

PREFACE

Verbs, movement and prepositions

Verbs are a central category in linguistic studies, as they constitute the core of predications, and there is an important body of literature that covers nearly all aspects regarding this class. There are, however, several areas of debate, such as the one of verbs of movement, which need further research. In fact, although this type of verbs has been studied for a long time, in various linguistic traditions and within different theoretical models, there are still numerous issues to deal with. One of them concerns the types of languages that can be defined by these verbs. The discussion about path or manner of movement expressed in a verb or outside the verb led to Talmy's seminal proposal of verb-framed languages and satellite-framed languages. This typology was then augmented by a third class of equipollently-framed languages and by more subdivisions, such as weak satellite-framed languages and strong satellite-framed languages, but these proposals are not without criticism. Other issues regarding verbs of movement are, for instance, the relation of movement (and location) with other conceptual domains, such as possession (and change of possession). The relation between verbs of movement and Aspect is another area of debate, especially the aspectual classes of predications and their connection to telicity. From a computational point of view, verbs of movement pose questions about the mapping of descriptions of motion in natural languages with formal representations that can be used in an array of applications.

One can also relate the study of verbs of movement to the study of a less analysed category, prepositions. In fact, prepositions are important in the context of some language families, such as Romance, because several semantic components of events of movement are denoted by prepositional phrases, namely Goal and Source. However, there are many matters of debate regarding prepositions. For instance, what is the relation of prepositions with other categories, such as adverbs? What is the syntactic status of prepositional phrases (arguments or adjuncts) in predications projected by verbs of movement? What is the contribution of prepositions to the

definition of the aspectual profile of these predications? What theta-roles can prepositional phrases exhibit?

In general, the use of prepositions is a problematic area in any language. As to European Portuguese, several arguments support this claim. For instance, there are contexts in which a few prepositions can occur with verbs of movement, whereas there are contexts in which only a particular preposition can occur. Furthermore, in a context in which several prepositions can occur, the choice between one preposition and another is associated with a different meaning, whereas in other cases apparently there is no change in the meaning of the sentence. This heterogeneity increases if we consider other Portuguese varieties, namely African and Brazilian Portuguese, which exhibit different uses of prepositions. This variety of uses poses some problems in different areas of application, from teaching to automatic translation.

This book deals with a diversity of issues that relate to verbs, namely verbs of movement, and prepositions. It was planned within the project “Verbs and Prepositions in European Portuguese”, which had two main goals: the description of the possibilities of combining verbs and prepositions in contemporary European Portuguese and the investigation of a set of constructions involving verbs of movement and directional prepositions.

The project team included linguistics and computer sciences researchers from two R&D units – Centre of Linguistics of University of Porto (CLUP) and INESC TEC (Porto) – who developed work in both areas (theoretical research and application). Some of their findings were presented in a workshop that took place on May, 2017 at FLUP.

This volume has six chapters and four of them were previously presented at the workshop. They all analyse topics that address at least two of the project’s themes – verbs and prepositions, verbs and movement, prepositions and movement.

The chapters of this volume

Ignacio Bosque addresses Source prepositions in four Romance languages – Spanish, Portuguese, French and Italian – in what concerns mainly their spatial interpretations.

After arguing that, in these Romance Languages, Source and Goal prepositions share some properties (e.g. incorporation processes), but also exhibit relevant differences, namely their contribution to the characterization of the Paths, the author addresses two issues related to Source prepositions.

The first issue concerns the fact that the same prepositions are used in these different Romance languages in the same spatial and temporal contexts. The author argues for a unified explanation for this coincidence that relies on Path identification: spatial Source prepositions require spatial paths, whereas temporal Source prepositions require temporal (durative) paths.

The second issue is related to the fact that these languages do not present the same number of Source prepositions: in Italian, there are two; in Spanish and Portuguese, there are three; and, in French, there are four different lexical possibilities of marking the spatial origin of a displacement with different types of verbs. The author argues that these differences are related to the way these prepositions lexicalize some components of the Path (only the initial point or the whole path) and to the bounded or unbounded nature of the path itself.

