

GRAMMATICALIZATION AS ONE OF THE MAIN LANGUAGE SYSTEM EVOLUTION CONSISTENT PATTERNS (ON THE MATERIAL OF THE SET EXPRESSIONS WITH PREPOSITIONAL-NOMINAL GROUPS IN THE GERMAN LANGUAGE)

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ABSTRACT

The article deals with the grammaticalization as a language system pattern which enriches not only morphology but also vocabulary. Grammaticalization theory development has been described. Special attention was paid to its basic principles and mechanisms. The authors have defined the prepositional-nominal groups, designated their linguistically significant features and functioning in the modern German language.

Key words: grammaticalization, tendency to the analytical language system, "shift to the form", analytical constructions, analogy, set expressions with prepositional-nominal group

1. INTRODUCTION

Language system evolution is determined by the different tendencies, which are interrelated and sometimes multidirectional. For to understand the language system evolution laws and to specify the direction of its development it is important to find out main consistent patterns which cause the changes at the language system levels. The universal consistent patterns which function at two or more language system levels are the most interesting for the linguistic study. They form the foundation for the language system further self-development. Grammaticalization is one of these consistent patterns.

Hopper and Traugott defined the grammaticalization as a process during which the lexical units start to perform morphological functions [1]. Gradually they change into morphological formants and gain the ability to perform new additional morphological functions. In this case grammaticalization is a part of the process of meaning change and it is considered as a factor of morphological and lexical systems development.

One of the main tendencies which lays the foundation of the grammaticalization is the meaning change. Traugott stresses that there is a change from the meaning which depends on the described situation to the meaning which depends on context or metalinguistic situation [2]. This kind of change may be classified as a language unit or language construction desemantization. But it is pointed out that the semantic structure of the grammaticalized units often contains the elements of the initial lexical meaning. So, grammaticalization leads to the loss of some old meanings and acquisition of some new ones [3].

2. METHODS

In the article various types of the analysis are implied: the functional and stylistic analysis (considering the ways of representation of expressional values of language units in certain texts); the contextual analysis (studying features of the context which causes the process of semantic shift in the process of grammaticalization); the intralinguistic semantic analysis (identification of the general and national peculiar features in semantics of language units).

3. MAIN PART

A. Meillet used grammaticalization as a linguistic term for the first time in 1912 [4]. In one of the articles he spoke about the process, during which lexical formants were gradually changed into morphological morphemes. The scientist wanted to find out the mechanism of the transformation. The result of his study was the understanding of the main role of analogy in the above mentioned process. New paradigms appear on the foundation of the formal identity with the language units which already exist. An autonomous word is changed into morphological element. On the other hand Meillet has discovered that grammaticalization process may be found not only in separate words but also word combinations, set expressions and sentences. The linguistic units of different language system levels may be under the process of grammaticalization.

Later the linguists of the Structuralism worked in this linguistic theoretical field. Pragmatic and typological issues were in the focus of attention. The new points of language self-development and evolution study gave an opportunity to speak about future changes in the language systems of different types. Some of the changes were proclaimed to be universal.

The results of new researches of grammaticalization have been published since 1980s. The most classical ones considered to be the works of B. Heine, Ch. Lehmann and J. Bybee [5, 6, 7]. The latest studies of the topic are connected with the usual units.

Modern German language is a synthetic language. Its morphological system is characterized as a declensional one with four morphological cases. The case marking is contradistinguished. Generally the morphology of modern German is superfluous as the morphological meaning may be shown with the help of inflections, prepositions, intonation and word order in a sentence. Despite of these facts there are a lot of features of the analytical language system type.

Case forms are parts of the paradigmatic class; from their position point of view they are mutually exclusive. If one form with a certain marker is used it is neutral positionally. Its criteria were determined by the paradigmatic class.

In modern German language the homonymy of case form markers are widely observed. The opposition and the contradiction of the case form markers less distinguished. The effect of this tendency is functional role of the prepositions is expanded. The morphological meaning is transferred from case form of the noun to a preposition. This shift of the morphological content is known as a grammaticalization. It is one of the main features of any analytical construction. Within its frame a lexical unit gradually loses its object meaning and gains the meaning of the morphological formant. Analytical construction with the newly formed morphological formant is a result of the grammaticalization.

