Jerzy Kuryłowicz

THE EVOLUTION

OF GRAMMATICAL CATEGORIES

If from the etymological point of view the term *category* denotes a class of objects sharing a common feature, under *linguistic category* we generally understand a class of linguistic units (chiefly words) sharing a common meaning or syntactical function, expressed by a common external (phonetic) form. Thus the words *room-s, table-s, pencil-s, match-es, glass-es...* are representative of the category of the plural number; (*he*) *describe-d*, *contrive-d*, *share-d*, *found-ed*, *assert-ed...* represent the category of the past tense. Forms like *men, children*, etc., on the one hand, (*he*) *rode*, *went*, etc., on the other, are also members of the category of the plural or past, respectively, in spite of the lack of the characteristic feature -(*e*)*s* or -(*e*)*d*, since functionally (i.e. as regards meaning) they lean upon the pattern of the productive -*s* and -*d* forms, thus:

the semantic difference between *man* and *men* (*child* and *children*) is the same as that between e.g. *room* and *room-s*, rendered by the sign -*s* versus zero;

the semantic difference between *rides* and *rode* (*goes* and

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went) is the same as that between *describe-s* and *describe-d*, rendered by the sign *-d* as against *-s*.

A word may belong to different categories according to its external (phonetic) and internal (semantic) characteristics. A Latin word like *virōs* represents a *noun* (category of part of speech), *masculine* (category of gender), in the *accusative* (category of grammatical case) of the *plural* (category of number). The words *agrōs, hortōs, lupōs* will belong to the same categories. The words *hort-ul-ōs*, *lup-ul-ōs*, with their additional feature *-ul-*, will be moreover representative of the category of diminutiveness, etc.

Words also admit a classification from the standpoint of the syntactical role they play in a given (type of) sentence: subject, predicate, object, complement, attribute.... Thus e.g. *is awake* and *awakes* belong both to the category *predicate*, although *awake* is an adjective, and *awakes* a personal verb. In *he and John were awake* both the pronoun *he* and the noun *John* are representatives of the category of *subject*.

Not only words but also meaningful parts of words may constitute categories. In O. English the endings of the nominative-accusative plural *-as*, *-u*, *zero*, *-e*, *-a*, *-an*, form a category:

stán-as "stones," *scip-u* "ships," *word* "words," *brýd-e* "brides," *sun-a* "sons," *heort-an* "hearts." These different exponents of the nominative-accusative plural are *allomorphs*, i.e. varieties conditioned by the individual word-stem or rather type of word-stem. But their semantic value is identical.

Finally, meaningless units of the language, like syllables or sounds (phonemes) constitute their own categories: we have closed and open (or heavy and light) syllables, vowels with subdivisions, e.g. tense: lax, high: low, front: back, unrounded: rounded; consonants: obstruents and continuants; non-aspirated: aspirated; categories of accentuation, intonation, quantity, etc.

Parts of speech are probably the most important set of linguistic categories, at least as regards the Indo-European linguistic family, which comprises the great majority of the living European languages. School grammars distinguish nouns (substantives), adjectives, numerals, pronouns, articles, verbs, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, particles, interjections. Owing to the variety

of the principles of division adopted in this traditional classification, the latter is far from being satisfactory for scientific purposes. Since, however, the following remarks are limited to certain subcategories like tense (of the verb), or plural, case and gender (of the noun), the important and difficult problem of the parts of speech may be disregarded for the present purposes.

Linguistic categories are the subject-matter of the grammatical and the lexicographical description of language. Depending on the more or less extensive range of a given category the latter will be assigned a place in the grammar or in the dictionary. It is, e. g., doubtful if the formation of such diminutives as *hill-ock* from *hill* still concerns English *grammar*. The case of the "personal" or "animate" nouns in *-ess* is different: *count-ess, baron-ess, lion-ess.* Owing to its range and its productivity this category will figure in the chapter "Word-formation" of a descriptive grammar of English.

