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On the grammaticalization path of some Romance verbal periphrases

(dissertation abstract)

This dissertation is concerned with the grammaticalization process of Romance progressives and perfects and special attention is paid to the interplay between aspect and actionality (i. e. *Aktionsart*). The periphrases under scrutiny are gerundial and infinitival progressives, including those formed with the descendants of Latin STARE and with motion verbs. Their grammaticalization process is compared to the evolution of other Romance analytic forms, such as the Present Perfect in Portuguese and Spanish and the Catalan analytic Simple Past.

The grammaticalization of such forms can be conceived as a gradual loss of selectional restrictions in the domain of actionality. While the form is grammaticalized as an aspectual marker, it reduces its actional restrictions, which derive from the original actional value of the auxiliary. The interaction between actional value and emerging aspectual function is studied here by means of elicited sentences, diachronic data and synchronic corpora, the focus being on the comparison between Ibero-Romance languages and Italian.

Chapter 1 is devoted to a peculiar case of aspectual marking, the perfective progressive, in which the progressive periphrasis is combined with perfective morphology (either with the Simple Past, as in (1), or with the Perfects). Consider the following Spanish example:

- (1) Ayer Pilar *estuvo hablando* con Jaime durante dos horas
'Yesterday P. was:PERFECTIVE PAST talking to J. for two hours'

These perfective progressive forms have been mentioned in the literature as showing a double aspectual marking (perfectivity plus imperfectivity). In this work a different proposal is presented, based on the interplay between aspect and actionality. As far as aspect is concerned such a form is perfective, but it is also actionally marked, being restricted to durative situations. This double marking can be typologically compared to some Bulgarian forms, such as the imperfective aorists.

As to the grammaticalization process of progressive forms, it is remarkable that such a perfective progressive occurs in the Ibero-Romance languages, and used to occur in Italian until the 19th century, but it is not admitted in contemporary Italian, even if the Italian progressive (*stare* + gerund) is structurally similar to the Ibero-Romance one (for example to *estar* + gerund in Spanish).□

In chapter 2, the different distribution of the progressive in the Ibero-Romance languages and contemporary Italian is discussed in detail from the point of view of the grammaticalization path. The diachronic evolution of the Italian form shows a change in the relationship between aspect and actionality. This process can be summed up as in the following chart:

DURATIVITY ---> IMPERFECTIVE PROGRESSIVITY
[+ ACTIONALITY] ---> [+ ASPECT]

The progressive starts out as a form actionally constrained to durative contexts, while later on it develops as a pure aspectual marker of imperfectivity. This evolution is quite different from what can be observed in Spanish, where the progressive is not restricted to imperfectivity and still admits perfective aspect and purely durative situations. Recent developments of the progressive in Peruvian Spanish are also presented. In such a case another pattern of grammaticalization is at work, involving a change in the actional restrictions of the form but no reduction in the aspectual morphology.

In chapter 3 the interplay between aspect and actionality which is shown by progressives is compared to the evolution of the perfect, with special reference to the Portuguese Present Perfect and the Present Perfect of some American Spanish varieties. These forms are restricted to durative contexts temporally including the Speech Point, this being another case of interaction between aspect and actionality in the grammaticalization process of a periphrasis.

The Catalan analytic Simple Past can be also conceived as a comparable case of interaction between aspect and actionality. In contemporary Catalan it functions as pure perfective past, but at the first stages of its evolution it is documented as actionally restricted, occurring only for denoting non-durative situations. Interestingly, a form such as the Catalan Simple Past which starts out as restricted to non-durative situations eventually develops as perfective, while the

opposite can be observed for the progressive, which is originally connected to durativity and then develops as imperfective marker.

Chapter 4 is concerned with the behaviour of the Romance gerundial progressives whose auxiliary is a motion verb. Also in this case the semantics of the form is derived from the interaction between aspect and actionality, thus showing the role of the intrinsic actional value of the auxiliary itself and its evolution in the diachronic process.

While chapters 1-4 are devoted to the grammaticalization path of some analytic constructions, in chapter 5 the opposite phenomenon, the loss of a synthetic form, is studied. In particular the gradual loss of the Romance forms derived from the Latin synthetic Pluperfect of the CANTAVERAM type is analyzed, with special reference to their Portuguese and Spanish issues. By means of the description provided by a 19th century Portuguese grammarian it can be demonstrated the loss of the synthetic Pluperfect to be a gradual process in which the function as perfect in the past is lost before, while the usage as past in the past is more resistant, thus mirroring the parallel process of dismissing the synthetic Simple Past, which in most Romance languages is being ousted by the new analytic Present Perfect.