Motion Events from Latin to Romance: Role of Linguistic Resources in Typological Shift

Natalya I. Stolova Colgate University nstolova@colgate.edu

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In Talmy's typology of event conflation (Talmy 2000), language's type is based on the surface element that this language commonly uses to express the framing event of the macro-event. For example, consider the macro-event "[the bottle MOVED in to the cave] DURING-WHICH [it floated]". English commonly expresses it as *The bottle floated into the cave*, while Spanish as *La botella entró flotando en la cueva* (literally, 'The bottle entered (MOVED-in) floating to the cave') (Talmy 2000: II: 49). The English pattern places the framing event (i.e., path of motion) in the satellite *into*, making English a satellite-framed language. In contrast, in the Spanish pattern, the framing event is lexicalized in the main verb root in *entró*, making Spanish a verb-framed language. The fact that Spanish and other Romance languages are predominantly verb-framed is noteworthy because they developed from a predominantly satellite-framed language (Latin). Publications that have addressed the transition from predominantly satellite-framed Latin to predominantly verb-framed Romance languages have discovered that the typological shift in question is part of broader trends attested on the way from Latin to Romance (Stolova 2008, 2010, 2015).

The goal of the present study is to establish a comprehensive inventory of Latin-to-Romance trends involved in the typological shift from satellite-framing to verb-framing. The study argues that such trends have to do with changes in motion-independent linguistic resources. The study demonstrates that there are three kinds of relevant linguistic resources involved: semantic, morpholexical, and morphosyntactic. The study has a Pan-Romance focus. In addition to Classical Latin and Late Latin, it relies on data from a wide range of Romance languages: Spanish, French, Italian, Portuguese, Romanian, Catalan, Occitan, Sardinian, and Raeto-Romance.

References

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