Cognitive Linguistics and Lexical Change

Motion Verbs from Latin to Romance

Natalya I. Stolova

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Natalya I. Stolova

Cognitive Linguistics and Lexical Change. Motion Verbs from Latin to Romance

Preface & Acknowledgments

My interest in the development of motion verbs from Latin to Romance goes back to my doctoral dissertation of 2003 at the University of Pennsylvania under the supervision of Paul M. Lloyd. His passionate interest in historical Romance linguistics and his distinguished scholarship, especially his monumental *From Latin to Spanish* (1987), have been a great source of inspiration for me.

An important point in the writing process of the present monograph was my participation in the 8th International Conference on Late and Vulgar Latin held at St Catherine's College, Oxford in September 2006. It offered me the first opportunity to present some of the study's key findings. I am especially grateful to the conference organizer and editor of its proceedings, Roger Wright (University of Liverpool), for his comments on my paper (Stolova 2008) and for discussing with me on several occasions my progress on this book. I am also thankful to the president of the session at which I gave my paper, Benjamín García-Hernández (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid), for providing me with his publications on Latin preverbation.

Another venue which provided me with helpful feedback on some of the present study's main findings was the session on historical and contrastive description of the Romance languages at the 25th International Congress on Romance Linguistics and Philology held at the University of Innsbruck in September 2007. I am particularly grateful to the session's president, Peter Koch (University of Tübingen), for taking his time to discuss with me at length my presentation which was later published in the Congress' proceedings (Stolova 2010a).[1]

My gratitude also goes to Joel Rini (University of Virginia), Donald Tuten (Emory University), Yanira B. Paz and Haralambos Symeonidis (both at the University of Kentucky), who were the organizers of the sessions on Hispanic and Romance linguistics at the annual Kentucky Foreign Language Conference which I have been attending since 2006. Although at the University of Kentucky I spoke mostly on topics other than the topic of the present book, I always tried to integrate historical Romance data with cognitive linguistics, posing the following questions: (1) How can the cognitive framework help us explain the developments attested from Latin to Romance and (2) How can the developments attested from

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1.   Earlier, in 2004, Prof. Koch had kindly provided me with papers of his on cognitive historical Romance onomasiology and semasiology.

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Objectives and key concepts

1.1 Goals of the present study

This book explores the lexical change of motion verbs from Latin to Romance in light of current advances in cognitive linguistics and examines the contribution of Latin and Romance historical data to the cognitive linguistics framework. The research on Latin and Romance verbs of motion (i.e., verbs like 'go', 'enter', 'walk') that has been carried out so far is often scattered in dictionaries, grammars, articles, and monographs that treat the topic incidentally. The few articles and book-length studies that actually do make these verbs their prime concern choose to limit themselves to only one or a few lexical items, one language, and one point in history. Besides that, within the Romance family, the amount of material available to us on verbs that express movement varies from language to language. While Spanish, French, and Italian have received more attention, Portuguese, Romanian, and non-national Romance languages are left neglected. In addition, the existing accounts tend to be atomistic as they treat only one of the two levels at which lexical change takes place (lexicology/onomasiology, semantics/semasiology) without integrating them with one another. Furthermore, the focus of the existing studies has been the description and classification of the developments that took place, but not the analysis of the motivational mechanisms of the changes at hand. Consequently, while these research efforts provide valuable insights, they do not offer a balanced comprehensive picture.

How to see the forest for the trees? In this monograph, I argue that the theoretical approach known as historical cognitive linguistics is particularly well suited to achieve this task. The present study applies the historical cognitive linguistics framework to Latin and Romance verbs of motion in order to provide a unifying and comprehensive perspective on the evolution of the lexical field of motion verbs from Latin to the modern Romance languages. More specifically, the goal is to assess the continuity of Latin verbs of motion and the Romance innovations as far as lexical change is concerned and to examine how similar Pan-Romance tendencies manifest themselves differently in each particular language. In addition, my aim is not only to evaluate the developments that took place from Latin to Romance, but also, through the application of the cognitive framework, to identify the cognitive mechanisms involved and evaluate their role as enabling factors of

change. In other words, the objective is not only to establish what happened to the lexical field in question and how it happened, but also to find out why it happened. Furthermore, while interested in the new insights that cognitive linguistics can reveal about Latin and Romance diachronic data, I am at the same time focusing on what Latin and Romance diachronic data can reveal about cognitive linguistics. In other words, another research objective of this study is to illustrate ways in which historical Romance linguistics and the cognitive linguistics framework can mutually benefit each other, and to advance the elaboration of methods for cognitive diachronic lexicology and lexical semantics.

