

How Fascinating! Insubordinate Exclamations

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In a number of languages, exclamations share some of their form with one or more other constructions in the same language. In addition to English, parallelisms have been noted in French, German, Russian, Rumanian, Turkish, Mandarin, literary Japanese, and many more. German, for example, has both *Wie angenehm ist es!* ('How nice it is!'), and *Wie tust du das?* ('How do you do that?'); Russian has both *Kak ona krasiva!* ('How beautiful she is!) and *Kak vy zhiv'ote?* ('How are you?') (Elliott 1974:244-5). French has such pairs as *Comme vous avez de grandes oreilles!* ('What big ears you have!') and *Fais comme tu veux* ('Do as you wish'), as well as *Qu'il est beau!* ('How handsome he is', literally 'That he is handsome') and *Je vois qu'il est beau* ('I see that he is handsome'.) Several works have examined relationships between such exclamations and other constructions, generally focusing on underlying syntactic and/or semantic structures and features (Elliott 1971, 1974, Grimshaw 1979, Huddleston 1993, Michaelis and Lambrecht 1996, Rexach 1996, Zanutini and Portner 2003, Rett 2011). Here a different approach is taken, which focuses on processes by which such constructions can develop over time. Similarities among constructions are often due to shared origins: either one of the constructions has developed out of the other, or both have developed from a third. Differences can result from subsequent developments undergone by one or both individually.

Some processes of this type are illustrated with examples from Mohawk, an Iroquoian language of northeastern North America. Mohawk contains a robust construction based on a pervasive particle *tsi*, as in *Tsi niion'wé:sen!* 'How pleasant it is!'. Because there is little historical documentation of connected speech, it is not possible to trace the emergence of this construction philologically. All of the modern Iroquois languages (Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, Seneca) show similar arrays of constructions, so the comparative method has little to offer. A combination of two other tools, however, suggests a likely pathway of development. One is internal reconstruction, whereby coexisting *tsi* constructions in the modern language are compared. The other is our growing understanding of recurring processes of grammatical development over time. The Mohawk construction apparently began with a nominalization construction, which originally designated places then was extended to time, manner, and degree. All indicate coincidence of some kind. Manner and degree nominalizations came to serve as complements in complex sentences, first with a small set of matrix verbs, then an ever larger set. The final step appears to have been the process termed by Evans 'insubordination' (2007), whereby an erstwhile matrix verb is omitted and its complement is used as an independent sentence with connotations attributable to the original matrix. If this pathway of development is indeed the correct one, we can add an additional function to the three first described by Evans.

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