On Grammatical Evolution of Korean Displacement Verb *Pelita* 'Throw Away': From a Grammaticalization Perspective

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to investigate the semantic and categorical development of the Korean displacement verb pelita denoting 'throw away' from a grammaticalization perspective. The lexical verb pelita is an impressive example to show the diverse semantic extension patterns that trigger a categorical development from a lexical verb into an auxiliary marker, and this paper attempts to illustrate how particular meanings and categorial changes of this verb evolved, based on the semantic designations provided in Tongasaykwukesacen (2012) and NAVER Online Dictionary (2015). To examine the semantic and functional development of pelita, this paper suggests grammaticalization process that is largely enabled by the conceptual mechanisms along the event schema, and presents an explication for the semantic diversity with four mechanisms such as metaphor, metonymy, subjectification, and generalization.

Key Words: grammaticalization, semantic and categorical change, metaphor, metonymy, subjectification, generalization

1. Introduction

Among various kinds of verbs in Korean that denote action, the displacement verb *pelita* indicating 'throw away' is one of the impressive items in many aspects as it exhibits properties typical of grammaticalization processes. The verb *pelita* in the present-day Korean is used not only as a full-fledged lexical verb, but also as an auxiliary verb in the serial verb construction to mark the speaker's evaluative viewpoint. In the serial verbal constructions, diverse actions verbs participating in the constructions acquire grammatical status to function as tense-aspect-modality markers.[1]

Since the displacement verb *pelita* shows a wide variety of polysemous meanings in diverse contexts, it is worthwhile to investigate how its meanings are derived and what are the possible motivations to trigger the semantic and functional development. Although grammaticalization of *pelita* in serial verbal constructions may be looked at from many different perspectives due to the scope of grammaticalization research that encompasses potentially all levels of grammar, our immediate concern is to focus on its numerous semantic changes undergone through diverse change mechanisms. For the systematic research, this paper first discusses what the core sense of *pelita* is, based on the semantic designations provided in *Tongasaykwukesacen* (2012) and *NAVER Online Dictionary* (2015), and illustrates how numerous semantic extensions of the verb are connected with the core sense in terms of the cognitive mechanisms such as metaphor, metonymy, subjectification, and generalization.

This paper is organized as follows: Section 2 describes the grammaticalization of *pelita* focusing on its core sense and the extended meanings from the core, and further on the functional shift from lexical to auxiliary of the verb. Section 3 then sheds light on what mechanisms involve in its semantic and functional development. Section 4 summarizes the discussion and concludes the pape

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[1] The Korean language has some unique properties, in which a serial verb construction referring to "the combination of two or more asyndetically juxtaposed verbs with one shared argument in order to express a complex, but unitary action" (Lehmann 1982: 35) is exhibited as the one among other peculiarities. Serial verbal constructions are typically represented as [verb 1 + non-finite marking connective + verb 2], where 'verb 2' is a finite verb to function as a tense-aspect-modality marker.

2. Grammaticalization of Pelita

2.1 Core Sense

As a lexical verb, the core sense of *pelita* is 'throw away' or 'discard' (taken from *Tongasaykwukesacen* 2012, *NAVER Online Dictionary* 2015) as in the following examples.

(1) [THROW AWAY]
a. *kunye-nun   ssuleki-lul   peli-ess-ta*
she-Top   waste-Acc   throw.away-Pst-Dec
'She threw away waste.'
b. *ku-nun pwulpilyohan chayk-tul-ul   peli-ess-ta*
he-Top useless   book-Pl-Acc   discard-Pst-Dec
'He threw useless books into the discard.'
c. *ssuleki-lul   peli-cima   sio*
dump-Acc   throw.away-not.Imp   Emph
'No dumping here'

The lexical verbal usage of *pelita* denoting 'throw away' or 'discard' shown in the above examples is still very productive in Modern Korean. With the properties that the verbs denoting displacement are highly grammaticalized (cf. Genetti 1986, Hook 1989, Rhee 1996), this verb also shows diverse semantic extension patterns as seen in the following section.

2.2 Semantic Extension

An investigation into the semantic extension pattern exhibited by *pelita* reveals that it has undergone a series of semantic extension. This is well illustrated in the following examples.

(2) [ABANDON]

a. *ku-nun   anay-lul   peli-ess-ta*
 he-Top   wife-Acc   abandon-Pst-Dec
 'He abandoned his wife'
b. *ku-nun   konkyung-ey   chehan chinkwu-lul   peli-ess-ta*
 he-Top   trouble-Loc   in.need friend-Acc   leave-Pst-Dec
 'He turned his back upon a friend in need.'

