At the Crossroad of Objectification and Subjectification:
A Case of *kathta, siphta,* and *pota* in Korean*

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In grammaticalization studies, the notion of 'subjectification' has attracted much attention as a descriptive term or an enabling mechanism of semantic change contingent upon grammaticalization processes. Subjectification, largely referring to the phenomena where the semantics of a grammaticalizing source lexeme changes into one that describes the speaker's internal state or subjective attitude, is often considered to be one of the strong tendencies attested in grammaticalization processes. This paper intends to show that there is a phenomenon in the reverse direction, i.e. 'objectification', whereby subjective meaning changes into objective, or less subjective, meaning in the course of grammaticalization and that these two opposite directional changes are in fact intricately intertwined, drawing upon the grammaticalization processes attested by three verbs *kathta* 'to be same', *siphta* 'to desire/want', and *pota* 'to see', which evolved into markers of modality. In particular, it is shown on one level of analysis that, since the final state of the grammaticalization is the modal marking, which is inherently subjective, all instances of the grammaticalization from the three verbs are instances of subjectification. On a different level of analysis, however, there are three different strategies operative in the processes: the objectification process by *kathta* by mapping a propositional content to a concrete object; the objectification and

subjectification by *pota,* the former by likening a propositional content to something visible, and the latter by mapping the propositional content onto subjective, mental state; and subjectification by *siphta* by involving subjective desideration. This paper intends to show that even though the notion 'subjectification' is an extremely useful one in studying semantic change in grammaticalization either in descriptive or in explanatory terms, the complexity in semantic change is such that there are instances, probably in a large number, where subjectification and objectification may both be operative in the emergence of grammatical forms.

Key Words: grammaticalization, subjectification, objectification, modal markers, *kathta, siphta, pota*

1. Introduction

Language change is a ubiquitous phenomenon occurring at all levels of grammar, and for that reason, grammaticalization processes have been characterized by various changes in all aspects of grammar, encompassing phonological, morpho-syntactic, semantic and discourse phenomena as well as the changes in conceptual, cognitive dimensions. Of particular importance in semantic change are the notions 'subjectification' and 'intersubjectification'. These notions have been proved powerful in characterizing semantic change of grammaticalizing forms. We may invoke an antonymous notion 'objectification' to refer to the reverse process of subjectification. This neologism bears particular significance in a discussion of certain modality markers that exhibit recent grammaticalization in modern Korean, including those that were developed from such source lexemes as *kathta* 'to be same', *siphta* 'to desire/want', and *pota* 'to see'.[1] These linguistic forms have received some attention, as e.g. Kim (2000), but their analyses were primarily focusing on the contemporary semantics of these forms, and an analysis from a grammaticalization perspective has been largely underrepresented. Rhee

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1) A similar semantic analysis of conjectural expressions involving these verbs is Kim (2000), even though it did not assume the grammaticalization perspective.

(2004a &b) constitute a major exception in terms of their perspectives, but they were focusing on the similiatives in Korean and across languages, respectively.

In this paper, we discuss the key notions subjectification and objectification in Section 2; describe the newly arising grammatical functions of attenuatives involving the said verbs in Section 3; and discuss their theoretical implications in Section 4.

2. Subjectification and Objectification

2.1 Subjectification

The notion 'subjectification' was first proposed by Traugott (1982), followed up by Traugott (1988, 1989, 2003), Traugott and König (1991), and Traugott and Dasher (2002). It is largely referring to the speaker involvement, as is well illustrated in the following statement:

(1) "[M]eanings tend to come to refer less to objective situations and more to subjective ones (including speaker point of view), less to the described situation and more to the discourse situation." (Traugott 1986: 540)

This was later extended to include the semantic change that involves text-relations as is illustrated in the following:

(2) "...the shift ... from meanings grounded in more or less objectively identifiable extralinguistic situations to meanings grounded in text-marking ... to meanings grounded in the speaker's attitude to or belief about what is said." (Traugott & König 1991: 189)

Further, noting the ubiquity and significance of subjectification in language use, some argued that this should be a central research topic in linguistics as put forward by Stubbs (1986: 1) in the following:

(3) "[W]henever speakers (or writers) say anything, they encode their point of view towards it: whether they think it is a reasonable thing to say, or might be found to be obvious, irrelevant, impolite, or whatever. The expression of such attitudes is pervasive in all uses of language. All sentences encode such a point of view...and the description of such markers of point of view and their meanings should therefore be a central topic for linguistics."

