Travelling features:
Multiple sources, multiple destinations

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Grammatical categories and features

- Grammatical categories
  - Traditional perspective: monolithic
  - In fact: conglomerates of feature bundles (Croft 2001, Bickel 2010)

- Example: syntactic function of subject

  NEPALI
  a.   *ma*   *ga-ẽ.*
          1sNOM   go-1sPST
          'I went.'

  b.   *mai-le*   *timro*   *ghar*   *dekh-ẽ.*
          1s-ERG   your   house.NOM   see-1sPST
          'I saw your house.'

  ⇨ accusative alignment for verb agreement, ergative alignment for case marking

- Hypothesis: The lack of a one-to-one mapping between categories and features – i.e. the 'promiscuous' nature of features – may be due to language change ("Everything is the way it is because it got that way", D'Arcy Thompson)

Travelling features

- Human propensity for blending
  - Example: target dog, source (partially) cat
    - Sufficiently close to each other, to allow transfer
    - 'Cat eye' feature travels, rubbing off onto the whole dog target category
    - 'Dog ears' feature is reinterpreted
    - Target: hybrid dog/cat category

DOG

CAT

DOG / CAT

Travelling features

- The same propensity manifests itself in language change

- Van de Velde, De Smet & Ghesquière (2013) on 'multiple source constructions':

    "[I]nnovations in language change may derive not just from one, but from different source constructions at once. That is, change often seems to involve some interaction between lineages or between different branches of a lineage" (p. 473)

- Simple example: suppletive verb forms:
    - French (*nous*) *allons* 'we go' (< Latin *ambulare*)
    - French (*je*) *vais* 'I go' (< Latin *vadere*)
    - French (*j'*) *irai* 'I will go' (< Latin *ire*)

Travelling features

- Linguistic categories function as blending machines

- Well-known that categories recruit members from different sources
  e.g. English determiner category:
  - *a*(n) < numeral 'one'
  - *the* < demonstrative 'that'
  - *some* < adjective 'single'
- But newly recruited members may
  - fail to adopt all of the behaviour of the recruiting category
  - introduce new behaviour to the recruiting category
  - transfer behaviour of the recruiting category to their source category

- This talk: three case studies that demonstrate feature exchange between categories through the recruitment of new members
  - Debonding in English
  - English quantifiers
  - Dutch auxiliaries

Example 1: Compound > A + N

- Debonding processes introduce defective adjectives into the adjective category (Van Goethem & De Smet 2014; Denison forthc.)

  - From first element in compound to adjective
    - (1) The _giant_ squid is certainly the largest invertebrate animal.
    - (2) Bears. Werewolves. _Giant_ flightless birds.
    - (3) It is _giant_ in format (9 in. by 11 in.), formidable in price and weight
    - (4) is his brain so much more _giant_ than mine

  - Many debonded adjectives are defective, as adjective behaviour is acquired only gradually
    - (1) to guard against _sneak_ atomic attack
    - (2) a few _sneak_ surreptitious glances at me
    - (3) *very sneak
    - (4) *BE sneak
    - (5) *sneakest / most sneak

- New category members cause (temporary?) subsective gradience (Aarts 2005)

Example 2: Quantifiers

- *A lot of* imports new behaviour into the English quantifier category

  – *A lot of* develops into a quantifier , along with some other less frequent binominal phrases (*a heap of*, *a bunch of*, etc.) (Traugott 2008; Brems 2012)

 | Semantics | Syntax |
    |---|---|
    | 'plot of land / set of articles for sale' | Head + modifier |
    | --> 'group of spatio-temporally contiguous things / people' | Head + modifier |
    | --> 'many' | --> Modifier + head |

    (1) <u>*a lot of*</u> ground was purchased for the use of the Infirmary (1809, HD)

    (2) instead of leaving matters to <u>*a lot of*</u> gentlemen (1857, HD)