Besides the lexical meaning denoting 'throw away' unanimated entities/things, *pelita* in (2) is used to denote 'abandon' or 'lay aside', combining with animated entities/ persons in the contexts. For further discussion, let us take some other examples as follows.

(3) [GIVE UP]

a. *ku-nun   salang ttaymwuney   wangwi-lul   peli-ess-ta*
 he-Top   love due.to   crown-Acc   give.up-Pst-Dec
 'He abdicated the crown due to/for his love.'
b. *anay-lul   wihay ku-nun ciwi-lul   milyen-epsi   peli-ess-ta*
 wife-Acc   for   he-Top position-Acc   regret-without   abandon-Pst-Dec
 'He threw up his position for his wife without any regrets.'

From the examples in (3), the sense of *pelita* is considered to indicate 'give up' or 'quit' the job, position, or status given. The additional sense of the verb is also found in the following examples

(4) [MAR]

a. *ikicekin   emma-tul-i   aitul-lul   peli-e-no-n-ta*
 selfish   mom-Pl-Nom   children-Acc   spoil-NF-make-Pres-Dec
 'Selfish moms make their children spoilt.'
b. *ku-nun   kwaum-ulo   kenkang-ul   peli-ess-ta*
 he-Top   excessive.drinking-Caus   health-Acc   ruin-Pst-Dec
 'He ruined his health by excessive drinking.'

50

Pelita in (4) is used as an indicator to denote 'mar', 'spoil', or 'ruin'. As seen in the above examples so far, the event *pelita* is schematic to several specific senses such as 'abandon', 'give up', 'spoil', etc. In other words, diverse meanings of *pelita* are derived from its core sense in terms of the schematic conceptualization, i.e. event schemas.[2]

2.3 Categorical Development

The Korean language exhibits peculiarities in that displacement verbs show extensive semantic extension and are grammaticalized into auxiliaries that require the connective particle *–a*, or *–e* with a primary verb in the constructions of verb serialization as follows.

(5) From lexical to auxiliary

[O + V]   >>   [O + V1-*e/-a* + V2]
[Acc + *pelita*]   >>   [Acc + V1-NF + *pelita*]

In the serial verb construction, *pelita* acquires a grammatical status (i.e. an auxiliary verb) to function as either an aspectual marking 'completivity' or an 'undesirability' marker. Let us consider the following examples.

(6) [COMPLETIVITY]

  a. *na-nun   onul   halil-ul   ta   kkuthn-ay-peli-ess-ta*
  I-Top   today   work.to.do-Acc all   finish-NF-Compl-Pst-Dec
  'I finished up all my work to do within today.'
  b. *kunye-nun   ku   il-ul   kkamahkey   ic-e-peli-ess-ta*
  she-Top   the   matter-Acc   completely   forget-NF-Compl-Pst-Dec
  'She had clean forgotten the matter.'

(7) [UNDESIRABILITY]

  a. *ku-nun   kyengma-lo   manhunt ton-ul   thangcin-hay-peli-ess-ta*
  he-Top   horse.racing-Loc a lot of   money-Acc   lose-NF-use.up-Pst-Dec
  'He had lost a lot of money betting on horses.'
  b. *cicin-ulo   toci-ka   phyeyhe-lo   pyen-hay-peli-ess-ta*
  earthquake-Caus   city-Nom ruin-Loc   fall.into-NF-disapper-Pst-Dec
  'The city fell into ruins by an earthquake.'
  c. *twumok-un   panghay-ca-tul-ul   ceyke-hay-peli-ess-ta*
  boss-Top   obstacle-person-Pl-Acc   kill-NF-remove-Pst-Dec
  'The boss killed those who were in his way.'

As shown in (6) and (7), the verb *pelita* is used as an auxiliary with the particles *–a* or *–e* in the serial verbal constructions indicates either an aspectual marker as in (6), or an 'undesirability' marker as in (7).[3] Since *pelita* as an auxiliary usually marks undesirability on a state, it takes the V2 position in the serial verbal constructions that usually contain adjectival predicates in V1 position.
This characteristic has to do with the core lexical meaning of *pelita*, i.e. its major lexical sense as a transitive verb associated with 'move away from the original location/state' is metaphorically equated with deviation from the normal state, and this original sense strongly effects its semantic change oriented to undesirability.

