

Types of contexts inducing the grammaticalization of demonstratives into definite articles – the case of a language without articles

Branimir Stanković (University of Niš)

We hypothesize that there are certain **types of contexts** that are mostly responsible for initiating the grammaticalization process(es) of demonstratives from spatial, deictic elements into discourse-relevant anaphorics thru context-induced reinterpretation (Heine, Claudi & Hünemeyer 1991), in which the use of these items is necessary for obtaining the intended definite interpretation, and not simply for reasons of disambiguating between the available indefinite and definite interpretation of bare NPs. This idea is based on the situation in Serbo-Croatian, a language lacking the categories of definite and indefinite articles, but in which the use of demonstratives is mandatory in the following types of contexts.

i. **cardinal numbers** and **partitivity**. Discourse-old cardinal number phrases (1) and partitive phrases (2) must be marked for definiteness, as the bare phrases unambiguously yield the indefinite interpretation. This is achieved by the use of demonstratives:

(1) Belić je napisao [dva rada o dijalektima južne
Belić AUX write-PAST.SG.MASC two papers on dialects-INST.PL Southern-GEN.SG
Srbije]_i. On u {[dva rada]_{*i,j}} / {[ta dva rada]_{i,*j}} objašnjava da...
Serbia-GEN.SG he in two papers that-PAUCAL.MASC two papers explains that
“Belić wrote two papers on the dialects of South Serbia. In {some two papers / those two papers} he explains that...”

(2) Belić piše o [delu reči]_i. {[Deo reči]_{*i,j} / [Taj deo reči]_{i,*j}} je...
Belić writes about part-LOC.SG word-GEN.PL part word-GEN.PL that part word-GEN.PL is
“Belić writes about a part of the words. {A part of the words / That part of the words is...}”

ii. **discourse-old indefinite specific pronominal referents**. The discourse status of previously introduced indefinite specific pronominal referents must be signaled with the use of demonstratives; otherwise, the indefinite pronouns remain unambiguously indefinite:

(3) Neko_i je napisao rad. {[Neko]_{*i,k} / [Taj neko]_{i,*k}} je Belić.
someone AUX write-PAST.SG.MASC paper someone that someone is Belić
“Someone wrote a paper. {Someone / That someone} is Belić.”

iii. **temporal constructions**. A series of temporal genitive constructions consist of a mandatory “determiner” and a noun denoting time period sequence (considering Meillet’s (1912) broad notion of grammaticalization, which includes the evolution of grammatical constructions):

(4) ove godine / tog jutra /
this-GEN.SG.FEM year-GEN.SG.FEM that-GEN.SG.NEUT morning-GEN.SG.NEUT
onog dana
that-GEN.SG.MASC day-GEN.SG.MASC
“this year / that morning / that day”

Although unidirectional in its nature (Greenberg 1978; Lyons 1977; Heine, Claudi & Hünemeyer 1991; Hawkins 1994; Diessel 1999), the proposed hypothesis does not negate the possibility of the reverse grammaticalization pattern, as shown by Frajzyngier (1996) for Chadic and Stavinschi (2012) for Romance languages. As a matter of fact, the presented Serbo-Croatian demonstratives are a result of a diachronic integration of the initial deictic items *ovъ*, *tъ* and *onъ* with the anaphoric pronoun *i/jъ* (*ovъ* / *tъ* / *onъ* + *jъ* > *ovъjъ* / *tъjъ* / *onъjъ* > *ovaj* / *taj* / *onaj*). Eventually, the anaphoric item *i/jъ* entirely disappeared from the

language, leaving its traces throughout the pronominal system and in the category of definite adjectival aspect.

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