    (3) <u>*A lot of*</u> fellows have crotchets (1867, Brems 2012: 218)
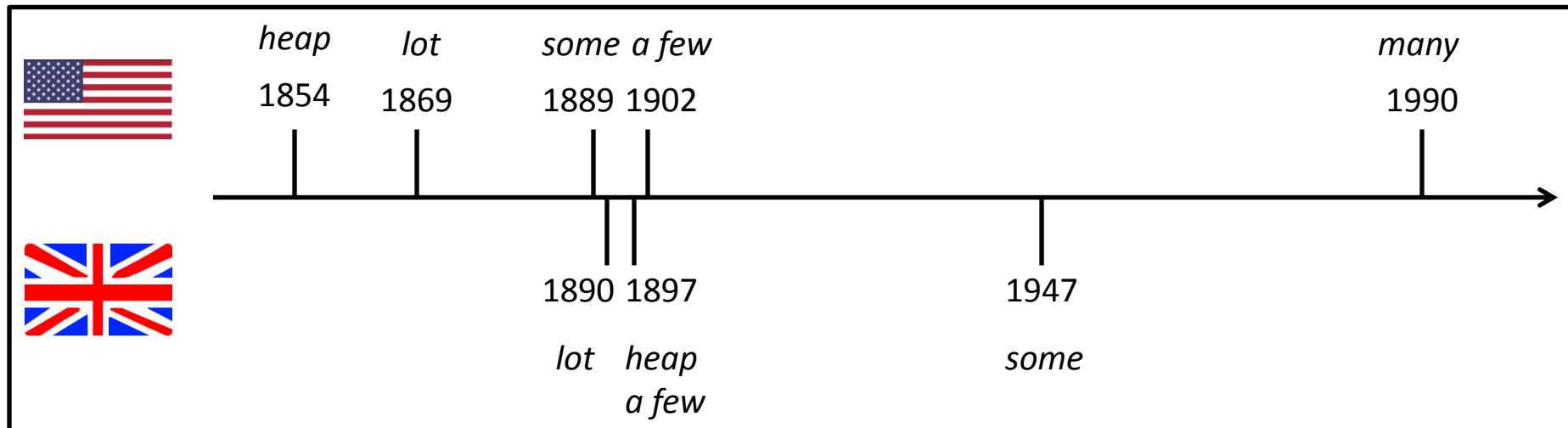
Example 2: Quantifiers

– Even as a quantifier, (*a*) *lot* (*of*) retains some nominal characteristics

- *Lot* can be premodified by some adjectives, both as noun (1) and as part of the quantifier *a lot of* (2)
  - (1) Wrought at the review, and finished a <u>good</u> lot of it. (1828, CLMET3.0)
  - (2) The swallows laid an <u>awful</u> lot of eggs in the night, I think. (1915, CLMET3.0)
  - (3) an <u>awful</u> lot of people are on medication who don't need it. (1993, COHA)

- *A lot* can be premodified by *quite*, both as noun phrase (4) and as quantifier (5)-(6)
  - (4) Mr. Fowler said he had sold Mr. Woodworth <u>quite</u> a lot of apples for more than he was selling us, I think $4.25, of this same lot. (1878, GB)
  - (5) but you've been up in Scotland, making <u>quite</u> a lot of speeches. (1890, CLMET3.0)
  - (6) There were <u>quite</u> a lot of rough-looking men there. (1907, OBC)
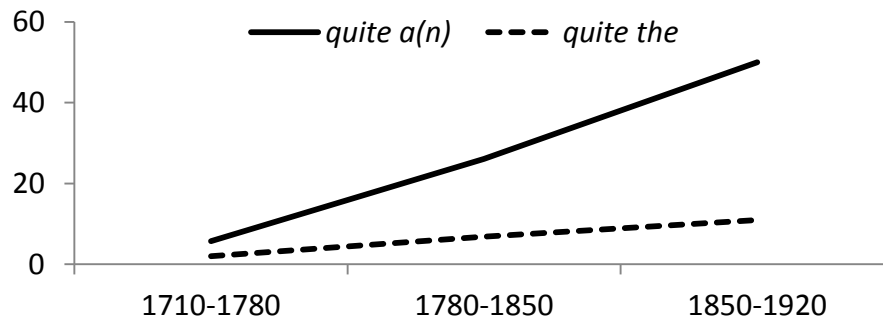
- NOTE: *quite* with noun phrases is on the increase at the time :
  - (7) to be sure he grows <u>quite</u> a rake! (1740, CLMET3.0)
  - (8) but <u>quite</u> the contrary (1748, CLMET3.0)

