

## On some Problematic Aspects of Subjectification

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### Abstract

The aim of this paper is to clarify the notion of subjectivity and subjectification. It is proposed here that subjectification is a purely semantic change, similarly to the view presented in Boye and Harder (2012a). That is, in contrast to other diachronic processes that involve semantic *and* structural changes and of which subjectification may be a part, e.g., lexicalization, grammaticalization, and pragmaticalization, it does not necessarily correlate with any particular structural changes. Three diagnostic criteria for detecting subjective meaning in linguistic expressions will be introduced. Their application will be demonstrated using examples from the diachrony of German. Additionally, contra to the predominant views on subjectification, a suggestion will be put forward that this process is *not* gradual and *not* unidirectional.

### Keywords

Subjectivity; subjectification; semantic change; unidirectionality

### 1. Introduction

The topics related to subjectivity and subjectification have received increasing attention in recent studies on semantic change and grammaticalization (see López-Couso, 2010 for an overview). In the last three decades, the importance of subjectification as a mechanism of semantic change has been repeatedly emphasized, beginning with the first explicit discussions that have been carried out by Traugott (1982). From then on, the notion of subjectivity and the model of subjectification (and intersubjectification) have been elaborated in more detail. But still, the core definition has remained the same, as shown in the citations below:

... ‘subjectification’ refers to a pragmatic-semantic process whereby ‘meanings become increasingly based in the speaker’s subjective belief state/attitude toward the proposition’, in other words, towards what the speaker is talking about. (Traugott, 1995: 31)

One branch of my own work in the last twenty-five years [...] has been to study the semanticization over time of subjectivity, understood as relationship to the speaker and the speaker’s beliefs and attitudes, and of intersubjectivity, understood as relationship to the addressee and addressee’s face. I have called the diachronic process of semanticization

“(inter)subjectification”, assuming that an important (though not rigid) distinction is to be made between *-ity* (synchronic state) and *-ation* (diachronic process).

(Traugott, 2010: 29f.)

As the notion of subjectification gradually has become an integral part of many descriptions of semantic change, it has also received different, sometimes even conflicting interpretations (for a synthesis of other views, such as Langacker’s, Nuyt’s or Verhagen’s, cf., e.g., Traugott, 2010; López-Couso, 2010 and references therein). Increasing concerns have been raised about the vagueness and “elusiveness” of the notion (cf. Breban, 2006; De Smet and Verstraete, 2006; Visconti, forthcoming; López-Couso, 2010; Ghesquière, 2010, etc.):

In spite of the growing popularity of these topics and of the pervasiveness of (inter)subjectification phenomena within and across languages, such notions remain relatively vague and elusive, still lacking airtight definitions. (López-Couso, 2010: 127)

Nearly all research on subjectification has relied on the intuition of the analyst as the last word for determining whether a form-meaning pairing FM1 is of greater or lesser subjectivity than another, related, form-meaning pairing FM2.

(Torres Cacoullos and Schwenner, 2007: 347)

Moreover, the unidirectional character of subjectification has been called into question. In the recent literature, several developments running counter to the subjectification cline have been presented (cf., e.g., Adamson, 2000, who explicitly introduces the term ‘de-subjectification’; Schwenner, 1994; Ghesquière, 2010, etc.). Kranich (2010), taking up this idea, suggests that ‘objectification,’ i.e. the reverse of subjectification, is a mechanism of semantic change that is essentially involved in so-called secondary grammaticalization. Traugott (2003) admits that the unidirectionality of subjectification has been proven to be particularly robust in the initial stages of the processes of change, and recognizes some counter-examples as exceptions: “no change is likely to be exceptionless” (Traugott, 2003: 124).

There have been several attempts to elaborate and partly revise the original view on subjectivity and subjectification presented in Traugott (1982). Most of them have been carried out by Traugott herself (cf. Traugott, 1989, 1995, 1997, 2003, 2010; Traugott and Dasher, 2002, etc.). The accounts found in De Smet and Verstraete (2006) and Visconti (forthcoming) are of particular interest here and will be discussed in Section 2 in more detail.

The aim of this paper is to further clarify the notion of subjectification. It will be proposed that subjectification is a purely semantic change (see Boye and Harder, 2012a for a similar view). In contrast to other diachronic processes that involve semantic *and* structural changes and of which subjectification may be a part, e.g. lexicalization, grammaticalization, and pragmaticalization, it does not necessarily correlate with any particular formal and structural changes

which can be generalized and applied cross-linguistically. Section 3 will be devoted to the specifics of this proposal. In Section 4, three criteria for detecting subjective meaning in linguistic expressions will be introduced. Section 5 will demonstrate how the proposed diagnostics apply in practice. Section 6 will give a short summary and briefly discuss the question of gradualness and unidirectionality.

## 2. Attempts to Refine Subjectification, and their Problems

One of the most relevant points raised by the critical voices is that subjectivity and subjectification are not only very vaguely but also rather widely defined notions. Hence they have been applied to numerous instances of semantic change and/or to their individual steps on somewhat intuitive grounds (see above). Therefore, the attempts of the last years have mainly concentrated on finding ways to operationalize these notions to make them applicable to specific linguistic expressions and their diachronic developments in a unified manner. Two models deserve particular attention because they offer modifications of a general concept of subjectivity and strive to ensure its broad application.

### 2.1. *De Smet & Verstraete*

De Smet and Verstraete (2006) distinguish three types of subjectivity: (i) the *pragmatic* type, referring to the very fact that every linguistic expression is necessarily based in the speaker's perspective and therefore is a matter of speaker's choice; (ii) the *semantic ideational* type, concerning the "description of speaker-internal content"; and (iii) the *semantic interpersonal* type, defined as "enactment of speaker position with respect to content" (p. 387). The terms *ideational* and *interpersonal* roughly correspond to the functional layers of language structure first proposed in Halliday and Hasan (1976).<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Interestingly, in her first paper on subjectivity and subjectification, Traugott (1982) explicitly refers to the distinction 'ideational'—'textual'—'interpersonal' found in Halliday and Hasan (1976) and reformulates the latter as 'expressive.' The same tripartite distinction is still reflected in Traugott's (1989) three general tendencies of semantic change, from which only Tendency III: "Meanings tend to become increasingly based in the speaker's subjective belief state/attitude toward the proposition" (Traugott, 1989: 35) is taken to define subjectification (see also Traugott, 2010: 34, where *non/less-subjective* meanings match the *ideational* component of language, whereas *subjective* and *intersubjective* meanings are mapped to the *interpersonal* component). As De Smet and Verstraete do not discuss this point explicitly, it remains to be clarified whether their proposal may be considered a return to Traugott (1982) or a different way to apply Halliday and Hasan's classification.

