

Grammaticalization of lexical expressions

Principles of language change

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Definition

Grammaticalization is the process whereby lexical items develop into grammatical items and items that are already grammaticalized assume new grammatical functions.

[Hopper and Traugott 1993]

Lexical expressions and grammatical markers

	Lexical expressions	Grammatical markers
Meaning Class size		

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Meaning	symbolic	schematic
Class size	open	closed

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is copula

(1) 'to exist'

(2) 'stand' / 'stay' / 'lie'

(3) 'that' / 'it'

a indef. article

'one' (numeral)

that relative pronoun

demonstrative

-s argeement

(1) pronouns (e.g. look-it)

(2) auxiliary (e.g. look-has)

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itself reflexive pro

‘it’ + ‘self’

over preposition

(1) relational nouns

‘in front of’

(2) body part term

‘back’ > ‘in back of’

‘stomach’ > ‘in’

‘head’ > ‘on’

‘buttock’ > ‘under’

-s plural marker

dem > article > plural marker

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therefore

conjunct

there (DEM) + fore (P)

must

modal

mete 'to have the opportunity' /
'to be permitted'

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Indeed, most historical linguist-**s** began **as** general linguist-**s** **before they** turn-**ed to the** study **of** language change.

indeed	disc. marker	in (P) + deed (N)
as	conjunction	all + so (DEM)
before	conjunction	be 'by' (P) + fore 'for' (P)
-ed	past tense	V-do
the	definite article	Þes (DEM)

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with phonological **and** morphological change.

-ly	adverb	lic > 'appearance' / 'form' / 'body'
was	auxiliary	copula
with	preposition	'against'
and	conjunction	'with' (P)

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and the development **of** grammar.

however

conjunct

how + ever

has

auxiliary

'to possess' (V)

onto

preposition

on + to

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anybody	indefinite pro	any = an + ig / y (cf. might-y)
who	relative pro	question word
because	conjunction	by + cause (PP)
it	personal pro	that (DEM)

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nevertheless

discourse

never + the + less

given

conditional

'to give'

that

complementizer

DEM

Case study 1: 'gonna'

- (1) I am going to marry Bill.
[meaning: I am **leaving** in order to marry Bill]
- (2) a. She is **going** to kiss him.
b. She's **gonna** kiss him.
- (3) I [am going [to marry [Bill]]].
>>> I [[[am [going to]] marry] [Bill]]

From space to time

- (1) a. The priest stood **before** the altar.
b. St. Michael's day is **before** Christmas.
- (2) a. Bill is **in** Leipzig.
b. He will come **in** the spring.
- (3) a. The balloon flew **over** the hill.
b. The game is **over**.
- (4) a. He **followed** him.
b. World War II was **followed** by a 45 year period of Cold War.

