Pragmaticalization vs. grammaticalization
- Evidence from the historical evolution of Chinese pragmatic markers

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Outline

• 1. Background
• 2. Data and methodology
• 3. Diachronic analysis
• 4. Destruction
• 5. Construction
• 6. Conclusions
Background

• The rise of pragmatic markers
  • Group One: Gzn ---- divergence, layering, decategorization, morphologization
  • Group two: NOT Gzn
    • Pragmaticalization
• NOTE: minority (the rise of PMs as lexicalization)
Background

• Through probing into how NIKAN (you see) and WOKAN (I see) evolve to emerge and function as pragmatic markers from expressions of non-pragmatic origins in the corpus of ancient Chinese, the paper attempts to address the following four issues:
  • a) Is it really necessary to include the development of pragmatic markers under the concept of grammaticalization?
  • b) If not, then how shall we conceptualize pragmaticalization?
  • c) What kind of role does unidirectionality, “the bedrock of grammaticalization” (Norde 2010: 68), play in the historical evolution of Chinese pragmatic markers?
  • d) How to solve the borderline issue between pragmaticalization and grammaticalization?
Data and methodology

• A large amount of authentic language data from the Ancient Chinese Corpus designed by the Center for Chinese Linguistics (CCL) Peking University.

Table 1. Periodization of the Chinese Language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Beginning</th>
<th>Ending</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Old Chinese</td>
<td>1046 BC</td>
<td>220 AD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Chinese</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>907</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Mandarin</td>
<td>907</td>
<td>1368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Mandarin</td>
<td>1368</td>
<td>The 19th Century</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modern Mandarin</td>
<td>The 19th Century</td>
<td>Present</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 2 Distribution of WOKAN and NIKAN in Each Chronological Division of the History of Chinese

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division</th>
<th>WOKAN</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>NIKAN</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Middle Chinese</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Six Dynasties</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tang</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Old Mandarin</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five Dynasties</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Song</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Song</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>28</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yuan</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Middle Mandarin</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ming</td>
<td>321</td>
<td>2370</td>
<td>773</td>
<td>2831</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qing</td>
<td>2049</td>
<td></td>
<td>2058</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>2390</td>
<td></td>
<td>2884</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Methodology

• As to the methodology, I search the corpus for target forms and analyze and compare the discursive behaviors of these forms at different historical periods according to the periodization of the Chinese language so as to investigate the evolution of these two expressions.

• WOKAN: 吾看 WUKAN, 余看 YUKAN, 予看 YUKAN, 愚看 YUKAN

• NIKAN: 汝看 RVKAN, 女看 RVKAN, 尔看 ERKAN, 若看 RUOKAN, 而看 ERKAN, 乃看 NAIKAN
Historical development of WOKAN and NIKAN into pragmatic markers in Chinese

• **XKAN1**: X + KAN \{pronoun + predicate verb\}
  
  如来遣我看*(WOKAN1)*慈母 （《敦煌变文集》）

• **XKAN2**: pragmatic markers
  
  如这事 我看*(WOKAN2)*得如此，与他说亦是如此，只此便是信。 （《朱子语类》）

• **XKAN1 > XKAN2**
Historical development of WOKAN

• WOKAN1 > WOKAN1/2 > WOKAN2a > WOKAN2b
• Both WOKAN2a and WOKAN2b function as pragmatic markers
• Dissimilarities: WOKAN2a is followed by an NP which is visible to the naked eye and present at the CT while WOKAN2b by an NP which is invisible or not present at the CT.
Cases of WOKAN1/2 are exemplified in (1):
- (1) 我看(WOKAN1/2)见这些做官的，都不得有甚好收场。(《儒林外史》)
- WOKAN1/2 those officials will come to no good end.

WOKAN1/2 is ambiguous between WOKAN1 and WOKAN2

(2) 我看见这些做官的，都不得有甚好收场

(3) 我看见这些做官的，都不得有甚好收场
• The general syntactic characteristics of WOKAN1/2 can be summarized as follows:

• 1) KAN is usually followed by a NP that refers to concrete objects and can be seen with the naked eye.

