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*Variation*



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# COLLOQUIAL VARIATION AND ITS IMPLICATIONS IN GRAMMATICALIZATION THEORY

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AS IS THE CASE WITH ALL HUMAN LANGUAGES,<sup>1</sup> formal variation is observed at all levels of grammar. Among widespread variations is a peculiar phenomenon of formal variation that can be characterized as resulting from additive processes, an unexpected state of affairs in view of such widely accepted principles of grammaticalization as attrition, parallel reduction, erosion, and loss (Bybee *et al.* 1994; Lehmann 1995[1982]). According to these principles, linguistic forms located on the grammaticalization cline tend to move in the direction of phonological reduction as one of many parameters. Even though the change itself is never deterministic and thus the change does not have to occur, the direction of the change that does occur, is invariably toward the reducing the phonological volume. This direction of change observed across languages is considered to be sufficiently robust to qualify as a principle of grammaticalization: the unidirectionality principle. Since the directionality of change is indeed a strong principle operative in grammaticalization, any instances that do not conform to this principle should be of great academic interest. Interestingly enough, there are many such instances in Korean. However, there have not been any notable attempts to address the issue in earnest, and this paper intends to fill this gap, assessing the issue from a grammaticalization perspective.

1. DATA. The variational data under present investigation involve the grammatical forms occurring postpositionally with respect to their host, mostly nominals but verbals as well. The data selected for discussion consist of twenty postpositional particles that carry various grammatical meanings. Certain forms are polysemous, but we restrict our discussion to those meanings and functions that are relevant to the current issue. The cases are selected from spoken corpora (KAIST KORTERM Corpus, Sejong Corpus, etc.) and elsewhere (e.g. lexicons by the National Academy of Korean). Their forms, meanings/functions, and variational forms are listed in **Table 1** (overleaf).

In terms of semantic differences among variant forms, there seem to be hardly perceptible minor differential shades of meaning. However, the level of semantic differences is such that to most speakers of Korean they are simply other ways of saying the same thing. And these alleged other ways typically refer to dialectal, register, and style differences. Some judgment-givers, when pressed to explain the differences, offer an explanation that the addition of certain morphemes (e.g. *-pota* vs. *-potato* or *-potaya*) may bring forth some nuance of added emphasis. It is evident, then, that the differences, if any, are minimal.

“Standard” Form	Meaning/Function	Variations
<i>-pota</i>	than	<i>-potato, -potatwu, -potanun, -potam, -potamun, -potaya</i>
<i>-se</i>	because of; and then	<i>-sen, -senun, -sellang, -sellangun, -sellamwuney</i>
<i>-ul</i>	Accusative	<i>-ullang, -ullangun</i>
<i>-man</i>	but	<i>-manun</i>
<i>-chiko</i>	granting that; among	<i>-chikose, -chikosenun, -chikonun, -chikosen, -chikon</i>
<i>-hako</i>	and	<i>-hakon, -hakonun, -hakosen, -hakosenun</i>
<i>-kiey</i>	as	<i>-killay</i>
<i>-ni</i>	since, as	<i>-nikka, -nikkanun, -nikkan</i>
<i>-ketun</i>	if; Sentential Ending	<i>-ketullang, -kellang, -keteng</i>
<i>-key</i>	in order to	<i>-keykkum</i>
<i>-kilo</i>	as	<i>-kilose, -kiloseni, -kilosentul</i>
<i>-ncuk</i>	what X is	<i>-ncuksun</i>
<i>-mye</i>	at the same time; Sentential Ending	<i>-myense, -myensenun</i>
<i>-myen</i>	Conditional	<i>-myenun</i>
<i>-nula</i>	because of	<i>-nulako, -nulani, -nulanikka, -nulamyen</i>
<i>-ntey</i>	while; in addition to	<i>-nteytaka</i>
<i>-tun</i>	either or; (if or not)	<i>-tunci, -tuncikaney</i>
<i>-e</i>	Connective (NF)	<i>-ese, -esenun, -esen</i>
<i>-ko</i>	and	<i>-kose</i>
<i>-ko</i>	because of	<i>-kohayse</i>
<i>-lyemyen</i>	in order that	<i>-lyemyenun, -laymunun</i>

**Table 1.** List of target forms.

2. MOTIVATIONS FOR VARIATION. In recent grammaticalization scholarship, the research has been increasingly focused on the motivations that activate conceptual changes that trigger language change. The formal variation phenomenon as described here presents challenges to the widely held views and hypotheses of grammaticalization in terms of its motivation.