The authors suggest that the contrast between semantic ideational and semantic interpersonal subjectivity is reflected in the syntactic behavior of linguistic expressions. They take the Dutch adjectives *leuk* ‘pleasant’ and *dom* ‘bloody, cursed’ to illustrate this contrast. Unlike *leuk*, *dom* is not gradable, it cannot be modified by intensifiers, and it cannot be used predicatively. Moreover, it cannot function as the focus of a *wh*-question and cannot be in the focus of negation. The same set of tests is applied to the English causal conjunctions *as*, *since*, *for*, *because* and *after* to demonstrate similar differences in syntactic behavior. As opposed to ideational subjective *because*, the other conjunctions are said to be interpersonal because they cannot be focused, interrogated and negated. The parameters described are seen to serve as a heuristic tool to classify other instances of subjective expressions mentioned in the literature, e.g. discourse markers are classified as interpersonally subjective, whereas their precursors, such as VP adverbs, are considered ideationally subjective.

Though De Smet and Verstraete (2006) do not make any claims about the ordering of subjective meaning types in the diachrony, they assume that at least possible pathways of semantic development can be concluded from their classification. Following the common practice in postulating such pathways of change, it is stated that “pragmatic subjectivity need not always end up as semantic subjectivity, and even if there is a development towards semantic subjectivity, the end result need not be interpersonal subjectivity” (De Smet and Verstraete, 2006: 388). As the reverse ordering, i.e. from interpersonal to ideational subjectivity, is not even mentioned, it can be assumed the authors adhere to the view that the diachronic process of subjectification is unidirectional.

Despite the usefulness of the proposed syntactic criteria especially for empirical investigations, the model does not allow testing for *semantic* subjectivity itself. Instead, it relies on a rather intuitive understanding of what a subjective expression is. Linguistic expressions, which are assumed to be subjective on the basis of intuition (alone), get differentiated with respect to whether they contribute to the ideational or to the interpersonal component of the sentence. As it stands, the criteria proposed by the authors show that linguistic expressions that fail to pass the syntactic tests pertain to the domain of what has usually been called “non-propositional,” “non-truth-conditional,” “procedural” or even “grammatical” meanings (see Section 2.2). “The fact that they [the causal conjunctions; ES] cannot be focused, interrogated and negated from the perspective of the main clause shows that they are not part of the propositional content of that main clause” (De Smet and Verstraete, 2006: 387–388).

Moreover, the exact distinction between two types of semantic subjectivity remains to be clarified. From the definitions<sup>2</sup> and the tests applied it follows

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<sup>2</sup> See esp. Table 1 in De Smet and Verstraete (2006: 387), where ideational and interpersonal

that the combination of ideational and interpersonal subjectivity in one and the same linguistic expression is ruled out, as it cannot be e.g. focusable and non-focusable at the same time. In their discussion of the English conjunctions, however, the authors seem to consider the combination of these two meanings in one linguistic expression unproblematic:

*As, since, for, because* and *after* are **all equally subjective in an ideational sense** because they can denote causal relations, but *as, since,* and *for* make an additional contribution to the interpersonal component of the complex sentence.

(De Smet and Verstraete, 2006: 386; emphasis added)

Especially from a diachronic point of view, it remains to be explicated whether the development of what De Smet and Verstraete (2006) call *interpersonal* subjectivity should be conceived of as an addition to the existent *ideational* one or rather as a substitution of *ideational* subjectivity for the *interpersonal* type.

## 2.2. *Visconti*

Another attempt to refine the concept of subjectification is Visconti (forthcoming). Here, similar to De Smet and Verstraete (2006), the Traugottian view is complemented by additional predictions concerning the structural aspects of linguistic expressions. The aim is to identify structural factors of subjectification that are replicable across languages and construction types, i.e. to find general criteria of subjectivity and subjectification which may be applied cross-linguistically. Two basic ideas guide this approach: (i) the theoretical distinction between *modus* and *dictum*, or between *propositional* and *evaluative* meanings (cf. Doherty, 1987; Pasch, 2003); and (ii) the manifestation and modeling of this distinction in the layered structure of the utterance (cf. Doherty, 1987; Ferrari, 1993, 1995; see also Dik's Functional Grammar for a similar view of the sentence structure).

Relying basically on the view presented in Doherty (1987), the author defines propositional meaning as a part of the sentence meaning which is evaluable; non-propositional meaning is seen as the “evaluating part,” which specifies the speaker's attitude toward the proposition. Additionally, non-propositional meaning is subdivided into the evaluative component or “attitude” on one hand, and “attitudinal mood” or *Satzmodus* on the other. The former concerns the evaluation of the propositional content by the speaker, whereas the

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subjectivity are described in terms of clear-cut binary distinctions and marked with +/- with respect to the criteria “focus,” “content” and “rhetorical.”

latter is related to the illocutionary function of the sentence. Propositional and two types of non-propositional meanings are associated with the different structural layers of a sentence. The layered model of a sentence is represented in the following manner (see also Doherty, 1987: 22):

AM(A<sub>k</sub>(p))

where AM = attitudinal mood, A = attitude, k = the variable for the subject of an attitude or an attitudinal mood, and p = propositional meaning. Applying this model to a diachronic dimension, Visconti (forthcoming) proposes to define subjectification as a

... shift from the propositional to the attitudinal component [...]: from an element (typically) denoting acts/events to an element enacting speaker's judgment, thus from operandum to operator status, binding an individual variable (the speaker) to an evaluation.

According to the author, this proposal has two consequences. First, the distinction between “lexical” vs. “grammatical” subjectivity and thus between diachronic processes leading to “lexical” vs. “grammatical” subjective meaning is introduced. The former is located at the propositional level and corresponds to Traugott's (1989: 34) Tendency I: “Meanings based in the external described situation > meanings based in the internal (evaluative/perceptual/cognitive) described situation” and comprises developments like *silly* ‘blessed, innocent’ > ‘stupid,’ *insist* ‘to sit on’ > speech-act verb, etc. The latter applies to the developments of non-propositional meanings and concerns the ‘movement’ along the cline out of the propositional content towards ATT (Visconti's abbreviation for attitude) and AM, cf.:

... the distinction is largely a matter of the scope on which the subjectified element acts and of how advanced in the cline of subjectification it is: whether the expression is used to operate on a proposition, as in subjectification to ATT, or on higher textual units, indexing speaker's attitudes in relation to chunks of text or to extralinguistic context, as in further (inter)subjectification at the level of SATZMODUS. (Visconti, forthcoming)

This semantic development is said to be accompanied by structural changes, among them the loss of ability to be focused or negated (i.e. criteria mentioned by De Smet and Verstraete, 2006; see also Company, 2006 for a similar view on syntactic correlates of subjectification). Moreover, Visconti argues that “lexical” subjectification is prerequisite to “grammatical” subjectification, as it is at the less advanced stage of the subjectification cline.

