

Abstract for the LUND conference

EVENT CONFLATION IN CHILD ROMANIAN

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Research in cognitive linguistics (Slobin, 2004, Talmy, 1985, 1991) has shown that motion events are made up of a few basic components, such as a *moving object* (FIGURE), a *reference object* with respect to which the FIGURE moves (GROUND), the trajectory of the figure with respect to the ground (PATH), and some additional elements, such as Manner and Cause of Motion. Languages will encode these constituents in different degrees and by different means, being classified by Talmy in two important groups: *satellite-framed* languages, which express the MANNER of motion on the main verb, and frame the PATH in a verb particle and *verb-framed* languages that frame the PATH onto the main verb, and leave MANNER to be encoded in an optional constituent, a representative of the latter being Romanian.

The present paper aims at analysing the way in which Romanian children and adults make use of the elements available in their mother tongue to encode motion events, in an attempt to trace a developmental path and to check whether Romanian patterns neatly with one of the two language groups mentioned above.

To examine these issues, a corpus of 57 narratives produced by Romanian subjects of 5 age-groups will be employed, all narrative productions being based on the same picture booklet *Frog, where are you?* (M. Meyer, 1969), which proved a useful tool in that it presents a number of FIGURES (the boy, his dog and pet frog, the owl, the bees and the gopher), one location (the forest), several GROUNDS (the tree, the rock, the pond), several PATH types (down, up, into, out of), some MANNER types: (to go, to climb, to ascend, to topple over), as well as instances of caused and self motion (*was thrown into the river vs. fell into the river*). For the analysis the form-functional approach to language development will be employed.

Key words: *first language acquisition, event conflation, developmental path, satellite-framed language, verb-framed language*