2.1. SEMANTIC-PRAGMATIC MOTIVATION. The most frequently addressed aspect of grammatical change is the semantic-pragmatic motivation. The forms under present investigation may be classified into four sub-groups.

2.1.1. ADDITION OF TOPIC MARKER. The first group consists of the forms that recruited the topic marker *-(n)un*, as shown in (1).

(1)	<i>-pota</i>	>	<i>-potanun</i>	‘than’	<i>-ncuk</i>	>	<i>-ncuk(s)un</i>	‘that is’
	<i>-se</i>	>	<i>-senun</i>	‘and’	<i>-man</i>	>	<i>-cimanun</i>	‘but’
	<i>-sellang</i>	>	<i>-sellangun</i>	‘because’	<i>-ese</i>	>	<i>-esenun</i>	‘because’
	<i>-chiko</i>	>	<i>-chikonun</i>	‘speaking of’	<i>-ko se</i>	>	<i>-kosenun</i>	‘and then’
	<i>-hako</i>	>	<i>-hakonun</i>	‘and’	<i>-kohayse</i>	>	<i>-kohaysenun</i>	‘as’
	<i>-hakose</i>	>	<i>-hakosenun</i>	‘and’	<i>-ullang</i>	>	<i>-ullangun</i>	Accusative
	<i>-myen</i>	>	<i>-myenun</i>	‘if’	<i>-nikka</i>	>	<i>-nikkanun</i>	‘because’
	<i>-lyemyen</i>	>	<i>-lyemyenun</i>	‘in order that’	<i>-mye</i>	>	<i>-myenun</i>	‘and’
	<i>-ketullang</i>	>	<i>-ketullangun</i>	‘if’	<i>-tanikka</i>	>	<i>-tanikkanun</i>	‘since’
	<i>-kellang</i>	>	<i>-kellangun</i>	‘if’				

The topic marker *-nun* is a very frequently used particle in Korean. This is due to the idiosyncrasy of Korean whereby case-stacking is relatively free and the topic marker is often stacked with other particles. One peculiarity with this stacking is that the topic marker does not always host a nominal, i.e., Korean allows for phrasal and clausal topics as well as nominal topics.

The topic marker sometimes has a contrastive effect, which contributes to the strengthening of meaning. The contrastive effect that results from the added topic marker, however, seems to be inconsequential in the examples in (1), since the effect is not noticeable.

2.1.2. ADDITION OF SEQUENTIALITY MARKER. The second set consists of examples that have added emphasis by means of *-se*, as shown in (2).

(2)	<i>-chiko</i>	>	<i>-chikose</i>	speaking of’	<i>-ko</i>	>	<i>-kose</i>	‘and’
	<i>-hako</i>	>	<i>-hakose</i>	‘and, with’	<i>-ko</i>	>	<i>-kohayse</i>	‘because of’
	<i>-kilo</i>	>	<i>-kilose</i>	‘even if’	<i>-mye</i>	>	<i>-myense</i>	‘and’
	<i>-e</i>	>	<i>-ese</i>	‘and’				

The sequentiality marker *-se*, originally developed from the existence verb *iss-* ‘exist’, adds the meanings of sequential posteriority, status, and causality to the following verbal. The added emphasis communicated by the sequentiality marker is largely due to the fact that, as it connects two verbal events, the sequentiality meaning between the two events creates a conceptual juncture whereby the two events draw distributed attention.

However, the sequentiality meaning is not always present with this marker, especially with the cases enumerated in (2). For instance, it is redundant after *-ko* ‘and’, and even contradictory with *-mye* ‘simultaneous’. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that the semantic consequence of *-se* addition is either non-existent or at best minimal.

These observations point to the hypothesis that the recruitment of the sequential *-se* may have been motivated by the desire for semantic reinforcement, but the resultant reinforcement is not substantial.

2.1.3. SEMANTICALLY REDUNDANT CASES. Another kind of variation is formed with the use of semantically redundant morphemes, as shown in (3).

