**Theorizing word-class change in the history of languages**

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One of the most easily observed changes in the diachrony of languages concerns word classes in a broad sense. This change involves verbs with semantic content becoming auxiliaries, nouns and adjectives being used as adverbs, adjectives and verbs being employed as nouns, referential expressions losing their referential properties, numeral classifiers functioning as indefinite determiners, and so on. Most of these cases are described as conversion, which is defined as a non-concatenative process (i.e. derivation without affixes), and is one of the most productive means of forming new words in many languages (see, for instance, Kim 2010). However, as they involve not only a change of category but also differences in their grammatical properties, some of these changes have been analyzed as cases of grammaticalization (see Narrog & Heine 2017).

Beyond the label, this phenomenon has raised many questions about categories: (a) do lexemes belong to a word-class or are they unmarked (Valera 2005)?; (b) is there a directionality on word-class changes?; (c) can contact situations favor this change?; (d) is there any content relation between categories that facilitate the process? The goal of this workshop is to discuss word-class changes without derivational morphology from different theoretical frameworks. The aim is to identify cross-linguistic regularities and analyze how different theoretical models account for this variation.

It is worth noting that this proposal seeks to continue the research developed in the workshop on categorizers in diachrony in the *ICHL 26*, since word-class change involves categorizers or, at least changes in the functional information associated with them. For instance, in the change from adjectives to adverbs in Spanish variation, number and gender morphology may remain unmarked (*Ana habló alt-o* ‘She spoke loud’, instead of *Ana habló alt-a*, where *alta* matches *Ana* in gender and number) (see Pato and Feliu 2020 for a relevant discussion on variation). Similar phenomena are observed across languages, and from a diachronic perspective they are analyzed in terms of grammaticalization (Haspelmath 1998, Hopper & Traugott 2003) or reanalysis (see Madariaga 2017), depending on the hypothesis adopted.

The question of why word-class changes occur is relevant for all theoretical frameworks, and solutions often explore sharing properties between the classes involved. Coming back to the relation with categorizers, deep discussions of their properties might shed some light on this issue. For example, the proposal that adjectivizers do not exist but adjectives are the result of combining a nominalizer with a verbalizer (Mitrović & Panagiotidis 2020) allows us to explore an analysis for some changes in terms of contention (Mare 2023).

**Research questions and aims:**

We welcome further contributions (in both English and Spanish) to the workshop that address word-class changes from different frameworks, in order to share perspectives on the following questions and beyond:

* Which kinds of word-class changes can we find across languages?
* How can we relate this phenomenon to assumptions about categories and functional information?
* What are the common properties/features that might motivate this kind of changes?
* How could the empirical evidence on this topic refine the theoretical frameworks?
* Where are the shared properties/features located: in the lexical items, in the syntax, in neighboring elements?

**References**

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