3. Possible Triggers for Grammaticalization

In the discussion of grammaticalzation processes, semantic changes are always major concern, for they show "cognitive forces that drive language users in dynamic interaction of discourse" (Rhee 2002: 84). In many cases, semantic changes are the products from cognitive mechanisms that operate either simultaneously or successively. With this regard, various mechanisms such as metaphor, metonymy, subjectification, and generalization are suggested for the description of semantic changes of *pelita*.

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[2] The semantic extension of *pelita* derived from event schemas is discussed in Section 3 in detail.
[3] Further discussion of the semantic extension of *pelita* involved in the speaker's subjective viewpoint will be examined in Section 3.3.

3.1 Metaphor

Metaphor is "understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another" (Lakoff & Johsnon 1980: 5), or 'transfer from basic to more abstract' (Clauid & Heine 1986, Heine et al. 1991, Matisoff 1991, Sweetser 1990). The majority of extended meanings of *pelita* are clearly the products from the metaphorical transfer that is evident in the semantic change exhibited by categorial transfer from physical space into mental space and into more abstract marker, such as marking undesirability on the state. In grammaticalization of pelita as an undesirability marker, the semantic domains most frequently involved are concrete location in a physical domain and abstract location in a mental domain. Domain shift, such as concrete-to abstract occurs in terms of metaphorical transfer.

(8) [Physical discard]

  a. *kunye-nun   ssuleki-lul   peli-ess-ta*
   she-Top   waste-Acc   throw.away-Pst-Dec
   'She threw away waste.'
  b. *ku-nun   pwulpilyohan   chayk-tul-ul   peli-ess-ta*
   he-Top   useless   book-Pl-Acc   discard-Pst-Dec
   'He threw useless books into the discard.'

(9) [Non-physical removal]

  a. *ku-nun   konkyung-ey   chehan chinkwu-lul   peli-ess-ta*
   he-Top   trouble-Loc   in.need friend-Acc   leave-Pst-Dec
   'He turned his back upon a friend in need.'
  b. *ku-nun   salang ttaymwuney   wangwi-lul   peli-ess-ta*
   he-Top   love   due.to   crown-Acc   give.up-Pst-Dec
   'He abdicated the crown due to/for his love.'

The meaning of *pelita* in examples (8) concerns a 'concrete/physical' action, while the sense of the verb in (9) relates to a 'non-physical' behavior. In the cases of (8) and (9), the semantic change from physical action to non-physical or mental behavior involves schematic conceptualization of metaphorization, and such metaphoric transfer can be schematically represented as in (10).

(10) Domain transfer by metaphorization

Displacement verb	Semantic designations	Domain transfer
pelita	X physically discards Y X mentally discards Y	Physical >> Non-physical

In the light of the description of the semantic extension of *pelita*, it is observed that such conceptual shifts of the semantic domain as [physical >> mental] occur in terms of metaphorical transfer, which is a major driving force to trigger the semantic domain shift from concrete into abstract. This domain change is in consonance with unidirectionality in metaphorical mappings of tenor and vehicle suggested by Henie et al. (1991: 48): [person > object > process > space > time > state].

3.2 Metonymy

There is another major enabling force causing the conceptual transfer of *pelita*. For the illustration, consider the following sense designations and the examples.

(11) Sense designations
  a. leave, abandon
  b. give up, quit
  c. spoil, disappear

(12) Examples

  a. *ku-nun   soksey-lul   peli-ko   tten-ass-ta*
   he-Top   world-Acc   abandon-Conn leave-Pst-Dec
   'He renounced/left the world.'

b. *ku-nun   myengyey-lul   wihay   mokswum-ul   peli-ess-ta*
he-Top   honor-Acc   for   life-Acc   lay.down-Pst-Dec
'He laid down/gave up his life for the honor.'
c. *ku   naymsay   ttaymwuney   ipmas-ul   peli-ess-ta*
the   smell   due.to   appetite-Acc   lost-Pst-Dec
'I lost my appetite due to the smell.'

Much of the polysemy of *pelita* is understood as the outcome of the gradual and continuous process which is related to metonymic transfer or the context-induced reinterpretation (Heine et al. 1991). The semantic extension of the verb shown in (11) and (12) is largely due to metonymization (Heine et al. 1991, Traugott & König 1991, Traugott & Dasher 2002), in which semantic transition from initial stage via intermediate stage to final stage is continuous, and there is no discrete step separating a source meaning and a target meaning. The semantic change of *pelita* involves the conceptual contiguity represented by [ABANDON-GIVING.UP-SPOIL], whereby any of these concepts is viewed as part of this series of the related concepts. In (12a), *pelita* indicates mental scene of 'X abandons Y'. From this scene, the extended scenes shown in (12b) and (12c) are created by the context-induced reinterpretation, in which the sense of *pelita* is transferred from a 'practical behavior (forsaking the world)' to a 'social behavior (giving up his life)' and further a 'psychological behavior (spoiling of one's appetite)'. Such a series of the semantic relationship shown in (13) can be illustrated by the following scenario.

