

The functional interpretation of semantic and syntactic shifts in the domain of North Slavic “conversive” preposition-pronominal constructions

Following a dynamic and functional approach (cf. Givón 2015), this paper presents the development of grammatical functions of preposition-pronominal constructions (PPCs) in North Slavic, cf. preposition+pronoun as in Pol. *przy tym* ‘lit. by this; at the same time; moreover’, *przy czym* ‘lit. by what; at the same time’. The study of this topic in Slavic languages has been so far patchy (Rysová 2017, Danlos, Rysová, Rysová & Stede 2018, Kisiel & Sobotka 2022) and has not investigated the difference in diachronic progress from one base pattern toward the state observed in the modern languages. The talk intends to fill in this gap by delivering a functional explanation for the diverse results of the grammaticalization based on the same underlying PPC. Particularly, the paper targets two-element symmetric (preposition + interrogative pronoun vs demonstrative pronoun) grammaticalized structures across grammatical classes (adverbs, relatives, conjunctions, connectors, discourse markers) to interpret differences between grammaticalization paths of PPCs with *conversive pronouns* ‘this’ and ‘what’, e.g. Rus. *potomu* ‘lit. after this; that’s why; because’ vs *počemu* ‘lit. after what; for what reason; why; so’, Pol. *dlatego* ‘lit. for this; that’s why; therefore’ vs *dlaczego* ‘lit. for what; why’, Cz. *přesto* ‘lit. through this; even though; nevertheless’ vs *přes co* ‘lit. through what; what’.

The first part of the paper presents the grammaticalization chain of PPC with an interrogative pronoun, see ORus. (1a-b). This chain is shorter and more predictable than the chain with a demonstrative pronoun, see ORus. (2a-b). It seems also shared by most North Slavic languages: the path of Polish *dlaczego* ‘lit. for what’ or Upper Sorbian *čehodla* ‘lit. what for’ resembles the one of Russian *počemu* ‘lit. for what’ or *začem* ‘lit. beyond what’, regardless the difference in the prepositional element.

- (1) a. *po* *čemu* *nareklъ* *jestъ* *χristosъ*
PREP INTER call.PST.3SG be.AUX.PRS.3SG Christ.NP
‘For what reason is he called *Christ*’. (ŽivAndJur)
- b. *počemu* *že* *ty* *nazyvaešъ* *tu* *zemlju*
INTER PTCL 2SG call.PRS.2SG DEM land.ACC.SG
‘Why are you the one who calls this land?’ (Arx.Str. I 228)
- (2) a. *kažetsja* *potomu,* *i* *žalb* *emu* *menja*
it seems CONN CONJ pity.ACC.SG 3SG.DAT 1SG.GEN
‘It seems that this is why he feels sorry for me.’ (Av.Ž. 52)
- b. *A* *starca* *obvinilъ,* *potomu* *peredъ*
CONJ old.GEN.SG accuse.PST.3SG CONJ PREP
knjazemъ *na* *srokъ* *ne* *stalъ.*
prince.INS.SG PREP time.ACC.SG NEG stand.PST.3SG
‘and he blamed the old man because he did not appear in time before the prince.’ (Arx.Str. I 48)

The second part of the paper focuses on patterns and conditions of change in PPCs with demonstrative pronouns, which show a greater variety in East and West Slavic languages, see e.g. Cz. discourse marker *nadto* ‘moreover’ vs Rus. unlexicalized *nad to* ‘over that’ etc. Also, the functions of PPCs with demonstrative pronouns display a high level of variation between the languages, e.g. Pol. *potem* as an adverb vs Cz. *potom* as an adverb, conjunction, connector, and discourse marker.

Reference

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