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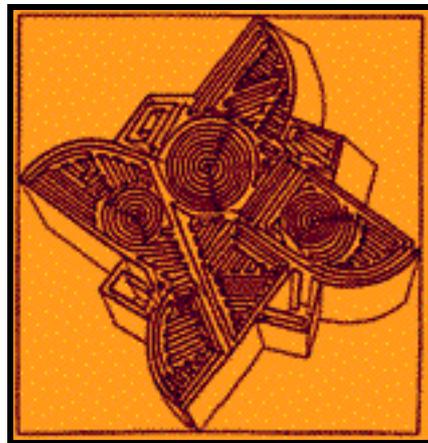
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Intensifiers as Targets and Sources of Semantic Change

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How regular is semantic change?

In contrast to the established view on sound change and morphological change, which seem to be governed by clear restrictions and principles, the prevailing view on semantic change has been for a long time and probably still is that "each word has its own history" (J. Grimm, J. Gilliéron). This pessimistic view has been seriously called into question by some recent studies, which have shown that it is possible to formulate some pervasive generalizations about semantic change. First of all, it has been shown that all semantic changes are instances of a very limited set of possible processes, such as metaphor, metonymy, ellipsis, narrowing, broadening, etc. (Traugott 1985; Blank 1996; Koch 1997). Secondly, it is possible to formulate at least some generalizations about the source domains and target domains involved in such changes, in particular, with regard to metaphorical change. The structuring of temporal domains in terms of spatial notions (space > time) or, more generally, the pervasive change from concrete to abstract are cases in point. Thirdly, various attempts have been made to formulate some generalizations about possible directions of semantic change. E. Traugott's hypothesis that meanings grounded in the socio-physical world of reference develop into meanings grounded in the speaker's world and further into markers of metatextual attitude to the discourse is one of the best known examples (Traugott 1989, 1995).

That semantic change is far from erratic or random and is in fact general and regular to a certain extent is particularly obvious if the focus of investigation is on minor lexical classes (function words) rather than on the major word classes (N, V, Adj, P). The semantic development of such function words does not only reveal some general tendencies of semantic change within a particular language, but also allows cross-linguistic generalizations to be made about typical source and target domains and possible directions of change.

The meaning of intensifiers

Since this paper is centrally concerned with general processes of semantic change involving intensifiers either as target or as source, our analysis has to begin with a brief analysis of their meaning. Intensifiers are expressions like the following:

(1)　　Germ. *selbst*; Russ. *sam*; Ital. *stesso*; Engl. x-*self*; Fr. x-*même*, etc.

There is no general agreement as to how such expressions should be categorized. We find at least a dozen different labels in grammar handbooks or specific studies. The

reason for choosing the term *intensifiers* is not that it is particularly illuminating, but simply that it avoids misleading connotations, in contrast to terms like *emphatic reflexives*. The morphological properties of such intensifiers differ considerably across languages: Intensifiers may be invariant (German, Mandarin, Japanese) and they may inflect for some or all of the following features: person, gender, number and case (Turkic, Slavic, Romance, English). In the latter case they manifest adjectival behavior and typically exhibit agreement with a nominal co-constituent. Among their syntactic properties there is one that seems to be the most reliable criterion for identifying them across languages: In nearly all of the fifty languages investigated so far we found that intensifiers are used as adjuncts to noun phrases, i.e. they combine with a noun phrase to form another noun phrase:

(2)   a. I would like to talk to the Pope himself.
       b. The work of Picasso himself is what I came to see.
       c. The work of Picasso itself …

Furthermore, there seem to be semantic criteria which clearly allow their identification across languages. Intensifiers seem to have at least two uses: an adnominal one and an adverbial one. In addition to functioning as adjuncts to noun phrases (cf. (2)), intensifiers can also be used as part of a verb phrase:

(3)   a. The President wrote that speech himself.
       b. I had a car like that once myself.

As is shown by examples like (3a-b), many languages further differentiate between two such adverbial uses: (i) an exclusive use, roughly paraphrasable by 'alone', 'without help' and (ii) an inclusive use, paraphrasable by 'too'. There is a certain complementarity between these two uses. Only an exclusively used adverbial intensifier can be in the scope of negation and only inclusively used intensifiers can combine with predicates denoting states and processes. Since the relevant contrast is not found in all languages, however, it will play no role in the subsequent discussion.

