

The role of (inter)subjectification in the development of the Norwegian preproprial article into the psychologically distal demonstrative

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This study is concerned with the use of third person personal pronouns in determiner position as markers of “psychological distance” (PDDs) in Norwegian (Johannessen 2008, 2014). Marking psychological distance is known from so-called “recognitional” demonstratives (Himmelman 1996) and from stance-marking demonstratives (Lyons 1982), which have mapped their spatial semantics onto the psychological or emotive domain. It is particularly striking that a third person personal pronoun has acquired this use, while initially lacking the distal semantics. An analysis of diachronic corpus data of (Oslo) Norwegian will shed new light on the syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic changes of the use of the third person personal pronouns in determiner position.

The overarching concept of (inter)subjectification is central in the study. (Inter)subjectification is the process in which a word develops an (inter)subjective meaning and it co-occurs often with the larger process of grammaticalization. It seems to have caused the Latin distal demonstrative *ille* to acquire a psychologically distal use (cf. Carlier and De Mulder 2010), and it is likely to have played a role in the development of the PDD.

On the basis of syntactic and semantic parameters, this study tracks the (Oslo) Norwegian third person personal pronoun during its (inter)subjectification process into a PDD. Moreover, it provides some new methodological tools for the analysis (inter)subjectification, a relatively new field of research.

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