Example 2: Quantifiers

- Following its appearance with *a lot of*, *quite* also spreads to other quantifiers

  (1) I've dealt with <u>*quite a few*</u> men in my time, Harve (1897, CLMET3.0)

  (2) I am afraid we should have been here for <u>*quite some*</u> time. (1947, HD)

  (3) and <u>*quite many*</u> people said, why isn't she the candidate? (2002, COCA)

- *Quite* spreads most easily to *a few* and *some*
  - *Quite a few* contains the already licenced bigram *quite a*
  - *Some* is (as determiner) paradigmatically related to the indefinte article in *quite a*

First attestations of quite *with different quantifiers in American and British English.*

Example 2: Quantifiers

- Interim summary

  - *Quite* appears as a degree modifier with noun phrases
  - It combines with *a lot of* / *a heap of*, which function as quantifiers but retain features of noun phrases
  - It spreads to other quantifiers, primarily *some* and *a few*

- A new feature infiltrates the category of quantifiers via a group of new members, causing intersective gradience (Aarts 2005)

NP

Q

a gentleman
a fool
a distance
a while

a lot of
a heap of
a bunch of

a few
some
(many)
(much)
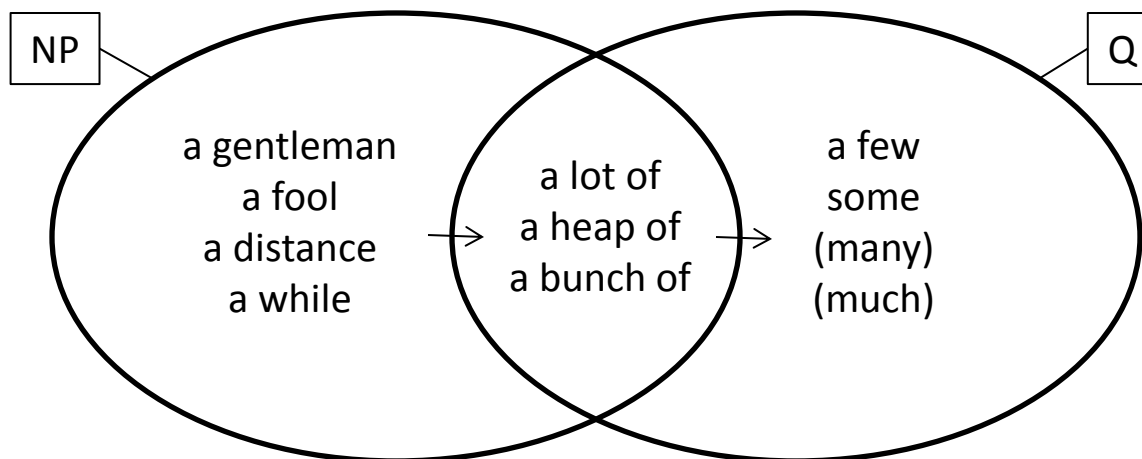
Example 3: Dutch auxiliaries

- Two things you should know about Dutch auxiliaries:

  - 1: Difference bare infinitive vs. *to* infinitive
    a.   *Het*   *lijkt*   **te/*∅**   *werken*
            it   seems   to   work
            'It seems **to/∅** work'
    b.   *Het*   *mag*   **∅/*te**   *werken*
            it   may   to   work
            'It may **∅** work'

