

Conjunctions and sentence-final particles: two processes of grammaticalization

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Observing the “final *but*” phenomena, Mulder and Thompson (2006, 2008) postulate a grammaticalization continuum from “initial *but*” to “final *but*” with no “leap” (2008: 196). According to their account, “final *but*” is divided into three stages “final 1 (final hanging) *but*,” “indeterminate,” and “final 2 (final particle) *but*,” analyzed respectively as having structures like [X *but*], [X/Y *but*], and [Y *but*] on the basis of the unmarked structure [X *but*, Y]. However, recognizing the presence of two heterogeneous structures ([X *but*] and [Y *but*]) in “final *but*,” we have argued that the two structures are analyzed as deriving from different syntactic processes: TRUNCATION and BACKSHIFT (Izutsu and Izutsu 2010). [X *but*] is analyzable as resulting from cutting [Y] off the underlying compound sentence structure, while [Y *but*] involves backshifting of *but* (i.e., using the conjunction after Y).

Truncation and backshift are similarly observed with conjunctions in Common Colloquial Japanese and some of its dialects. The present paper demonstrates that the two processes operate on both Japanese subordinate and coordinate conjunctions and motivate their developments into sentence final particles (SFPs). Truncation is responsible for the development of subordinate conjunctions into SFPs, and backshift is for that of coordinate conjunctions into SFPs. Japanese complex sentences have the unmarked structure [X-SUBORD, Y]. This structure often allows the main clause [Y] to be cut off, yielding the structure [X-SUBORD.], which is often called “suspended clauses” (Ohori 1996). Subordinate conjunctions occurring in this structure have a sense of hanging implication (e.g., *Wakaru-kedo*.... “Although I know what you mean....”). However, some of them have obtained new emphatic and emotive meanings and are now conventionalized as SFPs, as shown in B(i) below. On the other hand, Japanese coordinate sentences have the unmarked structure [X. COORD Y]. The coordinate conjunctions (COORDS) are sometimes backshifted to the position after the second conjunct [Y] like “final 2 (final particle) *but*,” as given in B(ii). Some of them have acquired emphatic and emotive meanings, which are hardly expressed in the sentence-initial position. This development is further conventionalized in some dialects of Japanese, where some coordinate conjunctions more or less approximate the status of SFPs.

- A: *Kono hon kat-ta hoogaii-yo!*
this book buy-PAST had:better-FP
‘You should buy this book.’
- B: (i) *Hakkiri it-te, takai-n-da-kedo!*
frankly say-CP expensive-FN-COP-though
‘Quite frankly it’s expensive!’
- (ii) *Dakara takai-n-dat-tebaa, demoo!*
so expensive-FN-COP-FP but
‘I’m telling you it is expensive!’

In other words, whether they are subordinate or coordinate conjunctions and whichever process they undergo, Japanese sentence-final conjunctions are inclined towards sentence-final particles with new emphatic and emotive meanings.

Interestingly, however, there is an exception in these developments into SFPs. The process of truncation is responsible for that of SUBORDINATE conjunctions into SFPs, but not for the development of COORDINATE conjunctions into SFPs. We argue that this is triggered by different kinds of “conceptual groupings” (Langacker 1997) involving the conjunctions: current-clause enrichment and subsequent-clause introduction.

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