Grammaticalization Pathways of Progressive Aspect in Korean and Hindi: A Cross-Linguistic Perspective

Keywords: Grammaticalization; Progressive Aspect; Korean; Hindi; Cross-Linguistic Comparison

Introduction: Aspectual markers, particularly progressive markers, evolve through grammatical reanalysis and typological shifts. This study examines the grammaticalization of progressive aspect in Korean and Hindi, tracing their development despite genealogical differences. Both languages derive progressive markers from imperfective constructions, contradicting Bybee et al.'s (1994) model linking them to locative/posture verbs. Korean retains dual meanings for *-go iss-* (progressive/resultative), while Hindi distinguishes progressive (*-rah- h-*) from habitual (*-t- h-*). This comparison highlights universal trends in grammaticalization while emphasizing language-specific adaptations, contributing to a broader understanding of aspectual evolution across typologically distinct languages.

Grammaticalization Pathways of the Progressive Marker in Korean:

➤ Historical Development

- In Middle Korean (15th century), *-eo iss-* conveyed both resultative and progressive meanings (Kim, 2003; Kim, 2009; Park, 2011).

- With the expansion of the connective *-go* from the 15th to the 17th century, the *-go is(i)-*[1] construction began replacing *-eo is(i)-*, with this replacement being selective based on transitivity. Over time, *-go iss-*, which primarily marked duration with transitive verbs, emerged as a progressive marker, while *-eo iss-* was reanalyzed to carry a resultative function, reflecting a common typological shift (Comrie 1976, Hopper & Traugott 2003).

➤ Pathways

Imperfective (*-e iss-*) → Resultative (*-eo iss-*)

        ↘ Progressive → (*-go* → *-go iss-*)

➤ Examples

Middle Korean:

(1) a. Jin-e   bo-m-al   nalawad-a seoleu   <u>gideul-yeo isi</u>-ni…

     truth-LOC see-NOMZ-ACC raise-CON together <u>wait-yeo isi</u>-CON

     'To obtain the ability to see truth, (they) stayed waiting together…' [Yeongga, 1464, 1:78b]

   b. Seonhye <u>nib-eo is</u>-deo-si-n   nogbi   os-al   bas-a…

     Seonhye <u>put.on-eo is</u>-RETRO-HON-REL deer.skin clothes-ACC take.off-CON

     'Seonhye took off the deer skin clothes that he was wearing and…' [Wolinseogbo, 1459, 1:15b]

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[1] *-is(i)-* is the old Korean form that later developed into *iss-* in Modern Korean.

(Examples cited in Kim, 2009)

Modern Korean:

(2) a. geu-neun s-<u>eo</u>   iss-da. ('He is standing.')

    He-TOP stand-CONN be-DECL

  b. geu-neun gadili-<u>go</u>   iss-da. ('He is waiting.')

    He-TOP   wait-CONN be-DECL

Grammaticalization Pathways of the Progressive Aspect in Hindi:

  ➢ **Historical Development**

- In the Classical period, the *-t- h-* construction expressed both habitual and progressive readings. Even by the 19th century, a clear distinction between habitual/generic aspect and progressive aspect had not yet been fully established (Kellogg, 1893; Montaut, 2006).

- The *-rah- h-* construction gained prominence as a dedicated progressive marker in Middle Indo-Aryan (Deo, 2006). In Modern Hindi, a clear distinction exists: *-t- h-* marks the habitual aspect, while *-rah- h-* is used for the progressive aspect (Hackman, 1976; Montaut, 2006).

  ➢ **Pathways**

Imperfective marker (*-t- h-*) → Habitual aspect (*-t- h-*)

                              ↘ Progressive → (*-rah-* → *-rah- h-*)

  ➢ **Examples**:

  - Old Indo-Aryan: ve   khel-<u>t-e</u>   <u>h</u>ain ('They play/are playing') (Hackman, 1976).

                      They play-IMPERF be.3.M.PL

  - Modern Hindi: ve   khel-<u>t-e</u>   <u>h</u>ain ('They play')

                      they play-IMPERF-M.PL be.3.M.PL

                      ve   khel <u>rah-e</u>   <u>h</u>ain ('They are playing')

                      They play PROG-M.PL be.3.M.PL

Conclusion: The grammaticalization pathways of progressive aspect markers in Korean and Hindi reveal both typological parallels and language-specific divergences. In both languages, progressive markers evolved not from locative or posture verbs (as predicted by Bybee et al., 1994) but from imperfective constructions through periphrastic reanalysis and lexical verb grammaticalization. However, while Hindi resolves ambiguity through distinct forms (*-rah- h-* for progressive, *-t- h-* for habitual), Korean retains dual meanings for *-go iss-* (progressive and resultative). This study underscores the interaction between universal grammaticalization trends and language-specific developments, contributing to a broader understanding of aspectual evolution in diverse linguistic contexts.

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