- |     |              |   |                   |  |
|-----|--------------|---|-------------------|--|
| (3) | <i>-ni</i>   | > | <i>-nikka</i>     | ‘because’ ( <i>-kka</i> ‘Reason’)          |
|     | <i>-nula</i> | > | <i>-nulani</i>    | ‘because, since’ ( <i>-ni</i> ‘Reason’)    |
|     | <i>-nula</i> | > | <i>-nulanikka</i> | ‘because, since’ ( <i>-nikka</i> ‘Reason’) |
|     | <i>-nula</i> | > | <i>-nulako</i>    | ‘because, since’ ( <i>-ko</i> ‘and’)       |
|     | <i>-ko</i>   | > | <i>-kohayse</i>   | ‘and’ ( <i>-hayse</i> ‘Causal Connective’) |

As shown in (3), *-ni* recruits *-kka*, which is a reason marker, thus becoming *-nikka*. Semantically, *-ni* already marks the reason, and the addition of another reason marker *-kka* results in semantic redundancy.

Likewise, *-nula* is the target of a similar additive operation: *-nulani* with the addition of the reason marker *-ni*; *-nulanikka* with the addition of doubly redundant *-ni* and *-kka*; and *-nulako* with the addition of the connective *-ko* ‘and’. As for the last case, the addition of *-ko* is functionally redundant because *-nula*, being a clausal connective, has the connective function that translates into ‘and’, and therefore, the addition of another connective *-ko* ‘and’ results in redundancy.

The processes of semantic redundancy are often viewed as vacuous by virtue of their making no substantial semantic contribution. From a slightly different perspective, however, this type of semantically redundant operation presupposes either that the original form is so weak that it necessitates the use of a supplementary form, or that the new element is so weak that its addition does not cause a feeling of awkwardness even with the juxtaposition of two semantically identical forms. As a matter of fact, speakers of Korean do not perceive that the newly supplemented forms have any more semantic strength than the original, non-redundant forms.

The foregoing discussion leads to the conclusion that this particular group of variation formation is, speaking from a strictly semantic perspective, not well motivated, as the newly added elements do not add any substantial semantic content.

2.1.4. ADDITION OF CONTRUENT MARKER. The last group consists of cases where the original forms appear with other grammatical morphemes that are semantically or functionally congruent with the original forms, in the sense that they have similar and supplementary, but non-overlapping, semantics or functions, as is shown in (4).

- |     |              |   |                  |  |
|-----|--------------|---|------------------|--|
| (4) | <i>-nula</i> | > | <i>-nulamyen</i> | ‘because, since’ ( <i>-myen</i> ‘if’)            |
|     | <i>-ntey</i> | > | <i>-nteytaka</i> | ‘to, on top of’ ( <i>-taka</i> ‘Transferentive’) |
|     | <i>-tun</i>  | > | <i>-tunci</i>    | ‘whether’ ( <i>-ci</i> ‘Determinative’)          |

The forms in (4) show that the cause/reason marker *-nula* ‘because, since’ is augmented with the conditional marker *-myen* ‘if’. The reason marker *-nula* refers to a factual, not hypothetical, condition of causality. In this context, the addition of *-myen* ‘if’ does not add strict conditionality, but simply brings in the effect of background setting. This particular use of the conditional marker *-myen* is congruent with the reason marking for its ability to provide a background for the proposition that follows. The next case, *-ntey* > *-nteytaka*, also shows added emphasis through the additive process. The main function of

the transferentive *-taka*, historically derived from the verb *taku-* ‘to draw near’, is to signal a focus shift, but the other function it carries, presumably as a result of equally distributed focus, is to add emphasis to a locative. This is well illustrated in the paired examples: *chayksang-ey* ‘on the desk’ vs. *chayksang-eytaka* ‘on top of the desk, onto the desk’ Likewise, the last case: *-tunci* makes use of *-ci*, which has to do with the speaker’s emotion or belief, and the determinative aspect (Rhee 2007).

It is noteworthy, however, that even though the recruited particles in the variational formation seem to have the potential for semantic strengthening, the resultant variational forms do not in fact contribute much of an increase in the semantic content of the variant forms, and the resulting effect is largely not noticeable. The most common intuitive description of the differences between the original and the variant forms is that the latter are simply other ways of saying the same thing.

It has been repeatedly shown in the preceding discussion that there are many instances that exhibit a peculiar change, i.e. the addition of certain phonetic or morphological elements whose semantic characteristics supposedly could bring forth semantic reinforcement, but in reality the resultant forms do not contain any substantial semantic increase. This may have to do with the idea of exaptation as suggested by Lass (1990), which refers to linguistic recycling, i.e. making use of something for a certain function that differs from its original function, an operation that does not result in a substantial increase in semanticity. The topic marker *-nun* and the sequentiality marker *-se* are among the ideal linguistic forms for exaptation, since their semantic content is impoverished.