Although Visconti's account of subjectification contributes to the better understanding of the phenomenon and offers a general model of change, some points deserve critical appraisal. First, similarly to the account introduced in the previous section, it fails to identify subjective expressions in a unified way. Structural distinctions are drawn *within* the domain of subjectiv-

ity or subjective meaning, but the question remains how to detect subjective meaning in the first place. Second, the model applies only to the sentential level, leaving aside development on the phrasal level, e.g. within the nominal phrase (cf. Breban, 2006; Ghesquière, 2010, *inter alia*). Hence it cannot account for changes that occur clause-internally. Third, it seems to equate subjectification with the development of non-propositional meanings. In this connection, one could ask whether an extra notion of subjectivity is needed. Moreover, one could object that non-propositional meanings need not be limited to subjective ones—take voice distinctions, for instance. Admittedly, this point largely hinges on the general understanding what subjective meaning is.

To conclude this section, though there have been several attempts to clarify and further elaborate the notion of subjectification, we still seem to be left with a rather vague and elusive concept. The heterogeneity of the notion gets even more apparent if one looks at the range of phenomena recently subsumed under the heading of subjectification:

Subjectified polysemies may index evaluations of others (*silly* ‘blessed, innocent’ > ‘stupid’), or relative position on a scale (adverbs like *pretty* ‘cleverly’ > ‘attractively’ > ‘rather’), of attitude toward the truth of a proposition (epistemics like *probably* ‘provably’ > ‘in all likelihood’); they may index information structure (e.g. the topicalizer *as far as*), connectivity of clauses to each other (*anyway*), the speech act being undertaken (*promise* in its illocutionary uses), or the relationship of chunks/episodes of speech to each other (*then* in its discourse marker use).  
(Traugott, 2010: 32)

In the light of this very heterogeneous list, and as more and more developments have been added to it (see López-Couso, 2010 for examples from different languages), it is understandable that Traugott herself adopts a rather reserved position towards the operationalizability of her notion of (inter)subjectification:

There are important studies that seek to find structural groundings for the admittedly rather imprecise notion of subjectification. However, because the relevant factors are so different, these variation- and multivariate analysis-based studies raise the question whether it is possible to identify factors of subjectification that are replicable across languages and construction-types, independently of those that might be particular to a construction.  
(Traugott, 2010: 58)

The view presented in this paper is in line with this opinion. As has been shown in this section, recent attempts exemplified by the models of De Smet and Verstraete (2006) and Visconti (forthcoming) do not really contribute to the better understanding of what subjectivity and subjectification essentially are. Instead, they introduce distinctions *within* the domain of subjectivity. In doing so, they rely on syntactic criteria which are not symptomatic of linguistic expressions with subjective meaning only, but may also be applied to a wide range of other, non-subjective expressions (see esp. Boye and Harder,

2012b, who apply the criteria of addressability and focusability to determine the *grammatical* status of linguistic expressions).

In the next section, I will argue that subjectification is a purely semantic change and does not necessarily correlate with particular cross-linguistically valid formal and structural changes.

### 3. Subjectification is a Purely Semantic Change

In what follows, subjectification will be described as an inherently semantic shift which does not necessarily correlate with particular structural changes.<sup>3</sup>

Subjectification was originally defined as a particular type of semantic change. Here, I reproduce one of the definitions to which I adhere in the following.

Subjectification is the semasiological process whereby SP[eakers]/W[riter]s come over time to develop meanings for L[exeme]s that encode or externalize their perspectives and attitudes as constrained by the communicative world of the speech event, rather than by the so-called “real-world” characteristics of the event or situation referred to.

(Traugott and Dasher, 2002: 30)

It is argued here that subjectification as a process of change should be conceived of as a purely semantic phenomenon (see Boye and Harder, 2012a for a similar view but with a different focus). This means that in subjectification a linguistic expression develops a new meaning (component) that can be described only with reference to the speaker, e.g. to his/her belief or attitude.

The hypothesis is that *there is no other but semantic change* that is constitutive of subjectification. That is, changes that directly affect e.g. morphosyntactic and positional properties of linguistic expressions do not pertain to the subjectification process *per se*. Instead, they may occur largely independent of it and cannot be taken for its symptoms or even for its direct outcomes. If, however, some structural correlates are observed in a subjectification process, they should be best attributed to the peculiarities of this specific linguistic expression or construction in this individual language. That is, it is suggested here that subjectification cannot be linked to any *particular* structural changes which are replicable cross-linguistically.

This idea is not entirely new, though it has not been formulated in such a strong way. Traugott herself has repeatedly pointed out that subjectification cannot be equated with, e.g., grammaticalization (cf. Traugott, 1989, 2010).

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<sup>3</sup> Following the large body of research, I concentrate here on the notions of subjectivity and subjectification. I suggest, however, that what will be said about subjectification applies analogously to the notion of *intersubjectification* as well.

This means that there are cases of subjectification ‘within’ as well as ‘outside’ grammaticalization, where the latter is usually seen as a combination of certain semantic *and* structural changes. Moreover, Traugott (2010: 61) is skeptical about a uniformly defined set of contextual preconditions for subjectification: “it appears that each construction needs to be studied in its own terms before any cross-constructural let alone cross-linguistic predictions can be made.”

