

On the grammaticalisation of schematic constructions and construction families Korean causative and desiderative constructions

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The literature has long acknowledged that grammaticalisation happens to constructions rather than lexical items (Lehmann 1982, 1992; Hopper & Traugott 1993; Bybee et al 1994). Nevertheless, research remains focussed on the lexical item and constructions are mainly considered as contexts in which lexical items become grammaticalised (also Diewald 2002; Traugott 2003). Construction grammars, on the other hand, have shown little interest in diachronic processes (but notably Croft 2000).

Against this background, the paper explores the grammaticalisation of two Korean construction families: that of the resultative adverbial construction [X-*ke* Action] ‘acts so that X’ into causative function, and that of conditional constructions into desiderative (deontic) modality functions à la ‘must/should/may (not)’. The process has the following unfamiliar features:

- (1) Grammaticalisation begins with a maximally schematic construction, whose only substantive components are relational functors: resultative adverbial or conditional markers. There is not yet any particular lexical item to be grammaticalised.
- (2) The ‘target’ meaning is widely present in the initial construction: the resultative adverbial and conditional constructions already have full potential for the expression of causation and desideratives. Consequently, there is no ‘untypical’ context (Diewald 2002) and the ‘critical/bridging’ context (Heine 2002, Diewald 2002) is there from the start.
- (3) Subsequently, the slot that expresses the ‘target’ meaning causation or desirability becomes associated with specific lexical items, spawning a family of substantive daughter constructions (e.g. for causation *sik^hi.ta* ‘order’, for desideratives *coh.ta* ‘good’, *honna.ta* ‘get into trouble’). Some then go down the road of distributional extension, bleaching and functionalisation while others remain where they are. Meanwhile, the schematic constructions remain in the family, and there are no ‘switch/isolating’ contexts (Heine 2002, Diewald 2002).
- (4) At some point, the ‘target’ meaning slot may take in ‘(pseudo)-pro’ items (for causation *ha.ta* ‘do’, for desideratives (*an*) *twæ.ta* ‘(not) become/happen’), resulting in constructions that look highly grammaticalised. However, these appear only later and require prior entrenchment of the schematic construction and its substantive daughters. Again, these remain in the family.
- (5) For desideratives, entrenched lexical items and pseudo-pro expressions may appear as minimal clauses that express pertinent modal categories (e.g. *honna.ta* ‘get into trouble’ and (*an*) *twæ.ta* ‘(not) become’ come to express undesirability/prohibition or acceptability/permission).

The paper then highlights other peculiar features that obtain when schematic constructions and construction families are grammaticalised:

- The schematic construction lingers on as part of the grammaticalised family. Consequently, the family remains open to new substantive members.
- The grammaticalised family is relatively resistant to structural opacity, compression and erosion, even of its most frequent and bleached members. The reason is that the persistence of the schematic construction impedes change in the substantive constructions.

Where structure deterioration happens, the process has peculiar features that corroborate rather than contradict this claim.

- The slot-filling variability of the grammaticalised family provides fertile ground for analogy, which spawns new constructions, within and even outside the family.

In conclusion, the paper suggests candidates for a similar analysis in other languages.

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