2.2. PHONOLOGICAL CHANGE. The first type of phonological change is the addition of seemingly meaningless sounds as shown in the partial list of such cases in (5).

- |     |              |   |   |               |   |                                    |
|-----|--------------|---|---|---------------|---|------------------------------------|
| (5) | <i>-se</i>   | > | <i>-sellang</i> ‘and’                   | <i>-se</i>    | > | <i>-sellamwuney</i> ‘and’          |
|     | <i>-kiey</i> | > | <i>-killay</i> ‘because’                | <i>-ketun</i> | > | <i>-ketullang, (-kellang)</i> ‘if’ |
|     | <i>-kilo</i> | > | <i>-kilosoni, (-kiloseni)</i> ‘because’ | <i>-key</i>   | > | <i>-keykkum</i> ‘in order to’      |

The changes observed in (5) do not seem to have been motivated by semantics, simply because the newly added phonetic elements are non-morphemic or they have no clear semantic relations. If any semantic relation must be found, *-soni* and *-seni* may have something to do with the reason marker *-ni*, which cannot yet be established. The *-kkum* in *-keykkum* may have to do with the Middle Korean emphatic particle *-kom*, which again cannot be established from the current level of research.

From the phonological perspective, these additive changes seem to suggest a more aesthetic motivation. That is, considering that some of the examples in (5) involve the addition of the liquid [l] and/or the nasal [ŋ], characteristics often attributed to child and feminine language for their euphony effect, especially in the case of [l] (Koo 2001), it is suspected that they are simply added to make the new forms sound better. As a matter of fact, the variant forms *-killay* and *-kellang*, in particular, are regarded as favored by female speakers.

Phonological motivations with the other two cases are less clear. As indicated earlier, they do not seem to have strong semantic motivation, which leaves us with the option of

phonological motivation. Then the additive processes that result in *-kilosoni* and *-kiloseni* seem to have been triggered merely by the desire to increase the phonetic volume of the grammatical form, probably to make it more perceptible. This hypothesis seems reasonable, considering that the semantic bleaching and the phonological weakening concomitant with the process of grammaticalization may have made the speakers of the language attempt to reinforce the phonetic volume.

The second type of phonological change comprises those that have undergone the seemingly unmotivated sound changes as listed in (6).

- (6) *-potan* > *-potam* 'than'  
*-ketun* > *-keteng* 'if'  
*-lyemyenun* > *-laymunun* 'in order to'

The examples given in (6) constitute a unique case, in that the changes can not be characterized as additive processes, and the motivation behind them is not clear. We might suspect that the case of *-potan* > *-potam* may have been motivated by shift of the originally alveolar [n] to the labial location of the initial consonant, a thesis undermined by the fact that the consonant immediately preceding it is alveolar, not labial.

In the case of the change from *-ketun* to *-keteng*, the explanation is equally difficult, but as the new variation has the nasal [ŋ], it may possibly have to do with the euphony effect discussed in the preceding section. However, this is by no means clear.

Likewise, the last case is mysterious. In terms of phonetic values, the two forms involved may be represented as [lyəmyənʉn] > [læmʉnʉn]. The audible change is the simplification of articulatory gesture with the loss of the glides. Other than this minor economy in articulation, no plausible motivation for this sound change can be found.

2.3. STYLISTIC MOTIVATION. The next aspect of the variations under consideration is the stylistic motivation. **Figure 1** is a rough diagram in which the forms are plotted along a formal/literary and informal/colloquial continuum. Even though the exact locations of the forms have not been determined by way of formal measurement, the plot is consonant with the native-speaker intuition in general.

Among notable observations about the diagram in **Figure 1** is the fact that the formal/literary variety is usually shorter than the informal/colloquial counterpart. This is due to the process of addition. On the other hand, among the informal/colloquial varieties, the ones toward the polar extreme tend to be shorter. This is due to the process of contraction. Therefore, in terms of phonological volume there is shortening and lengthening alternating along the way. This fluctuation is illustrated in the partial list of the forms in more simplified representation in (7).