Led by Traugott's seminal research on the roles of subjectification in the development of discourse markers, honorific forms, and performative uses of locutionary verbs, much research has been carried out and produced results in support of this valuable notion. Among classic examples of subjectification are English conjunctive *after* and *while* as illustrated in the following:

(4) English *after*
    a. Shut the door after you.
    b. Brush your teeth after breakfast.
    c. After we heard the lecture we felt greatly inspired.

(5) English *while*
    a. Wait here for a while.
    b. Call him while you are there.
    c. While he is poor, he is honest.

In examples in (4) above, *after* is used to denote a spatial relationship in (4a),

temporal relationship in (4b), and causal relationship in (4c). The development of causal meaning from spatial posteriority is attributed to subjectification motivated by the common logical fallacy of *post hoc ergo propter hoc*, i.e. 'after this, therefore, because of this'. Likewise in examples (5), *while* is used as a noun denoting temporal duration in (5a), as a conjunctive denoting temporal duration or overlap as a background-setter for the event denoted by the main clause in (5b), and as a concessive conjunctive with a sense of counter-expectation in (5c). The development of the concessive meaning from a mere temporal duration is also attributed to subjectification motivated by the focus of contrast between the two temporally concurring events.

Instances of this type of subjectification are also available in Korean as shown in the following examples, all involving *tey*, which was formerly a full-fledged noun but displays chimerical features in contemporary Korean.[2]

(6) Korean *tey*

    a. ilha-nun   tey-ka   eti-y-a?
        work-Adn   place-Nom   where-be-Q.End
        'Where do you work?' (Lit. 'What is the place where you work?')

    b. ilha-nun-tey(-ey)   pwulphyenha-n-tey   eps-e?
        work-Adn-place(-at) be.inconvenient-Adn-place not.exist-Q.End?
        'Is there any inconvenience while you are working?' (Lit. 'Is there
         any place that is inconvenient in the place of work?')

    c. ilha-nun-tey(*-ey)   cenhwa-ka   o-ass-ta
        work-Adn-place(*-at)   telephone-Nom come-Pst-Dec
        'The phone rang while working.' (Lit. 'Telephone came at the place

     of working.')

    d. ilha-nu-ntey   il-i   an   toy-n-ta
        work-Pres-Conn work-Nom   Neg   become-Pres-Dec
        'Even though I'm trying, there is no progress with the work.' (Lit.
        'While (I) work, work does not occur.')

In the above examples, (6a) is an instance of nominal use of -*tey,* while it is not clear whether -*tey* in (6b) is the nominal usage or conjunctive usage. In (6c) it is a conjunctive with the 'background' meaning, whereas in (6d) it is a conjunctive with the 'contrastive' or 'adversative' meaning. The progression from (6a) through (6d) clearly illustrates that the direction of the semantic change of -*tey* is toward increasing subjectivity.

    The subjectification is also evident in the semantic change that occurred with Korean *pelita* 'to throw away', *chiwuta* 'to relocate', *nohta* 'to place', *twuta* 'to keep', *cwuta* 'to give', *ancta* 'to sit' and numerous others that we cannot go into detail for space limitation.

    An interesting aspect of this notion of subjectification is that this process is claimed to be unidirectional, i.e., the extension of meaning of a grammaticalizing item is predictably away from objective, referential meaning towards subjective attitude and points of view, as has been observed by Herring (1991: 254). We shall look into this matter with reference to grammaticalization of certain verbs in Korean--*kathta* 'to be same', *siphta* 'to want' and *pota* 'to see', and claim that the direction of meaning change is not unidirectional from less subjective to more subjective, and that the direction may in fact be a complicated one involving both subjectification and objectification depending on the characteristics of the source lexemes and those of the target grammatical category, i.e. modality under our immediate discussion.

2.2 Objectification

The notion 'objectivity' has been conceived of in a number of different ways depending on the disciplines where the notion is adopted. In the logical, philosophical, and computational traditions, for instance, objectivity has been linked to truth and information structure (Traugott & Dasher 2002: 21). Certain registers, such as scientific writing, tend to be maximally objective, and it has been also thought that active, declarative assertions in which the speaker's viewpoint is not explicitly coded are exemplars of an objective language. In this regard, the notion is adopted in a macroscopic conception of language use, i.e. information or rhetorical structure of a text or discourse.

