A PRELIMINARY STUDY OF
METAPHORICAL, NEUTRAL MOTION VERBS IN *LOB* AND *FLOB*[1]

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The semantic domain of motion and space has been exhaustively studied in the last decades, being considered a cognitive universal. Research in the particular field of motion is mainly based on Talmy's (1991, 2000, 2007) typological classification of languages into *Satellite-framed* (S-languages) and *Verb-framed* (V-languages). The difference here lies in the lexicalization of the path of motion. If one language codifies or 'frames' a path within the verb (e.g. Spanish *María cruzó el parque*), then it is a 'verb-framed' language, whereas if it codifies path through satellites (e.g. English *Mary walked across (the park)*), it is referred to as being 'satellite-framed'. Thus, apparently, and due to lexicalization patterns, there exist remarkable differences between the two languages in what concerns the variety of verbs expressing manner of motion. In this preliminary study the focus will be on the English field of motion along the diachronic dimension. For this purpose, the metaphorical uses of three neutral English *run* verbs (*walk*, *run*, and *jump*) that express manner of motion have been taken into consideration by comparing two sub-periods of Present-day British English (the 1960s and the 1990s) as represented in the *LOB* and the *FLOB* corpora respectively.

Keywords: Space, motion, lexicalization, Historical Linguistics.

1. Introduction

The present research is a pilot study of the metaphorical uses of some of the verbs that express neutral manner of motion meaning: *walk*, *jump* and *run*, comparing two sub-periods of Present-Day English (the 1960's and the 1990's) in order to see whether there have been changes in usage along the time axis. This study is part of a larger project whose aim is to provide a contrastive analysis of the development of verbs of manner of motion in English and Spanish as represented in different corpora, considering literal and metaphorical meanings.

Manner of motion verbs is the largest class in the semantic domain of motion events. According to Levin (1993: 264-5) we can divide manner of motion verbs into two sub-classes: *Roll* verbs and *Run* verbs. *Roll* verbs typically express manners of motion of inanimate entities as well as motion Around an Axis. In turn, *Run* verbs describe the manners of movement of animate entities.
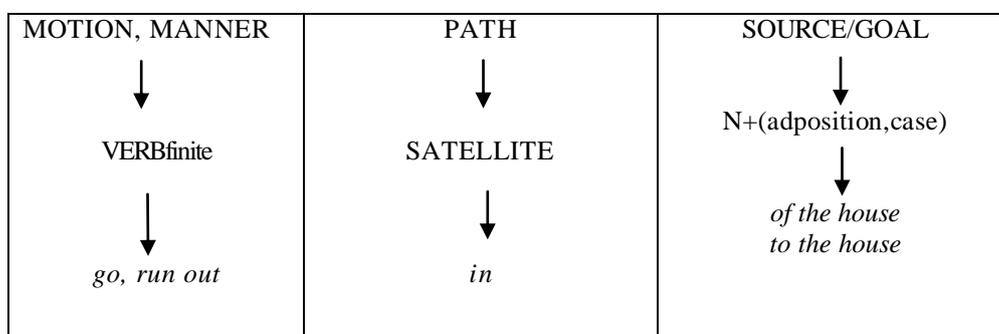
2. Motion events

A clear definition of a motion event is that proposed by Talmy (2000: 25): a motion event "consists of one object (the *Figure*) moving or located with respect to another object (the reference object or *Ground*)". Moreover, according to the previous definition there are many participants are involved in the expression of motion events: Figure, Path (that is direction of movement), Extent, Manner or Ground which can be

divided into source (initial location), goal (final location), milestone (location passed along path).

The domain of motion is essential in all languages but they differ in the way of codifying motion events because they have developed different types of lexicalization patterns, which raise specific forms of narrative style and mental imagery in the motion domain. In this connection, Talmy put forward a typological classification of motion events by dividing languages into '*Satellite-framed*' languages and '*Verb-framed*' languages. The difference here lies in the lexicalization of path. If one language codifies or 'frames' a path within the verb, then it is a 'verb-framed' language, whereas if it codifies path through satellites, it is referred to as being 'satellite-framed'. Thus, motion events in V-languages are typically expressed by the combination of a path verb and a subordinate adverbial of manner, in contrast with S-languages, which express them by means of a manner of motion verb + path satellite.