  - 2: Infinitivus pro participio (IPP): in the (analytic) perfect tense, auxiliaries are in the infinitive, rather than in the participle form
    c.   *Hij*   *heeft*   *kunnen* / **gekund*   *werken*
            he   has   can.INF / *can.PST.PTCP   work
            'He has been able to work'

Example 3: Dutch auxiliaries

- Travelling features: *to* inf. feature is integrated in auxiliary category
  - Bare inf. is oldest (age-old preterite-present modals invariably have bare inf.)
  - Many verbs oscillate between bare and *to* inf. in the history of Dutch

    OLD DUTCH

a.	*tho*	***begunden***	*thie*	*wazzer*	***wahsen*** (…)
	then	began	the	waters	rise

    'then the waters began to rise'

b.	*tho*	***begunda***	*min*	*salfwerz*	*meer*	*ande*	*meer*
	then	began	my	ointment	more	and	more
	ze	***stinchene***					
	to	stink					

    'then my ointment began to smell more and more'

  - Long-term *to*-inf drift in Dutch,
    - Due to the fact that more and more *to* inf. verbs joined the class of auxiliaries (*beloven* 'promise', *blijken* 'appear', *dienen* 'have to', *dreigen* 'threaten', *hopen* 'hope', *pogen* 'attempt', *proberen* 'try' etc.)
    - Some verbs shift from bare to alternating *to* inf (e.g. *helpen* 'help'), or from alternating to consistent *to* inf. (*beginnen* 'begin') (in simplex verb forms)
    - Small group of age-old preterite-present modals are impervious to *to* drift

Example 3: Dutch auxiliaries

- Travelling features: extension of bare inf. feature
    - Bare inf. held out in:
        a. Horror aequi contexts:

om	*met*	*open*	*mond*	*te*	***staan***	*kijken (...)*
to	with	open	mouth	to	stand	look

           'to stand and look in astonishment'

        b. Double infinitive:

met	*die*	*kinderen*	*kan*	*je*	***beginnen***	*denken*
with	those	children	can	you	begin	think
aan	*een*	*volgende*	*stap*			
about	a	next	step			

           'with those children you can start to think about the next step'

        c. IPP:

ze	*hadden*	***zitten***	*slapen*
they	had	sit	sleep

           'they had been sleeping'

        d. INF/IPP-Homomorphic contexts (i.e. plural present in subordinate clauses):

dat	*ze*	*zich*	*er*	*niet*	*druk*	*om*
that	they	REFL	PARTICLE	not	worried	about
hoeven	*maken*					
need	make					

   'that they need not be worried about it'

Example 3: Dutch auxiliaries

- Travelling features: extension of bare inf.
  - Bare inf. construal held out in:
    a. Horror aequi contexts

    b. Double infinitive

    c. IPP

    most auxiliary-like contexts

    d. INF/IPP-Homomorphic contexts (i.e. plural present in subordinate clauses)

  - Hypothesis: diachrony a > b > c > d
    - a: broad principle

    - b > c: double inf. selected by aux., plus analogical extension, supported by other IPP verbs (see also Duinhoven 1997; Van Pottelberge 2002:156-157)

    - c > d: analogical extension

Example 3: Dutch auxiliaries

- Travelling features: extension of bare inf.
  - Durative auxiliary *zitten* ('sit') (data partially taken from Brabers 2014)
  - Participates in *to*-drift from 17th century onward
  - But at the same time: extension of bare infinitive contexts
  - Hypothesis: diachrony (a >) b > c > d