   To describe the meaning of adnominal intensifiers simply as expressing 'emphasis', 'intensification' or 'unexpectedness' is clearly not very illuminating. Examples like (2) show that such expressions evoke alternatives to the denotation of the expression they combine with. Since this property is generally associated with focusing, it suggests that these expressions should be regarded as focus-sensitive adjectives or particles. Perhaps the evoking of alternatives is then a property of the focusing intensifiers are associated with and the co-constituent they combine with can be analyzed as their focus. This is exactly the view that will be taken here. What then is the real contribution that an adnominal intensifiers makes to the meaning of a sentence? To answer this question for examples like (2a), we need to ask what the alternatives evoked in such cases are. A plausible answer certainly is that they are people associated with the Pope in some way: his Cardinals, his secretary, his collaborators or clergy. An assertion of (2a) is thus tantamount to asserting that the speaker does not want to talk to any of those people from the environment of the Pope. Generalizing from such examples, it is suggested in König (1991) that adnominal intensifiers associate a periphery of alternatives (Y) with a center (X), constituted by the denotation of their focus. Building on this idea, Baker (1995) has distinguished several types of such relations between a center (characterized as

'discourse-prominent' by Baker) and a periphery, which can be illustrated by examples like the following:

(4) a. Bill Clinton himself will sign the document.
     b. The passengers got away injured. The driver himself died on the scene of the accident.
     c. Mary's husband looks after the children. Mary herself has a regular job.
     d. He was not particularly tall, a little taller than Jemima herself perhaps, but his shoulders in the tweed suit were broad, giving an air of authority, and he himself, if not exactly heavy, was certainly a substantial man. [Antonia Fraser, *A Splash of Red*, 1981:88]

A center can be established on the basis of hierarchies in the real world (cf. (2a), (4a)). Intensifiers in their adnominal use can thus always be combined with expressions for people of high rank. In fact, it seems that these are the examples that we think of first whenever we are asked to produce examples with adnominal intensifiers. In our modern egalitarian societies central roles are more typically temporary, rather than permanent. A driver is central, in contrast to the passengers, in all matters of driving and safety, a guide is central during the time of an excursion, etc. (4b). Centrality may also be the result of taking a certain person as point of departure for the identification of others, as in (4c). Note that the intensifier in this example could not be combined with the expression *Mary's husband*. Finally, a person may be used as the center of observation or perspective in a narrative and become central in that sense. The final example (4d) is a case in point. Following Baker (1995), the conditions for using adnominal intensifiers can thus be summarized as follows:

(5) conditions for the use of adnominal x-*self* (Baker 1995)
     a. X has a higher rank than Y on a real-world hierarchy
     b. X is more important than Y in a specific situation
     c. Y is identified relative to X (kinship terms, part-whole, etc.)
     d. X is the subject of consciousness, center of observation, etc. (logophoricity)

In German there are expressions often used as titles for pictures which nicely illustrate the points made above:

(6) *Maria selbdritt*
     Mary   self-three
     'Mary together with two persons'

In contrast to the adnominal use, the adverbial (exclusive) use of intensifiers will not play a prominent role in the subsequent discussion. We will therefore only say that sentences with exclusively used adverbial intensifiers make an assertion which can be roughly represented by the relevant sentences without intensifiers, but with an information structure in which the agent subject is focused against the rest of the sentence as background. Moreover, there is a presupposition to the effect that it is the denotation of the subject which profits or suffers most as a result of the relevant action:

(7) a. The President wrote the speech himself.
     b. [[the President]$_F$ wrote the speech] (assertion)
     c. The President is primarily affected. (presupposition)

The expressions listed in (1) are the most prominent representatives of intensifiers in the languages mentioned, i.e. they are the ones most frequently used, exhibiting the fewest restrictions and the greatest versatility in their use. The list given in (1) should not be taken to suggest, however, that there is only one single intensifier in each language. The following examples from German show that languages typically have more than one intensifier, even if their number is very limited in each case:

(8) (*höchst*)*selbst*, (*höchst*)*persönlich*, *eigen*, *leibhaftig*, *in Person*, *von selbst*, *von sich aus*, *an sich*, (*von*) *allein*

Processes of semantic change with intensifiers as targets and sources

In this section only a brief overview of all changes involving intensifiers as sources or targets will be given. Each of the changes listed will then be discussed in detail in a subsequent section.

