

A Diachronic Dimension of Grammaticalization: With Historical Examples of Negative Adverbs in English and Japanese

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While grammaticalization has both a synchronic and a diachronic dimension, its foundation is diachronic in nature (Heine 2003). In this paper, a diachronic dimension of grammaticalization is explored with historical examples of negative adverbs in English and Japanese. Negative adverbs have not been the subject of grammaticalization, and the reason for an adverb's becoming a negative adverb has been unknown. However, this paper elucidates the diachronic process where an adverb with rich lexical meanings gradually serves as a negative adverb with more abstract meanings of negation.

Since grammaticalization is a diachronic process, findings should be verified by means of historical evidence. In this paper, each stage of the grammaticalization process is verified with historical examples of the English adverb *hardly* and the Japanese adverb *kesshite*. English and Japanese are historically best-documented languages, which makes it a good testing ground for hypotheses about grammaticalization in general (cf. Narrog & Ohori 2011). The abundant historical examples were gathered by thorough investigation. I investigated the general indices of literary works; looked up every type of dictionary, particularly those that are old; and searched those adverbs in computerized corpora and electronic databases.

Based on the numerous examples of those adverbs, it was shown that the gradual changes of phonological and morphological erosion occurred, which coincided with attenuation and bleaching of the lexical meanings. Loss of morphological elements and simplification of phonetic substance are conspicuous features of grammaticalization from a diachronic perspective (Heine and Kuteva 2007). Negative adverbs have had rich lexical meanings, however, such rich lexical meanings have been attenuated, and the adverb became a grammatical word completely bereft of lexical content (Takahashi 2016, 2018).

By examining the derivation and extinction of the historical meanings of those adverbs, this paper also verifies another characteristic of grammaticalization: "layering" (Hopper 1991). The historical examples showed that the old meanings had continued to be used for several centuries. Meanwhile, the new, attenuated meanings appeared and coexisted with the old, rich meanings.

The historical examples in a chronological order give deep insight into many questions regarding grammaticalization. Some answers will be provided to several key issues of grammaticalization, and the diachronic approach of this paper maintains consistency in the grammaticalization theory.

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