Further evidence for this hypothesis comes from a variety of developments which have been classified as instances of subjectification in the literature (and which conform to the criteria introduced in the next section) but do not yield any phonological or morphosyntactic changes of the original linguistic expression. Some of them are considered cases of “lexical subjectification” by Visconti (forthcoming). Here, a few examples should suffice to make the point:

- i. various cases of pejoration and amelioration (Engl. *silly* ‘blessed, innocent’ > ‘stupid,’ *knight* ‘boy’ > ‘nobleman’; Germ. *billig* ‘appropriate’ > ‘cheap’ > ‘sleazy,’ *Dirne* ‘virgin’ > ‘prostitute’);
- ii. numerous cases of euphemisms, interjections and swear words<sup>4</sup> which arise from descriptive expressions;
- iii. developments of attitudinal adjectives from non-attitudinal ones, e.g. Engl. *blessed*, *damn*, *wonderful*, Germ. *irre*, *wahnsinnig* ‘crazy,’ *phantastisch*, etc. (see Keller and Kirschbaum, 2003 for details and further examples from German);
- iv. non-speech oriented verbs > speech act verbs that are used for performative purposes, e.g. *promise* ‘send forward’ > ‘promise,’ Germ. *beauftragen* ‘lay on’ > ‘order’ (see Traugott and Dasher, 2002: 203 for further examples);
- v. sentence adverb(ial)s > discourse markers such as Engl. *frankly*, *actually*, *well*, *indeed*, *in fact*, where no apparent structural changes occur when the meaning changes from ‘epistemic’ to ‘discourse marking’ (cf. Traugott and Dasher, 2002: Ch. 4, for a detailed account; cf. also Boye and Harder, 2012a for an analysis of Engl. *well* and Spanish *de hecho* ‘de facto’ [Fanego, 2010]).

On the other hand, most of the developments accompanied by structural changes (phonological, morphosyntactic, positional, etc.) that have been

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<sup>4</sup> An anonymous reviewer pointed out that e.g. swear words and some discourse markers may take up positions in the sentence that are different from their sources. As such, they indeed behave syntactically different from their sources. However, these differences concern only positional properties and may be claimed only for some, and not all, languages; they are not correlated with any phonological and further morphosyntactic changes. I take this as strong evidence in favor of the position that subjectification does not have *particular* structural correlates.

mentioned in the literature as instances of subjectification have been identified as ‘something else’ at the same time, most often as instances of grammaticalization or pragmaticalization. Consider for example the following cases:

- i. The developments of discourse or pragmatic markers, which are (inter)subjective expressions *par excellence*, are seen as instances either of grammaticalization or pragmaticalization<sup>5</sup> (cf. López-Couso, 2010: 135 f. for examples from different languages);
- ii. the German modal particles, such as *aber, ruhig, eben, auch*, etc., are said to arise via the process of grammaticalization (cf. Diewald, 2006, 2008);
- iii. the developments of epistemic from root or deontic modal verbs are seen to be accompanied by grammaticalization (Traugott and Dasher, 2002: 120–137; Krug, 2000, etc.);
- iv. epistemic-evidential variants of the verbs *promise, threaten, seem* and their cognates in e.g. German, Dutch, Spanish, Portuguese, and Greek are more grammaticalized than their sources (cf. Diewald and Smirnova, 2010a, b);
- v. intensifiers such as *lovely* (Adamson, 2000), *pure* (Vandewinkel and Davidse, 2008) are also seen as resulting from grammaticalization processes;
- vi. for some phrasal discourse markers, e.g. *I think, y’know, it seems* (Aijmer, 1996), *methinks* (Wischer, 2000), *innit?* (Krug, 1998) it has been argued that they result from lexicalization processes.

In view of this, I would like to propose to keep diachronic processes like lexicalization, grammaticalization, pragmaticalization, etc., which usually involve semantic as well as formal changes, apart from the process of subjectification. I suggest that we deal with a *combination* of subjectification and other diachronic processes when cases like those mentioned above are concerned.

In this connection, attempts to operationalize and refine subjectivity and subjectification, as illustrated in the previous section, turn out to apply to grammaticalization (or pragmaticalization, according to the view the authors adhere to; see esp. Boye and Harder, 2012b). Since the diagnostics proposed by De Smet and Verstraete (2006) and Visconti (forthcoming) allow to detect *structural* changes usually identified with grammaticalization (or pragmaticalization), they have little to say about subjectification *per se*. In the following section, I will introduce some diagnostic criteria to test for subjectification as a semantic phenomenon.

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<sup>5</sup> As the notions of grammaticalization and pragmaticalization are not in the focus of this analysis, I just reproduce the labels used in the cited literature without any theoretical implications.

#### 4. How to Diagnose Subjective Meaning

In what follows, I will focus on the question how a newly evolved subjective meaning or meaning component may be diagnosed in a linguistic expression at hand. As I have concluded above, uniform criteria for measuring subjectification—if the hypothesis presented here is accepted and subjectification is treated as a purely semantic phenomenon—are still lacking. Here, I propose a semantic analysis that consists of three basic steps. The first two steps will be dealt with very briefly in passing, as they are pervasive in any study on semantic change and are therefore not problematic. The third step concerns subjective meaning exclusively, and will be explained in more detail.

In the first step, it should be ascertained that the linguistic expression under consideration exhibits a newly evolved subjective component as a part of its *coded* semantics. In other words, subjectivity is not merely pragmatically associated with this expression in specific contexts of use. Basically, the distinction between coded meaning and implicatures is described in terms of cancelability in the tradition of Grice (1975): whereas conversational implicatures may be explicitly cancelled by the speaker, (parts of) semantic content cannot.<sup>6</sup>

Second, the new meaning component should be sufficiently different from the original semantics of the expression, i.e. the expression should have become *polysemous*. Thereby, either several readings may coexist at the same time ('layering') or the new meaning may replace the old one. In either case, during the diachronic development, there is a transient stage at which both, the old and the new meanings or meaning components, coexist. Evidence for the polysemous status of a linguistic expression may be drawn in different ways. If there are enough data, an analysis of relevant *collocations* will offer solid grounds (cf., e.g., Gries and Stefanowitsch, 2004 for the method of 'collostructional analysis,' and, e.g., Hilpert, 2006, 2008, etc. for the application of this method in diachronic studies). Collocations may reveal relevant information not only about the polysemous status of an expression; they also help to identify the precise semantic content of the expression (which is also relevant for the next step in the analysis, see below). Moreover, the investigation of the *contexts of use* helps to determine whether an item actually displays different readings. Contexts of use usually provide more information than collocations because

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<sup>6</sup> The importance of this distinction has been frequently pointed out by Traugott: subjectivity is very often present in language use; this does not automatically mean, however, that it pertains to the coded meaning of linguistic expressions. The same view is also taken by De Smet and Verstraete (2006) in that they explicitly differentiate between *pragmatic* and *semantic* subjectivity.

they include more linguistic material as well as non-linguistic aspects such as genre, register, etc. Particularly relevant in this regard are the so-called ‘bridging’ (Heine, 2002) or ‘critical’ (Diewald, 2002) contexts, which are ambiguous between two or more readings. Additionally, several tests may be performed on the expression under consideration, e.g. zeugma, coordination, finding of antonyms, etc.<sup>7</sup>

After having ensured that an expression has developed a new meaning or meaning component, one still has to prove that this meaning is subjective. To my knowledge, in the vast literature on subjectivity and subjectification, no procedures have been proposed for this purpose. The next paragraphs are devoted to presenting some diagnostic criteria.

