

THE LEXICAL SEMANTICS OF VERBS OF MOTION

Malika Pirniyazova

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The semantic properties of English motion verbs are complex and display several levels of organization. The author would like to show that the two basic concepts associated with physical motion, namely progression in space and progression in time, are hierarchically structured. More specifically, the author claims that speed as an external temporal component of movement assumes a secondary, derived status because it derives from the kinetic properties of actions denoted by the verbs (and from their intralinguistic comparison). The author also argue that it is essential to separate the level of external temporal (in the sense physical) structuration of motion verbs from the level of their internal semantic structure.

Needless to say, motion is conceptually related to progression in place and in time. According to Pustejovsky J. and Boguraev B., to say that a body moves through space is to say that a body occupies a continuous sequence of distinct points in space correlated with the passage of time [1, 187].

Most of the authors are included values, as the most heterogeneous in nature, function and level of the language structure, so that the category of modality is deprived of any certainty. However, this issue is of considerable importance, not only for Linguistics and logic, since the category of modality belongs to the field of linguistic phenomena, where their relationship to the logical structure and way of thinking are the most immediate. It is known that the modality in equal measure is the subject of studies and Linguistics and logic. And if the first modality is included into number of the most significant characteristics of the offers as a language unit, in the second it is regarded as a significant indicator of judgment as a form of thinking. Therefore, analysis of the linguistic category of modality can only be performed in close connection with the analysis of the logical categories of modality.

In the expressions to walk slowly (quickly), or to come back quickly (slowly) the adverbs specify time intervals between individual kinetic quanta (their temporal sum total marks the duration of the motion). Since these components of meaning pertain to temporal configuration of individual quanta, they operate at the level of physical structuration of movement as lexically encoded by the verb. More specifically, they operate within the sphere of kinetic (external temporal) structure of movement, which must be kept apart from the level of the internal temporal contour (internal semantic structure) of motion verbs.

At this point the author tries to make a brief terminological remark concerning the ‘internal semantic structure’ of verbs. This term is used in at least two different senses. It may describe the type of componential semantic analysis in which certain semantic concepts operating at a higher level of abstraction are specified (e.g. the concepts of change, motion, contact or cause), or it may be used to specify ways of viewing situation types in terms of the speaker’s aspectual choices. The term ‘internal semantic structure’ in the latter sense relates to the internal temporal contour or distribution of an event in terms of the beginning, middle and end phases [2, 45].

Perhaps the best-known classification of verbs in terms of what Poutsma H. [3, 345] felicitously referred to as ‘lexical aspect’ was proposed by Talmy L. [4, 156]. He distinguished four major types of verbs. States (such as knowing the answer) are temporally homogeneous and static. Activities, such as running, are extended in time but have no clear endpoints. Accomplishments, such as running a mile, are also extended in time but aim at the attainment of a certain state. Achievements, such as reaching the border, refer to the instant at which a state is achieved. States and activities are atelic, i.e. their action does not proceed to any goal or in any direction, whereas accomplishments and achievements are telic, i.e. they are delimited (for the distinction between telic and atelic verbs see e.g. [4]).

Before dealing with speed as a component of meaning pertaining to the external temporal structuration of motion verbs, the author tries to explain the terms ‘manner-conflating verbs’ and ‘path-conflating verbs’. In his description of motion situation, Schubiger M. distinguishes the following components [5, 222]: the Figure (i.e. the object moving with respect to another object, called the Ground), the Path (i.e. the course followed by the Figure), and Motion (which refers to the presence per se of motion in the event of motion). In addition to these internal components, a Motion event can be associated with an external Co-event that most often bears the relation of Manner. For example, the verb roll (as in the sentence The pencil rolled off the table) conflates two components: Motion plus Manner. Strang B. adds, among other semantic components, also the speed of motion (run, stroll) [6, 187].

How is it, then, that dictionaries and linguists generally treat run as denoting a rapid rhythm of the movement and walk as denoting a slow (or ‘normal’) rhythm of movement? For example, Watts N. explicitly states that ‘when you run, you move faster than when you walk’ [7, 107].

