

Syntactic paradigms, markedness and similative markers in comparative and relative clauses

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Introduction

manner deictic elements:

- (1) **So** möchte ich mal tanzen können.
so want.1SG I once dance.INF can.INF
'I would like to be able to dance that way at some point.'

Grammaticalisation

manner deictic elements can grammaticalise as complementisers
(cf. König 2015) – two major forms:

- basic form (*so*)
- reinforced version, e.g. *as*, *als*, going back to *all* + *so* ‘just as’
(see Kortmann 1997 and López-Couso & Méndez-Naya 2014
for English, Jäger 2010 for German)

Observation

- the individual syntactic constructions involving a SO-complementiser partly constitute grammaticalisation paths (with two major directions)
- but: analogical changes affect the constructions beyond a single path

Proposal

- syntactic paradigms exist – members ordered according to markedness
 - gaps in the paradigm appear to be systematic: they occur in the more marked (potential) slots
- paradigm effects arise both for filled and non-filled slots

Grammaticalisation

manner deictic element can appear on its own:

- (2) a. It is **so**.
- b. Es ist **so**.
it is so
'It is so.'

Reinforced forms

no manner deixis proper (linguistic antecedent necessary):

- (3) a. *It is **as**.
- b. *Es ist **als**.
it is as
'It is so.'

Simulative clauses

examples from Middle English:

- (4) a. Se sæ heo onhefð . . . **swa swa** weall
'The sea rises like a wall.' (*Vespasian Homilies* 90;
Nevanlinna 1993)
- b. beoð ofdred of euch mon **alswa as** þe þeof is
'Be wary of every man just like the thief is.'
(*Ancrene Wisse* 91; Nevanlinna 1993)

Old High German

- (5) **só** thu giloubtus **só** si thir
so you believed.3SG so be.SBJV you.DAT
'Let it pass onto you as you believed.'
(*Tatian* 84, 6; Jäger 2018)

Two directions

grammaticalisation can proceed into two directions: relative and comparative clauses

- similatives → equative relatives → relatives
- similatives → degree equatives → (degree) comparatives

Equative relatives

- (6) a. Al **such so** sette ben callid contemplatif soules and ravischid in loue of god.
'All who plant are called contemplative souls and are delighted in the love of God.'
(*The Tree and Twelve Fruits of the Holy Ghost*)
- b. Now therefore let us make a covenant with our God to put away all the wives, and **such as** are born of them, according to the counsel of my lord, and of those that tremble at the commandment of our God; and let it be done according to the law. (*King James Bible*)

Relative clauses

- (7) a. and yrfan hi **swa** hi wyrðe witan
'And let those inherit whom they know worthy.'
(*Charters* 578; Ericson 1931)
- b. He ... was a chap **as** got a living anyhow.
(Anderwald 2008)

Equative relative clauses

Old Saxon:

- (8) **sulike** gesidoe **so** he im selbo gecos
such companions so he him self chose
'such companions that he chose for himself'
(*Heliand* 1280; Brandner & Bräuning 2013)

Relative clauses

German:

- (9) hier das Geld so ich neulich nicht habe mitschicken
here the.M money so I recently not have with.send.INF
können
can
'Here the money that I recently could not send.'
(Schiller to Goethe 127; Brandner & Bräuning 2013,
quoting Paul 1920)

equative relatives involving a matrix equative-like head seem to be
an intermediate step to relative clauses

Degree equatives

other direction: similatives to equatives to comparatives –
following a markedness hierarchy (Jäger 2018)

degree equatives:

- (10) a. seoþ swa swyde þ hit þriwa wylle **swa** swyðe **swa**
wæter flæsc
'Cook it until it turns round as fast as water flash.'
(*Peri Didaxeon* 104; Nevanlinna 1993)
- b. Mary is **as** tall **as** Susan is.

Comparatives

- (11) Also this erbe haviþ **mo** vertues **as** endyue haþe.
'This herb also has more virtue than endive has.'
(J. Lelamour, ca. 1400; Jäger 2018)

German

equatives:

- (12) a. wart aber ie **sô** werder man geboren [...] **sô**
was.3SG but ever so noble.M man born as
von Norwege Gâwân
from Norway Gawain
'But was there ever born a man as noble as Gawain
from Norway?' (*Parzival* 651, 8ff; Eggs 2006)
- b. dochn was dâ nieman **alsô** vrô **alsô** mîn her
but was.3SG there noone so glad as my lord
Gawein
Gawain
'but noone was as glad there as my Lord Gawain'
(*Iwein* 2618f; Eggs 2006)

Comparatives

- (13) Maria ist größer **als** Peter.
Mary is taller as Peter
'Mary is taller than Peter.'

both directions of changes represent grammaticalisation – original
manner deictic and similitive meaning bleached

Paradigm effects

grammaticalisation processes appear to be unidirectional – e.g. complementiser taken over from equatives to comparatives but not vice versa (see Jäger 2018)

pattern:

(14) comparatives ← degree equatives ← similatives → relative clauses

likewise: no changes affecting all these constructions as a single chain:

(15) *comparatives → degree equatives → similatives → relative clauses

Possible expectations

two chains unrelated, and grammaticalisation has no reverse effect

but: the syntactic similarities among all these constructions still hold (cf. Haspelmath & Buchholz 1998, Brandner & Bräuning 2013, Bacskai-Atkari 2018b)

Syntactic paradigm

→ the constructions constitute a syntactic paradigm

members of this paradigm are subject to diachronic changes in the complementiser along two major lines:

- morphological distinction among the individual members (comparable to phonological distinctions in inflectional paradigms)
- analogical changes affecting the morphological properties of the complementiser (comparable to analogical changes in pronominal systems, e.g. the change from *h*-pronouns to *th*-pronouns in 3PI in Middle English)

Morphological distinctions

Standard English:

construction	marker
relative	<i>that</i>
similative	<i>like</i>
equative	<i>as</i>
comparative	<i>than</i>

historically and dialectally: distinctions may differ

morphological distinctions in syntactic paradigms similar to
phonological distinctions in morphological paradigms

German

changes from *d*-series to *w*-series also induce differentiations (see Jäger 2018)

e.g. Early New High German had initially *a/s* both in similatives and in equatives – later similatives predominantly contained *wie* ‘how’

Analogy

but: these changes not only cyclic but also analogical – in South German, the change from *als* to *wie* in comparison constructions (including later comparatives proper) is accompanied by the change from relative *so* to *wo* (Brandner & Bräuning 2013) – *wo* not a similative element otherwise (and changes affecting relatives cannot be a push chain here either)

→ analogical change from the *d*-series to the *w*-series affects the whole paradigm

Paradigmatic change

paradigmatic change differs from simple analogical extension – e.g. hypothetical comparatives also take over the new simulative complementisers (e.g. the combination *wie wenn* ‘how if’ in German) but this is additive, as the older patterns (e.g. *als wenn* ‘as if’, *als ob* ‘as if’) remain (see Jäger 2010, 2018, Bacskai-Atkari 2018a on the changes)

syntactic paradigms relating to functional elements are not only results of changes but they also contribute to the way changes happen

Markedness and gaps

Minimalist Morphology: the members of inflectional paradigms are ordered according to markedness (see Wunderlich & Fabri 1995, Wunderlich 1996, 1997, 2004)

feature values: only positive values in the paradigm – the more positive values, the more marked the given element is

e.g. past tense more marked than present tense: [+Pst]

systematic gaps in inflectional paradigms occur in the more marked slots – e.g. future tense more marked than present tense: in languages like English, there is no morphological future tense

Similative-based paradigm

the unmarked pattern is the similative – source construction for others: grammaticalisation from the unmarked value to the marked values

- similative → equative → comparative (termed the “comparative cycle” by Jäger 2010, 2018)
- similative → relative (contrary to Haspelmath & Buchholz 1998)

Simulative constructions

no matrix (lexical) head needed:

- (16) a. Es ist **wie** es ist.
it is how it is
'It is as it is.
- b. Mary is **like** you.
- c. It feels **like** I haven't done enough.

Matrix heads

all other constructions contain a matrix lexical head:

- an NP in headed relative clauses
- a gradable predicate (AP or NP) in degree equatives and comparatives

- (17) a. This is the **book** that I was talking about.
b. This book is as **boring** as the other one.
c. This book is more **boring** than the other one.

relative clauses: nominal head necessary (\leftrightarrow equative relatives: a similitive head is sufficient) – property [+rel] for shorthand

Degree

degree equatives and comparatives: degree property [+deg] – more marked (Jäger 2018)

degree interpretation: both a gradable predicate and a degree head present (Bacskai-Atkari 2019)

- (18) a. Mary is **as tall** as Susan is.
b. Mary is **taller** than Susan is.

Inequality

comparatives more marked than equatives – inequality/difference
more marked than equality/similarity (Jäger 2018; see also
Bacskai-Atkari 2016)

→ property [+ineq] in comparatives

Differentiations in the paradigm

two kinds:

- systematic: starting from the unmarked member (similatives)
– potentially leading to reanalysis processes (e.g. *wie*), but not necessarily (e.g. *like*)
- system-external: innovations in the marked cases – not leading to reanalysis, e.g. non-similative-based complementisers such as English *that* or *than*

Predictions based on markedness

- gaps arise in the most marked slots, i.e. relative and comparative clauses
- languages that lack more unmarked members also lack the more marked members, but not the other way round

Gaps in Germanic

- relative pronouns (demonstrative-based or interrogative-based)
- historically: phrasal comparatives marked by case (dative/genitive, see Jäger 2018) – also in other European languages (often following the CONTRASTIVE or SEQUENCE schema, Stolz 2013)

Typology

typological predictions also borne out

Estonian

phrasal equatives and phrasal comparatives (also: similitive-based clausal equatives and comparatives with *kui*):

- (19) a. Minu õde on minu pikk**one**.
my sister is me tall.EQUAT
'My sister is as tall as me.' (Haspelmath & Buchholz 1998)
- b. kevad on sügis**est** ilusam
spring is fall.COMPR more.beautiful
'The spring is more beautiful than the fall.' (Stassen 2013)

typologically: (19a) less common than (19b)

Relative clauses

similative base common in European languages (but not exclusive)

Nenets

similative clauses possible, but relative clauses independent
(possessive-based):

- (20) a. Ne nāmi sit piruvna ɲobtarcja sjadota.
 woman sibling you as same beautiful
 ‘My sister is as beautiful as you.’
 (Haspelmath & Buchholz 1998)
- b. [xansəm] ne:pəke:m
 write.MC book.1SG
 ‘the book I wrote’ (Ackerman & Nikolaeva 2013)

→ gaps in the complementiser paradigm appear in the more
marked slots

Conclusion

modelling a simulative-based syntactic paradigm (in Germanic)

- syntactic similarities point to the relatedness of the constructions
- analogical changes and differentiations beyond mere relatedness – paradigmatic effects
- markedness similar to marked members of inflectional paradigms

predictions made by assuming a syntactic paradigm borne out both for a single system and typologically

Thank you!

Danke!

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