Unlike Traugottian tradition where subjectivity and objectivity are conceived of involving linguistic choices in discourse, Langacker (1985, 1990, 1999) approaches the issue from a more conceptual structure, with attention to situation types, especially event structures and associated argument structures, and considers that objectivity is associated with placing participants in an event "on-stage" as foci of attention (Traugott & Dasher 2002: 97). Therefore, according to Langacker (1990), the following sentences show different levels of subjectivity/objectivity.

(7) a. Vanessa jumped across the table.
    b. Vanessa is sitting across the table from Veronica.
    c. Vanessa is sitting across the table from me.
    d. Vanessa is sitting across the table.   (Langacker 1990: 17-20)

Examples (7a) is maximally objective because 'across' profiles movement without regard to speaker-hearer position, (7b,c) more subjective because the conceptualizer (speaker) traces a mental path to locate the trajector with respect to a reference point, and (7d) most subjective because the (off-stage, i.e. zero) reference point is the speaker (as cited in Traugott & Dasher 1990: 97).

In our discussion we will use the term 'objectification' in a different way.

By objectification, we will refer to a process whereby something of subjective meaning is likened to an objective entity. For example, if a linguistic form x, be it a word or a sentence, that encodes the language user's viewpoint such as evaluation or subjective judgment, or refers to a subjectively construed event, is used as comparable to a more objective, real-world entity, we will consider that particular language usage an instance of objectification. Therefore, this notion, widely construed, shall include figures of speech that involve mapping any abstract entity to a concrete entity as well, since they represent processes whereby 'abstractness' is demoted and 'concreteness' is promoted. In this regard, objectification is inseparable from, or at least closely related with, 'concretization'. In the line of this conception, the ontological categories of metaphorization as proposed by Heine et al. (1991) are useful notions, shown in (8).

(8) Ontological Categories of Metaphorization
PERSON > OBJECT > PROCESS > SPACE > TIME > QUALITY

In the above cline, the usual direction of metaphor is from left to right, which is expected because metaphorization typically involves a concrete entity as the vehicle and an abstract entity as the tenor (topic). Since we assume a close relation between objectification and concretization, a process characterizable as objectification should involve the reversed direction of metaphorization, i.e. from right to left in the above cline, if the ontological categories are applicable indeed. One caveat, however, is that adopting the metaphorization cline does not entail that the progression from left to right is an instance of subjectification.

3. Special Cases of Attenuative Modality Marking in Korean

There are many different ways of marking modality in Korean like any

other languages. Of our special concern is a subcategory of modality markers, i.e. attenuatives, which reduce the illocutionary forces of an utterance.

3.1 *Kathta, Siphta,* and *Pota*

In Korean, the three verbs *kathta* 'to be same', *siphta* 'to desire/want', and *pota* 'to see' are all lexical verbs as illustrated in the following examples.

(9) a. ku   sonye-nun   kkoch-kwa   kath-ta
        that   girl-Top   flower-with   be.same-Dec
        'The girl is like a flower.'

     b. na-nun   com   swi-ko   siph-ta
        I-Top   a.little   rest-NF   desire-Dec
        'I would like to take a rest for a while.'

     c. na-nun   ecey   John-ul   po-ass-ta
        I-Top   yesterday   John-Acc   see-Pst-Dec
        'I saw John yesterday.'

From the above examples, it is obvious that the three verbs are in lexical usage, even though they tend to employ certain grammatical structures due to their semantic idiosyncrasy or otherwise, as e.g., *kathta* 'to be same', semantically requiring a comparee argument, takes a comitative-marked argument; the verb *siphta* 'to desire/want' takes a *-ko*-marked verb whose denotation is the object of the desiring; and the verb *pota* 'to see', a plain transitive verb, takes an accusative-marked object noun phrase as its argument.

However, as we shall see in the following discussions, these verbs developed an interesting type of more grammaticalized usages, where subjectification and objectification are intertwined in an intriguing way.

3.2 Grammaticalization of Attenuatives and Polite-Stance Marking

Now we turn our discussion to the grammaticalization of attenuatives displayed by *kathta, pota* and *siphta*[3]. The three major types of constructions, though there exists diverse variants depending on the morpho-syntactic environment, and their attenuative modal constructions are given in (10) and (11).