(a) Satellite-framed construction type:

MOTION, MANNER	PATH	SOURCE/GOAL
↓	↓	↓
VERB finite	SATELLITE	N+(adposition,case)
↓	↓	↓
go, run out	*in*	*of the house* *to the house*

(b) Verb-framed construction type:

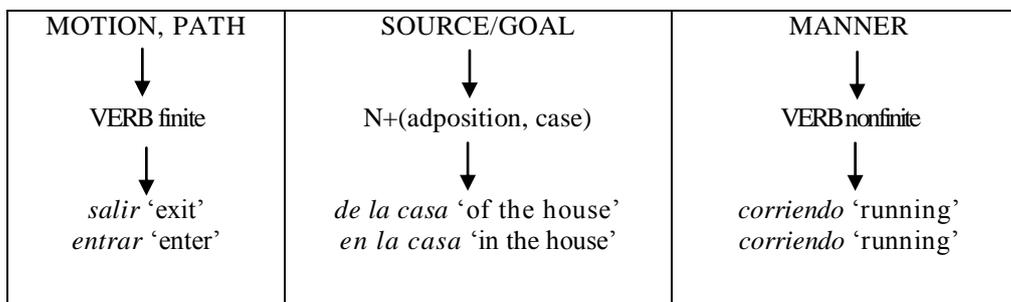| MOTION, PATH	SOURCE/GOAL	MANNER
↓	↓	↓
VERB finite	N+(adposition, case)	VERB nonfinite
↓	↓	↓
salir 'exit' *entrar* 'enter'	*de la casa* 'of the house' *en la casa* 'in the house'	*corriendo* 'running' *corriendo* 'running'

Figure 1: Satellite and verb-framed constructions

These patterns make speakers of V-languages and S-languages focus their attention on different components of motion events. S-language speakers consider manner as an inherent component and, as a result, the domain of manner is widely elaborated in these languages. In contrast, V-language speakers focus less on manner and more on changes of location and settings.

However, several languages do not fulfil either of the patterns. Thus, as Zlatev and Yangklang have proposed, a third typological category should be added: that of 'equipollently-framed languages', i.e. languages in which manner and path are expressed at equal terms. This category includes not only serial-verb languages but also bipartite verb languages and generic verb languages.

Nevertheless, a tripartite typology does not seem to be the solution because, due to language-specific features, many of them cannot be ascribed to any of the three typological categories described above. Therefore, it is fair to conclude that it is necessary to place languages on a cline of path salience because, due to their specific morphosyntactic, lexical and cultural features, they may show both V- and S-language behaviour, even simultaneously.

2.1. Path

In the expression of motion events, path information must be somehow present. Being an obligatory element, it is not possible to look for a range of accessibility of path as a category, but we should consider path in relation to two different aspects:

❖ Number of path components into which a motion event can be divided (i.e. number of sub-trajectories that conform an overall trajectory).
❖ Distribution of these path segments into the different clauses present in the event (i.e. how compacted the path segments are).

Thus, according to Talmy's typology, V-language speakers tend to encode fewer path segments than S-language speakers in both speaking and writing. Moreover, in S-languages, path information is expressed in a more compacted way than in V-languages.

These previous two points are connected in some way and affect the use of manner of motion verbs. V-languages often make use of path verbs in order to express motion events because whenever a change of path direction occurs, they are subjected to the 'boundary crossing constraint'[2] and the use of manner of motion verbs is therefore affected by this. By contrast, S-languages show a single verb (usually a manner of motion verb) with different path satellites attached to it; as path information is conveyed through satellites, this pattern admits a more frequent use of manner of motion verbs. Besides, the different ways of codifying path information influences the attention to grounds (sources, goals, and milestones). As Slobin points out:

> Apparently language typology contributes to a typical level of event granularity. The determining factor seems to be the heavy use of a series of separate clauses in V-languages, as compared to the accumulation of path particles and prepositional phrases with a single verb in S-languages... [even in the case of] English-speaking children, at early ages, [it is possible to see a disposition] to describe complex paths, and in compact constructions. Across ages, the collection of complex locative elements in English exceeds the possibilities provided by path verbs in V-languages (2004: 239-40).

S-language speakers usually establish a one-per-one equivalence between ground elements and path segments, due to the possibility, inherent in these languages, to express several path components attached to a single verb. In S-languages, when several paths are introduced, more ground elements per clause can be expressed. V-languages, in turn, provide this information through static descriptions of setting.

3. Metaphorical *Run* verbs

3.1. Description and characteristics

This study is focused on the category of *Run* verbs: because they are generally used in sentences which provide movement information through the verb itself or

through other parts of the sentence and they can be considered one of the core elements in spatial semantics when expressing change of location.

Run verbs can be classified into two groups: general verbs (or 'neutral' in Slobin's terminology: e.g. *jump*, *walk*, *run*), and more expressive ones (*traipse*, *slink*). This latter type is much more elaborated in S-languages like English, in opposition to V-languages.

These verbs can be used in a metaphorical way "to add an evaluative dimension to descriptions" (Slobin 2003: 171), usually to talk about political and economic events, thus, for e.g., enabling financial indexes or prices to '*jump*'. The metaphorical uses of motion events are frequent in S-languages in contrast to their infrequence in V-languages. Since their meaning is metaphorical, they cannot be included among ordinary manner of motion verbs.