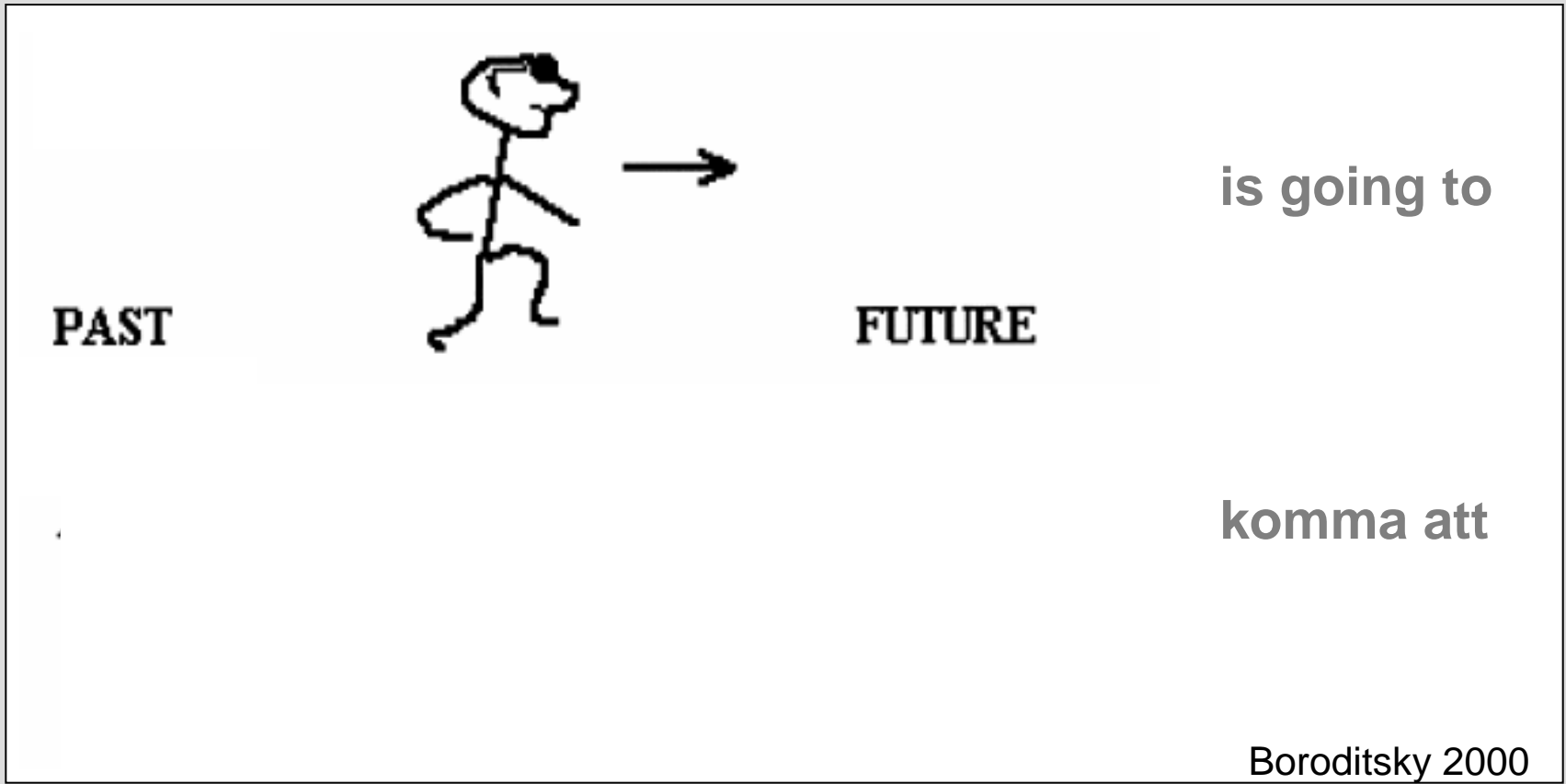
From space to time

- (5) a. That's a pretty **long** log.
b. It has been a pretty **long** day.
- (6) a. They were driving **along** the river.
b. He new it **all along**.
- (7) a. He is **going** to the village.
b. The rain is **going** to help the farmer.
- (8) a. At the **end** of the queue.
b. At the **end** of the day.

