

Regularity in Semantic Change

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REGULARITY SEMANTIC CHANGE

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PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The focus of this work is recent developments in cross-linguistic research on historical semantics and pragmatics, with special reference to the histories of English and Japanese. The framework can be characterized as “integrative functionalist” (Croft 1995) in that we consider linguistic phenomena to be systematic and partly arbitrary, but so closely tied to cognitive and social factors as not to be self-contained; they are therefore in part nonarbitrary. One of the linguist’s tasks is to determine what is arbitrary, what is not, and how to account for the differences.

We see semantic change (change in code) as arising out of the pragmatic uses to which speakers or writers and addressees or readers put language, and most especially out of the preferred strategies that speakers/writers use in communicating with addressees. The changes discussed in this book are tendencies that are remarkably widely attested, but that can be violated under particular, often social, circumstances ranging from shifts in ideological values to the development of various technologies. “Regularity” is to be understood as typical change, or frequent replication across time and across languages, not as analogous to the Neogrammarian idea of unexceptionless change in phonology.

Richard Dasher takes prime responsibility for the Japanese data, Elizabeth Traugott for the remainder, but both have discussed all the material presented here in countless meetings over nearly fifteen years. The ideas presented here have been explored in several venues. It would be impossible to thank and acknowledge the contribution of all those who have helped make this a better book than it would have been otherwise, but Joan Bybee, Maria Cuenca, Bernd Heine, Paul Kiparsky, Roger Lass, Nina Lin, Alain Peyraube, Eve Sweetser, Chaofen Sun, Shiao-Wei Tham, and Yo Matsumoto deserve special mention, and especially Brady Clark, Andrew Garrett, and Nigel Vincent who gave extensive advice on pre-final drafts. Elizabeth Traugott owes a particular debt to her coauthors on various other occasions: Paul Hopper, Ekkehard König, Rachel Nordlinger, Whitney Tabor, and above all to Scott Schwenter without whose inspiration, intellectual

Preface and acknowledgments

congenial, and friendly challenges this book would not have come to fruition. Juno Nakamura gave invaluable help with preparing the manuscript and the indices. Citi Potts saved us from many errors at the copy-editing stage, and Andrew Winnard of Cambridge University Press supervised the production. To all our deepest appreciation.

CONVENTIONS

Here we outline conventions of transcription and periodization for the three languages most fully discussed in this book: Chinese, English, and Japanese.

All languages including Japanese, Chinese, and Greek are transcribed in the Roman alphabet. Macrons indicating reconstructed vowel length are omitted.

All dates of the language stages should be considered to be approximate. Some texts from early in a language stage may show relatively more characteristics of the previous language stage. Some may be deliberately archaizing.

(i) Conventions for Chinese

The transcription employed for Chinese examples is the *pinyin* system of romanization, used in the People's Republic of China. The tone marks of the romanization are omitted.

Approximate stages in the history of Chinese are as in (1):

(1)	Language Stage	Beginning	Ending
	PAC Pre-Archaic Chinese	1400 BC	1100 BC
	EAC Early Archaic Chinese	1100 BC	500 BC
	LAC Late Archaic Chinese	500 BC	200 BC
	EMC Early Middle Chinese	200 BC	600 AC
	LMC Late Middle Chinese	600	1250
	EMand Early Mandarin	1250	1800
	MdMand Modern Mandarin	1800	present

(ii) Conventions for English

Old English is transcribed without macrons or abbreviations other than ampersand.

Approximate stages in the history of English are given in (2):

(2)	Language Stage	Beginning	Ending
	OE Old English	450	1150
	EOE Early Old English	450	800
	LOE Late Old English	1000	1150

Conventions

ME	Middle English	1150	1500
EME	Early Middle English	1150	1300
LME	Late Middle English	1370	1500
EMdE	Early Modern English	1500	1770
MdE	Modern English	1770	1970
PDE	Present Day English	1970	present

Dating Old English texts is notoriously controversial. Dates of composition differ extensively from dates of manuscripts. In the case of the epic poem *Beowulf*, the manuscript dates from about 1000, but the date of composition is presumably significantly earlier. Scholars disagree on whether it was composed in the eighth or ninth century (see Bjork and Obermeier 1997); we accept the eighth century date. The dating suggested in this book provides specific dates of composition where reasonably well established; otherwise, we use the dating conventions adopted for the Helsinki Corpus of English Texts (see Rissanen, Kytö, and Palander-Collin 1993) or by the editions from which texts are cited.

(iii) Conventions for Japanese

For Japanese linguistic items, phonemic transcription is used. Thus, for example, the syllables [fu] and [tsu] in Modern Japanese are written as *hu* and *tu*, respectively. Transcriptions of linguistic items from previous stages of Japanese for the most part follow the orthographic conventions of the language at the time, but these may be modified for clarity, e.g. when discussing the history of a single item across several language stages. In particular, the phonological system change of /F/ (bilabial fricative; in preliterate times most likely a stop) to /h/ (which spread at different times depending on the following vowel) is captured by using *F* for Old Japanese transcriptions, *h* for later premodern periods of the language, and the current phonemic shape for the form in the present day language, e.g. *tamaFu* “give” (Old Japanese) > *tamahu* (Late Old Japanese–Early Modern Japanese) > *tamau* (Modern Japanese). Transcriptions of Old Japanese in the present work do not distinguish between the *koo* (A) and *otu* (B) series of vowels.