Categories whose range represents whole parts of speech, like cases (of the noun), tenses (of the verb), degrees of comparison (of the adjective), may be considered as the most important part of the morphological structure of a language. They form the nucleus of the descriptive grammar and are of foremost interest to the linguist.

In the course of the history of a given language grammatical categories may arise and disappear. Thus the category of *grammatical gender*, inherited by O. English from Germanic, i.e. the division of *all nouns* into masculines, feminines and neuters, disappeared in Early M. English. Cf. O. English *sé mon, séo brýd, thet child* versus modern *the man, the bride, the child.* Nowadays the pronouns *he, she, it* refer to the *sex of persons* and some other *animate* beings (animals). Only in exceptional cases (e.g. *ship*), but chiefly in certain types of literary style *inanimate* objects (*sun, moon*) may be referred to by means of *he, she.*

On the other hand, English has developed the verbal category of *temporal anteriority*, which did not exist in the older stages of its history. It is represented by forms composed with the auxiliary have: *I have, had, shall have written* versus *I write, wrote, shall write.*

Frequently the change of the category is only *external*, i.e. concerns the phonetic exponent (suffix, ending, etc.), whereas the

semantic content remains unchanged. We have seen that nowadays *-(e)s* is almost the only successor of a multitude of O. English plural endings. But the fundamental uses of the plural have not changed. A more interesting and important phenomenon is the opposite evolution: without an external change of its exponent a category may undergo important internal (functional) changes due simply to an extension or a limitation of its range. The logical principle of the mutual relation of range and content has to be applied in such a case: the *increase of the range* of a given category entails the impoverishment of its content, and vice versa.

A striking example of semantic shift due to the gradual spread of a grammatical form is offered by the English *perfect.* In the modern language two sentences like *he has written the book* and *he has the book written* are neatly kept apart by means of a rigid word-order. They are the result of a differentiation going back to a period when word-order was still free. At that time *have* was not an auxiliary verb but always a full verb with the meaning "to own, possess." Therefore, whereas "to have (to own) a written book" (in the sense of "to have the book written") was admissible, such a type of construction would have proved nonsensical for a great number of verbs: "to have (own) spoken words" ("to have one's words spoken"), "to have (own) suffered misfortunes" ("to have misfortunes suffered"), "to have (own) lost battles" ("to have battles lost"). Initially the construction expressed the result of a previous action exercised upon a given object. Now whereas the result of *having written the book* is *a written book, words, misfortunes, battles* are not objects preexisting to the action of *speaking, suffering, losing* and being afterwards changed by this action. They are so-called *internal* objects of the respective verbs.

The shift of meaning from "to have the book written" to "to have written the book" is understandable. The former construction stresses a state resulting from a previous action (as expressed by the past participle), the latter, the previous action inherent in the result. Up to a certain moment both shades of meaning were expressed by the same phrase, characterized by a relatively free order of its members. When word-order

began to be grammatically relevant, a differentiation took place with the participle put before the object (previous action with present result), or after it (result of a previous action). Moreover, in the former construction *have* is an *auxiliary* verb, in the latter, a *full* verb.

The semantic shift *result (of previous action)* > *action (with present result)* was tantamount to an increase of the stock of verbs permitting the construction *have* + *past participle* + *direct object.* Once a construction like *he has cut his hand* had become a perfect denoting an action whose result was still perceived at the moment of speaking, expressions like *he has lost the battle* became possible. The result was the "loss of the battle," not the change worked upon a previously existing "battle." The range of the perfect underwent a substantial increase once it became an inflectional form of all *transitive verbs* regardless of the nature of their direct object.

The next increase of the range of the *have*-construction was purely *external.* In the older period the perfect was formed either with *have* or with *are*, depending chiefly (though not exclusively) upon the transitive or intransitive character of the verb, but gradually *have* became the only auxiliary used in the perfect (constructions like the archaic *he is come, he is gone* are residual).