• 2) WOKAN1/2 usually occurs in the sentence which contains a SVC
• The syntactic environments of these four usages of WOKAN are captured in (4)-(7):
  • (4) WOKAN1 + NP (seeable and present at the CT)
  • (5) WOKAN1/2 + NP (seeable and present at the CT) + VP
  • (6) WOKAN2a + NP (seeable and not present at the CT) + VP
  • (7) WOKAN2b + NP (unseeable or not present at the CT) + VP
### Table 5 Distribution of WOKAN in Various Stages of the Chinese Language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>WOKAN1</th>
<th>WOKAN1/2</th>
<th>WOKAN2a</th>
<th>WOKAN2b</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Middle Chinese</td>
<td>2 (100%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Mandarin</td>
<td>15 (83%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2 (11%)</td>
<td>1 (6%)</td>
<td>18 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Mandarin</td>
<td>71 (61%)</td>
<td>2 (2%)</td>
<td>32 (27%)</td>
<td>12 (10%)</td>
<td>117 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Middle Chinese</th>
<th>Old Mandarin</th>
<th>Middle Mandarin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WOKAN</td>
<td>WOKAN</td>
<td>WOKAN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ideational</td>
<td>&gt; Ideational</td>
<td>&gt; Ideational</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td></td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Figure 2 Functional Change in WOKAN’s Pragmaticalization**
Historical development of NIKAN

- NIKAN1 > NIKAN1a > NIKAN1a/2 > NIKAN2
- In both NIKAN1 and NIKAN1a, KAN still functions as a main verb;
- The distinctness: in all cases of NIKAN1a, the verb KAN is used with direct illocutionary force (performativized):
  - (8) 宋永初三年，谢南康家婢，行逢一黑狗，语婢云：“汝看(NIKAN1a)我背后。”（《搜神后记》(365 AD-427AD)）
• NIKAN1a/2 can receive two interpretations between NIKAN1a and NIKAN2

(9) 您看 我家用兵  有走的么

1  2

3  4

(10) 您看 我家用兵  有走的么

1  2

3  4

《大宋宣和遗事》
Table 9 Distribution of NIKAN in Various Stages of the Chinese Language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NIKAN1</th>
<th>NIKAN1a</th>
<th>NIKAN1a/2</th>
<th>NIKAN2</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Middle Chinese</td>
<td>4 (67%)</td>
<td>2 (33%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Mandarin</td>
<td>15 (32%)</td>
<td>3 (6%)</td>
<td>15 (32%)</td>
<td>14 (30%)</td>
<td>47 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Mandarin</td>
<td>40 (23%)</td>
<td>16 (9%)</td>
<td>36 (20%)</td>
<td>85 (48%)</td>
<td>177 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Middle Chinese
NIKAN
Ideational

Old Mandarin
NIKAN
Ideational

Middle Mandarin
NIKAN
Ideational

NIKAN

ideational > textual > Textual

Interpersonal

Figure 4 Functional Change in NIKAN’s Pragmaticalization
Destruction - Historical development of pragmatic markers as instances of pragmaticalization

• I attribute the historical evolution of pragmatic markers to the framework of pragmaticalization instead of grammaticalization by first arguing that pragmatic markers are not grammatical categories.

• I then move on to prove that neither Lehman’s morpheme-based approach, Traugott’s discourse-based approach nor the principle of unidirectionality fit in with the evidence from the diachronic evolution of WOKAN and NIKAN into pragmatic markers.
Pragmatic markers: grammatical category or not?

• Jakobson (1959: 489) and Mel’cuk (1976: 84): the essential criterion of grammatical categories is **obligatoriness**: a meaning is grammatical in L if the speaker cannot choose to leave it unspecified (Lehmann 1995).
• Heine, Claudi and Hunnemeyer (1991) enumerate for us the following characteristics of grammatical elements or categories:
  – a. They are more abstract than other concepts.
  – b. They are synsemantic
  – c. They belong to closed categories.
  – d. They are relational.
  – e. They tend to form a system.
  – f. They contribute to the structure, whereas non-grammatical elements contribute to the content.
  – g. They tend to be encoded linguistically as nonlexical forms such as auxiliaries, prepositions, clitics and affixes.
Direct evidence from the diachronic evolution

- Lehmann’s morpheme-based Gzn

Table 10 Lehmann’s Parameters of Grammaticalization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>paradigmatic</th>
<th>syntagmatic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>weight</td>
<td>integrity</td>
<td>structural scope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cohesion</td>
<td>paradigmaticity</td>
<td>bondedness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>variability</td>
<td>paradigmatic variability</td>
<td>syntagmatic variability</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Traugott holds a very different view of grammar:
• The view of grammar adopted here is that it structures cognitive and communicative aspects of language. It encompasses not only phonology, morphosyntax and semantics but also inferences that arise out of linguistic form, in other words, linguistic pragmatics such as topicalization, deixis. On this view, other kinds of pragmatics including encyclopedic knowledge are not part of grammar, but are important in the speaker-addressee negotiation that motivates change. (Traugott 1995b)
• However, Lehmann (2005) clearly warns that:
• It is unwise to elevate grammaticalization to the status of ‘creation of grammar’ per se. This necessarily renders the concept wide and heterogeneous, with the consequence that it becomes less apt to generate falsifiable empirical generalizations and to be integrated into an articulated theory of language change and language activity. (see also Noël 2007: 7)
• Ariel (2010: 247) states that grammar must at the same time be viewed as less responsible for utterance use and interpretation than was previously thought.