Because this book provides the first in-depth historical lexical and semantic analysis of motion verbs for Romance linguistics and cognitive linguistics alike, its intended audience includes several types of readers: those interested in the language-specific field of historical Romance linguistics, those interested in the field of cognitive linguistics, and those interested in the phenomenon of lexical change.

The study adopts a broad Pan-Romance perspective. It relies on the diachronic data from ten languages: Latin, five national Romance varieties (Spanish, French, Italian, Portuguese, Romanian), and four non-national ones (Catalan, Occitan, Sardinian, Raeto-Romance). Several additional non-national Romance varieties (e.g., Aragonese, Sicilian) are mentioned whenever relevant to highlight similarities and contrasts within the Romance family. Non-Romance languages and language families (e.g., English, Chinese, Amerindian) are referred to when the need arises to place Latin and Romance developments in the cross-linguistic context.

The present work consists of ten chapters. The rest of Chapter 1 defines motion verbs, introduces the phenomena subsumed under lexical change, and identifies points of conversion between the historical and the cognitive approaches to language. Chapters 2 through 4 take up the question of recruitment to the lexical field of motion. Chapter 2 outlines the main principles of cognitive onomasiology and relates them to the cognitive typology of motion encoding. Chapter 3 presents Latin and Romance onomasiological data by providing the biographies of the verbs in question. Chapter 4 employs the theoretical framework outlined in Chapter 2 and the data presented in Chapter 3 to identify patterns of onomasiological change, focusing on such phenomena as degree of continuity, lexical loss, and innovative lexical creation on both Pan-Romance and language-specific levels. Chapters 5 through 7 are devoted to the semantic development of motion verbs. Chapter 5 outlines the main principles of cognitive semasiology and relates them to motion-based conceptual metaphors. Chapter 6 addresses the continuity and loss of the metaphorical extensions of the verbs in question. Chapter 7 examines the Romance innovative metaphorical mappings not attested in Latin. While Chapters 2 through 7 concentrate on how the cognitive framework enables us to account for patterns of lexical change from Latin to Romance, Chapters 8 and 9

turn the tables and focus on how these diachronic patterns inform current theoretical discussions within cognitive linguistics. Chapter 8 illustrates the ways in which my analysis contributes to the cognitive typology of motion encoding. Chapter 9 explores the implications of my results for the conceptual metaphor theory. The concluding Chapter 10 presents the book's main findings and points towards some possible research directions for the future.

1.2 Motion verbs in the Romance language family

The question "What are motion verbs?" has no single correct answer because the answer depends on what we understand as motion (or movement). On the one hand, motion can be construed as a physical state opposed to rest. Charles Bally (1865–1947), for example, classifies as verbs of motion such French verbs as *saisir* "to grab", *casser* "to break", *vibrer* "to tremble", *frotter* "to rub", *ouvrir* "to open", and *mêler* "to mix" (Bally 1951 II: 235–237). In a similar way, in his *Dictionnaire alphabétique et analogique de la langue française*, Paul Robert includes *palpiter* "to beat [of heart]", *plier* "to fold", and *tordre* "to twist" within the section entitled "Mouvement" (Rey, ed. 2001 IV: 1713–1719). One can also conceptualize movement as opposed to displacement (or translocation), as proposed by Lucien Tesnière (1893–1954) in the section "Mouvement et déplacement" of his *Éléments de syntaxe structurale*: a cyclist on a stationary bicycle achieves *mouvement* but not *déplacement* (Tesnière 1959: 308). This criterion, however, presents a problem: a particular verb can refer to both movement and displacement, depending on the context. For example, in *He jumped up and down*, *jumped* refers to movement, while in *He jumped over the fence* the same verb indicates displacement (Selimis 2002: 1). We should also take into consideration whether a movement of the whole body or just that of its parts is involved. For example, when a person puts things with their hand, the hand is moving with regard to the body, but the whole body does not move with regard to its background (ibid., pp. 5–6). In other words, as modern physicists recognize by building upon the revolutionary ideas of their great predecessors, Nicolaus Copernicus (1473–1543), Giordano Bruno (c.1548–1600), and Galileo Galilei (1564–1642), "motion is relative" and is to be studied "from the point of view of an inertial frame of reference" (Landau & Kitajgorodskij 1980: 46, 48).

