Grammaticalization and lexicalization at work together
Some evidence from Italian

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Italian features a verb class that comprises verbs that have incorporated a clitic pronoun (*si* 'reflexive', *ne* 'partitive', *ci* 'locative', *la* '3sg feminine direct object') or a clitic cluster (*si+la*, *si+ne*, *ci+la*) – the so-called *verbi procomplementari* (De Mauro 1999-2000). This paper aims at showing how the analysis of these verbs contributes to the on-going debate on the proper characterization of and the interrelationship between grammaticalization and lexicalization (Moreno Cabrera 1998; Lehmann 2002; Himmelmann 2004; Traugott 2005; Brinton and Traugott 2005, *inter al.*). The paper is concerned exclusively with the sub-class of *verbi procomplementari* in *ci*, exemplified in (1) – (4), where the (a) examples illustrate *verbi complementari* and the (b) examples show their sources.

(1) a. *Ci sono molte zanzare nella valle del Po.* [*esserci* 'be presentational/existential']
"There are many mosquitoes in the Po valley."
b. *Sono brave persone.* [*essere* 'be']
"They are good people."

(2) a. *Non ci vedo dalla nascita.* [*vederci* 'be able to see', intransitive]
"I'm blind from birth."
b. *Ho visto un'ombra.* [*vedere* 'see', transitive]
"I saw a shadow."

(3) a. *Non ci sto a mentire per te.* [*starci*$_1$ 'agree']
"I won't agree to lie for you."
a'. *La bionda ci sta.* [*starci*$_2$ 'be easy (of a woman)']
"The blond is easy."
b. *Sto sempre in casa perché sto male.* [*stare* 'stay, be']
"I always stay home because I'm not well."

(4) a. *Ci sono proprio rimasta.* [*rimanerci*$_1$ 'be surprised, disappointed']
"I was really disappointed."
a'. *È caduto dalla scala e ci è rimasto.* [*rimanerci*$_2$ 'die']
"He fell off the ladder and died."
b. *Sono stanca, rimango a casa.* [*rimanere* 'remain, stay']
"I'm tired, I'll stay home."

I propose that *verbi complementari* nicely illustrate the interaction between grammaticalization and lexicalization since their development involves both phenomena: grammaticalization of the clitic, which becomes an obligatory formative whose omission leads to unacceptable structures, and lexicalization because new lexical items emerge from the fusion of two pre-existing items (*univerbation*, Lipka 2002[1990]), which have undergone substantive changes at the semantic level (*idiomatization*, Himmelmann 2004:27; also Traugott and Brinton 2005). I then examine two issues pertaining to both grammaticalization and lexicalization: (a) what types of morphosyntactic functions can be attributed to *ci*; and (b) desemanticization or semantic weakening (i.e., change from more concrete, referential meaning to more abstract, grammatical meaning). Concerning (a), I argue that *ci* carries different functions, ranging from strictly grammatical (e.g., valence changing, as in *sentire* 'hear' ~ *sentirci* 'be able to hear'; object marker, cf. Berretta 1985, 1989) to (pragmatic-)semantic ones. As for (b), I show that *ci* may actually undergo semantic strengthening, though not necessarily in the sense of pragmatic strengthening as elaborated by Traugott and König (1991) since *ci* can acquire a

specific referential content, so that some of the verbs under analysis (e.g., (1c)) instantiate semantic specialization. Finally, I propose that the development of these verbs can be related to a process of conceptualization that conforms to the metaphorical continuum offered in Heine, Claudi and Hünnemeyer (1991).

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