bare inf with aux 'zitten' (n=156)
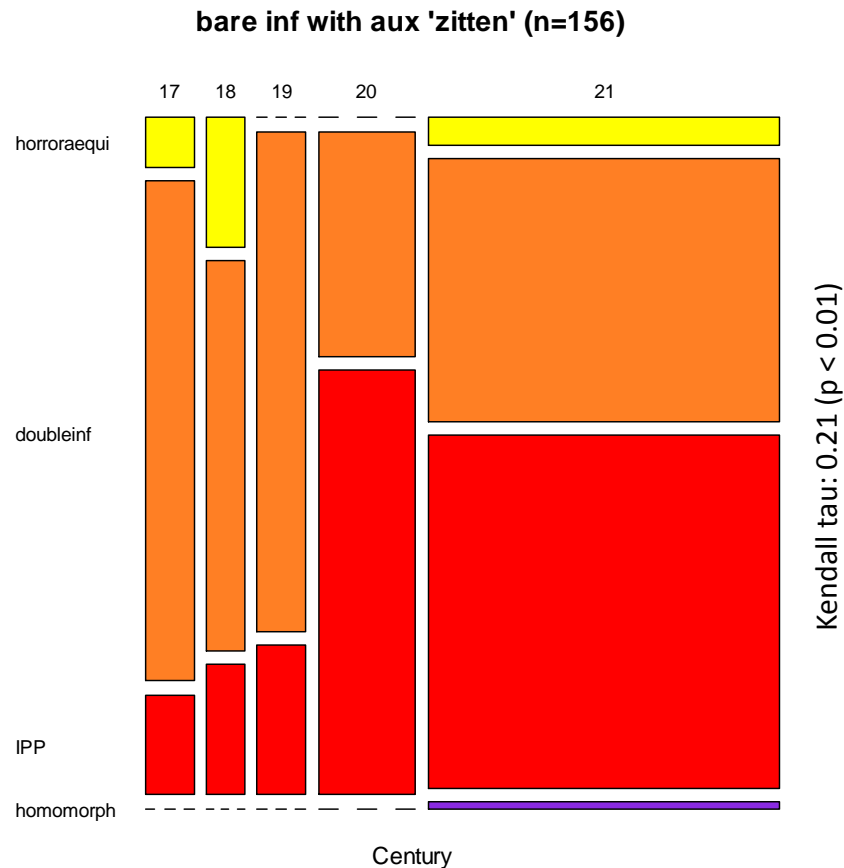
Example 3: Dutch auxiliaries

- Travelling features: extension of bare inf.
  - Deontic semi-modal auxiliary *(be)hoeven* ('need to')
  - Consistent *to*-inf
  - Recent extension of bare infinitives (analogy with deontic core modals)
  - Hypothesis: diachrony (a >) b > c > d

Aux (be)hoeven, incl. horror aequi contexts (n=3495)