Therefore, metaphorical uses of *Run* verbs do not retain their original dynamic meanings. In many cases, these examples are connected with economy (1) or politics (2), but also with other subjects such as mind and feelings (3), idioms (4), etc.:

(1)   PROFITS **JUMP**. HERE is surprisingly good news this morning from Sir Ivan Stedeford, master of mighty Tube Investments (*LOB*, A16: 118-20).

(2)   Mr. Harold Wilson, Shadow Chancellor, **jumped up** to offer the Government an easy passage for such legislation (*LOB*, A06: 18-9).

(3)   If love **walks into** my life I'll be happy, but I've got a strong nucleus of friends (*FLOB*, A10: 38-40).

(4)   She knew the risk she was **running** in going there (*LOB*, B13: 42).

3.2 Metaphorical, neutral Run verbs: Evidence from LOB and FLOB

If we look at the results from *LOB* and *FLOB* we can perceive an increase in the use of neutral manner of motion verbs from the 60's to the 90's. Of the three, *Run* is the one that undergoes a more evident increase, which coincides with a decrease of its frequency in literal uses:

Metaphorical, neutral manner of motion verbs	N. of tokens *LOB*	N. of tokens *FLOB*
Walk	11	12
Run	151	193
Jump	11	9
TOTAL	173	214

Table 1: Frequency of manner of motion verbs in the LOB/FLOB corpora

Besides, it is important to mention that, as these verbs are neutral, manner is not really marked in them. Nevertheless, there exist other ways of emphasizing manner, which are attested in both corpora in combination with neutral manner of motion verbs, thus making the description more vivid. Manner adverbs, prepositional phases, noun phrases and absolute participial clauses are attested in both corpora:

Metaphorical, neutral manner of motion verbs	LOB				FLOB			
	A:M	PP:M	NP:M	A PP CL	A:M	PP:M	NP:M	A PP CL
Walk	1	1	-	2	1	-	-	1
Run	19	6	2	6	21	13	2	5
Jump	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	20	7	2	8	22	13	2	6
TOTAL AVERAGE	37				43			

Table 2: Emphasis on manner.in LOB and FLOB

This emphasis on manner increases in terms of frequency from one period to the other, with the exception of noun phrases in which the results are equivalent and absolute participial clauses, which show a slight decrease. Nevertheless, due to the small number of tokens, the variation between both periods is minimal. Therefore, it seems that, the manner component accompanying neutral *Run* verbs is not really emphasized by speakers neither in *LOB* nor in *FLOB*. They seem to prefer more simple sentences with respect to manner.
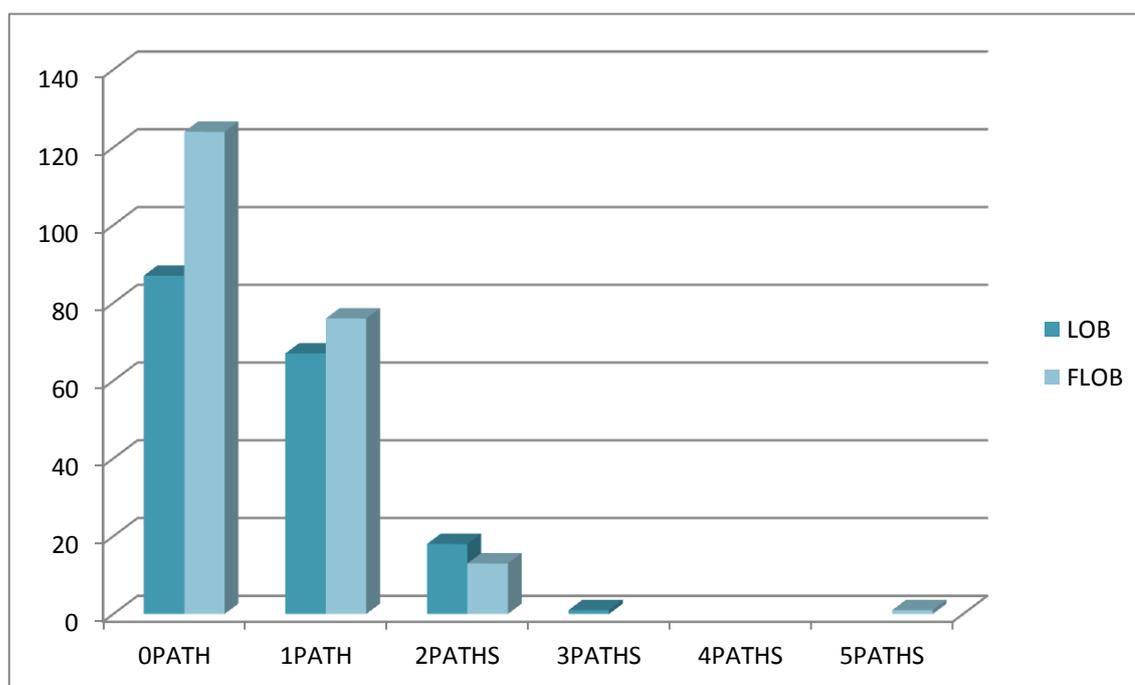
3.2. Path segments

