

Adam Ledgeway, The Grammaticalisation of Progressive and Andative Aspects in the Dialects of Apulia

The aspectual constructions (progressive *sci(re)* and andative *sta(re)*) in Southern Italy have received very little attention, since, despite the collection of vast amounts of data (Musio (1995), Fiorentino (1998)), there are only scanty remarks which are spattered around in the literature (e.g. Rohlfs (1969:134, 171), Lopocaro (1977:347-8)). Ledgeway's analysis, therefore, is an original one to a striking phenomenon.

Ledgeway approaches the data very descriptively by citing more than four examples for each feature of the phenomenon, and his analysis identifies many of the traditional features of 'grammaticalization', namely 'semantic bleaching' (i.e. the semantic shift of *scire* 'to go' and *stàre* 'to stand' to aspectual markers with no lexical content), 'phonological reduction' (*scire* > *sci*, *stàre* > *sta*) and 'creolisation' (grammatical markers are frequent in language contact, which in this case consists of southern Italians and Greeks e.g. *sta a* 'stand and' + finite verb (Salentino) vs (*st*)*é cé* 'stand and' + finite verb (Salentino Greek)) . Furthermore, Ledgeway's analysis does incorporate some very recent scholarship e.g. phonological attrition in the verbal paradigms, which seems to accord with Maiden's (forthcoming) U-pattern:

Fig 1:

| Salentino | Italian (U-pattern) |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| st cc m 'I call' | rimango 'I remain' |
| st cc m 'you (sg) call' | rimani 'you (sg) remain' |
| st cc m 'he/she/it calls' | rimane 'he/she/it remains' |
| st ccam m 'we call' | rimaniamo 'we remain' |
| st ccam t 'you (pl) call' | rimanete 'you (pl) remain' |
| st n (a) ccam n 'they call' | rimangono 'they remain' |

Ledgeway's description is therefore original and up-to-date with the most recent scholarship.

However, there are some flaws in Ledgeway's arguments. Firstly, he argues that, since the 'grammaticalization' process only occurs in Southern Italy but not in Northern Italy, it must have originated from the Greek speakers in the South. However, one can easily 'turn this round' and argue that the Greeks have inherited this construction from the Southern Italians, especially since *sto a* 'I stand and' + finite verb used to be pan-Italian (Ascoli (1896:453)), Greek origins are not a dead certainty here. Secondly, he notes that these two aspectual markers have been proliferated to contexts where they are not expected (i.e. neither progressive nor andative aspect), but some of these contexts are so similar to the aspect in question that they could be the same as the original aspect e.g. continuous aspect, which is very similar to the progressive one, and futurity, which is very similar to the

andative aspect. This similarity undermines the ‘proliferation’ argument. Furthermore, Ledgeway represents his examples with Minimalist means, but several features of the ‘grammaticalization’ seem to have tension with Minimalism e.g. ‘optionality’ between variants, when there is no syntactic optionality in the strong minimalist thesis (Chomsky 1995:1-10). There are, therefore, weaknesses in Ledgeway’s presentation.

This is not to deny the strength of Ledgeway’s presentation, which is, in my opinion, his illustration and analysis of the data, but he should have considered alternatives regarding the origins of these constructions, analysed his examples of proliferation more carefully, and explained his theoretical position before giving minimalist representations to his examples.

(word count 497)

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