For Japanese author and book names, including those of primary texts, the modified Hepburn romanization system (see Masuda 1974) is used in order to clarify references to proper nouns that are best known in this transcription. Double vowels, however, are used instead of macrons.

Approximate stages in the history of Japanese (Jp.) are given in (3):

(3)	Language Stage	Beginning	Ending	Corresponding Historical Period	
	OJ Old Jp.	710	800	Nara Period	710–794
	LOJ Late Old Jp.	800	1100	Heian Period	794–1192
	EMJ Early Middle Jp.	1100	1330	Kamakura Period	1192–1333
	LMJ Late Middle Jp.	1330	1610	Muromachi Period	1333–1603

EMdJ	Early Modern Jp.	1610	1870	Edo Period	1603–1868
MdJ	Modern Jp.	1870	1970	from Meiji Period	1868–present
PDJ	Present Day Jp.	1970	present		

The extent to which periodization is arbitrary for any particular text is well illustrated by the *Kyogen* plays. They are considered to be representative of the colloquial language of the Late Middle Japanese period, despite the fact that the written texts of the plays stem from the early seventeenth century. In fact, the language of the plays reflects some layering of Early Modern Japanese elements over a basic language model from the Late Middle Japanese period, plus some set “stage language” phrases (Koyama 1960: 27).

ABBREVIATIONS

Linguistic terms, languages, dictionaries (for full dictionary entries, see Secondary references)

ABL	ablative
AD/R	addressee/reader
AD/R+	addressee/reader and associated social group
ADV	adverbial
AffADHON	affixal addressee honorific
ASSOC	associative (includes genitive uses)
C	conceptual category
CAUS	causative
CDE	conceptualized described event
Ch.	Chinese
COMPAR	comparative
CONDIT	conditional
COP	copula
C-Ref	conceptualized referent (in figures)
C-Ref P	conceptualized referent person (in figures)
CSE	conceptualized speech event
DAT	dative
DEM	demonstrative
DESID	desiderative
DO	direct object
DOE	Dictionary of Old English
Du.	Dutch
EA	epistemic adverbial
EAC	Early Archaic Chinese
EMand	Early Mandarin
EMC	Early Middle Chinese
EMdE	Early Modern English
EMdJ	Early Modern Japanese

Abbreviations

EME	Early Middle English
EMJ	Early Middle Japanese
EMPH	emphatic (particle)
Eng.	English
EOE	Early Old English
EXCL	exclusive (focus particle)
FOC	focus (particle)
Fr.	French
FTA	face threatening act
FUT	future
GER	gerund (verb form)
GIIN	generalized invited inference
Gk.	Greek
Gm.	German
HONP	honorific prefix
HUMIL	humiliative subject
IE	Indo-European
IIN	invited inference
IITSC	Invited Inferencing Theory of Semantic Change
IMP	imperative
INCL	inclusive (focus particle)
INDEF	indefinite
INTENT	intentional
Jp.	Japanese
L	lexeme
LAC	Late Archaic Chinese
Lat.	Latin
LexADHON	lexical addressee honorific
LME	Late Middle English
LMC	Late Middle Chinese
LMJ	Late Middle Japanese
LOC	locative
LOE	Late Old English
LOJ	Late Old Japanese
M	coded abstract meaningful element
MA	manner adverb(ial)
MdE	Modern English
MdJ	Modern Japanese
MdMand	Modern Mandarin
ME	Middle English

MED	Middle English Dictionary
M-heuristic	Manner-heuristic
MJ	Middle Japanese
nec	necessity (in figures)
NEG	negative
NKD	Nihon Kokugo Daiziten
NP	noun phrase
OBJ	object
OE	Old English
OED	Oxford English Dictionary
OJ	Old Japanese
P	phonological element
PAC	Pre-Archaic Chinese
PASS	passive morpheme
PDE	Present-Day English
PDJ	Present-Day Japanese
PERF	perfect (tense/aspect)
PFV	perfective
POL	polite
POSS	possibility (in figures)
POTEN	potential (affix)
PP	prepositional phrase
PROB	probability (verb suffix)
PTC	particle
Q	question (particle)
Q-heuristic	Quantity-heuristic
QUOT	quotative (particle)
RA	respect adverbial (adverbial of “respect in which”)
Ref action	conceptualized referred-to action (in figures)
RESP	respectful (suffix, formulaic expression, etc.)
R-heuristic	Relevance-heuristic
S	(morpho)syntactic component
SAV	speech act verb (nonperformative)
SD	social deictic
s-o	scope over (in figures)
SP/W	speaker/writer
SP/W+	speaker/writer and associated social group
SUBJ Ref	conceptualized subject referent (in figures)
SUBJUNCT	subjunctive
s-w	scope within (in figures)

Abbreviations

TOP	topic (particle)
T-V	“familiar vs. formal” forms of the second person singular
VPOL	very polite
VRESP	very respectful

Symbols

↕	is linked to
→	is realized as
>	changes to
+>	invites the inference
-	morpheme boundary in original language
:	morpheme boundary in English gloss
/	poetic lines breaks in Japanese texts
X/Y	both X and Y (in Figures)
—	= attested as semanticized, and continues to period specified (in figures)
---	= sporadic use; probably not fully semanticized (in figures)
->-	= increase in strength of change (in figures)

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