Intensifiers frequently derive from expressions for body parts. *Leibhaftig* in German is the clearest example we can find in that language. Intensifiers may further develop into reflexive anaphors. The development of reflexive pronouns in English as a result of a fusion between personal pronouns and the intensifier *self* (*him + self > himself*) as well as similar developments in Afrikaans are clear examples.

(9) 'body parts' > intensifiers > reflexive anaphors

Intensifiers may also, so it seems, adopt the meaning of their focus and be used in the sense of 'master', 'boss', etc., i.e. they may come to express roles of high rank, normally expressed by a typical focus. It is a very similar development that gives rise to the use of intensifiers as polite or honorific pronouns, a usage that is found in Turkish and Japanese, for example. Given such developments, it also is not surprising that intensifiers should have a euphemistic use, as is found in the Celtic areas of the British Isles.

(10) intensifiers > social roles > honorific pronouns > euphemisms

A very different development is indicated by the polysemy found in many languages for intensifiers. In addition to the adnominal use discussed above, many languages use the same expressions pre-nominally as scalar focus particles expressing unlikely instantiations of values in certain contexts. In other words the relevant meanings correspond to Engl. *even*.

(11) intensifiers > scalar additive focus particles

In German *selbst* exhibits both uses, in contrast to *selber*, which is only used as an intensifier:

(12)   a.   Der Papst selbst/selber wird uns besuchen.
             'The Pope himself will come to visit us.'
       b.   *Selbst der Papst wäre hier ratlos.*
             'Even the Pope would not know what to do.'

Especially the Romance languages show that intensifiers may be involved in the development of demonstrative pronouns (Sp. *ese*). From these demonstratives, definite articles and personal pronouns may develop (Sardinian, Catalan).

(13)   intensifiers > demonstrative pronouns > definite articles/personal pronouns

Finally, we also find that intensifiers frequently develop into expressions indicating type identity (Sp. *mismo*).

From expressions for body parts to intensifiers

A wide variety of languages for which the relevant connection is still visible synchronically show that intensifiers often develop from expressions for body parts ('body', 'soul', 'head', 'eye', 'bone', 'person' (< *persona* 'mask'). The following examples illustrate this historical and synchronic connection (cf. Moravcsik 1972):

(14)   Arab. *ayn* 'eye'; Arab. *nafs* 'soul'; Amharic *ras-* 'head'; Georgian *tviton*, *tavi* 'head'; Germ. *leibhaftig*; Hausa *ni dakaina* 'I with my head'; Hebrew *etsem* 'bone'; Hung. *maga* 'seed'; Jap. *zi-sin* 'body'; Okinawan *duna* 'body'; Rum. *insumi* 'person'; etc.

Given such convincing cross-linguistic evidence, Grimm's (1967) hypothesis that Germ. *selbst* derives from *si-liba* 'his body' is not all that implausible, even if it is not fully convincing. For most intensifiers in European languages the etymology is unclear, except for those cases where the source is provided by Lat. *persona* (< 'mask'), such as *personally*, *in person*, etc.

   To reconstruct the path leading from expressions for body parts to intensifiers is no easy matter, given that we only have the beginning point and endpoint, but no information on stages in between. It is quite plausible to assume that the relevant change started in contexts like (2a) and (4a) and thus was essentially based on hierarchical structures in social groups. Persons of high rank could get things done by proxy. A formulation like 'The duke did that' was quite appropriate for such scenarios. Only their presence ('in person') was remarkable and noteworthy. The addition of such a proto-intensifier to a noun had the effect of eliminating the entourage of the high-ranking person as a possible referent and thus had the overall result describable as semantic narrowing. The next step could have been a metonymic change. The intensifier picked up the feature of characterizing a referent as central from its context and thus came to be associated with imposing a structure on a set of persons including the referent of its co-constituent and contextually given alternatives in terms of center vs. entourage and later center vs. periphery. If intensifiers were originally only used in combination with the names of persons of high rank, the other three uses listed in (5) can be assumed to be later developments. They would be, in fact, another instance of a change towards further subjectivization in the sense of Traugott (1989). These assumptions are supported by a substantial body of evidence:

i.   In the texts of older periods of European languages, intensifiers are primarily used with names of high-ranking persons. In Old English, for example, *self* was primarily used with nouns like *Crist, Haeland, God, Drihten, deofol, cyning*, etc. (Farr 1905:19).