As a consequence of such a wide choice of criteria, the number of verbs of motion established by linguists differs dramatically. For example, according to Paul Robert (1910–1980), French has more than 228 verbs of motion, while Annibale Elia states that there are around 150 of them in that language (Rey, ed. 2001 IV: 1717; Elia 1982: 352). Thus, it becomes clear that when talking about verbs of motion it is

imperative to clarify what is being understood under this term. For the purpose of the present study I adopt the definition formulated by Françoise Létoublon:

> Par 'verbes de mouvement', ou 'verbes sémantiquement apparentés au verbe *aller*', on entend [...] les verbes référant à un *mouvement autonome du sujet, avec déplacement*: ces verbes s'opposent donc à la fois à ceux qui renvoient à une position statique (*être debout/couché/assis* etc.), à ceux qui renvoient a un mouvement sur place, sans déplacement (comme *se lever, se dresser, s'asseoir, tourner* ou *toucher*) – [...] et aux verbes qui renvoient à un mouvement avec déplacement non du sujet, mais de l'objet, qui n'est pas 'autonome'. (Létoublon 1985: 14; original emphasis)

> [By verbs of motion, or verbs that are semantically similar to the verb *to go*, we understand [...] verbs that refer to the subject's autonomous movement with displacement. These verbs contrast at the same time with the ones that refer to static position (*to be standing up, to be laying down, to be seated*, etc.), with the ones that refer to movement on one spot without displacement (like *to get up, to stand up, to sit down, to turn*, or *to touch*), [...] and with the ones that refer to non-autonomous movement not of the subject but rather of the object.]

In other words, when I say 'motion verbs' or 'verbs of motion' I am referring to those verbs that express self-propelled motion of the subject which involves a change of place, i.e., translocation.[1]

It should be stressed that regardless of the method used to identify verbs of movement, these lexemes do not form a homogeneous group. A number of linguists have highlighted the broad and heterogeneous nature of the lexical field of motion verbs, dividing it into subfields based on criteria related to word-formation, semantics, and syntax. These classifications can be found in many places, from Bally (1951) in French to Cuartero Otal (2006, 2010) in Spanish.[2]

The present study focuses on verbs that express the following motion concepts: (1) movement in general without any specification of means or direction (equivalent of English "to go"), (2) movement toward and/or reaching a particular location (equivalent of English "to come", "to arrive"), (3) movement away from a

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1.   Self-propelled motion is also known as "agentive", "voluntary", "self-caused", and "internally-caused" (Filipović 2007: 18, n.11). Motion that involves a change of location is referred to as "translational" (Talmy 2000 II: 35; 2007: 80–81). For two recent taxonomies of motion, see Pourcel (2010) and Zlatev et al. (2010).

2.   See Meya (1976), Ferrari de Egues (1985), González Aranda (1998), Cifuentes Honrubia (1999), Hidalgo Rodríguez (1999), and Morimoto (2001) for Spanish; Guého (1979), Krassin (1984), Sikora (1985), Laur (1989), Sablayrolles (1991), Montibus (1996), Rossi (1999), Rey ed. (2001), and Lepetit (2004) for French; Ketterer (1971) for 16th- and 17th-century French; Lamiroy (1983) for French and Spanish; Violi (1996) for Italian; Welty (1974) for Italian and French; Rehfeldt (1980) for Portuguese; Ionescu (1963), Reinheimer (1965), and Evseev (1974) for Romanian.

particular location (equivalent of English "to go away", "to leave"), (4) movement inside (equivalent of English "to go in", "to enter"), (5) movement outside (equivalent of English "to go out", "to exit"), (6) movement upward (equivalent of English "to go up", "to ascend"), (7) movement downward (equivalent of English "to go down", "to descend"), (8) movement on foot by taking steps (equivalent of English "to walk"), (9) swift movement on foot (equivalent of English "to run"), and (10) movement by springing off the ground (equivalent of English "to jump"). The first seven categories are selected because they represent some of the main ways in which language organizes motion in terms of space, and the last three categories are included because they represent some of the main ways in which language organizes motion in terms of manner.[3] In other words, the lexical items that express these ten concepts constitute what is commonly referred to as "el núcleo o el centro del campo" (Geckeler 1976: 306), i.e., the core of the lexical field.

In the majority of cases, a single concept is lexicalized not by one but rather by several verbs. For example, in Latin "to go out" corresponds to EXIRE, EGREDI, and EVENIRE. In Spanish, "to go down" is rendered by *bajar* and *descender*, as well as by Old Spanish *abaxar* and *deçir*. Similarly, in Romanian "to go up" is lexicalized as *a urca*, *a sui*, and *a se ridica*. Thus, focusing on the ten core concepts listed above makes the total number of verbs analyzed in detail over two hundred, i.e., high enough to identify patterns of lexical change while manageable enough to be dealt with within a single study.