On the other hand, important *internal* changes of the perfect have taken place in the course of its further history. The shade of *anteriority* with relation to the moment of speaking was more and more put to the fore, the result of action gradually receding to the background. The old present value of *he has written a letter* can only be guessed at by certain restrictions like *I have seen him today, this week, this year* (time segments including the moment of speaking), but *I saw him yesterday, last week, last year* (time segments excluding the moment of speaking).

Still, the semantic difference between *I saw* and *I have seen* prevents a further spread of the perfect *I have seen*—a spread fully realized in French or in Southern German. In Classical French of the seventeenth-eighteenth centuries the semantic difference between *j'ai vu* and *je vis* corresponded approximately to that between English *I have seen* and *I saw*, but gradually

the latter form was ousted in the colloquial language (and restricted to the higher levels of style), with *j'ai vu* becoming its successor. Similar was the replacement of *ich sah* by *ich habe gesehen* in Southern German. This development means the spread of the old perfect at the expense of the old preterite (past tense). We get the following development, exemplified by the historical development of many languages: 1) present state (result of previous action); 2) action previous to the moment of speaking (with present result), 3) past action referred to the moment of speaking (anteriority); 4) past action.

The English perfect *I have written* has not reached stage 4. Yet already a successor of this form has turned up, taking over some of its old functions: *I have been writing.* In languages making a formal difference between the past (4) and the perfect (3) the former is felt as being in a certain sense more remote from the present than the latter, cf. the Italian term *passato remoto* denoting *cantai* versus *ho cantato.* Stage 4 is the real past, the final term of the development of 1 into a *verbal tense.*

The above development seems to be typical. We are e.g. able to trace the origin of the English past tense (as in *I wrote*) as far back as stage 1. Genetically this English and Germanic past is an Indo-European perfect, whose ancient value, as attested by Greek and partly by Indo-Iranian, could be defined as "present state resulting from a previous action."

The important point to keep in mind is the following: the category of the *past* is perpetually nourished by forms which etymologically are *present* forms, i.e. refer to the *moment of speaking.* In order that such a semantic shift be possible, the original form must denote a *present state* (resulting from a previous action) and not a *present action.*

The origin of the future is strikingly similar, cf. English *I shall write, I will write, I am going to write,* and similar forms in many other languages (like French *j'écrirai* from **je écrire ai* "I have to write"). All such forms are originally present forms, i.e. refer to the moment of speaking. They do not denote action, but obligation, desire or intention of action. Just as the present result of previous action supposes an action

which has taken place *before the moment of speaking*, so the present desire of action suggests that the action itself will take place after the moment of speaking, i.e. in the future.

In "analytical" forms, like those quoted above, the origin of the future is above-board since all the auxiliary verbs appear under present form. But etymology permits us to attribute a similar origin to such "synthetical" forms as Lith. *rašy-s-iu* or Greek *grap-s-ō* "I shall write" (addition of the future suffix *-s-*). These forms are also old presents with an original "desiderative" meaning, just as the English forms with *will.*

An interesting stage in the development *present* > *future* is still evidenced by certain semantic differentiations to be found in descriptive grammars: *I shall, you will, he will* (*write*) form the paradigm of the neutral future, whereas in *I will, you shall, he shall* (*write*) the shade of present desire or obligation is still perceptible.

The inference therefore is that the expression of the future is permanently renewed by forms referring to the moment of speaking. The semantic shift *present* > *future* is to be explained by the fact that the original form denotes a *present obligation* (*or desire*) of action, not a *present action.*

Therefore the speech situation with its fundamental *now* (the moment of speaking) is decisive not only for establishing temporal relations (before the moment of speaking = past; after the moment of speaking = future), but also for creating new verbal forms of the past and of the future which owing to their still perceived bond with the concrete speech situation are more expressive than the old ones.