As subjectivity is defined (see above) as coded expression of *speaker’s beliefs and attitudes*, one would expect that those can be easily paraphrased in a unified fashion. The idea is that the only necessary condition for the semantic paraphrases of subjective meaning is that the speaker must explicitly figure in them. This condition can be formulated even stronger in its negative form: *The speaker must not be omitted in the adequate semantic paraphrase of subjective meaning.*<sup>8</sup>

To briefly exemplify this, an adequate semantic paraphrase for a subjective attitudinal adjective, such as Germ. *toll* ‘awesome,’ *phantastisch* ‘fantastic,’ or *wunderbar* ‘lovely, wonderful’ in (1a), could be (1b):<sup>9</sup>

- (1) a. *Das ist eine tolle/phantastische/wunderbare Idee.*  
 ‘This is an awesome/fantastic/wonderful idea.’  
 b. *Ich finde diese Idee sehr gut. / Mir gefällt diese Idee.*  
 ‘I consider this a very good idea. / I like this idea.’

Note that the paraphrases in (1b) express the attitude of the *speaker* in an explicit way and are synonymous to the sentences in (1a). Indeed, a paraphrase with a 3rd person subject as in (1c) or an impersonal statement as in (1d) does not adequately describe the meaning of (1a):

<sup>7</sup> Consider, e.g., three criteria listed by Coates (1983: 10) which can be used as a polysemy test: (i) the two readings appear in different linguistic contexts; (ii) the two readings need different semantic paraphrases; (iii) there are ambiguous cases, i.e. sentences which allow one or the other reading.

<sup>8</sup> The same condition is expected to hold for intersubjective meaning or meaning components of a linguistic expression, with a slight modification: *The speaker and (his/her relation to) the addressee must not be omitted in the adequate semantic paraphrase of intersubjective meaning.*

<sup>9</sup> A similar semantic paraphrase has been proposed for the intensifying uses of subjective attitudinal adjectives by Kirschbaum (2002: 38), cf.: *Karl ist erbärmlich klein.* ‘Karl is depressingly short.’ → *Karl ist sehr klein, und das ist erbärmlich.* ‘Karl is very short, and this is depressing.’

- (1) c. *Erl/sie findet diese Idee sehr gut. / Ihm/ihr gefällt diese Idee.*  
 ‘S/he considers this a very good idea. / S/he likes this idea.’  
 d. *Man/jemand findet diese Idee sehr gut.*  
 ‘The idea is considered to be very good.’

On this account, highly grammaticalized and largely bleached intensifiers like Engl. *very* and Germ. *sehr* are considered non-subjective, as they do not allow for such a paraphrase. Indeed, they can be used in an adequate paraphrase, as in e.g. (1b), as well as in an inadequate paraphrase, as in e.g. (1c) and (1d). Their compatibility with any ‘evaluating source’ (including the speaker) proves that they are not restricted to the expression of the speaker’s perspective.<sup>10</sup>

Next, closely connected to the condition formulated above is the requirement for the expressions with subjective meanings to be compatible with certain other expressions. Or, to put it in a stronger negative form: *A linguistic expression with subjective meaning is incompatible with expressions bearing opposite meanings.* This follows from the assumption that the speaker cannot hold (and express) a specific belief or attitude and claim its opposite at the same time. The conclusion is thus that an attempt to complement a sentence containing a subjective expression with an expression of the opposite meaning would produce a mismatch.<sup>11</sup> In other words, if a subjective meaning is conventionally coded by a linguistic expression, then the attitude or the belief of the speaker cannot be explicitly negated, cf. the following modification of (1a):

- (2) *Das ist eine tolle/phantastische/wunderbare Idee, \*aber mir gefällt sie nicht.*  
 ‘This is an awesome/fantastic/wonderful idea, \*but I don’t like it.’

Note that some expressions with a general or bleached meaning of quality like *good* and *bad* do pass the incompatibility test (cf. Keller and Kirschbaum, 2003: 49):

<sup>10</sup> For the grammaticalization of intensifiers from adjectives, it can be assumed that subjective meaning is gradually lost during the process of semantic bleaching (see Kranich, 2010 for a similar view on subjectification in grammaticalization).

<sup>11</sup> Note that sometimes the incompatibility test can yield seemingly acceptable results. However, in most cases the allegedly non-subjective character of an expression is due to the context in which it is used. That is, either the evaluation of another person is reported without any specific marking, as, e.g., in *The iPhone is also great, but I don’t like it due to personal reasons*, or the evaluation concerns only a particular aspect of the described entity and not the whole entity, as in, e.g., *And as a basic premise, being able to control something without a controller sounds absolutely fantastic. But I don’t like it for gaming.* (I am grateful to an anonymous reviewer for providing these examples.) The original context, in which e.g. an attitudinal adjective such as *lovely* or *great* is used, should be taken into account.

- (3) *Das war ein **guter** Film, aber mir hat er nicht gefallen.*  
‘It was a good film but I didn’t like it.’
- (4) *Sie ist eine **schöne** Frau, aber mir gefällt sie nicht besonders.*  
‘She is a beautiful woman but I don’t really like her.’

For this reason, linguistic expressions like *good* and *bad* do not qualify as subjective, similarly to the bleached intensifiers described above. This may appear counterintuitive, since these adjectives are basically used to express evaluations and judgments. However, by means of these expressions the speaker may well refer to evaluations that apply independently of his/her own judgment and that are not in line with the attitude the speaker holds at the time of speaking, as demonstrated in (3) and (4). Since subjectivity is defined as the explicit reference to the speaker alone, attitudes of others do not qualify as subjective in this sense. And this is exactly what the incompatibility test is supposed to reveal.<sup>12</sup>

Furthermore, a criterion of ‘assessor shift’ suggested by Lehmann (to appear) may be used to test for subjective meaning. Lehmann (to appear) defines subjective modality as a type of attitudinal modality that involves a modal *assessor*, i.e. “the issuer or source of modality, the one who takes the modal attitude towards the proposition.” The claim is that normally the assessor role is taken by the speaker. To operationalize this criterion, the following test is suggested:

If the modal attitude in question is the speaker’s in declarative, but the hearer’s in interrogative versions of the same sentence, then the modality involves an assessor and is, thus, subjective. (Lehmann, to appear)

This is illustrated by the sentence pair in (5a)–(5b):

- (5) a. *Linda may go now.*– ‘**I** allow Linda to go.’  
b. *May Linda go now?*– ‘Do **you** allow Linda to go?’

