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What is 'lateral grammaticalization'?

Roberts and Roussou (R & R) (2003) and Roberts (2010) are Minimalist accounts of grammaticailzation. Simpson and Wu (S & W) (2002) and Wu (2004) analyse 'lateral grammaticalization', also within Minimalism. Vincent and Borjars (V & B) (2010:292-293) argue that 'lateral grammaticalization' is problematic for R & R's model of grammaticalization. In this paper I defend R & R (2003) and Roberts (2010) by showing that Minimalism is an elegant model for accounting for the relationship between grammaticalization and 'lateral grammaticalization'. S & W (2002) analyse Chinese *de* (D > T), and I have compared it with R & R's (2003) and Roberts' (2010) analyses of the Romance future *habeo* > *aio* (V > T) as both are geneses of T elements.

Lightfoot (1999, 2006) argues that 're-analysis' is essential in language change. However, Lightfoot's prediction that language evolution is random (Lightfoot (1999:180-204, 2006:90-111)) is contradicted by the 'cross-linguistic distribution' of grammaticalization (R & R (2003:2-4)). R & R (2003) propose that, as grammaticalization produces 'simpler' structures, it is a natural change that can occur cross-linguistically. Other features of grammaticalization include 'phonological weakening', 'univerbation', 'semantic bleaching', 'lexical > functional' and 'functional > more functional' (Campbell and Janda (2001)). These four features, along with 're-analysis' and 'cross-linguistic distribution', are diagnostics of grammaticalization within Minimalism.

Grammaticalization and 'lateral grammaticalization' both show 're-analysis' (R & R (2003:50), S & W (2002:177)) (see *going to* > *gonna* (Hopper & Traugott (1993:2-4))), as 're-analysis' is essential in language change (Lightfoot (1999:60-63)). 'Cross-linguistic distribution' is another similarity, and the cross-linguistic examples of Chinese *de* (determiners (D) > copula verbs (T) e.g. Chinese *shi* and Hebrew *hu* (Li and Thompson (1977)) and the Romance future *habeo* > *aio* (e.g. English *have to* > *hafta*, *shall* > *'ll*) all undergo R & R's (2003) 'simplification', namely 'reduction in feature syncretisms' (R & R (2003:210)). The Romance future and its cross-linguistic counterparts also display 'phonological weakening' and 'univerbation' (*habeo* > *aio*, *have to* > *hafta*, *shall* > *'ll*) as well as 'semantic bleaching', 'lexical > functional' and 'functional > more functional' since *habeo* and *have* are lexical verbs (V) with antonyms whereas *aio* and *hafta* are auxiliary verbs (T) with no antonyms (Radford (1997:45)). English *shall* is originally an auxiliary verb denoting obligation/necessity (Visser (1969:1582)), which is in a lower functional position than *'ll* (futurity) (Cinque (1999:106)), and so 'functional > more functional' can be defined in terms of Cinque's hierarchy. Chinese *de* and its cross-linguistic counterparts do not display these features, since D and T are different functional categories (Radford (1997:45)). T, especially higher elements in Cinque's T hierarchy, is argued to be 'weaker' than V in terms of Phonetic Form and Logical Form (R & R (2003:224-232)), and so V > T and lower T > higher T entail

'phonological weakening', 'univerbation', 'semantic bleaching', 'lexical > functional' and 'functional > more functional', whereas D > T does not. V & B (2010:292-293) assert that D > T does not conform to R & R's (2003:36, 202) or Roberts' (2010:48) account, yet I argue that it is precisely these discrepancies which account for the empirical differences between grammaticalization and 'lateral grammaticalization'. In fact, R & R's model is supported by 'lateral grammaticalization' since their definition of 'simplification' independently explains the 'cross-linguistic distribution' of Chinese *de.*

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