

The role of discourse strategies in the grammaticalization of the Japanese discourse marker *dakara*

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The present study examines the diachronic development of the Japanese discourse marker *dakara* 'so' from the perspective of grammaticalization with a special focus on the role of discursive strategy in its semantic-pragmatic meaning change. Stemming from the adverbial phrase *soredakara* 'because it is so', *dakara* originally emerged as a causal connective that introduces a consequence. Subsequently, it gained several non-causal uses, i.e. the point-making use that refers back to what has been said or inferable in the discourse to stress the point that the speaker has been trying to make, the point-clarification use that points out that the preceding interlocutor's statements need more elaboration, and the point-denying use that indicates the speaker's opposition to the interlocutor's claim. Among the new non-causal uses, it is found that the point-making use emerged from the retrospective use of causality as a result of employing the discourse strategy of justification in argumentative discourse, while the point-clarification and the point-denying uses arose due to its use as a device for delaying disagreement. It is argued that these new uses developed because the expression was repeatedly used for these two discourse strategies and over time the readings associated with these contexts became conventionalized and turned into the expression's encoded meaning. This low-level generalization seems to better explain the process of grammaticalization than the high-level generalization of (inter)subjectivity for the developments of *dakara*.

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