Li7 Historical linguistics
Pathways and cycles of change
`http://people.pwf.cam.ac.uk/dwew2/li7/li7_contents.htm`

1 UNIVERSAL PATHS OF GRAMMATICALISATION

• sources of particular grammatical markers are limited and form regular 'paths'

• typical sources are relatively general in meaning e.g. verbs of motion, verbs of wishing, generic nouns

• in most cases, there is not a one-to-one historical mapping (polygrammaticalisation)

1.1 Sources of future markers (Bybee, Pagliuca & Perkins 1991; Bybee, Perkins & Pagliuca 1994)

1. Aspectual forms: general present imperfective has future reference in a future context, then a new present (e.g. periphrastic progressive) develops leaving the old present as the future e.g. Kui (Dravidian), Welsh. Grammaticalisation not directly involved (in the development of the new present) (Haspelmath 1998).

2. Agent-oriented modalities: verbs with meanings like 'desire' or 'obligation'.

2a. desire e.g. Danish *ville*, English *will*, Greek *tha < thelo ina* 'I wish that', Bulgarian *šte* < 'I want that'.

DESIRE > WILLINGNESS > INTENTION > PREDICTION

Arises through conventionalising of the inference 'I want to go' > 'I intend to go soon' > 'I will go (future)'.

2b. obligation e.g. Danish *skal* (< 'owe'), English *shall*.

3. Movement towards, arising through the inference 'I am going somewhere to do something' > 'I intend to do something' > 'I will do something (future)' e.g. Zulu *-za-* 'future marker' < *-za* 'come'; English *gonna < going to*.

4. Temporal adverbs e.g. Tok Pisin *bai*.

Note that verbs of volition also give rise to avertive ('was going to but didn't') and proximative ('about to') meanings (as with German *eben wollen* 'be about to'); and obligation (deontic modality) meanings give rise to probability (epistemic modality) meanings (as with English *must*).

1.2 Indefinite pronouns (Haspelmath 1991, 1997)

1. 'I don't-know' type:

Swedish *någon*, Norwegian *noen* 'someone' < Old Norse *nekkverr < *ne wait ik hwarir* 'I don't know who'
Russian *nekto* 'someone' < *ne vě kuto* 'he doesn't know who'

Source:
She told him something. I don't know what. > She told him, I don't know what.
> She told him I-don't-know-what.

Note: irregular phonological reduction, prefixes.

2. 'Whatever-you-want' type

Russian *kto-libo* 'anybody (at all)' < *ljubo* 'preferrable'
Latin *quivis* 'anything' < *qui vis* 'what you want'

Source:
You can have what you want > You can have what-you-want.

3. 'Whoever-it-might-be' type:
Russian *kto-nibud'* 'anyone' < *kto ni bud'* 'whoever it might (not) be'
Polish *kto-ś* 'anyone'
French *qui que ce soit* 'whoever'

Source:
You can have whatever it may be > You can have whatever-it-may-be.
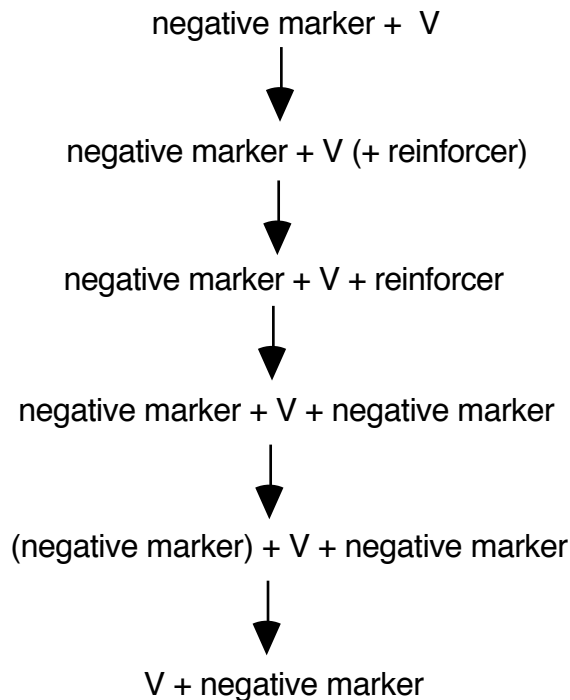
• adverb 'ever, always' or 'also' may be the sole remaining element e.g.
English *whoever*, French *quiconque* < *qui qu'onques* 'who that ever', German
wer auch immer 'whoever' (who also ever).

1.3 Jespersen's Cycle

1.3.1 The cycle
The history of negative expressions in various languages makes us
witness the following curious fluctuation: the original negative
adverb is first weakened, then found insufficient and therefore
strengthened, generally through some additional word, and this in
its turn may be felt as the negative proper and may then in course
of time be subject to the same development as the original word.