(10)   Form   Meaning   Source Meaning
     a. *kes kath-*   'seem'   be the same thing as
     b. *-na po-*   'seem'   see if (see asking)
     c. *-(k)ka siph-* 'seem'   desire to ask

(11)   a. kukes-un   nappu-n   kes   kath-ta
         it-Top   be.bad-Adn thing be.same-Dec
         'It seems to be bad.'

     b. ku-ka   cwuk-ess-na   po-ta
         he-Nom   die-Pst-Comp   see-Dec
         'He seems to be dead.'

     c. ku-ka   an   o-l-kka   siph-ta
         he-Nom   not   come-Fut-Comp   want-Dec
         'He seems to be not coming.'

As illustrated in (10) and (11), *kes kath-, -na po-* and *-kka siph-,* formerly fully periphrastic expressions with concatenative meanings, are grammaticalizing as attenuative markers, wherewith the speaker tones down the illocutionary force of the propositions being asserted. There are signs of grammaticalization of these constructions at various levels of grammar such as reduction of interparadigmatic and intraparadigmatic variabilities, i.e.

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3) As has been pointed out by an anonymous reviewer, *moyangita* 'in the shape of' also carries a similar function of marking the attenuative modality. In fact, there are other grammatical markers that belong to this modal category, such as *-tus hata, -ka hata,* in addition to *moyangita*. However, these are derived forms from the copula *ita* and the light verb *hata* and do not seem to be monolexemic at the source level, and their grammaticalization processes, though fully justifiable in terms of categorial membership, are not addressed here.

phonological loss of saliency, resistance to insertion, and resistance to synonymy substitution, as well as loss or reduction of lexical meaning, among others. We shall, however, focus on the strategies on the semantic domain, occasionally making reference to other types of changes whenever it becomes relevant.

3.2.1 From Likeness to Attenuative

The first type of semantic transfer involves the direction of [Likeness > Attenuative], in which the development of attenuative is mediated by the conjectural meaning, as is illustrated in the following examples.

(12)   a. kukes-un nappu-n   kes   kath-ta
              it-Top   be.bad-Adn thing be.same-Dec
              'It seems to be bad.' (Lit. '(It) is the same as the thing that it is
               bad.')

          b. pi-ka   o-l   kes   kath-ta
              rain-Nom come-Fut   thing be.same-Dec
              'It seems to rain soon.' (Lit. '(It) is the same as the thing that the
               rain will come.')

The examples above recruit such source lexemes as *kes* 'thing' and *kath*-'be.same/be.like', and employ multiple strategies, such as obscurification, i.e. claiming likeness rather than identity of the two items being compared (cf. Rhee 2004a)[4]. However, what interests us is the fact that they use objectification as one of the central strategies. In other words, the proposition "It will rain" is compared to "a thing" and the likeness between them are asserted. This process is an instance of objectification in that the abstract, intangible propositional content is regarded as an entity. This can be diagrammatically represented as in (13), for the illustration of the example

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4) Rhee (2004a), drawing on historical data enabling comparisons between Korean and Chinese in Buddhist scriptural commentaries and elsewhere, shows that historically *kath-* seems to have developed from the identicalness sense to similarity sense through semantic generalization.

(12b).

    (13) Objectification Process
      "It will rain"   "a thing"
      Proposition   SIMILARITY   Entity
      Abstract   RELATION   Tangible
      Subjective (cf. Modal) ---------------------->   Objective

From a slightly different perspective, however, this development may be viewed as an instance of subjectification in the sense that modal attenuative is basically a means of encoding subjective judgment of a speaker about the states of affairs. This broader perspective is contrasted with the more local, lexeme-focused perspective where objectification is operative. This subjectification process may be illustrated as in (14).

    (14) Subjectification Process
      Assertion of Similarity   Attenuative Modal Function
      Real-World Description   Speaker's Stance
      Objective ----------------------------> Subjective
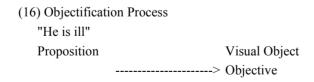
3.2.2 From Perception to Attenuative

The second type of development is in the direction of [Perception > Attenuative], in which the two apparently distinct concepts are also mediated by the conjectural meaning. In this developmental path, what is perceived is correlated with what is conjectured, probably because perception often does not necessarily warrant the incorporation of the perceived into the knowledge system, and this correlative mapping further brings forth the attenuative meaning of a proposition, as shown in the following examples.

