Sergej Jaxontov. 1988. The Typology of Resultative Constructions. In Vladimir Nedjalkow (ed.), *Typology of resultative constructions*, 3-62. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Nikiforidou, Kiki. 2009. Constructional analysis. In Frank Brisard, Jan-Ola Östman and Jef Verschueren (eds.), *Grammar, Meaning and Pragmatics*, 16-32. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Nurse, Derek. 2008. *Tense and Aspect in Bantu*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Prigogine, Ilja. 2009. *¿Tan solo una ilusión?* Barcelona: Tusquets.
- Rabinovitz, Mario. 2001. Do the Laws of Nature and Physics Agree About What is Allowed and Forbidden? *Journal of New Energy* 6:113-127.

- Schneider, Eric and Dorion Sagan. 2009. *La termodinámica de la vida*. Barcelona: Tusquets Editores.
- Squartini, Mario and Pier Marco Bertinetto. 2000. The simple and compound past in Romance languages. In Östen Dahl (ed.), *Tense and Aspect in the Languages of Europe*, 385-402. Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Taylor, John. 2002. *Cognitive Grammar*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- _____. 2003. *Linguistic Categorization*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Tuggy, David. 2003. The Nawaatl verb *kīsa*: A case study in polysemy. In Hubert Cuyckens, René Dirven and John Taylor (eds.), *Cognitive Approaches to Lexical Semantics*, 323-362. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Tyler, Andrea and Vyvyan Evans. 2003. *The Semantics of English Prepositions: Spatial Scenes, Embodied Meaning, and Cognition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Van der Auwera, Johan and Volker Gast. 2011. Categories and prototypes. In Jae Jung Song (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Typology*, 166-189. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Vydrine, Valentin, Bergman, Ted and Benjamin, Matthew. 2000. *Mandé language family of West Africa: Location and genetic classification (SIL Electronic Survey Report)*. Dallas: SIL International.
- Wagensberg, Jorge. 2007. *Ideas sobre la complejidad del mundo*. Barcelona: Tusquets Editores.
- Waltke, Bruce K. and Michael Patrick O'Connor. 1990. *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns.
- WEC. 1988a. *A Practical Orthography of Gambian Mandinka*. Banjul: WEC International.
- _____. 1988b. *Mandinka English Dictionary*. Banjul: WEC International.
- _____. 1989. *Kabeŋ Kutoo*. Banjul: WEC International.
- _____. 1991. *Suluu buka a jikoo baayi*. Banjul: WEC International.
- _____. 1995. *Mandinka English Dictionary - Revised Edition*. Banjul: WEC International.
- _____. 1998. *Kambeŋ Kotoo*. Banjul: WEC International.
- _____. 2002. *Mandinka Learning Manual*. Banjul: WEC International.
- Williams, R. J. 2007. *Williams' Hebrew Syntax*. Revised and explained by J. C. Beckman. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Williamson, Kay and Roger Blench. 2000. Niger-Congo. In Bernd Heine and Derek Nurse (eds.), *African Languages*, 11-42. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Wilson, William. 2000. Creissels's Mandinka Grammar. *Journal of West African Languages* 2(28):109-124.