The grammaticalization of the Kikaijima Ryukyuan SFE soo

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Our goal is to examine whether the sentence final expression soo in Kikaijima Ryukyuan is a case of grammaticalization. We propose that the synchronic data are compatible with an assumption that soo is a reduced form of a negated copula occurring sentence-finally. Synchronically, we distinguish the following three sentence-final strings:

1. \textit{takasee kagoshima-kara shii-soo araa.}\nnPN-TOP Kagoshima-from come-NMLZ.TOP COP.NEG

   “Takashi isn't coming from KAGOSHIMA.”


   “Won't Takashi do it in my stead?”

3. \textit{da-nu tiki-ten icha-soo yo.}\nyou-NOM go.IMP-QUOT say.PST-soo SFP

   (in reply to: “Why did you go there?”) “But you told me to go!”

Negation in (1) targets the constituent “from Kagoshima”, \textit{i.e.} this is a case of constituent negation. A cleft sentence can be derived from (1), in which negation attaches to the constituent it singles out:

4. \textit{takashi-nu shii-soo kagoshima-karaa aran doo.}\nnPN-NOM come-NMLZ.TOP Kagoshima-from.CTOP COP.NEG ASS

   “It's not Kagoshima Takashi is coming from.”

In (2), negation is not constituent negation but rather used as an expression of an expectation of the speaker that the proposition holds. We assume that the string \textit{soo aran ka} is reinterpreted as a sentence-final expression of doubt, as a contrastive reading like in (1) is not available. Finally, this string is reduced to \textit{soo} in (3), and the utterance conveys that the speaker takes the proposition to hold, \textit{soo} contributing to its expressive meaning only (we are not concerned with the details of its meaning here). We propose a process of lexicalization followed by grammaticalization as in (5) to explain the synchronic data.

5. \textit{focus negation > epistemic expression > SFE}\nNMLZ-NEG NMLZ-NEG-YNQ soo

We argue that the contrast between (1) and (2) is due to a process of lexicalization in which negation is no longer propositional and the entire string is interpreted as a single expression of doubt. This is a prerequisite for the subsequent process of grammaticalization from which the sentence final element (SFE) \textit{soo} (3) arises. We observe the following distributional properties of \textit{soo} pointing towards grammaticalization to a sentence-final particle:

- \textit{soo} can follow a non-negated copula
  \textit{(6) ami furoo su-ja \{-soo / yaa / -*soo aran ka\}}
- \textit{soo} can occur in \textit{why}-questions
  \textit{(7) nuwa khuran \{-soo / -*soo aran ka\}}
- \textit{soo} combines with other sentence-final particles
  \textit{(8) un switchi ushi su-ja \{-soo / yaa / -*soo yaa\}}

This could be analogical change where \textit{soo} is reanalyzed as a sentence-final particle. Comparing different classes of KR sentence-final elements with \textit{soo}, we conclude that it does not straightforwardly pattern with any of them but has some properties from different classes, showing that the sentence-final element \textit{soo} is not the result of (purely) analogical change. Finally, considering that \textit{soo} only contributes to the expressive meaning of the utterance, we observe that the final stage of its grammaticalization process can be viewed as pragmaticalization.

References


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