    (15)   a. ku-ka   cwuk-ess-na   po-ta
             he-Nom   die-Pst-Comp   see-Dec
             'He seems to have died.' (Lit.: '(I) see if he died.')

b. ku-ka   aphu-n-ka   po-ta
   he-Nom   be.ill-Pres-Comp see-Dec
   'He seems to be ill.' (Lit.: '(I) see if he is ill.')

The perception verb *pota* 'to see' shows a peculiarity in several aspects in this grammaticalization context. Most of all, it is an extremely fossilized structure where the verb does not inflect with tense, aspect, or other grammatical categories that occur at the sentential penultimate position. The sentence-final categories such as the formality/politeness marking apparently are the only exception. It is also noteworthy that it recruits such question endings or questing embedding complementizers as *-na, -ka,* and *-kka* to develop into a construction of marking attenuative. In terms of strategies, it also employs obscurification in that it uses interrogative forms that are propositionally incomplete. This propositional indeterminacy is metaphorically mapped onto the procedural indefiniteness, thus creating the attenuative effect on the proposition being presented.

Attenuatives, and modals in general, are semantically subjective because they are the means of encoding speaker's subjective stance. In the development of attenuatives with *pota,* the proposition being asserted, be it objective or subjective, is now enveloped into a visual perception package, thus the propositional content is now the object of the speaker's visual perception. From the epistemological point of view, this is an instance of epistemic demotion, and from the ontological perspective, this is an instance of objectification because a propositional content is likened to something that is visible. This objectification process may be represented as follows with the example (15b):

(16) Objectification Process
   "He is ill"

  Proposition   Visual Object
              ----------------------> Objective

As is evident in (16) the proposition "He is ill" *per se* is by no means subjective. The act of treating the descriptive proposition as an object for

visual perception is objectifying the non-tangible proposition, in which sense this metaphorical process is an instance of objectification.

This perspective notwithstanding, this very process is undoubtedly a process of subjectification in that a propositional content is likened to a subjective, mental, perceptual entity. Again this process may be represented as follows:

(17) Subjectification Process
    "He is ill"
    Assertion of State-of-Affairs   Attenuative Modal Function
    Real-World Description   Speaker's Stance
    Objective   ------------------> Subjective

As illustrated in the discussion, therefore, the development of attenuative from the perceptual verb *pota* 'to see' involves an interesting interplay of subjectification and objectification depending on the perspectives.

3.2.3 From Desire to Attenuative

The next type of the development of attenuatives is characterizable by its direction of [Desire > Attenuative], involving the desiderative verb *siphta* 'to want'. This development is also mediated, just as the two other verbs in the preceding discussion, by the conjectural meaning, which seems to have arisen from the fact that the object of desire is not (yet) a possession of the aspirant, i.e., metaphorically speaking, something desired is not something secured at the present time. The attenuative uses of the grammaticalized desiderative verb are as shown in the following examples with various, morpho-syntactically determined, complementizers participating in the formation of the attenuative modal constructions.

(18)   a. ku-ka   an   o-l-kka   siph-ta
             he-Nom not   come-Fut-Comp   want-Dec
             'He seems to be not coming.' (Lit. 'I desire to ask, 'Will he not
              come?")

b. ku-ka   na-l   cohaha-na   siph-ta
   he-Nom   I-Acc   like-Comp   want-Dec
   'He seems to like me.' (Lit.: 'I desire to ask, 'Does he like me?'')

c. pelsse   pom-i-n-ka   siph-ta
   already   spring-be-Pres-Comp   want-Dec
   'It looks like spring already.' (Lit.: 'I desire to ask, 'Is it already
    spring?'')

d. ku-ka   imi   cip-ey   ka-ss-na   siph-ta
   he-Nom   already   home-to   go-Pst-Comp   want-Dec
   'It seems that he's gone home already.' (Lit.: 'I desire to ask,
   'Has he gone home already?'')

In the above examples, the desiderative verb *siphta* 'to desire/want' forms constructions with an interrogative complementizer, and the construction becomes a grammatical marker of attenuatives. In this regard, the construction employs a process largely identical with the one employed by *pota* 'to see' discussed in the preceding section. One of the characteristics of the grammaticalization phenomenon is that it involves obscurification in that it employs propositionally incomplete question constructions, a strategy adopted by *pota* in its development into a modal.