(Jespersen 1917: 4)

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                    negative marker +  V
                             │
                             ▼
              negative marker + V (+ reinforcer)
                             │
                             ▼
              negative marker + V + reinforcer
                             │
                             ▼
          negative marker + V + negative marker
                             │
                             ▼
        (negative marker) + V + negative marker
                             │
                             ▼
                    V + negative marker
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The French Jespersen's Cycle
Old French: *jeo ne dis* 'I don't say'
Standard French: *je ne dis pas*
Colloquial French: *je dis pas*

French: *ne* + V → *ne* + V (*pas*, *point*, *mie*) → *ne* + V + *pas* → (*ne*) + V + *pas*

Also available in Berber, Breton, Burmese, Dutch, English, Estonian, Fɔn, German, Moroccan Arabic, Palestinian Arabic, Scandinavian, and Welsh.

1.3.2 Sources of negative markers:
(i) nouns denoting smalls unit of measurement (minimisers): French *pas* 'step', French and Italian dialects *mie* / *mica* / *mia* 'crumb'

I didn't sleep a wink.
I didn't touch [➔ drink] a drop.

(ii) negative quantifiers / pronouns: Greek *dhen* < Classical Greek *oudhén* 'nothing'; English *not* < Old English *nan wiht*.

(iii) generic noun: Welsh *ddim* < Old Welsh *dim* 'thing', Morroccan Arabic *shi* < Classical Arabic *shahy?*.

1.3.3 Grammaticalisation and reanalysis here
• contains various grammaticalisations-reanalyses:

noun / pronoun > reinforcing adverb
reinforcing adverb > negation

• but bleaching and loss of preverbal negation is central to the cycle, and not obviously grammaticalisation (except as the end of a grammaticalisation path)

• reinforcing adverb > negation is accompanied by changes in word order in some cases (Welsh, French *ne* infinitive *pas* > *ne pas* infinitive)

2 DIRECTIONALITY ISSUES (CAMPBELL 2001, FISCHER 1997, LASS 2000, NORDE 2001, WILLIS 2004)

2.1 Unidirectionality of grammaticalisation
Unidirectionality = changes of the reverse kind are not possible

But well attested cases do exist:

(A) GRAMMATICAL ITEM > LEXICAL ITEM

(B) AFFIX > CLITIC > FREE WORD

(A) Syntactic lexicalisation (Willis 2004)
Welsh *eiddo* 'his' > 'property'; Bulgarian *něšto* 'something (indefinite pronoun)' > 'thing (noun)'; Welsh *yn ôl* 'after' > verb 'fetch'; English *dare*;

(B) Deflection (Norde 2001)
AFFIX > CLITIC: English possessive *'s* (genitive case affix > possessive phrasal clitic), Swedish possessive -*s*; Estonian adessive case > clitic postposition 'without'.
AFFIX > FREE WORD: Irish -*muid* (first person plural conditional suffix > pronoun 'we').

• frequently these involve either loss of a grammatical subsystem, as in Irish present tense paradigm for *mol-* 'praise' (cf. exaptation):

	sing.	plur.
1	molann mé	molaimid
2	molann tú	molann sibh
3	molann sé, sí	molann siad

or 'analogical' assimilation to a new category, as with the deflection of Estonian adessive case:

(1)   työttä   ja   leivättä
        work.ADESS and   bread.ADESS
        'without work and bread'   (Finnish)

(2)   ämbri   ja   labida-ta
        bucket   and   shovel-without
        'without bucket and shovel'   (Estonian)

This assimilates the abessive to the commitative ('with') clitic -*ga*.

Confounding issues:
• lexicalisations e.g. *to up the ante*, *to down a beer*, *ifs and buts*, *isms and ologies*, *a he or a she* etc.

• retractions: A > A/B > A (compare 'normal' A > A/B > B, possible examples: English *dare*, English *man*.

2.2 Directionality beyond grammaticalisation

2.2.1 Sound change
some sound changes are unidirectional: [s] > [h], [l] >[w];
others aren't: [x] > [f] and [f] > [x].

2.2.2 Reanalysis: Complementation
• elements of main clauses are often reanalysed as elements of embedded clauses
• the reverse is not common
• often this involves grammaticalisation, for instance, preposition > complementiser, but not always.

With grammaticalisation:
English for-to-clauses
Welsh nonfinite clauses: I caused / asked to John [PRO leave] > I caused / asked [to John leave]

Without grammaticalisation?
Finnish participial clauses (Timberlake 1977)
Irish nonfinite OV clauses (Disterheft 1984)

• loss of movement
• reanalysis
• no grammaticalisation
• possibly directional

FURTHER READING

Core reading

Bybee, Joan L.; Pagliuca, William, & Perkins, Revere D. 1991. Back to the future. In Approaches to grammaticalization, edited by Elizabeth Closs Traugott & Bernd Heine, ii.17-58. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. [Identifies common sources for future markers based on a sample of 75 languages.]

Norde, Muriel. 2001. Deflexion as a counterdirectional factor in grammatical change. *Language Sciences* 23:231–64.

For references and other reading, see the Li7 website.