- (7) *-pota* > *-potanun* > *-potam* > *-potamun* 'than'  
*-chiko* > *-chikose* > *-chikosenun* > *-chikosen* > *-chikon* 'speaking of'  
*-ni* > *-nikka* > *-nikkanun* > *-nikkan* 'because, as'



Formal/Literary	←—————→		Informal/Colloquial (Dialectal)		
-pota	-potanun		-potam	-potamun	
-se	-senun		-sellang	-sellangun	-sellamwuney
-ul			-ullang	-ullangun	
-man	-manun				
-chiko	-chikose	-chikonun	-chikosenun	-chikosen	-chikon
-bako	-bakonun		-hakon		
-man	-manun				
-kiey		-killay			
-ni	-nikka		-nikkanun	-nikkan	
-ketun			-keteng	-ketullang	-kellang
-key	-keykkum				
-kilo	-kilosoni	-kilose	-kiloseni		
-ncuk		-ncuksun			
-mye	-myense				
-myen		-myenun			
-nula	-nulako	-nulani	-nulamyen	-nulanikka	
-ntey	-nteytaka				
-tun	-tunci				
-ko		-kobayse			
-lyemyen		-lyemyenun		-laymunun	

**Figure 1.** Variation on formality/colloquiality scale.

One caveat is that not all forms follow this pattern. For instance, the forms derived from *-se* show a continuous pattern of uniformly increasing phonetic volume, i.e. *-se* > *-senun* > *-sellang* > *-sellangun* > *-sellamwuney*.

One other aspect that merits our attention is that there is an interesting diachronic fluctuation whose pattern is not consonant with the speaker's intuition that contributes to the style-sensitive selection of forms. For instance, *-man* when affixed to a proposition fully equipped with morphological trappings, i.e. marked with a complementizer, is thought by most lexicographers and grammarians to be a contracted form of *-manun* (cf. Lee & Lee 2003[2001], *Dong-A Say Kwuke Sacen* 2006, among others). According to this analysis, the forms with *-man* affixed, e.g. *-taman*, *-ciman*, *-kkaman*, *-laman*, *-caman*, are contracted forms of *-tamanun*, *-cimanun*, *-kkamanun*, *-lamanun*, and *-camanun*, respectively.

If this hypothesis is correct, an intriguing pattern emerges. Speakers of Korean largely agree with the idea that *-taman* is more formal than *-tamanun*; *-ciman* more formal than *-cimanun*, etc. This is also well illustrated by the fact that in texts in formal registers, such as newspaper reports and academic papers, the shorter forms are almost exclusively used. Certain inferences then follow. Historically the short form, e.g. *-taman*, was derived from a long form, e.g. *-tamanun*, in which case the original form, i.e. the longer form, is supposed to have been used in a more conservative style. This is a natural assumption, because in the situation where a conservative form and an innovative form are layered (Hopper 1991, Hopper & Traugott 2003[1993]), the more conservative form, i.e. the longer *-tamanun* in this case, is associated with the formal register, and the innovative form, i.e. the shortened

variant *-taman*, is associated with the informal/colloquial register. However, as noted above, this pattern is the exact reverse of the pattern in contemporary Korean.

There are two possible scenarios for this state of affairs: one may be that when *-taman* had acquired a sufficiently standard status (cf. specialization, Hopper 1991, Hopper & Traugott 2003[1993]) perhaps through attaining sufficient frequency of use, the more conservative form was relegated to a peripheral status. The speakers would then employ the peripheral, less standard, form in informal styles.

The other possible explanation is that when the innovative *-taman* gradually gained supremacy over the original *-tamanun*, the use of the latter decreased, perhaps almost to disuse. A new innovative operation applied to the now standard *-taman*: the addition of the topic marker *-un*, a very common process in variation formation, as discussed previously.

In the absence of conclusive data, both options are equally viable. In either case, as long as phonological shapes are concerned, the path these forms traveled can be represented as [*-tamanun* > *-taman* > *-tamanun*], and all forms involving *-man* should have traveled analogically similar paths.

3. DISCUSSION. The issues presented here warrant a discussion with respect to grammaticalization principles. Among many principles and hypotheses, only the three that are immediately relevant and have significant implications are chosen for discussion: unidirectionality in form and meaning, form-meaning parallel reduction, and renewal of grammatical forms.

