Agree- and Selection-oriented features: evidence from grammaticalization

This paper focuses on a previously undiscussed lexical peculiarity in the Southern Italian dialect Abruzzese which, we argue, offers a telling insight into the structural make-up of feature-bundles, while also enabling us to tease apart the components of grammaticalization processes in which elements become "more negative" (cf. Jaeger 2008 for recent overview discussion).

In Abruzzese, the adverb *angore* ("still") indicates both that an action is still taking place (1a) and, paradoxically, also that it has not yet done so (1b):

(1) a. Magne angore   b. Angore magne
        eats   still = "(S)he is still eating"   still/yet eats = "(S)he hasn't eaten yet"

The same is true in the past tense:

(2) a. Me   tene'   'ngore fame
        to-me held-IMPERF.   still   hunger = "I was still hungry"
    b. Angore me   tene'   fame
        yet   to-me held- IMPERF. hunger = "I wasn't hungry yet"

Angore's distribution is puzzling in various ways. Firstly, its meaning varies depending on its position: postverbal *angore* = "still"; preverbal *angore* = "not yet". Secondly, it is incompatible with perfective aspect, regardless of its positioning (3), a surprising fact given that yet adverbials, in contrast to still adverbials, usually select bounded events, thus being incompatible with imperfective aspect (cf. Iatridou et al. 2001, Verkuyl et al. 2005, van Geenhoven 2005).

(3) *(Angore) a   magnate   (angore)
        still   has   eaten   still

One approach to the peculiar distribution and double meaning of *angore* might be to view preverbal and postverbal *angore* as distinct, accidentally homophonous lexical items. This explanation, however, cannot account for the aspectual restriction common to the two forms.

Building on a proposal put forward by Szabolcsi (2004), we therefore suggest that postverbal *angore* is a positive polarity item (PPI), while preverbal *angore* is a negative polarity item (NPI), derived from the former via grammaticalization. According to Szabolcsi, PPIs have two NPI-features, viewed as negation features (¬; cf. also Postal 2000), that need to be both licensed and activated. In these terms, the semantics of a sentence like "He saw someone" would, for instance, be λP ¬ ¬ ∃x[person(x) & he_saw(x)]. To have a uniform syntax/semantics-morphology mapping, Postal proposes that the lower ¬ is deleted by the higher one, and that the higher ¬ can be deleted by raising or via an appropriate licenser.

Starting from these assumptions, we propose that preverbal *angore* constitutes the output of a still incomplete process of grammaticalization targeting postverbal *angore*, whereby one of the PPI's ¬ features becomes bleached (i.e. deleted). When *angore* loses one of its two ¬ features, acquiring a purely negative meaning, it then needs to appear preverbally for this ¬ feature to be licensed (cf. i.a. Haegeman & Zanuttini 1991, Haegeman 1995, Szabolcsi 2004). That we can find angore both pre- and postverbally is due to the fact that the grammaticalization process is not completed yet. This is also clearly shown by two other properties, namely (i) the fact that the "yet" and "still" forms of *angore* are phonologically

identical (i.e. no phonological reduction associated with the new, negative "yet" form) and (ii) the fact that both *angore*s select imperfective aspect (i.e. that appropriate to the original "still"-adverb).

We therefore see that loss of a syntactico-semantic feature may result in upwards reanalysis, as expected in generative terms (cf. i.a. Roberts & Roussou 2003, van Gelderen 2004), but that this development may occur prior to other components of the grammaticalization process (phonological and lexical restructuring). In particular, the case of *angore* shows us that the internal properties of an element (here a clausal satellite) may change before the externally (selection) oriented ones relating it to the "spine" with which it connects, pointing to further evidence, firstly, for postulating structured feature bundles and, secondly, for drawing a distinction between Agree-(internally) and Selection(externally)-oriented features (cf. also Rizzi 2008, Adger & Svenonius 2009). This latter insight may also shed important light on the much-discussed issue of how the originally non-negative elements acting as negative reinforcers at Stage II of Jespersen's Cycle ultimately become reanalyzed as genuinely negative elements serving to signal clausal negation. More generally, it opens up the possibility that grammaticalization at the syntactic level may in fact require two distinct changes: a first one affecting the properties of Agreeing features and a second affecting its Selection features.