ii. In many languages at least some intensifiers can only be combined with a human focus. Examples are Turk. *kendi*, Jap. *zisin*, Mand. *ziji*, Bengali *nije*, Ital. *in persona*. In other words, here we find a situation which is closer to the original selectional restrictions. In other languages intensifiers can be assumed to have extended their territory to all the contexts described in (5).

iii. Some languages seem to have developed new expressions which recreate, as it were, the original selectional restriction, i.e. that only combine with expressions for persons of exalted rank: *höchstpersönlich, höchstselbst* in German, *selveste* in Norwegian, *sahsiyyan* in Arabic*, in persona* in Italian, etc. That these new expressions are more complex than the original intensifiers, whose combinatorial potential had been extended, is to be expected. This fact finds a parallel in the frequent phenomenon that new, more complex local prepositions are created once the older ones are primarily used in a temporal sense.

From intensifiers to reflexive anaphors

A wide variety of languages use the same expression both as intensifier and as a marker of co-reference in a local domain, i.e. as reflexive pronoun. In Europe this phenomenon is relatively rare, but it can be found in the Finno-Ugric and Celtic languages and in English. Outside of Europe the double use of the same expression both as intensifier and as reflexive pronoun seems to be the majority pattern. It is found *inter alia* in Turkic languages, in Semitic languages, in many Caucasian languages, in Indic languages, in Persian, Mandarin and many others. For most of these languages it does not seem to be possible to identify a direction of change. Clear evidence for such a direction is, however, provided by West Germanic languages such as English or Afrikaans. In Old English there were no reflexive pronouns and personal pronouns did double duty as markers of disjoint reference and as markers of co-reference in a local domain. After modest beginnings in Old English and even in Middle English the intensifier *self* was more and more used in combination with object pronouns to indicate co-reference unambiguously:

(15) a. *Hannibal … hine selfne mid atre acwealde* [King Alfred's Orosius 4 11.110.2; Bately, 1980]
          'Hannibal killed himself with poison.'
      b. *Judas se arleasa de urne Hǽlend belǽwde for dam lydran scaette de he lufode unrihtlice aheng hine selfne* [Admonito ad filium spiritualem 19. 25, Norman 1848]
          'Judas the disgraceful who betrayed our Lord for that wicked money that he loved unrighteously hanged himself.'

These combinations of personal pronouns and intensifiers were later fused into one word and developed into reflexive anaphors in a process that is still not completely understood. At the same time, the original monosyllabic intensifier *self* was replaced by such compounded forms, so that intensifiers and reflexive anaphors are identical in

form, even if not in distribution, in Modern English. To this piece of positive evidence for a direction of change from intensifier to reflexive anaphor we can add the general argument that reflexive anaphors are more strongly grammaticalized than intensifiers and can also for this reason be assumed to be the target of a change connecting these two classes of expressions.

What we have not considered so far is the question of how a fusion of personal pronouns and intensifiers can lead to reflexive pronouns, i.e. result in expressions that mark co-reference in a local domain. Recall that in Old English a sentence of the form (16) could either express co-reference or disjoint reference of the third person pronoun:

(16)   *he acwealde hine*
       'he killed him/himself'

Now it is quite plausible to assume that an interpretation of disjoint reference was the preferred or unmarked option. Most activities denoted by verbs in a language are preferentially other-directed, i.e. the standard assumption is that these activities are outward directed, away from the agent. The opposite assumption seems to be the unmarked choice only for a very small subset of verbs: verbs of grooming, of defending, preparing seem to be self-directed in the standard case. So, whenever a simple personal pronoun appeared in a sentence like (16), the standard interpretation was one of disjoint reference. In order to indicate the marked option unambiguously, the intensifier could be used in Old and Middle English and was standardly used from Early Modern English onwards. The relevant meaning of the intensifier seems to have been the one discussed for the adnominal use above. When an intensifier was added to the pronoun the referent was characterized as center and opposed to a periphery. In the absence of any contextual information of the type listed in (5) the center was clearly the agent, the referent of the subject, as opposed to other persons towards the relevant activity could be directed. For *hine* in (16) to be interpreted as disjoint from the subject after the addition of *self*, alternatives to such a referent would have to be given in the context.