Another category enrooted in the speech situation is the plural. At first glance the relation *I*: *we, thou*: *you* (plural), Latin *ego*: *nos*, *tu*: *vos*, seems something quite different from what we are taught to consider as the real opposition between singular (one object) and plural (several objects). The form *we* has the meaning "I (the speaker) with other persons"; *you* (plural) means "thou (the hearer) with other persons." Now the plural of nouns denoting persons, sometimes also of impersonal or inanimate nouns, may have the meaning "a certain determined person (or object) together with other persons (or objects)." E.g. the Spanish plural *padres* (from *padre* "father")

means also "parents" (= "father and mother"). *The Browns* (*are coming*) = "Brown + his wife (+ their children)" etc.

This kind of plural, called *elliptic*, forms the starting-point of an important development. A plurality represented by a privileged member (*I, thou, padre, Mr. Brown*) accompanied by others is due to an association based on contiguity, on the fact of *being together.* The next stage is plurality based both on contiguity *and* similarity, cf. collectives like French *feuillage* (versus *feuille*, plur. *feuilles*) "foliage, leafage," i.e. "leaves with their stems etc. forming a complete unit." In many languages such collectives play the role of our plurals. Notice, however, that at this stage we already get a considerable extension of the range of the plural since it will apply to inanimate (perhaps chiefly to inanimate) nouns. The last stage of development will be what is commonly understood by plural: a plurality of discrete but *similar* objects, i.e. objects belonging to the same class. Let us call it the mathematical plural.

The approximate evolution would be therefore the following: 1) elliptic plural > 2) collective plural > 3) mathematical plural.

Our modern plurals are generally defined as having the status 3), but depending on the context they may still function as 2) (e.g. *he was assaulted by wolves, a pack of wolves* versus *to hunt wolves* or *wolves are beasts of prey*), and even as 1) (cf. instances like *the Browns*). The mathematical plural, underlying counting and elementary mathematics, presupposes a certain similarity of the counted objects and therefore relies on associations based upon similarity. But the always present and recurrent pattern of the elliptic plural, inherent in the speech situation (*we, you*), as well as numerous instances of the historical development of the plural, prove that the original associations are based on (*spatial*) *contiguity.* This fact may be important not only from the linguistic but also from the epistemological point of view. Just as *state* (from previous action) and *anticipation* (of imminent action) account for the origin of the concept *physical time*, even so *similarity* underlying the notion of *number* is enrooted in original *contiguity.*

But the pattern *I* (*we*), *thou* (*you*) is responsible not only for the category of the plural. In languages with grammatical gender it constitutes the basis for the fundamental distinction

between *personal* and *impersonal.* The third person of the personal pronoun, whether represented by one or more forms (cf. English *he, she, it,* French *lui, elle*), may refer both to impersonal and personal objects (persons), hence the pattern of an opposition between neutral (as represented by the pronoun of the third person) versus personal (first, second person), both in the singular and in the plural. A distinction between animate and inanimate is already a further development, due to the extension of certain formal devices, characteristic of personal nouns, to nouns denoting other animate beings (animals). A final extension of such devices, encroaching upon the names of inanimate objects, paves the way to grammatical gender as represented e.g. by the classical languages. To take an example, the masculine *o-* stems denoting persons were in Slavic characterized by the ending *-a* in the accusative singular, e.g. *mož-a* "the man, *virum.*" But already in the old period the same ending was used with names of animals, (e.g. *vəlka* "the wolf, *lupum*"). In modern Polish a considerable number of names of *inanimate* objects offers the same ending of the accusative singular (*mazur-a, szampan-a*).

