Abstract

The syntax and semantics of applicative constructions in Hočank (Sioux)

An applicative marker is a derivational means on the verb which is used to express an oblique participant of a clause as direct object or undergoer (depending on the syntactic status of the core arguments in that language). Languages may differ in that they have so-called one-type applicatives or multi-type applicatives (cf. Peterson 1999; Polinsky 2005). Applicatives of the former type do not distinguish the semantic role of the "promoted" participant (such as the be-derivation in German), applicatives of the latter type do. With regard to the syntax, applicatives may be used to add an argument slot to the valency of the applied verb, or they rearrange the valency of the verb by adding a new argument slot while deleting another (Lehmann and Verhoeven 2005). The proposed paper presents an investigation of the syntax and semantics of applicatives in Hočank, a highly endangered Siouan language of Wisconsin, along the lines of this typology. Hočank has a set of four applicative prefixes of the multi-type type distinguishing various semantic roles such as locative, goal, instrument, and benefactive. First, the semantic polysemy of all four applicative markers will be examined. Secondly, the effects of the different applicative prefixes on the argument structure of the applied verbs will be shown. Thirdly, the applicative prefixes in Hočank are undergoing a process of lexicalization with the verb stem to different degrees. The principal syntactic and semantic effects of this process on the applied verbs will be summarized in terms of grammaticalization theory. A statistic account will complement this investigation. The paper will be concluded with some suggestions for the typology of applicative constructions from the perspective of Hočank. The data for the survey to be presented come from the digital corpus of the Hočank language, elicited material, and the lexical database produced by the DOBES project on the "Documentation of the Hočank Language".

References:
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