(13) Three-stage scenario

Stage 1: X abandons Y
Stage 2: X is considered to give up Y
Stage 3: Y is spoiled

Such an interpretation is the result of metonymic transfer that brings forth semantic contiguity between earlier meaning and later meaning by means of the speaker's inference, i.e. pragmatically motivated forces (Traugott & König 1991, Traugott & Dasher 2002).

3.3 Subjectification

For further investigation of semantic extension of this form, we turn our attention to another enabling force - subjectification. From the exposition of Traugott & König (1991) and Traugott & Dasher (2002), semantic changes of a language occur in terms of the speaker's involvement. This means that the speaker's view point, attitude, and evaluative judgment are the major types of meaning changes. From this point, it is argued that the aspectual marker 'completivity/perfectivity' and evaluative marker denoting 'undesirability/malefactivity' from the lexical meaning of *pelita* is obviously due to the process of subjectification. Such a marker indicating evaluation is readily found in the serial verb constructions as illustrated in the examples (6) and (7), where *pelita* is used as an auxiliary. For convenience some examples in above are reprinted here.

(14) [Aspectual marker]

a. *ku-ka   nay   pap-ul   ta   mek-e peli-ess-ta*
he-Nom   my   meal-Acc completely   eat-NF Aux-Pst-Dec
'He (completely) ate up my meal.'
b. *kunye-nun   ku   il-ul   kkamahkey   ic-e-peli-ess-ta*
she-Top   the   matter-Acc   completely   forget-NF-Compl-Pst-Dec
'She had clean forgotten the matter.'

(15) [Negative evaluation marker]

a. *ku-nun   kyengma-lo   manhunt ton-ul   thangcin-hay-peli-ess-ta*
he-Top   horse.racing-Loc a lot of   money-Acc   lose-NF-use.up-Pst-Dec
'He had lost a lot of money betting on horses.'
b. *cicin-ulo   toci-ka   phyeyhe-lo   pyen-hay-peli-ess-ta*
earthquake-Caus   city-Nom ruin-Loc   fall.into-NF-disapper-Pst-Dec
'The city fell into ruins by an earthquake.'

It is frequently observed in present-day Korean that verbs in serial verb constructions have the tendency of the finite verb to become aspect markers and also tend to acquire the speaker's evaluative viewpoint (cf. Traugott 1989).

Pelita in (14) contributes the grammatical meaning of 'perfectivity' to the sentence, and the development of such aspectual marking from 'discard' seems to be straightforward because 'discard' is semantically close to 'finish' (Rhee 1996: 54).[4] Another usage of *pelita* as an auxiliary is to carry the speaker's subjective evaluation as seen in (15).

Such an emergence of an aspectual marker and an evaluative marker can be explained as being due to the speaker's subjective viewpoint. While the senses referring to 'non-physical discard' in (9) and 'mental removal' shown in (11) and (12) have been generalized by way of metaphor and metonymy when *pelita* is used as a lexical verb, aspectual and modal meaning of this item as an auxiliary in serial verb constructions seem to be acquired by way of the speaker's subjective involvement with the following evaluative scenario.

(16) Four-stage scenario of evaluative viewpoints (cf. Rhee 1996:55-58)

Stage 1: X did Y, and Y is done completely
Stage 2: X did Y completely, and Y is irretrievable
Stage 3: X's action to cause an irretrievability is considered to be undesirable
Stage 4: Undesirable action/event completion bring forth a malefaction

As the expression of *pelita* in serial verb constructions takes an action with natural end point, the meaning of the form referring to 'competiveness' has developed into the one concerning 'irretrievability'. Besides, this semantic change has triggered an additional semantic extension referring to 'undesirability' that seems to come from an aspect associated with the original verbal semantics and human experience, whereby humans tend to remove things undesirable. According to the real life experience in the world, humans tend to infer the fact that if something undesirable is done, male active effect would be emerged. The semantic path of *pelita* in terms of subjectification can be diagrammatically represented as follows.