Experts in so-called " primitive " languages and folklore have often written about "personification" of animals or inanimate objects (animism) *as revealed by these languages.* To at least a certain degree these were misconceptions based upon an inadequate analysis of the language. The fact that e.g. nouns with the meaning "implement," "stone," "tobacco" may belong to the same class of nominal gender as animate beings, is not more conspicuous than the O. English identity of gender of *man, moon, foot* or *woman, sun, hand.* The trend toward "personification" is apparent in such cases as the spread of the Greek suffix *-tēr-*, originally denoting acting persons, afterwards also implements, or the spread of English *-er*, referring in the older period of the language only to persons, now also to instruments, gadgets (like the *receiver* of the telephone and so forth).

Within the division *impersonal*: *personal* (*inanimate*: *animate*) there are subdivisions, the most important one being *sex*, cf. the English *he*-nouns and *she*-nouns as a subdivision of *who*-nouns. In languages like Latin or German, where the formal distinctions between personal and impersonal, between

masculine and feminine nouns have been partly or totally blurred, the function of the grammatical gender has become *syntactical.*

Since grammatical gender is only partly determined by natural sex, and only partly characterized by inflectional endings, if at all, its chief exponent is the form of the accompanying adjective, possessive or demonstrative pronoun or, last not least, the article: e.g. German *der Kiefer* "chin," *die Kiefer* "pine," *der Band* "volume," *das Band* "ribbon," *der Schild* "shield," *das Schild* "door-plate, name-plate"; *gut-er Mann, gut-e Frau, gut-es Kind.* The different endings of the adjective (*-er, -e, -es*) express *agreement* marking the syntactical dependence of the determining on the determined member. As long as the word-order within the sentence is relatively free, as e.g. in Latin, this kind of syntactical device may be useful. It becomes redundant when (as in English) a relatively fixed word-order expresses syntactical relations in an unequivocal way.

The loss of grammatical gender in English has been sometimes interpreted as a progress in language, as a kind of liberation from inherited, semantically non-motivated, ballast. Actually it has been only a change of syntactical device. Whether a given adjective belongs to the object or to another noun of the sentence, is henceforth decided by its position; cf., on the other hand, Latin *quadrupedant-e putr-em sonit-u quatit ungula camp-um*, where 1 determines 2, and 3 determines 4.

Loss of grammatical gender does not mean that language will never develop it again. The division of nouns into personal and impersonal (*I, thou, who*: *what*), masculine, feminine and the rest (*he*: *she*: *it*) represents an essential nucleus which under *favorable conditions of word-formation* may become the starting point of a new development of grammatical gender.

We have seen that the personal pronouns *I, thou* are of crucial importance for the development of both the category of number and the category of grammatical gender—the first being implemented by the opposition *I* (*thou*): *we* (*you*), the second, by the contrast *he, she, it*: *I* (*thou*).

We now come to the adverbs *here* (position of the speaker), *there* (position of the hearer). Some languages, e.g. Latin, Spanish, Armenian, distinguish between *here, there* (hearer) and *there*

(position of the third person or object spoken about). Thus e.g. Latin has *hic, istic, illic.*

These pronominal adverbs of place, as well as their derivatives (*here*: *hence*: *hither*; *there*: *thence*: *thither*—cf. also the corresponding interrogatives *where*: *whence*: *whither*) are of great importance as the ever-present nucleus of an existing or potential case-system.

Cases express either concrete (chiefly spatial) relations, e.g. Latin *Rom-am ire* (accusative), *Rom-ae manere* (locative), *Rom-ā proficisci* (ablative), *gladi-ō interficere* (instrumental), or a purely syntactical relation like the nominative (the case of the subject) or the accusative (the case of the direct object). There is, however, scarcely a case-form restricted to one rigorously determined function, whether concrete or syntactical. Thus besides being the case of the direct object the accusative expresses in Latin the goal of a movement (*Rom-am ire*). The nominative, the case-form of the subject, is also characteristic of the nominal predicate (*omni-a praeclar-a—rar-a*). Many case-forms lose their concrete value when governed by verbs, sometimes by adjectives: *urb-e potiri* "to possess oneself of the city" with ablative dependent on *potiri*; *dignus coron-ā* "worthy of the crown" with ablative dependent on *dignus.* These examples show that exponents of concrete spatial relations (like the ending of the ablative) may become simple syntactical markers.

