Grammaticalization of *kayzaeh* 'good' in Saisiyat

Marie Meili Yeh

This paper discusses semantic and functional extensions of the word *kayzaeh* 'good' in Saisiyat, a Formosan language spoken in northeastern mountainous areas in Taiwan. In order to demonstrate the characteristics of grammticalization manifested by *kayzaeh* in Saisiyat, the grammaticalization of its equivalent in three Chinese dialects – Southern Min, Hakka, and Mandarin will be compared. According to Chang (2010) and Yeh (2011), *ho* 'good' in Southern Min and Hakka can function as a degree converter in middle constructions, as a sentence connective marking purposive clause, and as a discourse marker. Besides, it can also designate deontic modality and completion. Similar developments are attested in Saisiyat, though with differences. First of all, the evaluative middle construction in *kayzaeh* is expressed by *kayzaeh* plus a Non-Agent focus verb (Patient Focus V-*en* mostly, but also Instrumental Focus *Si*-V and Locative Focus V-*an*). However, this construction is ambiguous – in addition to denoting characteristic properties of an object or an instrument, the whole construction also functions as a generic predicate to describe characteristic functions of something, and can expresses a kind of modality. The modality involved is epistemic rather than deontic since speaker's attitude towards the state of affair is conveyed. Secondly, with regard to the function as a purposive marker, it is found that the sentences following *kayzaeh* are inclined to be negative. In contrast, its antonym *'aewhay* 'bad' followed by a positive sentence is exploited to express similar meaning. For both the positive and negative evaluative word to develop into purposive marker seems to be unique of Saisiyat. As for the concept of completion, in the Chinese dialects, the evaluative word has grammaticalzed into an aspectual complement to serve this function. In contrast, Saisiyat *kayzaeh* functions as the main verb predicating a nominalized verb. Although from the viewpoint of grammaticalization, the semantic extensions of *kayzaeh* follow the cline of clause combining from parataxis to hypotaxis, and then to subordination (Hopper and Traugott 2003: 177) as well as the direction from subjectification to intersubjectification (Traugott & Dasher 2002, Traugott 2010), in terms of surface grammatical structure, divergences exist.

Selected References:

Chang, Chun. 2010. Grammatical Functions and Grammaticalization of the Evaluative Word Ho2 'goo' in Souther Min: A Corpus-based Approach. Ph.D. Dissertation: National Tsing Hua University, Taiwan.

Yeh, Jui-chuan. 2011. On the Grammaticalization and Subjectification of the 'HO+X' (好 X) Construction in Hakka. *Tsing Hua Journal of Chinese Studies* 42.3, 527 – 65.