Bare inf with aux '(be)hoeven' (n=176)
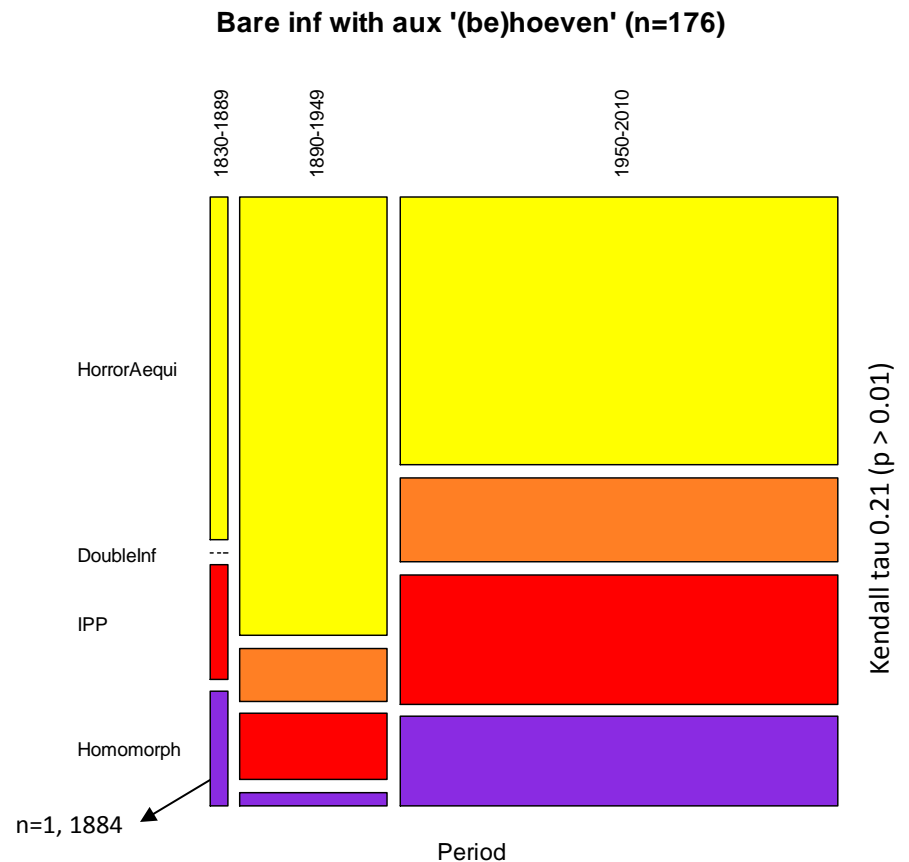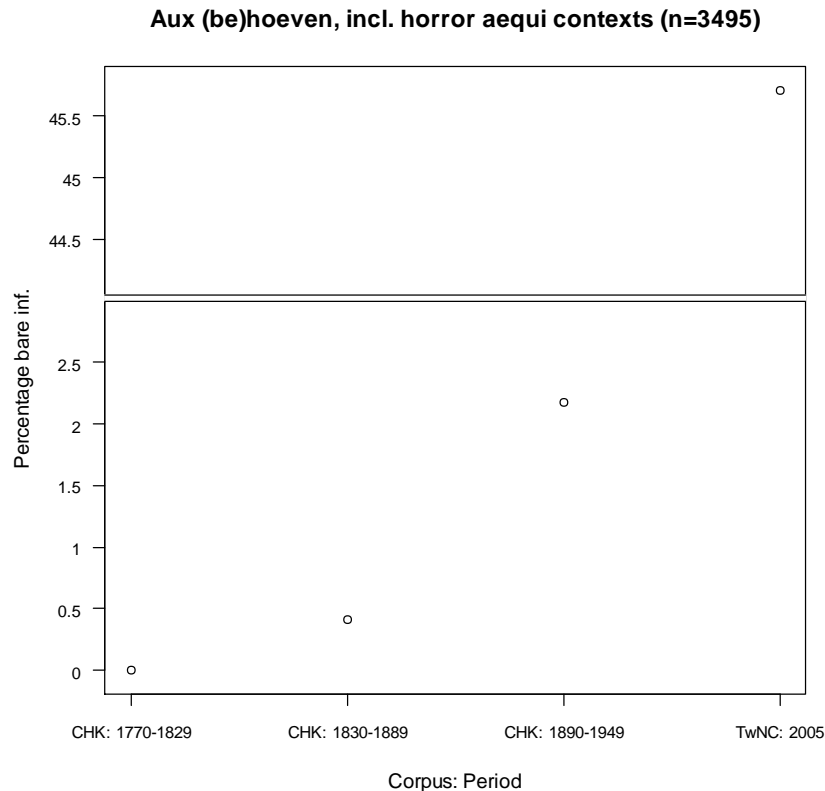
Conclusions

- Gradience results from recruitement of new category members

Type *sneak*	Newly recruited adjectives fail to adopt all adjective features at once, behaving as defective members of the class they join	Subsective gradience within class of adjectives
Type *a lot of*	Newly recruited quantifiers hold on to old NP behaviour, which then goes on to spread to older members of the quantifier category	Intersective gradience between NP and quantifier
Type *zitten*	Newly grammaticalized auxiliaries optionally adopt behaviour from another auxiliary construction	Subsective gradience within and intersective gradience between two types of auxiliary construction