There is always a certain hierarchy of the different possible functions of a given case-form, which we will not enter into here. It is sufficient for our purpose to notice that in a language with a developed nominal case-system the latter is reflected also in the pronoun, whether personal, demonstrative or interrogative.

Since the demonstrative pronoun shares the inflection of the noun, an important semantic relation develops between its case-forms and the adverbs *here, hence, hither*, etc.:

> Locative case of *this* meaning "in this": adverb *here.*
> Ablative case of *this* meaning "from this": adverb *hence.*
> Accusative of goal of *this* meaning "to this": adverb *hither.*

The above "analytical" case-forms, i.e. prepositional expressions, just as the corresponding case-forms of the noun,

denote spatial and other concrete relations as well as syntactical relations, e.g. *to be inherent in the situation* (*in this*), *to abstain from eating* (*from this*), *to bow to the necessity* (*to this*). The corresponding adverbs (*here, hence, hither*) are, on the contrary, *charged with spatial meaning*. Constructions like *to abstain hence* or *to bow hither* would be impossible.

The semantic content of these adverbs concentrates on spatial relations as against case-forms or prepositional constructions, which may express them or not, the spatial or non-spatial function depending on the governing verb. In order to stress the spatial function language has recourse to new case-forms or to new prepositional constructions, e.g. English *within, from under, from above, into, toward,* etc. In O. Indic new case-forms were formed on the model of pronominal adverbs, e.g. *ta-tra* "there" (*ta-* "that": *deva-tra* "with the gods" (from *deva-* "god"), *ta-taḥ* "thence" (*ta-*"that"): *mukha-taḥ* "from the mouth" (from *mukha-* "mouth"). In English the formal pattern of the pronoun *that* is not productive owing to the loss of the inflection of *that* and to the absence of a derivative bond between *that* and the corresponding pronominal adverbs *there, thence, thither.* Still, the *semantic* relation between the multifunctional prepositional expressions (*in this, from this, to this*) and the purely spatial value of the pronominal adverbs (*there, thence, thither*) has always been the driving force of the renewal of the nominal inflection, whether it is "analytic," as in English, or "synthetical," as in the old Indo-European languages. But the new case-forms or prepositional constructions, created in order to restore the spatial function in its purity, are gradually used in figurative, non-spatial and non-concrete meanings, and become again multifunctional. Thus e.g. *toward(s)*, a reinforcement of the older preposition *to*, is already applied metaphorically in expressions like *attitude* or *efforts toward.*

The general direction of the functional evolution of case-forms or prepositional expressions is this:

spatial relations → other concrete relations → syntactical relations.

This does not mean that a case-form or a prepositional phrase must necessarily represent only one of these stages. On the

contrary, in Latin and in other Indo-European languages the nominative is the only case with purely syntactical functions (the vocative is syntactically isolated). Even the accusative, which primarily functions as the case of the direct object, has secondary concrete applications as the accusative of *goal*, of measure, etc.

Up to now our attention has been concentrated on grammatical categories which are founded in the actual speech-situation and are renovated on the pattern of the always present *ego-nunc-hic* model. There are, on the other hand, categories representing a higher level, superstructures imposed on the more basic categories of the linguistic system.

Such is e.g. the case of the abstract nouns formed from verbs or from adjectives. A verbal abstract like Latin *occisio* presupposes a basic personal verb *occidit* or *occiditur*:

occidit hostem, hostis occiditur: occisio hostis.

A sentence is changed into a syntactical group (phrase). The semantic sum of information remains the same ("killing of the enemy"), but the condensation of the sentence into a group with abstract noun as nucleus makes it possible to use it as a member within a new sentence (*the killing of the enemy may become a necessity*).