Swan M. and Walter C. are certainly right in pointing out that the two verbs denote two conceptually different manners of movement. However, one must not forget that in comparison with walking, running also implies the presence of effort

since the motion involves more vigorous bodily movements – and effort is conceptually related to a relatively high speed of motion. From this it follows that velocity of movement as implied in these verbs is, as I have pointed out, determined by the character of the respective kinetic quanta. That is, velocity norm as implied in run differs from velocity norm as implied in walk. (Needless to say, velocity norm, being of relative character, cannot be specified in absolute terms.) Therefore, as opposed to walking, running is associated with higher speed, and this is precisely the reason why language users resort to run in the sense ‘to hasten somewhere’ (also figuratively, for example for help): *She ran to the store to get some ice cream* (it may well be that no actual running is involved) [8, 97].

Natural-language items are often capable of communicating more than one meaning depending on the linguistic environment and the situation of utterance they occur in. It is standardly observed that these meanings are often somehow related to each other, unlike in classic lexical ambiguities such as *bank, bar*, etc. [9, 200]. He mentions example of the adjective long, which can have both a temporal and a spatial interpretation, the latter being more central or prototypical. Another example is the preposition *up* in its two uses in *I'm feeling up today* and *The rocket went up*; again, Lakoff takes the spatial meaning to be the more central of the two meanings [9, 201].

Cognitive Linguistics rejects the idea of a common abstract meaning underlying all the uses of the above lexical items for three reasons. First, it is argued that a unitary-meaning approach would yield very counterintuitive core meanings for most words, in the unlikely case that such abstract meanings could be formulated at all. Second, the various meanings a given item may convey are sometimes characterized by family resemblance, rather than by the fact that they all share an underlying semantic component.

To take an example from Potter S.: a common source of systematic polysemy comes from the use of the CONTAINER image-schema. This schema consists of a boundary distinguishing an interior from an exterior, thereby allegedly defining the basic distinction the concept out. The immediate grasp of this schema comes from kinaesthetic bodily experience, since we experience our own bodies as containers; this image-schema is subsequently employed in metaphoric projections of the kinaesthetic into other (occasionally non-concrete) domains of experience, so that events, states and abstract entities are interpreted as spatially bounded entities. The result, says Johnson, is manifested in the systematic polysemy of various spatial prepositions, as the following examples demonstrate [7, 46].

1. *Tell me your story again, but leave out the minor details.*

2. *I give up, Fm getting out of the race.*
3. *Whenever I'm in trouble, she always bails me out.*
4. *Don't you dare back out of our agreement.*

Linguistics has come a long and winding path in the study of modality, building on the achievements of the logic, semiotics and psychology. However, the modality has not yet received a full explanation because of its complexity, specificity of language expression and functional features. Researchers give various definitions of the categories of modality. Take a look at some of the concepts.

In 1960, in the grammar of the Russian language have been formulated and are all linguistic facts relating to all phrases, introductory words plug-in designs, but the definition of modality has not yet been given [6, 29].

The first definition of modality found in 1969 in the linguistic dictionary (O.S. Ahmanovoy), which examines the modality as the conceptual category with the value of the speaker's relationship to the content of the remarks and the relationship of language to reality (relationship reported to its actual implementation), through different lexical and grammatical means, such as the shape and inclination, modal verbs etc. Modality can be set to approve, order, requests, approve, reliabilities and so on [3, 40].

In a dictionary of linguistic terms (1969) is the Division of the modality mode:

- hypothetical(suppositional) modality, which involves the submission of statements alleged;
- verbal modality. modality expressed by the verb;
- unreal modality. the presentation of the contents of speech is impossible, impracticable;
- negative modality – the presentation of the contents of statements as non-reality.

Russian grammar of 1980 notes, first, that the modality is expressed through language levels, secondly, states that an objective category of modality refers to the category of predicatively, thirdly, is the phenomena related to the phenomena of modality:

1. The value of reality-unreality: the reality is by indicative (present, past, future); unreality-the surreal inclinations (subjunctive, conditional, desirable, a socializing);
2. Subjectively-modal value is the ratio of the speaker to the reported;
3. The modalities of speech (verbs, adjectives, predicative), lexical values that express ability, desire, imperativeness [5, 46].

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Summing up of all what has just been said we can conclude that the semantic category of modality in the languages of the different systems has mixed the Lexico-grammatical in nature. In the languages of the system it covers the entire fabric of speech.

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