1.3 Levels of lexical change: Onomasiology and semasiology

Lexical change takes place on two levels: on the level of form and on the level of meaning. Therefore, it is analyzed on two levels: on the level of onomasiology and on the level of semasiology. Onomasiology (< Greek *ónoma* "name") is defined as the study of the different designations (also known as 'forms' or 'signifiers') of a given concept (also known as 'sememe' or 'mental object'); cf. Baldinger (1980: 110, 136). As Traugott & Dasher (2002: 25) put it, onomasiology focuses on "the development or restructuring of coded representations of a particular domain such as COLOR, INTELLECT [etc.]". Semasiology (< Greek *séma* "sign") is concerned with the ways in which a given lexical item acquires new meanings. In the words of Traugott & Dasher (2002: 25), the focus of the semasiological research is on "the

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3.   For a discussion of ways in which language organizes motion in terms of space and manner, see Kibrik (1970), Vernay (1974), Pick & Acredolo eds. (1983), Menovščikova (1986), Vandeloise (1986), Lý (1989), Violi (1991), Aurnague et al. eds. (1993), Svorou (1994), Bloom et al. eds. (1996), Pütz & Dirven eds. (1996), Wälchli (2001a), Levinson (2003), Shay & Seibert eds. (2003), Berthele (2006), Hickmann & Robert eds. (2006), and Levinson & Wilkins eds. (2006).

development of polysemies (or, where relevant, splits into homonymies)". Schematically speaking, onomasiology departs from the concept analyzing the forms recruited to lexicalize it (i.e., proceeds from function to form), while semasiology departs from the lexical item exploring the concepts that it is able to express (i.e., proceeds from form to function).

When studying lexical change, words are usually not considered by themselves on a word-by-word basis but rather as part of a larger group known as semantic (also lexical, or onomasiological) field; cf. Gordon (2001). Such fields are "closely integrated sectors of the lexicon, in which a certain sphere of experience is divided up and organized in a particular way which may vary from one language or one period to another" (Ullmann 1972: 370). Each element that belongs to the field both influences the rest of the elements and depends upon them: "[it] helps to delineate and limit its neighbors, and is delineated and limited by them" (Sylvester 1994: 21). Verbs of motion are a classic example of a semantic field. In his article "Bedeutungssysteme" published in 1910, Richard Moritz Meyer (1860–1914), who greatly contributed to the genesis of the concept of the semantic field,[4] chooses verbs of motion as one of his examples. Meyer points out that German verbs which express the concept of motion include semantic components that differentiate one verb from another. For example, *schwimmen* "to swim" and *marschieren* "to march" imply even repetitiveness, while *gehen* "to go" does not; *schwimmen* "to swim" refers to movement in the water, while *fliegen* "to fly" to that in the air. Meyer also observes that verbs of motion often include not one but a number of such components: *sinken* "to sink" implies 'downwards', 'slowly', and 'evenly'; *fallen* "to fall" implies 'downwards', 'fast', and 'evenly'; *stürzen* "to hurl, to plunge" implies 'downwards', 'fast', and 'unevenly', etc. (Meyer 1910: 360–363). The interdependence that exists between the members of this field on the diachronic level can be illustrated with the contrast between Standard German and the Alemannic dialects of High German. Among its verbs of motion Standard German has *gehen* "to go, to walk", *laufen* "to run", *springen* "to jump", and *hüpfen* "to hop". The Alemannic dialects, on the other hand, have experienced "the generalization of the basic verb *gehen* to a general movement verb" (Krifka 2001: 2). This generalization, in turn, produced a "chain effect", in which "the change in one slot of a semantic field exerts pressure on the words in other slots", resulting in *gehen* "to go", *laufen* "to walk", *springen* "to run", and *hüpfen* "to jump" (ibid.).

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4.   In *Semántica estructural y teoría del campo léxico*, Geckeler (1976: 100) assesses Meyer's fundamental contribution as follows: "R. M. Meyer [ha sido] [...] el primero que [...] ha demostrado de forma coherente y bastante detallada la idea de campo, si bien todavía no con la terminología posterior" ["R. M. Meyer [= Richard Moritz Meyer (1860–1914)] has been the first one to demonstrate coherently and in a fairly detailed way the notion of the semantic field; although he did not yet use the terminology employed in later studies"].