Prepositional-nominal set expressions are the object of our research. Word combinations of such a kind form a large group of collocations. They vary according to their characteristics and functions. Grammaticalization is a process with the regular usage of lexical units for showing morphological content [8]. In some time when the usage starts to be normal a lexical unit as a functional word loses its lexical independence.

Prepositions are usually used to link words in a sentence. There are two kinds of prepositions: original and derivative prepositions. The latter are formed when initially free prepositional-nominal word combination which has been grammaticalized.

Prepositional-nominal set expressions are the markers of the elements relations within a sentence and between some sentences in a text. They may function as a preposition and as a relation between the phrases marker:

Mit den Handelsbeziehungen gelangte auch ein bedeutender Wissensschatz in Karls Reich – zum Beispiel neue Möglichkeiten der Zeitmessung **mit Hilfe** der Wasseruhr. [<http://www.goethe.de/ges/pok/pan/de12642202.htm>] This is an example of a marker which show a relation between the phrases.

Und **in der Tat**, das Irrlicht hatte die letzten Worte der anderen Boten schon nicht mehr vernommen, sondern hüpfte bereits in langen Sprüngen durch den Wald davon [9].

Hopper distinguished 5 principles of grammaticalization, which help to identify it: 1) layering; 2) divergence; 3) specification; 4) persistence; 5) de-categorization [3]. The first one means that in a language there are several constructions with analogical or identical function. These constructions are used with different lexical units, in various contexts, in diverse sociolinguistic situations.

The main idea of divergence principle is the initial form of the lexical unit may function in a language system independently, despite of the fact that simultaneously its grammaticalized variant is used. In such a case grammaticalization is a source of homonymy in a language.

The third principle of specification leads to the contraction of form distribution.

The persistence principle works when the link between the initial construction content and its grammaticalized version is preserved.

De-categorization means a shift in a functional and semantic sphere which occurs with the grammaticalized unit. In the process a language unit loses morphological markers and syntactical characteristics of the lexical parts of speech and gains the features of the subordinate parts of speech [10].

The prepositional-nominal set expressions group observes the five principles, described above:

- 1) layering: **in Bezug auf** (neutral) – **bezüglich** (officialese);
- 2) divergence: **zum Tod verurteilen** (free word combination) – **sich zu Tode langweilen** (grammaticalized set expression);

- 3) specification: *in Wahrheit* (in the process of grammaticalization the ability to function with the definitive with the preposition über (*die Wahrheit über Coca Cola*);
- 4) persistence: *im Zusammenhang mit* (*etwas hängt mit etwas zusammen*);
- 5) de-categorization: a noun loses its morphological features and the ability to function as an ordinary word. The blending of a preposition and a noun in a complex.

Reframe and analogy are considered to be the main mechanisms of the grammaticalization. Reframing deals with lexical and morphological content of the linguistic construction. In the word-combination *im Anschluss* the noun has lost its formal markers of the number and case. It also has lost the ability to function as an objective complement. The free word combination is *einen Anschluss bekommen*.

4. CONCLUSION

Many linguists suppose that it is possible to speak about grammaticalization when there is a case of the language unit complete desemantization. But the research of the linguistic data shows that changes may be not complete. Inside the prepositional-nominal set expression a preposition may lose its content only partially. The preposition stops to be lexical preposition and its level of informativity decreases. In a case of complete grammaticalization the preposition loses its specific features and changes into a formant with lack of the lexical content. The noun is desemantized. In a partial grammaticalization the lexical content decreases: *im Entwurf, im Blut, im Kopf, von Herzen* и т.д.

5. RESULTS

Summing it up it is necessary to say that grammaticalization is one of the mechanisms of the language development and evolution. This process enriches a language with new means of forming the morphological content. It causes the formation of the new language units, such as prepositional-nominal set expressions.

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