   One notable difference of this *siphta*-derived attenuative as compared with the previously discussed *pota*-derived attenuative is that the *siphta*-derived attenuative resorts to the speaker's internal, mental, or affective state, whereas the *pota*-derived attenuative resorts to speaker-external perceptual stimuli, even though this external-internal dichotomy is often by no means clear-cut, as is evidenced by the double meaning of 'receive visual stimuli' and 'actively search through the use of visual organs' of *pota* 'to see'.

   More interestingly, however, the process involves subjectification by attributing the ground of reasoning to speaker-internal state. In other words, the proposition being asserted is presented in such a manner that the

propositional content is the object of the speaker's desiring. Or, in a more analytic way, the speaker asserts that his or her desire is to ask if the assertion of the proposition holds. On the other hand, this mental or affective state of desideration, unlike e.g. volition, is devoid of speaker's active intention, as is well evidenced in the fact that these desiderative verbs are commonly categorized as psyche-verbs where the external argument is not an agent but an experiencer in terms of their thematic roles. The desiderative urge, from this perspective, is a speaker-external stimulus over which the experiencer does not have control. Therefore, we can say that the inherently subjective grammatical category of modals is created through a subjective process, but this subjective process is still involving a stimulus somehow detached from the conceptualizer.

4. Discussion

The grammaticalization of the three verbs, *kathta* 'to be same', *pota* 'to see', and *siphta* 'to desire/want', shows various interesting phenomena such as functional split (Hopper 1991, Heine and Reh 1984), reanalysis, coalescence (Lehmann 1995[1982]), observance of grammatical channels (Givón 1979, Heine 1981, Lehmann 1995[1982], Heine & Reh 1984) and universal path (Bybee et al. 1994), each of which constitutes an in-depth research topic.

Adhering to our current focus of subjectification and objectification, we can see that the three verbs show intricate interplay of subjectification and objectification in the course of grammaticalization. On one level of analysis, since the final state of the grammaticalization as concerned here is the modal marking, which is inherently subjective, all instances of the grammaticalization from the three verbs are instances of subjectification.

On a different level of analysis, however, we see different strategies operative in the processes. For example, the grammaticalization of *kathta* 'to be same' can be characterized as an instance of objectification by mapping a propositional content to a concrete object. In case of *pota* 'to see', from the

ontological perspective, the development is objectification since it likens a propositional content to something visible, and yet it is at the same time subjectification since the change involves a mapping onto subjective, mental state. In the case of *siphta* 'to want'*,* on the other hand, it is undoubtedly an instantiation of subjectification since it involves subjective desideration, and yet as the desiderative urge is somehow a speaker-external stimulus this subjectification may be different from one which may involve a purely speaker-internal stimulus.

From all these cases, it is revealed that a common strategy is that the speakers resort to either speaker-external phenomenon or uncontrollable mental state, thus avoiding presenting themselves as responsible for such judgment. If we briefly take a look at the sentential realization, the true sentential subjects or other crucial arguments are omitted to make the sentential argument structure vague. This vagueness is suspected to have promoted the grammaticalization processes of these constructions, and also to the semantic shift from more lexical to more grammatical meanings, and from more concatenative to more unitized modal meanings of the attenuatives, whereby the speaker tones down the illocutionary force of the prepositions. The changes in the main can be summarized as follows:

(19) a. The speakers resort to either speaker-external phenomenon or uncontrollable mental state, thus avoiding presenting themselves as responsible for such judgment.

b. The sentential subjects do not agree with the sentential predicate, thus subjecting the sentence to reanalysis whereby the sentential predicates are now reanalyzed as modality markers.

c. The true sentential subjects or other crucial arguments are omitted, and this omission makes the sentential argument structure vague.

5. Conclusion

In this paper we have seen three cases of modals that derived from the lexical verbs of equation, perception, and desideration. All these lexical verbs underwent semantic change to conjectural and then to attenuative modal functions that reduce the illocutionary force of the proposition being asserted. We examined the direction of semantic change with respect to subjectification and objectification to see if the widely-accepted subjectification as a universal phenomenon holds with these cases.

What this paper suggests is that even though subjectification is a useful notion in the grammaticalization scholarship, its application is not always straightforward, because there are multiple planes on which grammaticalization phenomena can be analyzed. In the three cases of grammaticalization we observed that there do exist certain perspectives that support objectification instead of subjectification in characterizing the direction of the semantic change. This observation leads to disqualifying subjectification as a universally valid direction of semantic change, or at least to the call that the notion must be further refined to enable consistent application in grammaticalization research.

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