
[12] ***What motivates linguistic terminology: The case of grammaticalization, grammaticization, grammatisation, and grammation***

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The 1980s and 1990s saw a rising interest in the study of the processes leading to the rise of new grammatical structures in the languages of the world. Nowadays, the standard term used to refer to these processes is grammaticalization (Hopper & Traugott 1993; 2003). However, this term was not always generally accepted.

This paper will therefore discuss the early terminological debates in grammaticalisation studies. Apart from the current standard term grammaticalization, the following four terms will be at the centre of the discussion: grammaticization (Bybee, Perkins & Pagliuca 1994), grammatization (Matisoff 1991), and grammation (Andersen 2006).

Central to my analysis will be the two following questions. First, were the individual terminological choices theoretically motivated? Second, if that was not the case, what led to the preference of one term over the others?

To be able to answer these questions, I will combine theoretical explanations in research articles and explanations offered elsewhere such as in personal communication with the scholars active in the terminological discussions of the time. By doing that, I will show in what ways did such subjective categories as aesthetics and the perceived ease (or difficulty) of pronunciation affect the development of modern linguistic terminology.

Finally, I will briefly discuss the fate of the less successful terms. Those terms that have not become standard do not necessarily disappear from the scientific discourse altogether. They might get reinterpreted in a narrower, more specialised sense. A development well-known to affect normal synonyms as well (see Clark 1987).

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