• Ariel (2010: 247-248) points out that Sperber and Wilson (1986), Kempson (1986) and Carston (2002) are certainly right to assume that grammar is highly underdetermined with respect to meaning.
Evidence against unidirectionality

• It is true that the evolution of $XKaN$ from $XKaN1$ to $XKaN2$ shows the decrease of semantic content, i.e., its meaning becomes more abstract and procedural. Unidirectionality, however, is defied at the syntactic level.
The historical process involved in the derivation of XKAN1/2 from XKAN1 clearly demonstrates the tendency of decreased syntagmatic variability, or syntactic freedom. However, the evolution of XKAN from XKAN1/2 to the PM use, i.e., XKAN2 shows an increase of syntactic freedom, because the PM use of XKAN is syntactically and semantically more separated from the following NP + VP combination.

Figure 5 Pragmaticalization of XKAN and Unidirectionality
## Construction: Morpheme-based approach to pragmaticalization

### Table 11 Morpheme-based approach to pragmaticalization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameters</th>
<th>Changes involved in XKAN’s pragmaticalization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>integrity</td>
<td>Desemanticization: loss of semantic content; pragmatic strengthening: gaining and increasing of pragmatic meanings instead of grammatical ones;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structural scope</td>
<td>Scope expansion: having extended or increased syntactic and semantic scope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>paradigmaticity</td>
<td>no clear indication of increasing or decreasing of paradigmaticity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bondedness</td>
<td>Debonding: becoming less bonded; increasing of freedom in respect of juxtaposition with other elements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paradigmatic variability</td>
<td>Deobligatorification: becoming unobligatory in discourse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syntagmatic variability</td>
<td>Flexibilization: increase of syntagmatic variability; having no fixed positions in the sentence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Two points deserve clarification here.
• Firstly, all these parameters presented in the above table are not absolute criteria.
• Secondly, as far as the evidence from the present historical inquires is concerned, pragmaticalization has more similarities with degrammaticalization (Norde, 2010; Trousdale and Norde 2013) in terms of desemanticization, scope expansion, debonding, deobligatorification, and flexibilization. This may serve as further evidence to my stance that pragmatization and grammaticalization are different processes of language change.
A construction grammar approach to the rise of pragmatic markers

• Firstly, in construction grammar, there is no strict division between lexicon and grammar; instead, construction is the basic building block of language.

• Secondly, by adopting construction grammar, we can focus more on the coevolution of form and meaning, instead of focusing on strings or only one side of the meaning-form pair.

• [In constructions] semantics, morphosyntax, and phonology, and, in some models, pragmatics, work together in a construction (Traugott 2007)
Figure 6: Construction grammar approach to WOKAN’s pragmaticalization

- Stage I: [WOKAN1+ NP]
  - Verb phrase

- Stage II: [WOKAN1/ 2+NP+VP]
  - Ambiguous between WOKAN1 and WOKAN2

- Stage III: [WOKAN2a +[NP+VP]]
  - Pragmatic marker of self-quotiation

- Stage IV: [WOKAN2b +[NP+VP]]
  - Pragmatic marker of self-quotiation
Macro-construction

PRONOUN + Verb (saying/mental)

Meso-Construction1

Pronoun+Verb (thinking)

Meso-Construction2

Pronoun+Verb (saying)

1st person + Verb (thinking)

Micro-construction

2nd person + Verb (thinking)

1st person + 看 (see)

1st person + 想 (think)

2nd person + 想 (think)

2nd person + 看 (see)

Construct

WOKAN （我看）

NIKAN （你看）
Figure 7: Construction grammar approach to PRON +Verb construction’ pragmaticalization
• **Conclusions**
• 1) The rise of pragmatic markers is pragmaticalization instead of grammaticalization.
• 2) Construction grammar together with the notion of constructionalization may enable us to capture generalizations about pragmaticalization and grammaticalization.
• 3) The CxG approach can not only provide us with a holistic view of language evolution, but also explains the dynamic correlation between the verbs and the (macro)construction in the historical evolution
• Work in progress…
• Constructionalization
• Constructionalization and unidirectionality
• Cross-linguistic evidence
References

• Thank you!