

## **Aspects of grammaticalization in the ancient Indo-European languages Traditional knowledge and recent insights**

Eugen Hill (University of Munich) and Wodtko Dagmar (University of Freiburg)

The relevance of grammaticalization in detecting sources of similarity and diversity among genetically related languages was recognized as early as in the pioneering works of Meillet (cf. 1921: 130-48, 159-74). More recently, the importance of this notion has been extensively reestimated by Lehmann (1995), Heine & Kuteva (2002), (2005) and (2007). While many similarities in the grammatical structures of related languages can be plausibly attributed to inheritance from their common ancestor, this explanation cannot be applied to all of them. Many similarities not inherited from the proto-language as well as many differences in the grammatical structures may be due to processes of grammaticalization which operated in the undocumented prehistory of the languages in question, creating new similarities as well as new diversity.

In our introductory paper we intend to provide an overview of the different types of grammaticalization already established for the undocumented prehistory of the ancient Indo-European languages by previous research. We will concentrate on the question of what criteria can be applied in detecting grammaticalization and in distinguishing this type of change from other sources of grammatical innovations. The criteria recently suggested by Heine & Kuteva (2002) and (2007), explicitly designed for purposes of linguistic reconstruction, seem to work well, accurately describing the most probable path of development in those cases in which originally independent lexical material is involved, for instance the Germanic weak preterite with cliticized inflections of 'do' or the new strategy of object marking by a clitic developed out of a free preposition in Classical Armenian. It is, however, less clear how Heine & Kuteva's criteria can be applied to innovations without refunctionalization of lexemes such as, for instance, the grammaticalized initial mutations of Insular Celtic.

A further point we will address in the introductory paper is the role of language contact in grammaticalization. This point has been most recently discussed, again, in Heine & Kuteva (2003), (2005) and (2006) where an important distinction between two different kinds of contact-induced grammaticalization is made. As shown by Heine & Kuteva, in some cases grammaticalization due to language contact is a mere transfer of a grammatical category from one language to another without replication of the corresponding morphological structure. In other cases the exact morphology is copied together with the borrowed category. The notion of areal factors in grammaticalization and the important distinction suggested by Heine & Kuteva are capable of shedding new light on grammaticalization processes in the ancient Indo-European languages. It is, for instance, hardly accidental that the clearly recent category of definiteness in the inflection of adjectives is restricted to Baltic, Slavic and Germanic, all spoken in the North of Central Europe. Moreover, the important difference between Baltic and Slavic, where the definite form of the adjective is marked by a cliticized relative pronoun, and Germanic, where old differences between inflectional classes of adjectives are functionalized, can now be understood as two different strategies of copying a new category from a common source and we may hypothesize about the structures of this source.

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