

Title: The Lexicalization of Verbs of Motion in Russian: Manner vs. Destination
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Verbs of motion (VoM) in Russian are well-known for showing multiple interactions with grammatical-semantic categories such as verbal aspect, tense, and definiteness of motion (Arutiunova & Levontina 2000; Arutiunova & Shatunovskii 1999, etc.). Russian affixes, especially prefixes, make the semantics of VoM more complicated and this semantic complexity has been a popular topic for linguistic investigation (Krongauz 1998, etc.). This presentation aims to explain the systematic relationship in the meanings of VoM and prefixes by using an integrative approach to the category of the prefixed VoM in Russian.

Unprefixed VoM can be classified using three semantic features – Definiteness, Transitivity, and Using vehicles. Prefixation adds the feature of Directionality, which is related to the expression of the reference point in movement (Bondarchuk & Derwing 2009: 41–45). The prefixation process makes verbal aspect become a part of the whole semantics of VoM. The relationship between the categories of definiteness in motion and verbal aspect is motivated semantically; a detailed description of the motivation and relationship is another goal of this research.

A number of meanings do not seem to be related to the concept of space. For example, войти can be used metaphorically as “to understand” in a certain construction, but the context is very complicated and restricted: Я вошёл в положение родителей ‘I understood the situation of my parents’. The metaphorical extension is also a part of the semantics of prefixed VoM in Russian. In addition to all the grammatical features above, semantic characteristics of the motion participants must be considered as well. The purpose of this paper is to describe the semantic structure of VoM as exactly as possible by adopting ideas and methods from Cognitive Linguistics. I believe that this study is going to contribute not only to explaining linguistic phenomena, but also to understanding Russian from a cultural perspective.

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