

Variation in the expression of motion events: towards a unified approach

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This paper explores the idea that the properties of adpositional systems can suffice to explain Talmian distinction between satellite and verb framed languages. Following the insight that morphological simple prepositions in Romance languages are only locative, I propose that the functional domain of the directional/path preposition is defective and, hence, has to be licensed via incorporation to the (motion) verb. Prepositional incorporation, understood as head movement, prevents manner incorporation, as a particular case of Kayne's (1994) condition on adjunction. The proposal put forth here gives a unified account to Talmy's lexicalization patterns and points out to a relation between the defectivity in the inventory of Romance prepositions (Son 2007, Fábregas 2007) and the lack of a manner component in motion events (Mateu and Rigau 2002): Romance Prepositions cannot denote a bounded Path since P_{DIR} is always incorporated into the verb. At the same time P incorporation prevents the presence of manner in the expression of goal of motion events. The paper offers an account for Talmian lexicalization patterns from a non lexicalist perspective, reducing typological differences between languages to specific properties within the functional domain of lexical heads.