Abstract nouns formed from adjectives do not change sentences into groups but groups into groups, e.g. *the red light* → *the redness of the light.* The sum of information contained in the sentences *I see the red light* and *I see the redness of the light* remains the same, but there is a change in the hierarchy of the members of the group.

In the expression *the red light* the noun *light* is the constituting member, the adjective *red*, the accessory member. In *the redness of the light* the hierarchy is reversed. We have to do with a transformation consisting in a new assignment of "stresses," the referential meaning remaining the same. We may define abstract nouns as a *transformational* category within the linguistic system, since both deverbative and denominal abstracts presuppose certain basic forms (with personal verb or adjective) which are transformed for syntactical or "stylistic" purposes without encroaching upon the referential meaning.

In languages with the opposition *active voice*: *passive voice* the role of the passive is in many cases only transformational. Whereas the binary construction like *the soldier / was killed* is motivated by the fact that the agent of the killing is unknown or does not matter, a ternary construction like *the soldier / was killed // by a sniper* offers the same referential meaning as *a sniper killed the soldier.* The difference between these two sentences is again of "stylistic" value only and concerns the subjective distribution of "stresses" assigned to the semantic units. In the first sentence soldier is determined by the verbal predicate, the latter being itself determined by *a sniper.* In the latter, *a sniper* is determined by the verbal predicate, the latter being determined by *the soldier.*

According to our having recourse to the active or to the passive, each of the semantic items assumes a different form: *the soldier* following or preceding the verb; *killed* versus *was killed*; *a sniper* preceding the verb or *by a sniper* following the verb. But the *sum total* of these partial referential meanings is in both cases the same.

The impersonal forms of the conjugational system (infinitives, participles) are a classical example of such transformational categories. There are languages which lack infinitives (e.g. Irish or the Balkan languages) or/and participles (e.g. Irish). Both, the infinitive and the participle, may be considered as the "second verb" within the sentence, subordinate to the personal verb. They are a device serving to establish a hierarchy between two main clauses, e.g. *vidi eum; scribebat litteras—vidi eum scribere (scribentem) litteras.* "I saw him; he was writing a letter—I saw him write (writing) a letter."

In reducing higher linguistic forms to more elementary ones we must remove, one by one, the transformational layers before arriving at the core of the linguistic categories enrooted in the speech situation. The position of the transformational categories makes them appear as being less essential to the linguistic system than the primary stratum. Yet they represent the devices by which language achieves its status as the instrument of thought, viz. of the conscientious operations of the human mind upon the linguistic form.

The rise as well as the disappearance of grammatical cate-

gories frequently extend over long periods of time. The way from Latin *habeo litteras scriptas* to the French past *j'ai écrit la lettre* has been a rather long one. The French form represents an advanced stage of *grammaticalization* of a lexical phrase. From the Latin point of view the construction of *habeo litteras scriptas* is not different from constructions like *recipio litteras scriptas, vidi litteras scriptas* etc. Grammaticalization consists in the increase of the range of a morpheme advancing from a lexical to a grammatical or from a less grammatical to a more grammatical status, e.g. from a derivative formant to an inflectional one. Numerous instances may be found for the evolution *collective (derivative)* > *plural (inflectional)*, cf. the fate of the Slavic collective suffix *-ja, -je* (Russian plural *druz-ja* < *drug* "friend," Polish plural *liście* < *list* "leaf"), the Persian plural in *-hā*, an old collective, the so-called broken plurals of Southern Semitic, originally collectives (Arabic plural *kutub* < *kitāb* "book" etc.).