From space to time

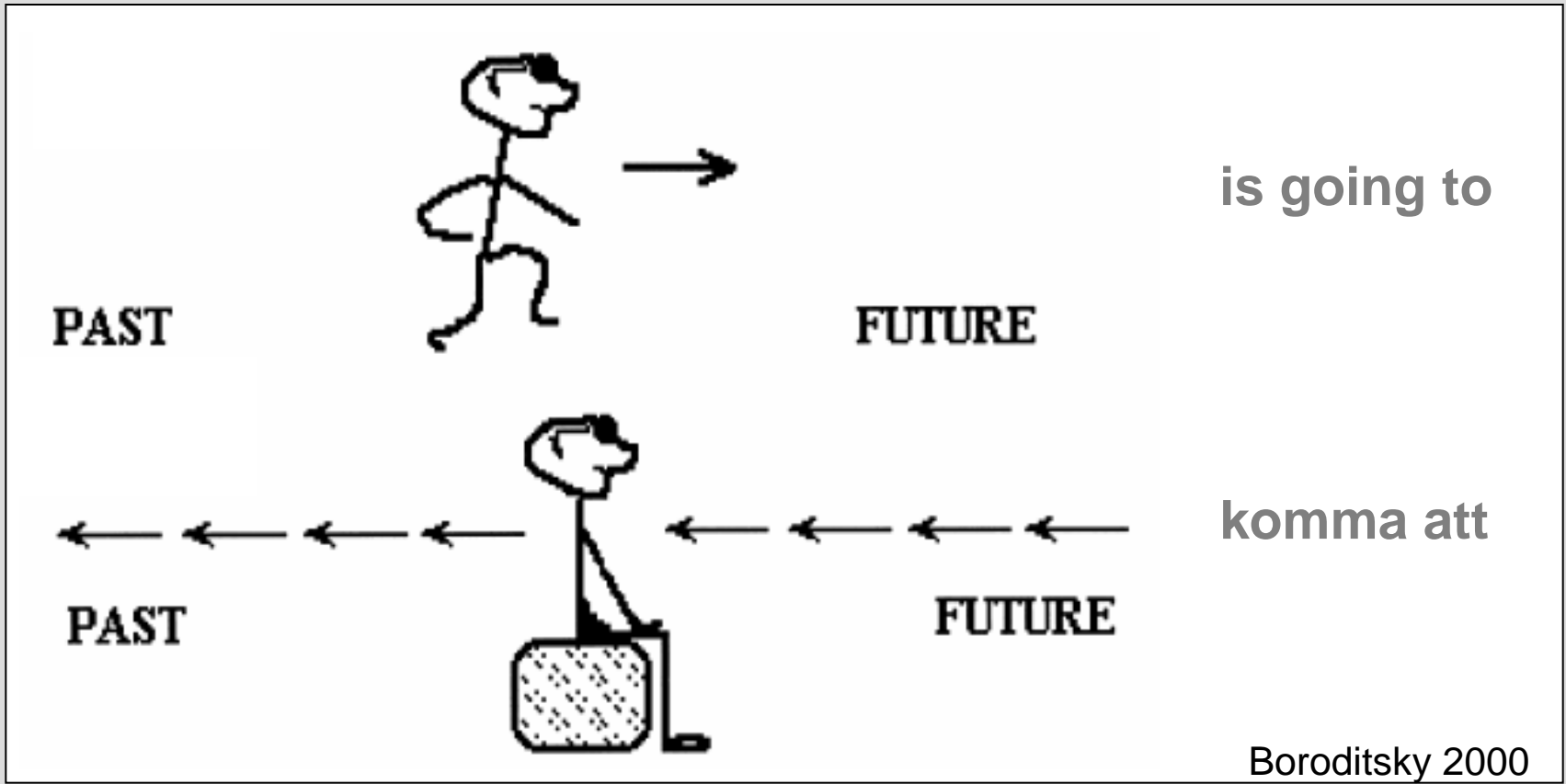


From space to time



Christmas is coming up soon.

From space to time



Christmas is coming up soon.

From space to time

- (2) The revolution is before us. (ego-moving)
- (3) The revolution is over before breakfast. (time-moving)

Examples of grammaticalization

Auxiliaries

'go' [motion verb] > *gonna* [auxiliary]

'will' [V of intention] > *will* [auxiliary]

'have' [V of possession] > *have* [auxiliary]

Bound morphemes

noun meaning 'with an x-appearance' > x-ly

auxiliary 'do' > x-ed

Conjunctions

DEM hwile SUB (hwile = 'time')

> *while* [conjunction]

'by cause' preposition+noun

> *because* [conjunction]

'given' [past participle of 'give']

> *given* [conjunction]

Prepositions

- 'during' [verb in continuous form] > *during* [preposition]
- 'in front of' [PP] > *in front of* [preposition]
- 'a-gone' [PREFIX-verb] > *ago* [postposition]
- 'be-foran' [be- prefix meaning by
+ foran ADV meaning
'in front'] > *before* [preposition]

Indefinite pronouns

'some body' [NP]

>

somebody [indefinite pro]

'one' [numeral]

>

one [article/pronoun]

Epistemic markers

'(do you) you know' [question]	>	<i>y'know</i>
'I think' [matrix clause]	>	<i>(I) think</i>
'guess' [imperative matrix clause]	>	<i>guess</i>

Aspects of grammaticalization

Phonetic reduction

going to > gonna

because > cause

I am > I'm

do not > don't

Loss of inflectional properties

that /those	>	that [complementizer]
that	>	the
give	>	given

Loss of constituent structure

want to

[in [front [of__]]]

some_{DET} body_N

>

wanna

>

[in front of [__]]

>

[somebody]_{PRO}

Semantic bleaching

have (poss)

>

have (aux)

go (motion)

>

gonna (aux)

stomach (concrete)

>

in (relational)

that (pointing)

>

the (definiteness)

Unidirectionality

All grammatical morphemes are eventually derived from lexical expressions, notably nouns and verbs.



De-grammaticalization

Grammaticalization cline

word > clitic > affix > Ø

English: genitive construction

- (1) a. The queen's crown
- b. The Queen of England's crown
- (2) a. Peter's car
- b. Peter and Mary's car

De-grammaticalization

Peters**s** = Peter **his**

structural reanalysis

John Browne **his** meadow

Daniel Williams **my** heirs

analogical extension

Ann Harris **her** lot

Case study 2: 'lets'

- (1)
 - a. Let yourself down on the rope.
 - b. Let Bill go.
 - c. Let me see it.

- (2)
 - a. Let's go to the circus tonight.
 - b. Let's watch a movie.

- (3) Lets **you and I** take'm on for a set.

Case study 2: 'lets'

- (1) Lets **you** go first, then if we have any money left I'll go.
- (2) Lets **ø** wash your hand..
- (3) Lets give you a hand. (= 'I'll give you a hand')

Case study 2: 'lets'

- The meaning has become more subjective.
- The final –s has lost its status as a separate morpheme (word > clitic > affix > speech sound).
- Phonological reduction ([lɛs]; *sgo* 'Let us go!')
- Range of contexts has been extended.