Figure 2: Frequency of path segments in the LOB/FOB corpora

In the result of the analysis of path segments we find 143 tokens of *Run* verbs + a path segment in both corpora, and 211 with no path segments at all. This contrasts with 31 instances of V + two path segments, one of V+ three path segments, and one of V + five path segments. Thus, English speakers prefer to use less compacted and less complex constructions instead (placing English closer to V-languages).

Besides, these three metaphorical, neutral manner of motion verbs show an increase in the use of *Run* verbs followed by no path segments from *LOB* to *FLOB*. In the rest of patterns attested in figure 2 the difference in frequency is minimal. According

to this, we can consider that the codification of path segments has undergone change from the 60's to the 90's, bringing English closer to V-languages.
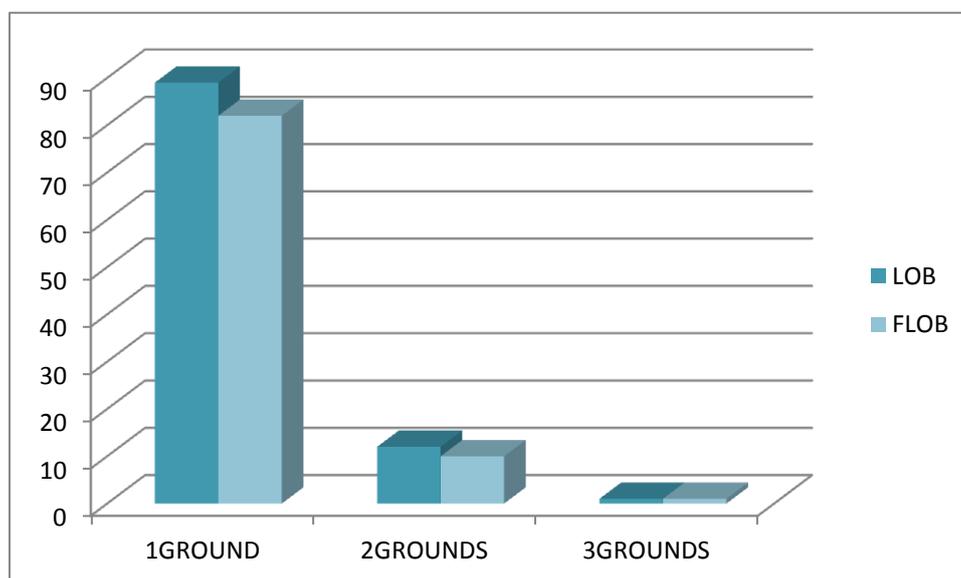
3.3. Ground elements

Figure 3: Instances of ground elements in the LOB/FLOB corpora

With respect to ground elements, the introduction of one ground in the expression of a motion event seems to be the preferred option. Again, English speakers choose a less complex construction, going against the literature on motion events. Moreover, there seems to be no equivalence between paths and grounds of the examples under analysis.

Ground elements	*LOB*			*FLOB*		
	SOURCE	**GOAL**	**MILESTONE**	**SOURCE**	**GOAL**	**MILESTONE**
Walk	1	2	7	1	2	4
Run	14	24	58	20	19	52
Jump	2	5	3	-	3	4
TOTAL	**27**	**31**	**68**	**21**	**24**	**60**

Table 3: Frequency of the different grounds in the LOB/FLOB corpora.

Considering them separately, milestones are the ground more privileged by speakers. This can be considered as a resource to express or describe the environment or space in which the figure is moving. In contrast, it is possible to perceive a lack of interest in mentioning initial and final locations which are expressed by static descriptions instead.

4. Conclusions and suggestions for further research

Taking all these aspects into consideration, it seems as if English were detaching itself from S-languages in the cline of manner and path salience, thus coming closer, at least in some respects, to V-languages, maybe due to language contact. However, the low number of tokens is not enough as to confirm a clear conclusion along these lines,

although my intention is to deepen and develop this particular aspect in further stages of the research.

In further stages of my research I will look at *Run* verbs in English and Spanish as represented in different corpora, seek for the historical and cultural reasons accounting for the differences between both languages analyse metaphorical cases of Run verbs and take a look at the influence of language on thought.

Notes

2. If there is some spatial crossing, it is not possible, at least in V-languages, to attach several ground elements to a single verb and therefore, these ground elements must be expressed through different verbs that convey path information.

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