So far our assumption has been that the path from body parts to reflexive anaphors necessarily involves intensifiers as an intermediate stage. There is, however, clear evidence that such an intermediate step is not necessary. Expressions for body parts may lead directly to reflexive markers. In Basque, for example, the reflexive marker *burua* 'head' is not used as an intensifier and similar facts have been reported from other languages. Moreover, it is a well-known fact that inherently reflexive verbs or reflexive uses of verbs may develop from constructions with objects denoting part-whole relations as a result of metonymic change. The following English example from the end of the 18th century, which clearly has a co-referential, reflexive interpretation, is an interesting case in point:

(17)   Women who have lost their husbands' affection, are justly reproved for
       neglecting their persons, and not taking the same pains to keep, as to gain a
       heart …
       [Mary Wollstonecraft, *The Wrongs of Woman*, 1798]

From intensifiers to prominent roles

Intensifiers in Balto-Slavic languages exhibit an interesting type of polysemy. The expressions for intensifiers are also used in the sense of 'husband', 'lord/lady of the house', i.e. they may denote important, prominent social roles.

(18)   Lith. *pàts* 'self', 'husband', *patì* 'wife'; Latv. *pats* 'self', 'Lord of the house'

Similar usages are also found in Latin, Classical Greek and Russian, even if this does not seem to be a matter of polysemy.

(19)   a.   Russ. *sam skazal* 'the master/the husband said'
     b.   Lat. *ipse/ipsissimus dixit* 'the master said'
     c.   Class. Greek *autòs* 'the master', 'the lord of the house', 'the teacher'

That such usage is not strictly a matter of polysemy, i.e. of *la langue*, is pointed out by Benveniste in the following quotation:

> L'emploi de *ipse* pour le maitre de maison est un simple fait de 'parole', il na jamais atteint le niveau de la 'langue'. [Benveniste 1966:302]

A similar usage can also be found in Hiberno-English as the following examples show:

(20)   a.   It's himself is going to speak.
     b.   Herself isn't too good again.
     c.   How is himself?
     d.   Herself isn't here right now. (i.e. the person salient in a specific context)

The relevant changes in Balto-Slavic as well as the incipient changes or extended uses are clearly based on ellipsis. The intensifier itself expresses the central role of a contextually given focus. In Irish English *himself* or *herself* can simply refer to a person who is salient in a given context. The conditions for such changes or extensions in usage are nicely summarized by Benveniste in the following quotation:

> Pour qu'un adjective signifiant 'soi-même' s'amplifie jusqu'au sens de 'maitre', une condition est necessaire: un cercle fermé de personnes, subordonné à un personnage central qui assume la personalité, l'identité complète du groupe au point de la résumer en lui-même, à lui seul, il l'incarne. [Benveniste 1969:91]

The relevant condition is a hierarchically structured social group with a prominent personality representing this group.

    The use of intensifiers in contexts where personal pronouns are normally used, particularly in subject position, is a related phenomenon. Due to the basic meaning of adnominal intensifiers, such usage is polite and honorific. In Turkish *kendi* can be used for all persons, speaker, hearer and other. In Japanese *zibun* is only used for speaker or hearer and, to give a third example, *nerrorek* in Basque is an archaic form which could be used as a honorific pronoun to address persons of high rank such as priests. Finally, there is the use of intensifiers as euphemisms. On the Isle of Man, for example, sentences like (21) are apparently used to refer to small people:

(21)   Themselves were not out on the streets today.

Intensifiers and scalar focus particles

In a wide variety of languages intensifiers, or related expressions, are also used in the sense of English 'even', i.e. as scalar focus particles, which characterize their focus as an extreme, or maximally unlikely value for the open sentence which constitutes their scope. In a sentence like the following George is characterized as a highly unlikely candidate for the predication 'x will go to that party':

(22) Even George will go to that party.