The default interpretation of the subjective modal *may* in (5a) requires the speaker to be mentioned in the paraphrase (which corresponds to the first criterion of subjectivity described above). That is, the assessor in (5a) is the speaker by default. If the sentence is used in interrogative, however, the assessor role shifts to the hearer and the semantic paraphrase of (5b) involves the hearer *you*. The same criterion is shown to apply to other domains of subjectivity such as evidentiality and egophora (cf. Lehmann, to appear).

<sup>12</sup> Similarly, expressions of so-called ‘objective’ epistemic modality (cf. Lyons, 1977) are not considered subjective here, for the same reason: cf. *It may rain tomorrow, but I don’t believe it.* (= I don’t believe that it will rain tomorrow).

This description is in line with the definition of subjectivity employed here. I suggest thus that the criterion of assessor shift may be applied to subjectivity in general. Of course, restrictions mentioned in Lehmann (to appear) apply also to expressions of subjective meanings in other domains. The most relevant one is that it is possible for the linguistic expression under consideration to occur in interrogative sentences at all. This is not the case, e.g., for sentence adverbials, which usually do not occur in interrogative sentences. Another restriction is that the expression under consideration operates at the level of propositions, i.e. it takes entire propositions in its semantic scope. For this reason, this criterion can be applied neither to adjectives, which operate within propositions, nor to discourse markers, which appear to operate on a higher metatextual or discourse level.

## 5. Two Case Studies

### 5.1. *Scheinen: From Verb of Visual Effect to Inferential Evidential*

The German verb *scheinen* ‘seem’ has developed inferential evidential meaning and is used now as an evidential auxiliary in the construction *scheinen* & *zu*-infinitive (for a detailed account see Diewald and Smirnova, 2010a). The diachronic order of semantic development may be summarized as the path

visual effect > visual impression > inferential evidential

Each of the variants of the polysemous verb *scheinen* displays particular structural properties. *Scheinen* with the meaning of visual effect in (6) is a main intransitive verb. The meaning of visual impression in (7) is linked to several structural patterns, among them *scheinen* as a copula verb, sometimes complemented by an infinitive verb *sein* ‘be’ (*scheinen* & *zu* & *sein*), *scheinen* with a complement clause with *dass* ‘that’ and the so-called parenthetical *scheinen* (see Diewald and Smirnova, 2010a: 177–180, and Askedal, 1998 for details). The evidential variant of *scheinen* in (8) is found in the construction *scheinen* & *zu*-infinitive, where *scheinen* serves as a grammaticalized auxiliary verb.

- (6) *Die Sonne **scheint**.*  
‘The sun is shining.’
- (7) *Sie **scheint** traurig (zu sein).*  
‘She seems (to be) sad.’
- (8) *Sie **scheint** den Kampf zu gewinnen.*  
‘She seems to be winning the fight.’

For the purposes of this paper, the difference between (7) and (8) is crucial, as the non-subjective character of (6) is obvious. In what follows, I will apply the criteria proposed above to show that the inferential meaning and the meaning of visual impression of *scheinen* qualify as equally subjective. Diewald and Smirnova (2010a) give the following semantic paraphrases for these variants of the verb:

- (i) *scheinen* with the meaning of visual impression:  
'something/someone is perceived (by an observer) as X';
- (ii) *scheinen* with the inferential evidential meaning:  
'due to some pieces of information available to the speaker, p [proposition].'

Note that only (ii) would qualify as subjective in the sense of Visconti (forthcoming). Applying these paraphrases to the examples given above, we receive the following sentences:

- (7a) *Ich sehe, dass sie traurig ist.* or *Sie sieht (für mich) traurig aus.*  
'I can see that she is sad.' or 'She looks sad (to me).'
- (8a) *Aus dem, was ich sehe/weiß, schliesse ich, dass sie den Kampf gewinnt.*  
'From what I see/know, I infer that she is winning the fight.'

Both paraphrases entail the explicit reference to the speaker. Note that until the 19th century, *scheinen* with the meaning of visual impression allowed for combinations with observers other than the speaker. This usage is exemplified in (9).

- (9) *Nun schien es aber dem Herrn von Mehlfeld Zeit zu seyn, ...*  
(Knigge, Gutenberg–DE; taken from Diewald and Smirnova, 2010a: 264).  
'Now it seemed to Mr. von Mehlfeld to be the right time ...'

This suggests that *scheinen* was not yet subjectified at that time; rather it had pragmatically associated subjective interpretations tied to certain contexts. In present-day German, one can still find individual instances of *scheinen* with an explicitly mentioned, 3rd-person observer referred to by a free dative like *ihnen* 'to them.' Those are however very rare and can be best treated as remnants of the former use (see Diewald and Smirnova, 2010a: 184 for a discussion). In light of this, the paraphrase of the meaning of visual impression should be better noted as 'something/someone is perceived (by the speaker) as X,' as the speaker is the observer, i.e. the assessor, by default.

Let me conclude that both variants of *scheinen* exemplified in (7) and (8) code subjectivity because the reference to the speaker cannot be omitted from

their paraphrases. The incompatibility test brings further evidence for this (see Diewald and Smirnova, 2010a: 81–87, 180 f. for a detailed discussion of scope differences and further examples):<sup>13</sup>

- (7b) *Sie scheint traurig, \*aber ich glaube es nicht.* (= Ich glaube nicht, dass sie traurig aussieht.)  
 ‘She seems sad, \*but I don’t believe it. (= I don’t believe that she looks sad.)’
- (8b) *Sie scheint den Kampf zu gewinnen, \*aber ich glaube es nicht.* (= Ich glaube nicht, dass sie gewinnt.)  
 ‘She seems to be winning the fight, \*but I don’t believe it. (= I don’t believe that she is winning the fight.)’

Finally, it appears that we can perform the assessor shift test as well. By default, i.e. in declarative sentences, the speaker is the assessor. This is the case with both variants of *scheinen*, as the paraphrases above show. Although *scheinen* & *zu*-infinitive is not normally used in questions, there are some interrogative examples in the corpus data, cf. (10). The most likely interpretation of (10) is given in (10a). (7c) and (8c) give possible paraphrases of the interrogative variants of (7) and (8). In any case, if *scheinen* occurs in questions, the role of the assessor is shifted from the speaker to the audience.