A reverse process is the *lexicalization* of a morpheme. The ending *-a* served in Latin to characterize the plural of neuter nouns (*verb-a, mari-a, genu-a, cord-a*). In Italian it has been ousted by the inherited masculine ending *-i* and restricted to a limited number of items (*mur-a, uov-a* etc.) with a specific collective meaning. Originally an inflectional ending, *-a* has become a kind of derivative suffix forming collectives which contrast with the regular plural in *-i*. In English the perfects with the auxiliary verb *be* were replaced by forms with the auxiliary *have*. The remnants of the old perfects *he is come, he is gone*, are lexicalized (archaic) forms with a shade of meaning different from *he has come, he has gone*. These examples illustrate the change of status of the respective forms. Neither Italian *mur-a* nor English *he is come* can be considered as the inflectional forms (plural; perfect) of *muro* and of *to come*—not because of their form but because of their semantic function (collective; state).

The extension of the use of a morpheme is, however, often accompanied by a simultaneous restriction in another respect. Whereas inflectional forms are characteristic of *parts of speech*, cf. the declension of nouns, the conjugation of verbs, the comparison of adjectives, derivatives are as a rule formed only

from a limited number of nouns, verbs, adjectives etc. Thus, the feminine nouns in *-ess* are derived only from nouns denoting personal or at least animate beings, adverbs in *-ly* cannot be formed mechanically from all adjectives etc. If therefore a derivative formant becomes an inflectional one (cf. a collective becoming a plural), the range of its application increases since it may now be applied to all representants of a part of speech. But, on the other hand, the derivatives characterized by the formant have been fully-fledged words with an inflectional system, whereas after the above semantic shift they become inflectional forms of other words and lose a part of their own inflectional system, cf. the Indo-European plural of neuter nouns, which was originally a (derived) collective of feminine gender with a fully developed system of case-forms. Its nominative was incorporated as the nominative-accusative-vocative plural into the declension of the basic noun, whereas all the other case-forms of the old collective were discarded. From being a *word* the old collective became the *inflectional form* of another word.

On the other hand, we find examples of isolated items of old inflections which becoming autonomous develop a new inflectional system of their own. The so-called present preterites of O. English, partly surviving in Modern English *I can, may, shall, dare*, are by their origin perfects whose corresponding present forms have disappeared. In Germanic they partly developed a new conjugation, cf. the past tense *I could, might, should, durst.*

It is noteworthy, though not surprising, that the result of lexicalization is frequently identical with the starting-point from which the given category has developed. Since the old nucleus of the plural is the collective noun, a renewal or ousting of the old plural reduces its preserved residual forms to the status of collectives. Since the etymological value of the perfect is "present," again a renewal of the perfect reduces its old residual forms to the status of the present (cf. *can, may...*). Grammatical gender may get completely whittled down to its nucleus: person and sex (c.f. *who*: *what*; *he, she*: *it*).

The categories discussed here reflect the most important function of language: the function of *communication* or *symbolization.* The functions of *expression* or of *appeal* generally find their exponent in phonetic features shared to a high degree

by all languages and therefore situated outside the phonemic system proper to a given language: force (loudness), pitch, inflection of the voice, breaks etc.

There are, however, *conventionalized* categories of expression and appeal which belong to grammar: cf. the I.E. subjunctive (mood of the speaker), the I.E. optative (expressing the desire of the speaker), the imperative and the vocative (= appeal to the hearer). Genetically they are as a rule residues of forms originally serving the fundamental (symbolic) function. The optative frequently continues an old past, the subjunctive, an old present-future; cf. the Polish, Russian etc. optative in *-by*, an old aorist, or the Sanskrit subjunctive *asat(i)* = Latin future *erit*. The imperative may go back to an old optative and therefore indirectly to an old past, e.g. Slavic *beri* "carry!" as against the old optative value of Sanskrit *bhareḥ*, Greek *phérois* (*phéroit*), Gothic *baírais*. The vocative continues an old nominative forced out of the cadre of the declension, thus vocative plural O. Irish *firu!* "o men!" from nominative plural **u̯irōs* ousted by the new nominative **u̯iroi* (O. Irish *fir*). The I.E. vocative singular is probably of a similar origin.

Such etymologies may in the future throw a light upon the genetical bond between the *different functions of the language*, a problem to which not much attention has been paid up to now.