3.1. UNIDIRECTIONALITY IN FORMAL CHANGE. The first issue is related to the unidirectionality principle of change in form. It is an established fact that linguistic forms undergoing grammaticalization processes tend to experience phonological loss. Lehmann (1995[1982]) defines phonological loss as the process whereby grammaticalizing forms lose their phonological volume.

However, the data presented here clearly show otherwise: the increase of phonological volume through additive processes. One caveat, of course, is that the additive process does not occur in such a way that the self-same form becomes shorter or longer, but that it creates multiple forms that coexist as style-sensitive variational forms. Since grammaticalization has been largely conceived of as a monolinear process, the idea that there are multiple forms forming clusters and that the creation of these multiple forms may often employ additive operations has not received attention to date in grammaticalization scholarship.

Granted that unidirectionality is not a never-failing principle,<sup>2</sup> the type of formal variation presented here constitutes a research issue, since they show systematicity with respect to the deviance from unidirectionality.

3.2. UNIDIRECTIONALITY IN SEMANTIC CHANGE. The next issue involves unidirectionality in semantic change. From the early studies of grammaticalization, it has been widely accepted that grammaticalizing forms undergo semantic bleaching. According to the concept of bleaching, grammaticalizing forms lose their semantic content or semantic specificity en route. The same idea is presented in different terminology, e.g. semantic

generalization, desemanticization, semantic attrition, etc. (Bybee *et al.* 1994, Lehmann 1995[1982], *inter alia*).

However, as shown in the preceding discussion, the examples presented here show otherwise. The variant forms that are in active use do not exhibit any noticeable, or at least more substantial, semantic differences. As has been made explicit in the preceding discussion, they show stylistic variations only.

3.3. FORM-MEANING CORRELATION. It has also been widely held since early grammaticalization studies that the phonological volume and frequency of use are closely related. This claim has been upheld in such studies as Bybee (1985), Bybee & Dahl (1989), Bybee *et al.* (1994), Rhee (2003) and many others. Bybee *et al.* (1994), in particular, presented the parallel reduction principle, which states that formal reduction and semantic generalization proceed in tandem.

However, the examples presented here show otherwise. As shown in the preceding section, there is no substantial meaning change involved in the formation of variants, whereas it involves considerable formal change, especially an additive one.

3.4. RENEWAL OF GRAMMATICAL FORMS. The final discussion addresses the concept of renewal. Grammaticalizing forms, after undergoing a substantial level of grammaticalization, may be replaced by longer, innovative, forms. Renewal is a mechanism language uses to maintain the level of complexity in the face of ever-shrinking form and meaning.

However, the examples presented here show otherwise. Even though the particles are grammaticalized forms, in the sense that they carry grammatical concepts, the particles addressed here are by no means at the extreme of the grammaticality continuum, as is shown by the fact that many of them still show their lexical origin, and that they are morphosyntactically periphrastic forms, a fact suggesting that they have not (yet) proceeded along the grammaticalization path to a considerable degree. Therefore, it can be asserted that the occurrence of the additive variation formation is not posterior to the stage of a substantial level of grammaticalization. In other words, the innovative forms came into existence while their targets of competition were non-extreme grammatical forms.

4. CONCLUSION. The discussion in this paper may be recapitulated in the following terms. The grammaticalization processes in terms of both form and meaning cannot be uniformly characterized as reductive processes. Grammaticalization paths are by no means monolinear and uniformly unidirectional, but involve fluctuation and variation, especially along such parameters as style and register. The additive processes seem to be motivated mostly by the desire for semantic reinforcement and recruit paradigmatically versatile particles with weak, but still remaining, semantic content, suggesting exaptation (Lass 1990), as is well illustrated by the addition of the topic marker *-nun* and the sequentiality marker *-se*. Finally, some of the additive processes have purely phonological motivation in that the ever-shrinking forms are augmented by apparently meaningless sounds whose sole function seems to be to increase the phonological volume, perhaps in order to ensure better

auditory perception. Some phonological additions may be motivated by a desire for the euphony effect.

The state of affairs with the variations described here calls research that explores how to reconcile the unidirectionally reductive processes predicted by grammaticalization theory and the additive processes observed in the fluctuating patterns of variation.

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- <sup>2</sup> Hopper and Traugott (2003[1993]:17) state it succinctly: counter-examples to unidirectionality are a reminder that language change is not subject to exceptionless physical laws, and diachronic universals are observed tendencies rather than theoretical absolutes.

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