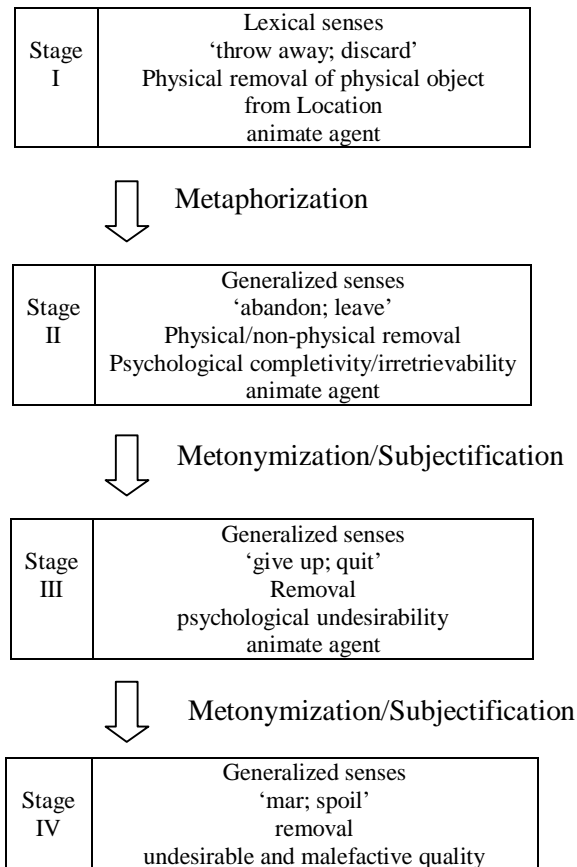(17) Semantic extension by subjectification
  'completivity >> irretrievability >> undesirability >> malefactivity

3.4 Generalization

Of diverse semantic change mechanisms that operate over the semantic change such as metaphor, metonymy, and subjectification, generalization can be also seen as one of the contributors to invoke the semantic extension of *pelita* from a physical event to an aspectual and evaluative connector in diverse contexts. In other words, the extended meanings of this form by a variety of cognitive mechanisms are widely distributed through generalization. In addition, this process is considered a driving force to cause the desemanticization (i.e. semantic bleaching) in the process of grammaticalization, and, as a result, the specific sense of the item is lost and its new and generalized meanings are gained (Bybee & Pagliuca 1985, Bybee et al. 1994).

In native speakers' intuition, the displacement verb *pelita* is a cognitively and experientially comprehensible word to draw a removal event. Accordingly, such a compatible word with drawing a physical removal action of an object is exploited in the contexts to express an irretrievable or undesirable state of affairs. The semantic generalization can be summarized as follows.

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[4] Bybee et al. (1994) suggest that the verb denoting 'finish' constitutes the member of the perfective aspect category.

(18) Semantic generalization of *pelita*

Stage I	Lexical senses 'throw away; discard' Physical removal of physical object from Location animate agent

⬇ Metaphorization

Stage II	Generalized senses 'abandon; leave' Physical/non-physical removal Psychological completivity/irretrievability animate agent

⬇ Metonymization/Subjectification

Stage III	Generalized senses 'give up; quit' Removal psychological undesirability animate agent

⬇ Metonymization/Subjectification

Stage IV	Generalized senses 'mar; spoil' removal undesirable and malefactive quality

As seen above, it is observed that the generalized meanings of *pelita* widely range in present-day Korean. An interesting fact in this point is that diverse mechanisms such as metaphor, metonymy, and subjectification are contributors to make a variety of meanings of *pelita* generalize. This indicates that the semantic change of *pelita* was not captured by a single change mechanism, but rather various mechanisms that operate either simultaneously or successively.

4. Conclusion

This paper has examined the semantic and categorial change of the Korean displacement *pelita* from a grammaticalization perspective. Since this form both as a lexical verb and an auxiliary marker shows a wide variety of polysemous meanings in diverse contexts, it was worthwhile to investigate how its meanings are derived and what are the possible triggers to cause the semantic extensions. For the systematic research, the core meaning of *pelita* has been traced. According to the semantic designations provided from contemporary Korean dictionaries, this lexical and grammatical item has diverse meanings such as 'discard', 'abandon', 'give up' and even 'completivity' and 'undesirability' as an aspectual and modal marker. For examining how various meanings of this verb evolved in the course grammaticalization, we have also noted that various mechanisms of semantic changes, such as metaphor, metonymy, subjectification, and generalization that operated in the course of semantic change of this grammatical marker.

Abbreviations

Acc: accusative ; Aux: auxiliary; Caus: causal; Compl: completive; Conn: connective; Dec: declarative; Emph: emphatic; Imp: imperative; Loc: locative; NF: non-finite marker; Nom: nominative; Pl: plural; Pres: present: Pst: past; Top: topic

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