- (10) ***schien** nicht eben dies Goethe in den Schlussworten andeuten zu wollen?*  
 (Benjamin, *Goethes Wahlverwandtschaften* [1925], S. 142)<sup>14</sup>  
 ‘didn’t Goethe seem to want to suggest exactly that in his closing words?’
- (10a) ‘From what you know, can you infer [here: confirm] that Goethe wanted to suggest exactly that in his closing words?’
- (7c) *Scheint sie traurig (zu sein)?*– ‘Siehst du, dass sie traurig ist?’ or ‘Sieht sie (für dich) traurig aus?’

<sup>13</sup> Note that in some contexts *scheinen* may pass the incompatibility test applied here and hence should be considered non-subjective. This is due to a particular interpretation of this verb that Diewald and Smirnova (2010a: 184) call the ‘make-believe’ meaning, as in, e.g., *Selbst etwas schwere Möbel **scheinen** bei dieser Zusammenstellung zu schweben* ‘Even the slightly heavier pieces of furniture seem to hover in this configuration.’ In this case, *scheinen* is used to emphasize the opposition between the appearance and the real nature of something/someone, whereby this appearance may be deliberately intended. This reading of *scheinen* is however not predominant in present-day German and may be accounted for in terms of semantic persistence of a diachronically older meaning.

<sup>14</sup> www.dwds.de; accessed on Feb. 14, 2012.

‘Does she seem (to be) sad?’—‘Can you see that she is sad?’ or ‘Does she look sad (to you)?’

- (8c) *Scheint sie den Kampf zu gewinnen?*—‘Aus dem, was du siehst/weißt, kannst du schließen, dass sie den Kampf gewinnt?’  
 ‘Does she seem to be winning the fight?’—‘From what you see/know, can you infer that she is winning the fight?’

In sum, both variants of *scheinen* qualify as subjective in the sense defined above. Note that they are attested in the same construction type, namely in the combination of *scheinen* with the infinitive of the copula *sein*. Diachronically, it is the *critical* context in the grammaticalization process of the evidential construction *scheinen* & *zu*-infinitive. That is, it is this syntactic configuration that was at the beginning of further semantic and structural changes of *scheinen*, i.e. its grammaticalization toward an evidential auxiliary. Thus, for the diachronic development of *scheinen*, the process of subjectification on the one hand and the process of grammaticalization on the other can be neatly dissociated from each other. Whereas the former essentially relied on implicatures that were present all the way in the uses of the copula verb *scheinen*, among them in the construction *scheinen* & *zu* & *sein*, the latter was triggered in this particular *critical* context. Whereas the former consists of the semantic change only, i.e. the speaker gradually becomes the assessor by default, and is not associated with particular structural changes, the latter is constituted by semantic and structural changes such as semantic bleaching and generalization, decategorialization, etc. (see Diewald and Smirnova, 2010a for a detailed account) but does not involve further subjectification. In other words, at the beginning of grammaticalization there is a verb *scheinen* with the already conventionalized subjective meaning.

## 5.2. Weil: *From Temporal to Causal to Epistemic*

A further case in point is the development of the causal conjunction *weil* in German. For reasons of space, it will be discussed very briefly (for details see e.g. Keller, 1993; Günthner and Gohl, 1999; Szczepaniak, 2009 and references therein). For the purposes of this paper, the following steps in the semantic change of this conjunction are of particular interest: (i) from temporal meaning ‘as long as’ to causal meaning ‘because,’ (ii) from causal to epistemic meaning.

- (11) temporal *weil*  
*Man muß das Eisen schmieden, weil es warm ist* (DWB, example taken from Diewald, 1997: 57)  
 ‘Strike while the iron is hot.’

- (12) causal *weil*  
*Die Temperatur ist gestiegen, weil die Sonne schien.*  
 ‘The temperature rose because the sun was shining.’
- (13) epistemic *weil*  
*Er ist nach Hause gegangen, weil ich sein Auto nicht mehr sehe/weil ich*  
*sehe sein Auto nicht mehr.* (Keller, 1993: 224)  
 ‘He must have gone [lit: has gone] home because I don’t see his car.’

Without going into further detail it can be said that there is no difference between the temporal and the causal meaning of *weil* in terms of subjectivity (contra e.g. Traugott and König, 1991, who consider the causal meaning of *weil* and *since* as more subjective than their temporal meaning).<sup>15</sup> In both cases, the speaker provides a description of relations that may well be observed and expressed in the same way by other persons.

The epistemic variant of *weil*, on the other hand, is subjective in the sense described above. The *weil*-clause is used by the speaker to give the reason for his/her claiming the proposition expressed in the main clause. That is, while the clause with the non-subjective causal *weil* answers the question ‘Why is it so?’ the clause with the subjective epistemic *weil* answers the question ‘How do you know?’ (for a discussion see Keller, 1993: 227), cf.:

- (12a) *Warum ist die Temperatur gestiegen?— Weil die Sonne schien.*  
 ‘Why did the temperature rise?—Because the sun was shining.’
- (13a) *Woher weißt du, dass er nach Hause gegangen ist?— Weil ich sein Auto nicht mehr sehe.*  
 ‘How do you know that he has gone home?—Because I don’t see his car.’

The application of the tests introduced in the previous section underpins this view: the reference to the speaker cannot be omitted from the semantic

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<sup>15</sup> The shift from temporal to causal meaning normally involves the conventionalizing of salient and stereotypical conversational implicatures, such as e.g. *post hoc ergo propter hoc*. Implicatures of this and other kinds as well as the phenomenon of pragmatic strengthening (cf. Traugott and Dasher, 2002), i.e. the process of coding those pragmatic implicatures, are naturally tied to the speaker, as it is the speaker who is responsible for the articulation of particular implicatures during communication. However, it is important to sharply distinguish between the process of pragmatic strengthening and the semantic content this process affects. The process naturally involves the speaker as the initiator of implicatures, i.e. the step from one meaning to another will always depend on the speaker. This does not mean, however, that any meaning arising from this process qualifies as subjective because it is based in speaker-based implicatures. Otherwise any instance of semantic change could be considered subjectification and the notion would lose its theoretical status.

paraphrase of the epistemic variant of *weil*, it is incompatible with expressions like ‘but I don’t believe it.’ The assessor shift test cannot be applied, as epistemic *weil* is not normally used in questions. However, additional tests presented in Keller (1993) convincingly demonstrate that *weil* is polysemous between the non-subjective causal meaning and the subjective epistemic meaning.

