

Evidential metapredicates Representatives of grammaticalization or lexicalization?

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Evidentiality should be conceived of as a semantic-conceptual category which concerns the source of information on the basis of which the speaker feels justified to make an assertion. Only very recently have there been attempts to “transfer” this notion from the grammatical domain to the lexical one (cf. Squartini 2007; Wiemer 2006). However some researchers, first of all Aikhenvald (2004; 2007), defend this notion as a strictly grammatical one, to the exclusion of lexical means indicating, for instance, hearsay and/or perception-based inference like *allegedly*, *apparently*, *paraît-il*, *dit-on*. Simultaneously, particles with evidential values are often included into grammatical means, whereas parentheticals and prepositions are excluded. In my talk I want to show three things:

- (a) The delimitation of ‘evidentiality’ to the grammatical domain is pointless, because lexical markers (adverbs etc.) often underlie the same processes which are claimed to be typical for certain grammaticalization phenomena. In particular this concerns widening of scope, syntagmatic variability and decategorization.
- (b) Widening of scope goes hand in hand with subjectification and is at variance with Lehmann’s criteria of condensation and coalescence (Lehmann 1995: 143-157). Thus, as with other instances known for a long time as cases of subjectification, we have to integrate this seeming contradiction into a theory of both grammaticalization and lexicalization, determining their difference on some other grounds, following, for instance, Himmelmann (2004).
- (c) In practice, it happens to be hardly possible to distinguish between particles and parentheticals (as well as conjunctions) on a synchronic level. The evolution of both is very much the same, too. We might thus better integrate them into a superordinate category of ‘metapredicates’.

I want to elaborate on these issues on the basis of two types of ‘metapredicates’: (i) raising constructions with *seem*-verbs, (ii) lexical items deriving from paradigmatically isolated forms of verbs. In both cases decategorization occurs and the syntactic status (particle, conjunction or parenthetical) is difficult to determine. Case (i) will be illustrated by Russian *kažetsja* and Polish *zdaje się* ‘(as it) seems’, case (ii) by Russian (*kak*) *budto* and Lithuanian *esq* ‘as if, like’. Both will be confronted with equivalents in Germanic and Romance. Slavic and Lithuanian data will be taken predominantly from electronic corpora.

Metapredicates, as a pragmatically determined class of items, render a good case to show how a substantial component of an integrative theory of grammaticalization and lexicalization should look like.

References

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