1.4 The historical cognitive linguistics framework as a new type of diachrony

Until fairly recently, work on lexical change of the Romance lexicon, in general, and work on lexical change of Romance motion verbs, in particular, has followed the long-established tradition of focusing on words' internal and/or external history. Within the internal history approach, attention has been given to the modifications that took place at the level of language as a linguistic system. Within the external history framework, the focus has been placed on the cultural and social realities of the speakers. The theoretical apparatus employed by these traditional approaches has been based largely on two foundational studies: Stephen Ullmann's (1914–1976) *The Principles of Semantics* of 1957 and Eugenio Coseriu's (1921–2002) "Pour une sémantique diachronique structurale" of 1964. Relying on these traditional approaches, linguists have been able to gather a great amount of data on the evolution of the Romance lexicon. However, as pointed out by Dworkin (2006a, b, 2010), most of such studies describe and classify the results or consequences of the changes that took place, but do not deal with broader theoretical issues related to the motivations behind the changes. At the same time, it is widely recognized that historical Romance linguistics has a great potential to answer not only the questions "What happened?" and "How did it happen?", but also the question "Why did it happen?" (see essays assembled in Dworkin 2003 and 2005, as well as Maiden 2004a). The approach known as 'historical cognitive linguistics' aspires to address the motivations of the changes by combining diachronic linguistics with the insights gained within cognitive linguistics.[5]

What makes the combination of historical Romance linguistics and cognitive linguistics so appealing for the study of lexical change? Such a question can be approached through a brief overview of the emergence and the evolution of these two fields with a focus on the goals that they have pursued and the research principles that they have followed.

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5.   It should be clarified that the term 'motivation' is better understood within the cognitively-oriented diachronic research as 'enabling factor', rather than 'cause' or 'explanation', as Hopper and Traugott point out in their study on grammaticalization (1993: 63). Along the same lines, in her study on historical semantics, Eve Sweetser (1990: 3) writes:

> By 'motivated,' I mean an account which appeals to something beyond the linguist's intuition that these senses are related, or that these two senses are more closely related than either is to a third sense. For example, it is possible to crosslinguistically examine meaning changes and to observe what senses frequently historically give rise to what later senses. We would then argue that there is reason to posit a close semantic and cognitive link between two senses if one is regularly a historical source for the other.

For a more detailed discussion of motivation in cognitive linguistics, see Radden & Panther (2004), Panther & Radden (2011), and Panther (2012).

The field of historical Romance linguistics (sometimes referred to as Romance philology)[6] emerged as a scientific discipline in the first half of the 19th century. The birth of this discipline is intrinsically connected to the development of historical-comparative linguistics, particularly the publication of such pioneering studies as Franz Bopp's (1791–1867) *Conjugationssystem* (1816), Rasmus Rask's (1787–1832) *Undersøgelse* (1818 [1814]), and Jacob Grimm's (1785–1863) *Deutsche Grammatik* (1819–1837). In 1816 François Raynouard (1761–1836) published his *Grammaire de la langue romane* that reflected his research on Old Provençal texts. Although Raynouard's work contained a fundamental error (he mistakenly believed that Old Provençal was the intermediate stage between Classical Latin and all of the modern Romance varieties), it was of great importance for the emergence of Romance philology since it provided a text-based grammar of an old Romance language and focused on the commonalities between the members of the Romance family. It is Friedrich Diez's (1794–1876) *Grammatik der romanischen Sprachen* (1836–1844) and *Etymologisches Wörterbuch der romanischen Sprachen* (1853) that are considered as the foundational works of historical Romance linguistics because Diez fully applied the comparative and the historical methods outlined by Bopp and Grimm to the Romance data. As can be inferred from the scope of studies by Raynouard and Diez, the main goal of Romance philology from its very beginning has been the understanding of the earlier stages of the Romance languages and the analysis of ways in which the diachronic patterns found on the way from Latin to Romance manifest themselves in different members of the linguistic family. This objective is firmly embedded in the cultural and intellectual milieu of the late 18th – early 19th centuries with its interest in earlier periods central to the Romantic movement in the humanities and its focus on evolution and comparativism characteristic of the natural sciences.

The importance of the comparative-historical methodological principle, or of the so-called "conscience romaniste" (Ernst et al. 2000: 185) that allowed Romance philology to establish itself as a scientific discipline, has remained until the present day. As can be seen from the articles collected in Dworkin (2003), modern practitioners of this field concur that the comparative-historical methodological principle is the very essence of Romance philology. For example, Koch (2003b: 42) writes: "It has always been the historical-diachronic relationship of the Romance languages to Latin which holds Romance philology together at its innermost core".

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6.   On the controversy that surrounds the possibility of using the terms 'linguistics' and 'philology' interchangeably, see Koerner (1989) and Swiggers (1998, 2001). There is no complete equivalence between historical Romance linguistics and Romance philology because the latter encompasses both linguistic and literary studies.