In the literature, the semantic difference between these two variants of *weil* has mostly been connected to the structural difference in word order: whereas the non-subjective causal *weil* occurs in verb-final subordinate clauses, the subjective epistemic *weil* is found in verb-second clauses. Conversely, this difference in syntax has been taken as evidence for the subjective status of epistemic *weil* and in favor of the hypothesis that subjectification comes along with the movement out of the propositional core into the (left or right, depending on the language) sentence periphery (cf. e.g. Company, 2006; Visconti, forthcoming). However, the following points argue against this. First, the distribution mentioned above is not as clear as it has been supposed in the literature: both variants of *weil* are found in verb-final as well as verb-second clauses. Second, the assumed diachronic ordering “causal *weil* in verb-final clauses > epistemic *weil* in verb-second clauses” does not hold either: as pointed out in e.g. Freywald (2009), verb-second word order after *weil* is relatively old and is not restricted to the epistemic readings of this conjunction. Third, similar semantic distinctions are found in other domains outside causal relations between propositions. Well known, e.g., is the tripartite distinction in ‘content,’ ‘epistemic,’ and ‘speech-act’ conditionals introduced by Sweetser (1990). This classification has been shown to apply to concessive and temporal connectives as well as to modal verbs. Langacker (2008: 484f.) suggests that this distinction is due to three different levels of linguistic organization at which linguistic expressions may operate, i.e. ‘effective,’ ‘epistemic,’ and ‘discursive.’ However, the different readings of such expressions have not been linked to any apparent structural differences, nor formulated in terms of diachronic tendencies of semantic change. In sum, although there is a clear semantic difference in terms of subjectivity between the causal and epistemic variants of *weil*, there are no particular structural differences that correspond to this semantic distinction. In other words, subjectification, i.e. the semantic change from causal to epistemic *weil*, did not yield any structural changes.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Recently, *weil* has been subject to the development towards a discourse marker (cf. Günthner and Gohl, 1999; Auer and Günthner, 2003; and others). By means of the continuation marker *weil* the speaker signals to the hearer that s/he is going to hold the floor. As a discourse marker, *weil* exhibits specific formal characteristics: it appears in the left periphery of the sentence, it is non-integrated into the clause, it is followed by a longer pause, it cannot connect noun

In the next section, I will conclude by summarizing the main points of this paper and presenting some open questions.

## 6. Conclusions

It has been argued here to treat subjectification<sup>17</sup> as a purely *semantic* change that is not correlated with any particular structural changes which may be given cross-linguistic validity. This supports the view already presented in Traugott (2010) that no cross-linguistic generalizations can be made about structural correlates of the subjectification process, and the peculiarities of individual changes will have to be dealt with separately in individual languages. Thus, in order to detect whether a linguistic expression has undergone subjectification, semantic criteria are needed. In this paper, three criteria have been suggested: (i) semantic paraphrase with the obligatory reference to the speaker; (ii) incompatibility test, and (iii) assessor shift test.

The predominant view on subjectivity and subjectification states that subjectification is a gradual process whereby meanings become more and more subjective over time. In light of the arguments presented in this paper, I suggest that subjectivity is *non-gradual*. The point of view of the speaker cannot be present in the semantics of a linguistic expression to a greater or lesser degree, i.e. it either pertains to the semantics or not. Hence the expression can be either subjective or not. The diachronic development of subjective meaning is gradual in the sense in which any language change is gradual: an innovation always takes time to be conventionalized.

Contra to another dominant view on subjectification, I would like to suggest that this process is not *unidirectional*. Apart from the empirical evidence provided by several authors (see Section 1), there are some further points that speak against the unidirectionality hypothesis. If subjectification is a purely semantic change without necessary correlates on the structural side, it is reasonable to assume that this change may be either stopped at some stage or even reversed. This is different for other changes like, e.g., grammaticalization,

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phrases, etc. It is a matter of considerable debate whether the development of discourse markers should be seen as grammaticalization or pragmaticalization (cf. Brinton, 2010; Diewald, 2011, *inter alia*). As this issue is not focused on in this paper, I will leave this question open. In any case, the semantic change of *weil* from causal conjunction to discourse marker is an instance of intersubjectification. As has been argued in Section 3, this does not mean that intersubjectification and pragmaticalization/grammaticalization are correlated. Instead, intersubjectification, in the same way as subjectification, is a purely semantic change, which may or may not be accompanied by structural changes.

<sup>17</sup> I suppose that the same holds for intersubjectification *mutatis mutandis*.

where semantic changes usually go hand in hand with structural changes. And once structural changes have occurred, it is by hypothesis more difficult to turn the change in the opposite direction. An additional argument comes from the wider domain of semantic change. It is well known that semantic changes are normally not unidirectional: the opposite of pejoration is amelioration; the opposite of generalization is specification or differentiation. And it is not precluded that a linguistic expression may undergo both directions of change during its ‘life time.’<sup>18</sup> This assumption needs a more elaborate discussion and a deeper inquiry, however.

There are some further points which still remain to be clarified. For instance, the notion of intersubjectification remains to be investigated in further detail. Is intersubjectification ‘just’ a further step after subjectification and thus a further point on the cline, or is intersubjectification essentially different from subjectification? As intersubjectification has often been associated with pragmatization and discursification (cf. Claridge and Arnovick, 2010) and thus with the development of procedural meanings, does it perhaps qualify as a separate kind of change or even identical with one of these notions?

Furthermore, the relation between subjectivity and deixis remains to be determined. For their interpretation, deictic expressions, lexical as much as grammatical, are essentially dependent on the deictic origo, the here and now of speaking. In this sense, they may qualify as subjective. However, they do not refer to speaker’s beliefs and attitudes, but only to his/her local, temporal, personal, etc. position. Traugott (2010) explicitly includes deictic expressions into the realm of subjectivity. Whether this is covered by and consistent with the definition of subjectivity remains to be seen.

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<sup>18</sup>) Additionally, as concerns the next step from subjective to intersubjective, shifts from non-subjective to intersubjective meanings, i.e. without passing the stage of subjective meaning, have been attested. These include, e.g., the development of the German modal particles directly from the non-subjective adjectives, adverbs and conjunctions (cf. Diewald, 2008), many instances of development of discourse markers, greetings, hedges, swearing and interjections (cf. Claridge and Arnovick, 2010). These run counter to the expectation presented in Traugott (2010: 37): “Where a ‘dedicated’ (coded) intersubjective meaning arises, however, it does by hypothesis arise from a previously subjectified meaning.”

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