A further aspect of meaning that distinguishes scalar focus particles from intensifiers is the 'additive' implication that alternatives to the value given will make the sentence true, i.e. other people than George will go to the party. This use of intensifiers or related expressions as scalar additive focus particles can be found in languages like the following:

(23) Germ. *selbst* (but not *selber*); Norw. *selv*; Dutch *zelfs*; French *même*

As is shown by this list, the relevant polysemy is a wide-spread phenomenon among the languages of Europe. What the exact path of the relevant extension or change is, is completely unclear. The only relevant observation that can be made here is that there are contexts in which intensifiers and additive scalar particles are interchangeable. In the relevant contexts the denotation of the focus must be characterized by the context as an extreme case for a predication that is also made true by other values. Note that in the case of intensifiers these aspects of meaning come from the context. All the intensifier does is establish the usual relation between center and periphery:

(24) a. In such basic issues the Pope himself would not know what to do.
      b. (This picture is very valuable) The frame itself would cost a fortune.

Such sentences clearly allow a paraphrase with *even*.

(25) a. Even the Pope would not know what to do.
      b. Even the frame would cost a fortune.

Note that the additive implication is due to the conditional mood of these sentences. The characterization as an extreme value for an open sentence is based on contextual knowledge. What the intensifier shares with scalar focus particles is the evoking of alternatives, and compared to the plausible alternatives, the focus of the intensifier in sentences like (24) is clearly an extreme, maximally unlikely value. Sentences like (24) can thus be assumed to provide the transition point for the relevant change, which could again be characterized as an abductive one. Different compositional processes can be assumed to lead to the same overall result.

There is one more detail in the change from an intensifier to an additive scalar particle that needs to be mentioned. Intensifiers in their adnominal use do not have scope over a clause, but take their scope purely within the NP with which they combine. Evidence for this claim is provided by the fact that adnominal intensifiers can never take scope over other scope-bearing elements. Moreover, the rest of the sentence other than the NP which they follow never plays any role in spelling out the contribution to the meaning of a sentence. All an adnominal intensifier contributes to

a sentence is the evoking of alternatives and their characterization as periphery to the referent of the focus, characterized as center. Scalar additive focus particles, by contrast, do usually take scope over the clause that contains them, which is clearly demonstrated by the fact that they have the additive implication in sentences which do not normally suggest that alternatives to the focus referent will make the relevant predication true:

(26) a. The President himself will address the meeting.
      b. Even the President will address the meeting.

From intensifiers to expressions of definiteness

As pointed out in (13) above, intensifiers may develop into demonstrative pronouns and further into definite articles. Intensifiers may also develop into expressions indicating type identity, personal pronouns and other anaphoric expressions. The following observations will mainly be based on the Romance languages.

That the Latin intensifiers *ipse* developed into a demonstrative pronoun is well-documented in the modern Romance languages, cf. Cat. *eix*, Port. *esse*, Sp. *ese*. In view of the fact that Lat. *ipse* is the result of compounding the Latin demonstrative pronoun *is* with the intensifier *-pse*, the subsequent development of *ipse* into a demonstrative pronoun is certainly not entirely unexpected.

It is also a well-known fact that demonstrative pronouns can develop into definite articles. This can be observed in German, where the articles *der*, *die*, *das* were originally used as demonstratives, but also within the group of Romance languages itself. Here the source of most modern definite articles can be found in Lat. *ille*, cf. Fr. *le*, *la*; Ital. *il*, *la*; Port. *o*, *a*; Sp. *el*, *la*. The underlying use of *ille* that allowed for this development is that as a determiner, not as a pronoun. We are here confronted with a clear process of semantic bleaching. Demonstratives are deictic expressions of definiteness, and when these expressions lose their deictic component and only retain the ability to pick out a unique referent in a certain discourse domain or world, they develop into definite articles. Hand in hand with this development has gone the emergence of an obligatory definite/indefinite marking on nominals.

