Syntactic change: Examples

(1)   Greek

    (a)   Classical Greek

    thélei 'want' (a main verb); 1SG form *thélō*; 3SG form *thélei*

thélō	hina	gráphō		thélei	hina	gráphei
want.1SG	that	write.1SG		want.3SG	that	write.3SG
'I want to write'				'He/she wants to write'		

    (b)   New meaning develops (old one remains)

    thélō hina gráphō
    'I want that I [=to] write' *or* 'I will write'

    (c)   'Future' meaning comes to take frozen 3sg form:
    Classical Gk thélei > Modern Gk [θeli]

    (d)   More phonological reduction (sound changes, etc.)
    [θeli hina] > [θeli na] > [θe na] > [θa na] > [θa]
- Are any of these steps in the process identifiable types of change?

    (e)   Modern Greek
    [θa γráfo] '(I) will write'
- What would we say the morpheme [θa] means now?
- What general process is seen in the change *theléi* > [θa]?

(2)   Finnish has undergone a syntactic change in how a subordinate clause is constructed. What are the different steps in this process? Can any of them be identified as known types of language change?

    (a)   Old Finnish: [-m] ACC.SG, [-n] GEN.SG

näen	miehe-**m**	tule-va-**m**	
I.see	man-ACC.SG	come-PART-ACC.SG	(PART = participle)
'I see the man who is coming'			

näin	venee-**t**	purjehti-va-**t**
I.saw	boat-ACC.PL	sail-PART-ACC.PL
'I saw the boats that sail'		

- How does Old Finnish construct a subordinate clause?

    (b)   Sound change (systematic): [m] > [n] / __#
- What type of sound change is this?

(continues on next page)

(c)   Consequence of the sound change

    näen   miehe-**n**   tule-va-**n**
    I.see   man-ACC.SG   come-PART-ACC.SG
    'I see the man who is coming'

  or   I.see   man-GEN.SG   come-PART-GEN.SG
    'I see the man's coming'

(d)   A new construction arises

    näin   vene-i-**den**   purjehti-**van**
    I.saw   boat-PL-GEN   sail-PART
    'I saw the boats that sail'

- How does Finnish construct a subordinate clause now?
- What type of language change led to the form in (d)?