Yuko Morimoto's chapter concerns mainly the aspectual event/state alternation in Spanish. She analyses different types of constructions that include: verbs of motion like *atravesar* 'to cross'; comparative expressions like *estar cada vez más guapa* 'look more and more beautiful'; predicates of activity like *cantar en locales nocturnos* 'to sing in nightclubs'; and expressions with the so-called aspectual *se* in combination with the verb *estar* 'to be_{ESTAR}'.

Morimoto argues that the alternations between state and event readings with verbs of motion are not cases of recategorization or coercion. Instead, the analysed verbs and verbal predicates are considered to be aspectually neutral and the definition of the aspectual profile of predications relies on contextual factors. This conclusion is similar to the one that Leal, Cunha and Silva point out in their chapter, concerning European Portuguese data. The other alternations analysed in Morimoto's chapter are used to support her proposal that states constitute a heterogeneous aspectual class, including states with a controlling subject, and that "stativity" can be ascribed to different layers of Aspect, namely to the verb, to the sentence and to the utterance.

Inês Duarte and Fátima Oliveira research the constructions that express external possession in European Portuguese. They start by analysing the patterns of argument realization found in external possession structures in European Portuguese and compare them to other Romance languages. They conclude that, as in other Romance languages, structures with change of state verbs combined with dative clitics are less restricted than structures with other types of verbs or with DP with the preposition case marker *a*. They also conclude that the concept of affectedness commonly used needs to be refined due to e.g. the variation in the human feature

of the possessor or the verb classes that can occur with possessor datives. So, in the second part of the chapter, the authors discuss and propose a more accurate definition of affectedness that combines the *R-integrated relation* of Moltmann (2003), the Hole (2005) concept of *affectee* and Beavers (2006, 2011) “Affectedness Hierarchy”. The authors argue that their definition of affectedness can account for the fact that common patterns of external possession across the Romance languages they analyse involve specific possession relations with human possessors and occur only with certain verb classes. Finally, they argue that affectedness in Portuguese is encoded in an aspectual head of the *v-V* system that is a complement of *v* and selects a VP complement.

João Cordeiro, Pavel Brazdil and António Leal present the system that they developed in the course of the project “Verbs and Prepositions in European Portuguese”. Their main goal was to characterize the current use of prepositions in predications with verbs of movement in some Portuguese newspapers. To do so, they designed and implemented an automatic system that extracts relevant examples of combinations of verbs and prepositions and stores them in a relational database. The authors describe the technical details of the method they used, along with some difficulties that they had to overcome and main results they achieved.

António Leal, Luís Filipe Cunha and Fátima Silva analyse the event/state alternation of predications with verbs of motion in European Portuguese. They start by presenting a series of tests that point out to the conclusion that predications with verbs of motion with stative readings in European Portuguese are instances of individual level non-phase states. In the second part of this chapter, the authors take into consideration the conditions underlying the stative/eventive readings of predications with verbs of motion, in particular the contribution of different tenses, temporal adverbials and denotational properties of the Figure argument. They also analyse the interaction of these grammatical components that result in the rise of eventive or stative readings of predications with verbs of motion.

The authors argue that the European Portuguese verbs of motion analysed are lexically underspecified in what concerns the state/event distinction and that the aspectual readings of these predications are defined compositionally, which is a conclusion similar to the one Yuko Morimoto presents for Spanish verbs in her chapter. Leal, Cunha and Silva also suggest the existence of an aspectual tripartite division of spatial verbs, between state verbs, event verbs and verbs that are underspecified regarding the state/event distinction.

Ana Maria Brito and Celda Choupinha analyse some uses of verbs of motion *ir* ‘to go’ and *vir* ‘to come’ in European Portuguese and their equivalents in Portuguese Sign Language. They discuss Talmy’s typology and its application to these languages in particular, and they argue that European Portuguese (and Romance languages in general) does not always behave as a verb-framed language. As for Portuguese Sign Language, the authors argue that it is closer to an equipollently-framed language than to a verb-framed language.

I hope that the results presented in these six chapters can enrich the scientific debate and point to new directions for fresh and stimulating research in the areas of verbs, movement and prepositions.

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