Sardinian and those dialects of Catalan spoken on the Balearic Islands did not use *ille* as source for the development of the definite article, but derived it from *ipse* instead, cf. Sard. *su*, *sa*; Cat. *es*, *sa*. Interestingly enough, the relevant dialects of Catalan have another set of definite articles, viz. those derived from *ille* (*el*, *la*). Their use, however, is mainly restricted to adverbials (*a l'hora de la mort*) and proper names (*l'Havana, el Papa*). There are even some minimal pairs. Thus, *s'església* refers to a particular church as a building whereas *l'Església* denotes the (Catholic) Church as an institution. Also, *es senyor* means 'gentleman' or 'owner', but *el Senyor* is reserved for 'the Lord' (cf. Hualde 1992:281; Seguí i Trobat 1993:35). To base the definite article on *ipse* appears to have been the original strategy in the linguistic domain where Catalan is spoken today. Those derived from *ille* were superimposed during the 12th and 13th century. The original situation is preserved in a number of place-names: *Sant Joan Despí*, *Collserola*, *Sant Esteve Sesrovires* (Seguí i Trobat 1993:33).

Another possible development of demonstrative pronouns is that of 3rd person personal pronouns. Although most of the modern Romance languages used Lat. *ille* as the source of this development (Fr. *il*, *elle*; Ital. *egli*, *ella*; Port. *ele*, *ela*; Sp. *él*, *ella*), Sardinian derived them from Lat. *ipse*, cf. *isse*, *issa* (Campidanese *issu*). As in the

case of definite articles, this development can also be assumed to be due to semantic bleaching. Note, however, that the relevant source are demonstratives in their use as pronouns, not as determiners. Again, the deictic component is lost and what remains is the referential function. It appears noteworthy that Sard. *isse* may also be used as a respectful form of address and that it is by and large restricted to animate referents. Apart from Lat. *ipse*, Lat. *ille* too left its imprint on the Sardinian pronominal system. The clitic pronouns found there are clearly derived from this demonstrative and are in fact preferred in direct/indirect object positions (cf. Jones 1993:201):

(27) a. ?*Appo datu su dinari a issos.*
     b. *Lis appo datu su dinari.*
        'I gave the money to them.'

This does not mean that *isse* could not be found in object positions. However, if it is used there, it always implies some element of contrast:

(28) *Appo vistu a issos, ma no'a tie.*
     'I saw them, but not you.'

Another possible path of development that intensifiers can take is the one to expressions of type identity (Port. *mesmo*, Sp. *mismo*). In the French expression *même*, we even find formal identity between Lat. *ipse* and *idem*. In the course of this development, the Lat. enclitic pronominal intensifier *-met* became prefixed to *ipse* (*mismo < meísmo < medipsimus < -met ipsimus*). What seems to have been grammaticalized here is the discourse-anaphoric or discourse-deictic function of *ipse*. This expression could regularly be used to pick up information which had been established in the previous discourse. Anaphoricity can be analyzed as the expression of identity, but this is at first restricted to cases of token identity. When this expression of identity is extended to also cover cases of type identity, we arrive at the meaning of Sp. *mismo* in contexts like the following:

(29) *Tengo el mismo coche que mi hermano.*
     'I've got the same car as my brother.'

In Sardinian we also find anaphoric uses of the pronominal forms derived from Lat. *ipse*. Still, this use of Sard. *isse* appears to be restricted to those positions where it is not a co-argument to its antecedent. In co-argument positions the reflexive clitic *si* is used invariably. In contrast to the reflexive clitic, *isse* in itself is not confined to the co-referential interpretation (cf. Jones 1993:241):

(30) *Juanne$_i$ credet ki Gavini$_j$ l'at comporatu pro isse$_{i/j/k}$.*
     'John thinks that Gavin bought it for him/himself.'

The co-referential interpretation can be forced by adding an intensifier (*e tottu* (lit. 'and all') or *mattessi* 'same') to the anaphoric pronoun. This strategy to restrict the binding domain of an anaphoric expression is strikingly parallel to what we find in Old English, Afrikaans or Frisian.

(31) *Juanne$_i$ credet ki Gavini$_j$ l'at comporatu pro isse e tottu$_j$/isse mattessi$_j$.*
     'John thinks that Gavin bought it for himself.'

Conclusion

However tentative some of the observations and assumptions are that were made above, the picture that emerges provides further evidence for the view that semantic change is not as random and unpredictable as it is often assumed to be. The development of minor lexical categories, in particular, exhibits a great deal of similarity across languages and seems to follow one of a limited number of possible paths. The processes of semantic change exhibited by the development of function words are partly those found in the development of major lexical categories, but there is also a certain element of generality, predictability and unidirectionality not found in the development of nouns, verbs or adjectives.

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